

**Czech Teachers as “Bearers of Change”:
Teacher Inspiration and Attitudes Toward Change
in Secondary State and Non-State Schools.**

Dagmar Kotlandova Koenig

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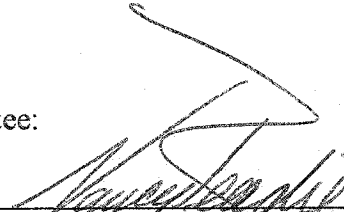
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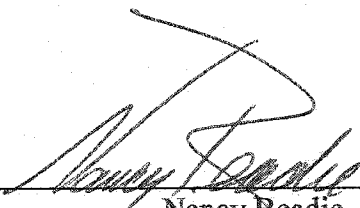
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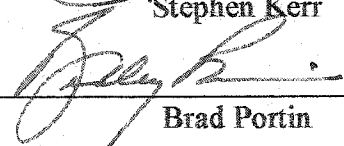
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Nancy Beadie



Stephen Kerr



Brad Portin

Date:

5/29/2003

University of Washington

Abstract

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Dagmar Kotlandova Koenig

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:
Professor Nancy Beadie
College of Education

This study examines teacher attitudes toward change in teaching and teacher use of professional development and sources of inspiration in Czech secondary schools. It seeks to identify and explore differences in attitudes toward change and professional inspiration between state and non-state secondary school teachers. The background for this study is framed by the post-communist transformation of the Czech political system, economy, and society. The combined influences of the pre-communist and communist heritage in teaching, the rapid post-1989 transformation of Czech schooling, and the emerging differing characteristics and conditions of teaching in state as opposed to non-state schools pull teachers in state and non-state schools in different directions.

This project studies teachers in eight schools, four state and four non-state, including three private and one church school, in two administrative regions of East Bohemia. It uses the tools of school site observation, teacher survey, and teacher interviews to explore aspects of teaching in the new sector of non-state schooling as compared to state schooling. Focusing almost exclusively on teachers, and situating the research as a comparison between state and non-state school teachers, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the new non-state schools and of the work and attitudes of teachers as change agents in these schools. This study will hopefully help in filling the gap in research of Czech teachers as change agents, and of Czech non-state schools in general.

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GLOSSARY

Secondary school:

Four-year school, the next step of schooling after the 9th grade. Students usually enter at age 15 and exit at age 19. Czech secondary schools are very diverse. They can lead to a professional position in the workplace or to college entry. They can be professional, such as school of nursing or economics, technical, or college preparation schools, the so-called *gymnazia*. All secondary schools end with the state exit examination, the so-called *maturita*.

Post-secondary professional school:

On, two, or three-year long courses taken after secondary school. Provide additional professional qualifications for entry into the work market. Not intended as college entry preparation school. Secondary school graduation and passing the *maturita*, secondary school exit examination, is required for entry.

State school:

A school fully funded and operated by the state through the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Physical Training.

Non-state school:

A school owned and operated by entities other than the state. Includes primarily private and church schools.

Church school:

A school owned and operated by a church. Church schools receive full state funding under exactly the same conditions as regular state schools. There is no separation of church and state in the Czech Republic.

Private school:

A school owned and operated by a private entity, either a person or a business or organization. Private schools receive only a portion of state funding as compared to fully state-funded state schools.

Associated UNESCO school:

A school which has officially applied and been accepted into the UNESCO Associated School Program. As its membership pledge, such school pledges to follow the UNESCO principles, teach intercultural and multicultural education, actively cooperate with other associated UNESCO schools, and focus on learning about peace, human rights, democracy, tolerance, and protecting the natural and cultural heritage and diversity of our world.

New teaching method:

Any teaching methodology other than the traditionally used method of teaching by teacher lecture, student note taking, rote memorization, and predominant oral testing for the memorized factual knowledge.

Traditional teaching method:

In the traditional method, the teacher lectures the students from the front of the classroom for most of the class duration. The students take notes and then memorize the

covered information in order to reproduce it in oral or written testing in the following lessons. This method is still widely used in all types and levels of Czech schools.

Integrated teaching:

Using the methods of integrated teaching means teaching complex information as opposed to teaching information divided into separate narrowly defined subject matter areas, such as history, physics, mathematics, etc. Students work in long periods not separated into short, subject-matter defined units, and take breaks as needed. Similarly as in the Montessori approach, individual students work independently, receive lessons one-on-one from the teacher, and specify their own pace of work. Students work with information in broad thematic areas, such as natural sciences, social sciences, environmental education, health education, and the like.

Problem teaching:

Teaching on the basis of identifying, explaining, and solving a problem in a group including both students and the teacher, as opposed to explaining problems in the frontal lecturing method. Also sometimes referred to as project teaching, and the concepts “problem” and “project” are often used interchangeably.

Group teaching:

Teaching smaller groups of students rather than the whole class all at once.

Foreign models of education, foreign methodology:

Refers to any models or methods of education teachers encountered, either while staying abroad, or within the Czech Republic from foreign lecturers, courses, experiments, etc. Includes models such as the Waldorf school and the Montessori school

methods, ideas for teaching approaches and methods gathered at the foreign language teacher associations such as the British Council, and many others.

Drama in teaching:

Use of drama in teaching in order to make use of demonstrative techniques such as role playing, situation playing, etc.

Teacher inspiration, sources of inspiration:

Teacher inspiration in this study refers to professional development and learning activities for teachers. This includes any activity that helps teachers develop their existing teaching methods or helps them learn about new teaching methods and approaches. These activities range from individual learning to professional development courses, and any other activity where teachers can learn.

Professional teacher associations:

Any associations for educators for the purposes of advancing the teaching profession, providing teachers with educational opportunities and with a gathering forum. Many Czech professional associations for educators are subject-matter defined. Some of the best known non-subject matter ones include the Association of Private Schools of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, Friends of Engaged Teaching, Association of Secondary School Teachers, Association of *Gymnazium* Principals. Some of the subject-matter ones include British Council, Association of French Teachers, Association of German Linguists and Teachers of the German Language, Unity of Czech Physicists and Mathematicians, Association of Art Teachers, Association of History Teachers.

Debates or discussions in education:

Official discussions of specific topics organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Physical Training. The Ministry usually runs three rounds of the discussion, each open to different participants. One of the rounds is open to the general public, another round is open only to school educators. Such discussions are usually open for a year or two before a new education law or rule is drafted in order to collect public and professional opinions on the matter.

Common technical culture, professional learning community, collaborative work culture

These three terms are from Fullan, 2001. They all refer to purposeful interaction among teachers within a school. Such interaction includes “providing technical help” to each other, collegiality such as “frequent communication, mutual support, help”, and “sharing expertise, seeking advice, and giving help” to each other. (Fullan, 2001)

Chapter 1:

INTRODUCTION

“Significant educational change consists of changes in belief, teaching style, and materials, which can come about only through a process of personal development in a social context.”

Fullan, M., 2001

Introduction: Czech Education After the End of Communism.

The end of communism in 1989 in East and Central Europe opened the door to great political, economic, and social changes in these countries. The transformation from strictly planned communist economies to free market democracies resulted in major restructuring efforts, such as privatization and reforms of industry and infrastructure. The predominantly industrial communist economies began to change into economies with large service sectors and a much stronger focus on consumer needs. The transformation also enabled widespread use of increasingly sophisticated information technology, requiring new skills and qualifications and changing the demands on the education of the work force.

On the social level, these changes have been evident in the emergence of a new social stratification according to income levels. The current social order reflects the formation of a new elite class composed of the richest business people, while the status of the existing upper middle class has improved, the pockets of the lower middle class have

deepened, and a whole new strata of the poor has emerged.¹ Demands on educating this new citizenry have been changing as well.

The latest strategic document in education, The National Program of the Development of Education in the Czech Republic, known generally as the White Book, defines goals for education in the new society. Quoting from Comenius², one of the most significant figures in the history of Czech education, the document calls for well-rounded general education for all members of society. (MSMT, 2001, p.13) Taking Comenius' wisdom to the present, the White Book frames Czech education as fulfilling the needs of building and living in a democratic society. More broadly, Czech education is conceived as being capable of forming "a learning society" and providing "lifelong learning for all", as specified by the European Union and verbalized by organizations such as OECD and UNESCO. (MSMT, 2001, p.16).

The White Book lists the principal goals to be achieved in Czech education by the year 2005. These goals span across the following six areas: Implementing a life-long education system for all, adapting education to living in a knowledge society, improving the monitoring and evaluating tools in education, supporting institutional changes from within, transforming the role and professional perspectives of educators, and changing

¹The average Czech salary at the time of research was 14,466.00 CZK (Czech Crowns) per month. This amount equaled about \$452.00 as the exchange rate was about 32 CZK to \$1.00 at that time.

² Comenius, Czech name Jan Ámos Komenský, a philosopher, humanist, theologian, and reformer of education, lived 1592 – 1670. The Czechs often call him a "teacher of nations". As a member and a priest of Unitas Fratrum, a religious order rooted in the Czech reformist Hussite movement, he was persecuted and forced to escape from the Czech Lands, spending the rest of his life elsewhere in Europe. In education, he devised and used various progressive audiovisual teaching methods. He promoted education for both genders and for all ages. His teaching methods and views of education are highly prized today for their progressive and humanistic approach to learning and to students.

the centralized system to management by institutional and individual decision making. (MSMT, 2001)

An earlier important document, Czech Education & Europe, stresses similar concepts in schooling. Framing Czech education as a part of the European efforts of building “a learning society”, “an information society”, “a Europe of knowledge”, and facilitating “transnational mobility”, it calls for some fundamental changes in Czech schooling. (Phare, 1999, p.6, 7) First and foremost, education is to become a life-long learning opportunity for all members of the society. Schools are to become locally managed and open to the public, including parents, employers, and all other members of the community. The “traditional” Czech school is to be transformed into a meaningful, active, and open-minded school supporting creativity, partnership and mutual respect. (Phare, 1999, p. 86, 87)

According to these documents, written by the best Czech academics and educators, Czech schooling is yet to undergo a complete restructuring in order to satisfy demands for education in the new society. However, schooling has not waited for policy directives defined by the best minds and administered by a central authority to begin changing itself. After all, even the Ministry of Education acknowledges that “changes of such magnitude” as happening since 1989 “cannot be ordered.” (MSMT, 2001, p.93)

Since the end of communism in 1989, the Czech education community and the general public have waited in vain for a badly needed new education act to replace the communist-era education act of 1984. A draft of the new act was finally proposed in 2001 by the Ministry of Education under the leadership of the social-democratic Minister

Eduard Zeman, but it was turned down twice by the parliament. The current Minister of Education, Petra Buzkova, also a Social Democrat, has not yet presented a new proposal.

In the meantime, schooling has had a life of its own. Since 1989, there have been great changes in education, both at the micro and macro levels, legally anchored in numerous amendments and directives tacked onto the existing education act. Many of these changes have been spontaneous, such as the rise of private and church schools or the occurrence of privately-run professional development courses for educators. Such new events and processes have sometimes become regulated by the law and centrally managed only as a response to their rise and continued existence.

One of the most important developments at the macro level in post-communist Czech education has been the appearance and rise of non-state schools. These include church schools and privately owned and operated schools. Non-state schooling at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels was legalized in 1989 by the Czech National Council Act No. 564/1989. Private institutions of higher learning were legally established and defined by the 1998 Higher Education Act.

Czech private schools, as in other East and Central European countries, usually are not referred to as "private" in the official language. The official Czech term for a private school is "non-state school" (*nestátní škola*), and this term usually refers to both church and private schools. The term "private school" (*soukromá škola*) is used in common speech and sometimes in the legal code, and it excludes church schools. In Russia, they also use the term "non-state schools" (*negosudarstvennye*) to refer to private schools. (Jones, 1994) The Polish use the term "social schools" (*społeczne*), based on

their private school association, the Social Education Association, or STO. (Heyns, 1995). In the North American research literature, these schools are often referred to as “independent schools”.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the new private schools in East Central Europe has been their quick emergence and sustained existence all over the region. The first Czech post-communist private schools were founded in 1989. By 1994, there were 300 of them, and by 1998 there over 500. (Respekt, 1998) In Poland, the numbers grew from 35 private schools in 1989 to more than 500 in 1993. (Heyns, 1995, p.62) In Russia, the number of private schools grew at a similar rate, exceeding 500 by 1993. (Kerr, in Jones, 1994, p.64)

In the Czech Lands, private and church schools have grown at all levels. In elementary education, some parents began to wish for alternatives to the unified state approach to schooling. Some welcomed the appearance of private and church elementary schools and tried the Montessori and Waldorf approaches to education, others favored new approaches by state schools, such as the Ministry-approved alternative curriculum General School (*Obecná škola*). In secondary and post-secondary education, the growth has been indicated by the high numbers of new private and state secondary and post-secondary professional schools.³ Higher education has grown its own private sector as well. Presently, there are over 20 privately owned institutions of higher learning.

³The post-secondary schools (*vyšší odborné školy neuniverzitního typu*) run one to three-year long courses of focused education in a specific trade or profession. Prospective students must pass the secondary exit exam, *maturita*, before they can apply. Graduates do not obtain a university diploma, and are expected to enter the job market in the trade or profession they just studied.

This unprecedented growth of private education in East Central Europe owes much to the immediate emergence of the new private business sector, energized by the long-stifled desires for individual self-realization in the region. The door was wide open to all those who had the desire and the stamina to begin building new non-state schools. And almost a decade after the initial boom, elementary and especially secondary non-state schools remain an important and attractive alternative for many students and parents, even with the sometimes high tuition cost in private schools. Most of those post-1989 schools have operated successfully to this day. The Czech press periodically reports on the inadequacies or closures of some privately owned schools, but such reports concern only a small fraction of the overall number.⁴

The growth of Czech private schools is very impressive especially when we realize that the Czechs have little history in non-state education. Between the two world wars, in the First Czechoslovak Republic, Czech private and church schools were not wide-spread. Under communism, between 1948 and 1989, there were no non-state schools in the Czech Lands. The hundreds of current private schools are a new phenomenon, fueled by the changing needs of the reforming economy and the desire of many to provide the student population with better choices, alternative approaches, and better quality of education.

⁴ An example of an article reporting on the recommendation by the Ministry of Education to exclude a private school from the official list of Ministry-approved schools is "Zrušení soukromé školy lze předvídat." (The closing down of a private school is predictable.) *Akademie*. Příloha Lidových novin pro vzdělání. November 19, 1999. The article features the ministry's proposal for the exclusion of the private Vocal Music Academy from the official, ministry-approved list of schools. Such exclusion is usually fatal for the school, depriving it of state funds and degrading its credibility with the public.

The two types of non-state schools differ in their history and current status.

Church schools are currently treated as state schools, and lumped together with standard state schools for official reporting purposes.⁵ As state schools, church schools receive exactly the same funding, provided under exactly the same conditions, as secular state schools. They are a magnet for some and a point of irritation for others. Both religious and non-religious parents seek them out, looking for a peaceful and disciplined education of high academic quality for their children. Others despise them, sometimes because they embody different approaches to teaching, but also because they receive funding from both the state and their churches.

Historically, Czech church schools had a good standing before communism, in the First Czechoslovak Republic between the wars. In the mid-1920s, there were close to 10,000 of them in the Czech part of Czechoslovakia. (Lidové Noviny, 2000) With the arrival of the atheistic communist regime in 1948, church schools ceased to exist for obvious reasons. Since 1989, church schools have successfully resurfaced, despite the fact that Czech Lands have statistically belonged among the least religious of European countries. (Lidové noviny, 2000)

Czech private schools were not as numerous during the First Czechoslovak Republic. The most common types of private schools in the pre-war republic included

⁵ There is no separation of church and state in the Czech Republic, and the post-1989 church schools are financed and managed by the ministry in the same manner as state schools. The Ministry of Education treats all church schools as state schools for its reporting purposes. In its annual reports, such as the annual report for the year 1999 *Na prahu změn*, the Ministry lumps church schools of all levels, K – 12, with state schools. Although they have to follow the curriculum and academic requirement prescribed by the ministry just like state schools, these church schools often behave like non-state schools in their choice of elective classes, extracurricular and after school activities, and their overall framing of education.

schools for ethnic minorities, especially the Poles, Ukrainians, Ruthenians, Jews, and Russians. (Akademie, 1998) With the arrival of communism, private schools for ethnic minorities gradually vanished. Many of the ethnic minorities were driven out of the country or absorbed into the Czech population and their schools disappeared with them.

The new Czech private schools fill a gap in state schooling created by the growing need of the transforming job market for new skills and qualifications. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001) The largest number of non-state schools developed on the secondary level, filling the gap left by the communist era. The centralized communist economy was focused on heavy industry to supply the Soviet Bloc, and education was planned accordingly. Only a small, carefully selected fraction of population entered higher education leading to research, academic, top management, and top political and administrative positions. Consequently, there was not a high demand for secondary schooling that would lead either to higher education or to other than low-level and manual industrial employment. Instead, there were many two, three, and four-year vocational and apprentice schools combining class instruction with internships and apprenticeships in factories and businesses.

This system with a predominance of narrowly conceived vocational training institutions persisted after 1989. About 85 % of all elementary school graduates entered vocational training institutions in 1989. Of the remaining 15%, only a fraction entered college preparation schools. By 1994, although the previously high number of low-level industrial and manual jobs began to shrink, the number of students entering college preparation schools was still low, less than 16% of the total of all secondary school

students. (OECD, 1996, p.159). This continued trend of tracking students before entering secondary education indicates that higher education continues to be treated to a degree as elitist. However, the growing number of newly formed post-secondary professional schools, both state and non-state and accessible to students without a degree from college preparation schools, indicates the need for education beyond vocational training at the secondary level.

At the same time, academic, political, and administrative careers were freed from the political dictates of the old communist government. After 1989, young people began to experience availability of choice in education and work and to abandon the communist-era pattern of starting a family early in life. Suddenly, there was a whole range of choices, and secondary and/or higher education of the academic type gradually became more valuable.

The new non-state elementary schools, secondary schools, post-secondary professional schools, and eventually also higher education institutions have been founded and operated by both new entrepreneurs and old-time educators wishing to have a fresh start. For many of them, running their own school has been a dream come true, as they can now put in practice their ideas about what and how to teach the new generations.

The reasons for the quick rise and sustained existence of Czech private schools are consistent with reasons for the development of private schooling in other countries. In a World Bank report on private education in developing countries, the authors found several roles shared by private schools in these countries. First, they are to fill gaps in public education. Second, they are expected to enhance the efficiency of public schools

as they create competition for students. And third, they are to serve as a “laboratory for alternative models of school-level management”. (Jimenez, 1995)

The notion of “laboratory” in schooling, and not just in private schooling, in trying out school-level alternatives for management, has also been applied by researchers of the Czech education reform. Polyzoi and Černá in their 2001 article examined the Czech education reform at the national level. In doing so, they called the Czech post-communist reform in education a “living laboratory”.

The new non-state schools are a vital part of this “living laboratory”, and the expectations have been high for these test schools. The involved educators and the interested public often envisioned them as innovative, introducing new curricula, alternative and new teaching methods and approaches, and new textbooks. These expectations also included the desire for better school discipline, improved academic quality, and support for disadvantaged children, especially in the case of church schools. (Lidové noviny, 2000) The allure and continued success of Czech non-state schools remains in presenting new ways of teaching, flexible approaches, and a more open and sometimes gentler way of imparting information than is common in the state schools.

The success and steady growth of private schools is also evidenced by the existence of an institutional professional association, the Association of Private Schools of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia (Sdružení soukromých škol Čech, Moravy a Slezska). By its own account, it is the only organization representing private schools as a whole in the Czech Republic. The association has been well established, with membership in the European Council of National Associations of Independent Schools, the Middle

European Organization of Private Schools, and the Union of Employers of the Czech Republic. (www.soukromeskoly.cz/sdruzeni.htm)

The association goals include, among many others, advocating for choice in education, participating in the preparation of the state concepts in education, cooperating with the ministry and other relevant state authorities, participating in regional work in education, and, importantly, finding solutions for funding of private schools. (www.soukromeskoly.cz/sdruzeni.htm)

The association has also published its proposals for reforms in education as a comparison to state legislation. In restructuring issues, the association proposes to decentralize education by redefining the role of the state, and to modernize secondary apprentice schools. In legislative issues, the association proposes that all schools regardless of their founder -- meaning both state and non-state schools -- be guaranteed identical conditions by the state. In financing, the association proposes that the same funding criteria be applied to all fields of study regardless of which schools teach them, and that all schools listed in the official list of ministry-accredited schools, including non-state schools, be provided identical state subsidies.

(www.soukromeskoly.cz/sdruzeni.htm)

Although many of these new non-state schools are private, much of what they do is regulated by the Ministry of Education. The ministry jurisdiction over non-state schools includes the enforcement of mandatory school attendance, teaching according to the state curriculum, and fulfilling the state requirements for the graduation examination, the so-called *maturita*, in case of secondary schools.

The ministry is the highest controlling authority in the rigidly centralized Czech education system. Its leader, the Minister of Education, is appointed by the president and approved by the parliament. The ministry works together with the Czech School Inspection (CSI), a state office that carries out periodic assessments of elementary and secondary schools and reports directly to the ministry. A similar authority for higher education is the Accreditation Committee, a part of the ministry higher education department. In recent years, the ministry also established the Institute for Information in Education, an office that collects and processes education data for use by the ministry and for reporting to the public.

This centralized Czech education system was inherited in 1918 by the First Czechoslovak Republic from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Since this state education system had served the population well, it was preserved by the Republic after 1918, and then again after the communist takeover in 1948. This centralized state education system remains in place till this day and is managed by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Physical Training.

The ministry has had a somewhat unstable development since 1989. There has been a high turnover of ministers since the year 1989, with a succession of eight ministers in the office, each with different plans and limited time to implement them. Petra Buzková of the Social Democratic Party, one of only a few women in the government so far, has been in the post since June, 2002. (Lidové noviny, 2002)

This lack of stability in the education leadership bears the imprint of the political developments of the past decade. The conservative, right-of-center and free-market

oriented government of the Civic Democratic Party and its Prime Minister, Václav Klaus, in office between 1989 and 1998, gave education rather low priority. The left-of-center Social Democratic Party won the June, 1998, parliamentary elections and has had parliamentary majority in coalition with several smaller parties ever since. This party changed the course toward re-instituting an extensive social welfare system, and imposed a greater control over businesses in the process of completing the unfinished privatization. Education became slightly more of a priority and slightly better funded, but the increased funding did not find its way into privately owned schools.

State funding of privately owned schools remains one of the most controversial areas of regulation concerning non-state schools. The amount of funding to private schools is defined by the law as a percentage of the amount provided to state schools, with private elementary schools receiving 60% of the amount provided to state elementary schools, private secondary schools 50% of the amount for such state schools, and private post-secondary professional schools 50% of the amount for such state schools. (Law No. 306/1999)

This baseline funding may be increased, as specified in the much disputed amendment No. 321/1998 of the government order No. 324/1996. If a private school meets the ministry's requirements, such as regularly submitting its annual report to the ministry, and accounting for the total amount to state funding on an annual basis, and it receives a positive assessment by the Czech School Inspection, the state funding may be increased. For elementary, middle, and secondary schools, the baseline funding may be

increased as a maximum to 90% of the funding provided to comparable state schools. (Friedl, 1998).

Private school educators have been bitter about state funding of private schools. This research project shows that some private school leaders and teachers see themselves as working harder than state school teachers, yet receiving less money for their effort. Private school leaders are involved in fund-raising activities which state school leaders do not have to consider. At the same time, they are not always able to pay their teachers salaries as high or higher than those of state schools teachers. State school educators, on the other hand, often see private schools as rich, commercially-minded institutions with an eye on profit rather than on educating. As a result, private school funding has become a vicious circle of rumors and misinformation.

This situation does not help in building a positive relationship between state and non-state schools and their educators. As this research study demonstrates, state and non-state school teachers often regard each other with distrust. It does not help that these feelings tend to be fed by misinformation. Where do individual teachers stand in this uneasy relationship, and what has been expected of them?

Teachers in the New Era.

The background for this study in education is framed by the combined influences of the pre-communist and communist ways and methods in teaching, and the influence of the rapid post-1989 changes on teaching methodology and teacher approaches to students. The resulting tangle of state requirements, habitual ways of teaching in state

schools, traditional expectations laid on teachers by the public, and new environment in private and church schools pulls teachers in different directions.

On the one hand, Czech teachers had been used to teaching according to a unified, national curriculum, using the same teaching materials in all schools all over the country. This status quo of the communist era is not a bygone yet, especially at the elementary schools. There is a Ministry-approved national curriculum, used by the majority of all state schools at this level. A small portion of state schools uses one of two officially approved alternative curricula, and an even smaller portion of non-state schools uses a variety of other alternative approaches. (CSI, 2001)

In secondary schooling, teaching materials and approaches have been more diverse, but this diversity is offset by the national requirement for the secondary exit examination, the so-called *maturita*. Since this examination is exactly the same for all secondary schools in the whole country and the results are crucial for graduates in the job market and in entering college, teaching in secondary schools is defined and unified by the need to prepare for this exam.

In this situation, Czech teachers stand almost at the opposite end of the spectrum from the U.S. teachers. High fragmentation of innovations and alternative programs is generally typical for U.S. schools. Teachers in U.S. schools, as studies of some school districts found, can hardly keep track of all programs used within their schools, and report the need for guidance and direction. (Fullan, 2001, pp.253, 254) Czech teachers, on the other hand, are now in the position to discard the over-directed communist-style way of teaching, and to strike out for new ways and approaches in teaching on their own.

Czech teachers are in a push and pull position. On the one hand, they are being pushed to transform themselves and their teaching. On the other hand, they may not always be ready for changes. Their “readiness factor”, or their perception of the degree of urgency to change and feasibility to carry out the change, is influenced by many factors. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001) For teachers to be able to transform themselves, they must possess enough confidence to believe that the change will be worth trying. They must also be flexible enough to deal with the inherent indeterminacy of change. (Pradl, in Kahaney, Perry, Janangelo, 1993)

What has been expected of Czech teachers in this complex, new, diversified reality? In the White Book, the authors refer to teachers as “bearers of changes” (MSMT, 2001, p.43). The section on teachers talks about the increasing complexities in the work of teachers, and the increasing demands on the personal and professional qualifications of teachers. The number one solution offered by the authors of this seminal document is the “rehabilitation of the salary levels for teachers.” (MSMT, 2001, p.43) Supposedly, improving teaching salaries should gradually result in improving the status of teachers as a socio-professional group.

Further plans listed in the White Book to support teachers in the new reality include improving teacher training, developing a system of life-long professional development, introducing teaching assistants, and reintroducing the practice of mentoring new teachers by senior teachers in individual schools. In the future, according to the White Book, all teachers at all schools levels must be college-educated. The state ought to require all teachers to have a teaching certificate, something that still does not exist in

Czech education. Also, the state plans to introduce a merit-based system of promotion and salary incentives for teachers. (MSMT, 2001, p.45).

The message communicated by the current minister of education, Petra Buzkova, resonates with these plans. Asked about her priorities for education, she named first the issue of raising teacher salaries and improving teacher status in society. Then she expressed her desire that the ministry become a nurturing place, so that “especially teachers feel that in case of problems they can look for support at the ministry...” (Lidove noviny, 7/2002)

In Teacher: The Leading Agent in Transforming the School, an important study sponsored by the ministry, the authors quote from a UNESCO document when stating that “[education] reform cannot be successful without the cooperation and active participation of teachers” (Kotasek, Svecova, 1999). Their recipe for making Czech schools better is to decentralize education and let schools be locally managed. Teachers in the new schools are to change from mere broadcasters of prescribed pieces of information into professional public servants. These new teachers would not only teach, but also participate in school decision-making, and form and maintain contact with the community, including the parents. (Kotasek, Svecova, 1999)

The authors also refer to the conclusions of OECD experts who carried out a long-term observation of Czech education. The conclusions and recommendations were first published in 1996 in a national report on Czech education, and revisited in 1999. In that year, the OECD conducted a review meeting in Prague. Regarding teachers, the OECD experts recommended in 1996 raising teacher salaries, building a system of life-long

professional development, and restructuring teacher careers to include a system of rewards and incentives. The 1999 review document states that “much has not happened in this area”, and “the proposed reforms so far have not been implemented”. (OECD, 1999, p.41)

In the meantime, teachers do their best with what is available. Their salaries were around the level of the national average monthly salary in 2001.⁶ Additional rewards and benefits were few. For funding professional development, for example, state school principals receive a small amount for funding attendance of teacher courses. These funds often come with strings attached. For one, they are under the discretion of local regional and school leaders who have the power of allocating them. Also, in some cases, these funds are to be used as specified by the Ministry of Education. Non-state schools fund teacher professional development as their means allow.

Teacher attendance of professional development events does not depend only on the availability of school funding. Teachers also need substitutes to take over their classes for them. They need transportation in case public transportation is not available or convenient, and many Czech teachers do not own a car. And often, their family situation does not allow for attendance of extended or weekend courses because most teachers are women with children of their own.

⁶ Average monthly salary in the first half of 2001 was 14,466 Czech Crowns (CZK), about \$452.00 as the exchange rate was approximately 32 CZK to \$1.00 at that time. For the same period, average monthly salary of an educator at K-13 levels was 14,471 CZK = \$452.00, and after subtracting benefits for supervising positions, such as principal, assistant principal, it was 13,754 CZK = \$429.00. (www.uiv.cz/demnitisk/tz_10_01_10.html)

And so, although teachers have been “the main initiators of educational change” in the post-communist Czech schooling, they also remain “cautious participants in the change process”. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001) Some of this caution may have been caused by the natural human resistive reaction to change. In some cases, teachers may have been resisting what they perceived as undesirable change. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001) Staying loyal to the state prescribed curriculum and using the established or accustomed teaching methods guaranteed a certainty and stability in turbulent times.

As shown in this research project, the outcome of this complex situation is that teachers are often left to their own devices in determining whether to introduce changes and what these changes ought to be. And they are also on their own in managing and financing their professional development and inspiration for their teaching. Individual teachers react in different ways. There are those who prefer to not change a thing in their work and approach, arguing that the old and proven is the best. There are those who venture into a new territory, with or without caution, despite lacking means to properly explore new ways of teaching. They seek out sources of professional inspiration, and are willing to test out new methods and create new approaches to teaching and students.

Inspiration for new and alternative methods and new teaching approaches comes from multiple sources. These sources may be domestic or foreign, state or privately run, inexpensive or unaffordable for teachers. They may overlap for individual schools, providing non-state and state school teachers with the same resources, such as the state-run regional Pedagogical Centers for teacher professional development. They may be subject-specific, such as subject-matter organized professional teacher associations.

They may be defined by new methods, and spread by the post-1989 alternative methodology professional associations. How teachers in state and non-state schools think about change in their teaching and where they look for ideas and inspiration is the subject of this research project.

Teaching Differently: The New and the Alternative.

Visiting the College of Education bookstore at Charles University in Prague helps an outsider understand that slice of teaching reality which deals with the new and the alternative in Czech teaching. The recent wave of fresh ideas is most apparent in foreign language teaching and especially in teaching English. Textbooks and methodical aids from the UK, the U.S., and Canada are many, as they are for all other Western languages which were so hard to access under communism. Needless to say, shelves for the Russian language textbooks have shrunk in size and scope, but fortunately have not disappeared.

Other than surveying the status of subject matter teaching materials, both for teacher training and teacher use in the classroom, one can also survey research reports of alternative schools and methodology. Generally, such works are few, and research of teachers and reform or change, or of non-state schooling is rare. Despite the attractiveness of the phenomenon of non-state schooling, there appears little systematic research of Czech non-state schools or their teachers.

Among the few projects about alternative approaches are research reports by The Prague Group of School Ethnography. The Group's latest report, named in Comenius' words "What you learn in youth...", describes their extensive research of standard and

alternative elementary school children's relationship to learning and school as conducted in a selected section of Prague elementary schools. (PF UK, 2001)

Books by the Czech education researcher Jan Průcha also belong among the few reporting on current alternative schooling. His latest issue about alternative schooling was published in 2001 by the education publisher Portal under the heading pedagogical practice. Titled Alternative Schools and Innovation in Educating, the slim volume contains a general summary about change in education. It is a continuation of his 1996 Alternative Schools which contained a description of the best-known types of alternative schooling. The 2001 sequel tries to go a step further and "clarify the content and causes of changes in education", based on theory and examples from the Western world. (Průcha, 2001, p.7). The book concludes with a brief chapter dedicated to post-communist Czech alternative education.

The author neatly summarized the causes of changes in post-communist Czech education. He includes, in this order, the formation and rise of the sector of non-state schools, the establishment of alternative reform schools, such as the Waldorf school, the occurrence of innovations in education in both state and non-state schools, and the use of several different variations of curriculum at current state elementary schools. (Průcha, 2002, p.107). Praising the multitude of the alternative approaches, the author also decries lack of monitoring and research of these new schooling methods.

Among the few existing studies of current Czech alternative education, the author chose to report on four research projects which are methodologically sound and bring valuable findings. (Průcha, 2001, p.108) These comparative projects focus on exploring

differences between traditional and alternative schools. Traditional schools are defined as those which “work in a currently habitual manner according to one of the officially approved educational programs”, while alternative schools are defined as those which use “a certain different pedagogical orientation or a different model of school management (e.g., classic reform school, church schools, expressly defined alternative schools).” (Průcha, 2001, p.115).

The first project studied the level of success of the ministry-approved alternative elementary school curriculum called General School (*Obecná škola*). The study included around 100 schools with the alternative curriculum, and about 40 schools with the regular curriculum used by the majority of state schools. The study found no differences in academic outcomes between the alternative and the standard curricula. However, the climate in schools with the alternative curriculum improved, students were given more options to express their opinions and actively participate in learning. Nevertheless, fewer and fewer schools are using the alternative program, preferring instead to teach according to the proven standard state curriculum. (Průcha, 2001, p.110)

What are the reasons for this growing unwillingness to try new things? The research authors do not attempt to answer this question. Instead, Průcha speculates that it may be due to the general unwillingness of educators to try things new and different, and mentions a study which proved that individual differences in teacher attitudes toward innovations are apparent as early as in teacher training colleges. Also, trying new things translates into a greater work load for teachers and is thus undesirable, and appropriate teaching materials may not be readily available. Finally, because of research limitations,

the study itself may be responsible for finding overly positive results of the alternative curriculum where there are none. (Průcha, 2001, p.111)

The next two studies focused on the climate in elementary schools with alternative and standard education programs found similar results. In one study, students in alternative schools were generally happier, less competitive, and found their classes more cohesive. Students in traditional schools were more competitive and student fights were more frequent. The other study found only small differences between the climate in the two types of schools. These differences corresponded with class size and favored smaller classes, which are a rule in alternative schools. (Průcha, 2001, pp.113-116)

A third study researched teaching methods in the two types of schools. The authors expected to find more individualized teaching methods at alternative schools. Surprisingly, they found that when measured by purely reproducing knowledge as opposed to applying and interpreting knowledge, teaching in traditional schools used the purely reproductive methods less frequently than alternative schools, and was thus regarded as more progressive. Also, students in traditional schools reported better options for deciding about their own learning and choosing learning activities than students in alternative schools. (Průcha, 2001, p.117)

Differences between state and non-state schools were the subject of the last study described in this book. The study focused on education outcomes in 48 academic secondary schools, the so-called *gymnazia*, 30 state and 18 non-state, either private or church. The findings were “surprising”, according to study authors. Average academic outcomes of state school students were higher than those of non-state school students.

Academic outcomes measured by subject matter tests were significantly higher for state school students, especially in mathematics and physics. At the same time, non-state school students rated their school climates and teaching styles in their schools more positively than state school students.

Simply put, the study found that state school education with teacher lecturing approach and high demands on student reproduction of knowledge results in better outcomes as currently measured by Czech standards. Non-state school education, often using other than traditional teaching methods, may better develop student creativity and cooperative skills, but academic outcomes are lower. (Průcha, 2001, pp.118-120)

Based on the description of this study, the author speculates about differences between state and non-state schools. Trying to determine the cause of better outcomes in state schools, the author presents the possibility that “deeper, psychologically rooted causes” may exist, resulting in “higher responsibility for student outcomes by state school teachers as opposed to private school teachers”. “What if”, the author asks in bold print, “the ‘less stressful’ and ‘more motivating atmosphere’ [in non-state schools] makes students less responsible for their own education, lowers the demand on individual productivity, while boosting all this by greater teacher tolerance?” (Průcha, 2001, p.121)

It is necessary to ask such speculative questions in current Czech education. It is even more important to begin exploring ways to answer such questions. Much thought needs to be given to schooling in different types of schools. Inevitably, requirements on education and education outcomes will be changing as the Czech Republic continues its journey to democracy, and as it attempts to meet the requirements of organizations such

as the European Union. As requirements change, education will have to change to reflect the new realities. Czech educators and researchers will have to begin exploring ways of schooling other than the "traditional" ways still common in most schools.

Reports of research that do not necessarily appear on the shelves of bookstores include collections of papers from conferences. It is hard to keep track of smaller, regional conferences and meetings as they are not always reported on publicly. National conferences, however, often produce electronically published overviews and offer the possibility to order the papers. The Czech Association of Pedagogical Research is one such organization.

The most recent conference of the Czech Association of Pedagogical Research featured two papers on teachers and change in its section devoted to research of teachers. The conference met in Prague in September, 2002. Both papers on teachers and change concerned only state school teachers. One author reports on a study exploring whether the post-communist organizational and curricular changes also brought any changes in the work of teachers. Surveying 124 elementary state school teachers, the study revealed that, regarding changes in their teaching, teachers most often reported making changes "rather rarely" or "never". (Janik, in Walterova, Lebeda, Suchankova, 2002, p.98)

The other study of teachers and change also focuses on elementary state school teachers. In this small research project, the author was trying to find out how much the slow pace of the post-communist transformation of Czech schools is determined by a correspondingly slow pace of changes carried out by teachers. He concluded that current conditions for innovations in teacher work are not very good, and that "the innovative

teacher often does not receive the needed support". Eventually, the author stated, "such teacher's presence in schools is 'suffered'" rather than welcome. (Simonik, in Walterova, Lebeda, Suchankova, 2002, p.100)

Such research projects are most useful and most certainly needed in current Czech education. It is important that at least a few researchers are beginning to ask questions about the potential benefits of approaches and teaching methods which are considered alternative and non-traditional in Czech schools. It is also encouraging to see that a couple of researchers began asking questions directly of teachers and about teachers. Eventually, there will need to be a lot more research posing questions directly to teachers and about teachers. We will need to know about teacher attitude toward change, conditions for teacher implementation and sustenance of change, and the supportive networks that work best for teacher-initiated change and reform.

Conclusion.

Two things are immediately interesting in reading the reports of these studies. For one, the results, conclusions, and speculations about the causes of these differences are all shaped by the current Czech values in education. These values, especially as applied to educational outcomes, include gaining a large body of factual knowledge, amassing a great summary of data which can be pulled out of memory like cards out of a catalogue, and obtaining as broad a general education as possible. Skills such as analyzing, searching for and locating information, making a claim and supporting it with evidence, or arguing a point are not valued quite as much in current Czech education.

The second thing immediately noticeable in this discussion of current Czech research of state, non-state, and alternative schools is that these studies rarely focus on teachers. While teachers are described in official Czech education documents as "bearers of change" and "leading agents of transformation", as noted earlier in this chapter, current studies of schools pay no or little attention to teachers.

This research study focuses on teachers in secondary schools. It asks teachers questions about changes in their method and their approach to students. It further explores sources of professional development and inspiration teachers use. Moreover, this study explores differences in teacher attitudes toward change in teaching and teacher use of sources of professional development and inspiration between state and non-state secondary school teachers. This study helps to fill the gap in research of Czech teachers as bearers of change and leading agents of school transformation. Importantly, this study also contributes toward filling the gap in research of Czech non-state schooling.

Chapter 2:

RESEARCH FRAME AND METHOD

Studying change within the teaching profession means

looking at a special kind of cultural development.

Martin, Laura M.W., 1993

Research Purpose, Study Limitations and Use.

Education reform can take place at different levels of the system, occurring at the national or regional macro levels, or at the local or school micro levels. A regional education reform is just taking place in the Czech Republic as elementary and secondary education management is being transferred from the Ministry of Education to the regional authorities and city offices. At the micro level, reform can take place in organizations and classrooms. The classroom is the ultimate micro environment where change can occur, and where it is initiated by teachers.

This research project explores aspects of the new sector of non-state schooling as compared to state schooling at the micro level of the classroom. More precisely, it compares some aspects of teaching and change at state and non-state schools. It focuses on identifying and exploring state and non-state teacher attitudes toward change, and sources of professional inspiration teachers in both types of schools use. As such, it seeks to contribute to the understanding of the new non-state schools, including privately owned schools and church schools.

At a closer look, this research project explores the attitudes of teachers toward change in teaching within the micro environments of Czech state and non-state secondary schools. The project has multiple goals. One goal is to explore Czech teacher attitudes toward change in teaching methodology, and their own perceptions of changing their approach to teaching and to students. Another goal is to identify and describe sources of professional development and inspiration these teachers use when they wish to change and improve their teaching.

Perhaps most importantly, the goal of this project is to identify and explore differences between state, private, and church school teachers in their attitude toward change in teaching and use of sources of inspiration. Each of the three school types has the potential to influence teachers in different ways. These different school types provide their teachers with differing options in their approach to teaching, and in professional development. Each school, on top of being defined by its type, i.e., state, private, or church, also carries its own mission and style. These combined influences shape the attitudes of teachers within the schools.

These three school types provide an attractive point of interest both for educational and social studies researchers, and for practical considerations by parents and students. Non-state schools are very interesting to follow in the Czech Republic and all over East Central Europe in the post-communist era. The post-communist political, economic, social, and cultural changes in East Central Europe form the backdrop for studying teacher attitudes in these schools. The political transformation of a centralized into a democratic regime changed the focus of the economy from centralized planning to

a free-market with a private sector. This economic transformation brought about a quick social change, producing new classes of the rich and of the poor. These political, economic, and social changes, together with the now free-flowing foreign influences, are slowly transforming the culture.

In education, there have been great changes since the end of communism. As noted in Chapter One, one of the greatest changes at the macro level has been the emergence and rise of non-state schools. The successful rise and sustained functioning of private and church schools has shaped the development of Czech education at both the macro and the micro levels since 1989. It has influenced the national policy in education and individual lives of educators and students.

This research project should be of interest to both education professionals and the general public, internationally and in the Czech Republic, because it contributes to the research of the post-communist change and the significance of non-state schools. Internationally, very little has been published about post-communist Czech education in general, and even less about non-state schooling. Several reports and studies of non-state education in other East European countries have appeared in Western literature since the end of communism. A study of Czech non-state schooling provides a nice complement to this small and slowly growing collection.¹

¹Some examples of such works include: Heyns, Barbara. "Markets for Organization Reform: Private Education in the Post-Communist Poland." In: Hallinan, Maureen T. (Ed.) (1995), in Restructuring Schools: Promising Practices and Policies. New York and London: Plenum Press, and Westbrook, Marie A., Lurie, Lev, and Ivanov, Mikhail. "The Independent Schools of St. Petersburg", and Kerr, Stephen T. "Diversification in Russian Education", both in: Jones, Anthony. (Ed.) (1994). Education and Society in the New Russia. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.

In the Czech Republic, this project is important and interesting for both teachers in the field and academic researchers. There is not enough research of teachers in general, and comparative studies of teachers in non-state and/or alternative schools and state schools are almost non-existent. While the multitude of new alternatives and teaching methods used in current Czech schooling is “truly great”, there is not enough “reliable and objective information... about the functioning and outcomes of these alternatives and innovations”. (Průcha, 2001, p.107) Referring to authors of a rare article about teaching trends in Czech schooling in the 1990s, Průcha explains that innovative and alternative schools remain outside of the area of interest of Czech research in education.

The collection of papers from the latest conference of the Czech Association of Pedagogical Research in September, 2002, shows well the incredible scarcity of such research. Only two studies of teachers and change were reported in the section on research of teachers. This dissertation study is therefore one of the few beginning steps toward filling in the gap in research on teachers and change. Projects such as this may help attract attention to teachers as agents of change, individuals with the power to bring about changes at the crucially important micro level, the classroom.

As such, this study has a potential for expansion and continuation. The current project included a sample of eight secondary schools in two administrative regions. Four schools were state, three private, and one church. In each school, seven to eighteen teachers filled in a written survey, and three to six teachers were interviewed. One extension of this study offers the possibility of producing an expanded study in a greater

number of state and non-state schools, in the same or different region(s) of the country. Another possibility is to conduct a similarly designed study in elementary state and non-state schools. Additionally, the survey and interview questions can be modified and improved to include lessons learned in this study. A follow-up study could be conducted individually by the same researcher, or as a part of a larger project.

My plans for the use of these research findings include several options. First, I will prepare a summary of the findings in the Czech language and send them to the eight schools in which I conducted the research. In English, I plan to report the findings in an article in an appropriate journal in the U.S., such as Review of Educational Research, Education, or Educational Leadership. I also plan to prepare the data in the Czech language for publication in an appropriate Czech education journal, such as Moderní vyučování (Modern Lessons), or Učitelské listy (Teacher Gazette). Possibly, this project could also be published as a separate issue or as a part of a research collection by the Czech education publisher Portál.

As any study, this project has its limitations. Since its very beginning, the project has been limited by its being conducted in a country other than my current country of residence. The length of my stay was dictated by time and availability of funds, as well as by my family needs. I had two full months of uninterrupted time to spend in the schools. I was accommodated in one of the researched regions, close to all the schools, and had a car and a laptop computer for my own use during the whole stay. The data collection period was therefore very intensive. I spent literally every day in the schools, observing school sites, collecting data and survey responses, and conducting interviews.

Whenever time allowed, I traveled to Prague and other cities to meet with education officials and professors, and to search publishers' and university bookstores for relevant literature. I collected a large enough body of data to produce significant findings, but a longer research stay would have been slightly more beneficial.

The next set of limitations resulted from the constraints posed by the U.S. human subjects approval procedures. My use of the three main research strategies, school site observation, teacher surveys, and teacher interviews, resulted from what was feasible and allowable by the human subjects approval rules at my home university. Originally, I planned to observe classes in session and conduct student interviews. Such strategies would, however, require me to obtain a signed letter of consent from the parents of every involved student, including all students in an observed class. Since my research time in the Czech Republic was so precious, I could not afford spending the time by collecting parent signatures. I therefore made the decision to use only those strategies requiring signed consent by school leadership and by the teachers.

This decision was also based on Czech procedures. In the Czech Republic, there is no comparable consent procedure used in research of human subjects. A researcher simply needs to ask the subjects to participate, and to satisfy the demands and wishes of the subjects themselves. Customarily, educators and members of the general public are not used to signing a written consent to participate in a research study. Teachers hesitated to sign my very simple letter of consent, usually saying that it really is not necessary. I reasoned that to approach every home of every student in order to obtain student and parent signatures would not only be an inefficient use of my precious

research time, but also be fruitless as people would consider it strange and possibly not trustworthy.

Some limitations were caused by the choice of my research strategies. This study focuses on teacher perceptions rather than teacher practices in the classrooms. I used teacher surveys and teacher interviews to ask teachers about their perceptions of changes in their teaching and approach to students, and about their opinions of using sources of professional inspiration. I did not employ any research strategies that would reveal what teachers actually do in their teaching in the classrooms. This project therefore reports on what teachers perceive and say about themselves. It explores teacher attitudes, not observations of teacher practices in reality.

The degree to which teachers reflect the philosophies and cultures of their schools when reporting about their individual attitudes presents another set of limitations. Based on the data collected in teacher surveys and teacher interviews, I cannot ascertain the degree to which the teachers reported on their own attitudes or to which degree their reported attitudes were shaped by the missions and cultures of their schools.

For example, one state school exhibited a very formal atmosphere and the principal and assistant principal praised their teachers for closely observing the discipline and the rules. The teachers I interviewed in this school appeared fully satisfied with their school, until, as reported later in Chapter Five, I witnessed a fierce argument between two teachers after interviewing one of them. The argument revealed a degree of one teacher's unhappiness with the way this school operates. On the other hand, two private schools prided themselves on openness to the public and open, direct, and sincere teacher-teacher,

teacher-student, and teacher-parent communication. Sure enough, the teachers were easily accessible to me for surveys and interviews, and I could enter all teacher offices without restraint. Teachers reported a high degree of satisfaction with teaching in their schools. It is impossible to find out, however, how much the reporting of this satisfaction with the school is a result of the school mission and culture, and what possible points of dispute or complaint may be hiding underneath this relaxed surface.

Finally, some limitations presented themselves in school and teacher availability and their willingness to participate in my research project. Initially, I prepared a sample of ten secondary schools to be contacted in research. They were either secondary academic college-preparation schools, the so called *gymnazia*, or business academies. Half of them were state and half private. One state and two private schools turned me down after the initial contact, stating lack of time for visitors, and I managed to add one church school to my research sample. I therefore ended up with eight schools, four state schools, three privately owned schools, and one church school. Three state schools, two private schools, and the church school are college-preparation schools, one state school and one private school are business academies.

Additionally, I faced limitations regarding teacher availability once I began my research in the schools. With the exception of two private schools, I faced some limitations with teacher survey distribution. The school leaders either preferred to distribute and collect the surveys by themselves, or assembled for me a selection of their teachers rather than letting me address all of the teachers. In the state schools, I faced various degrees of limited access to teachers and their offices, and in some, I was asked

to conduct teacher interviews only in the faculty meeting room. Most significantly, in one private school and the church school, I was not able to conduct any teacher interviews at all. The school leaders explained that their teachers were too busy to spend time with interviews in their breaks or free class periods, and no teachers responded to my posted request to meet with me before or after school.

Theoretical Framing

Educational reform can take place at the macro or micro levels. This project explores some aspects of educational change at the micro level of the classroom, framed by the larger issues of a reform at the macro national level. In North American research, one of the best known theoretical models for analyzing educational reform is that created by Michael Fullan. Fullan divides the change process entailed in educational reform into three stages: Initiation, implementation, and institutionalization. (Fullan, 2001, p.51)

The first stage, initiation, is the beginning phase during which it is decided whether a particular change will be used or not. The second stage, implementation, is one during which the new ideas are put into practice. This phase may last several years. The third stage, institutionalization, is one during which it is determined whether the new ideas will remain a part of the system or get discarded. (Fullan, 2001)

In this study of Czech teachers and change, I focus largely on the first and second stages of change at the micro level. It explores teacher readiness and willingness to change, teacher use of sources of professional inspiration, and their participation in professional support networks such as teacher associations and discussions of topics in

education. The findings are then used to map differences in these issues between state and non-state school teachers.

As such, this study is rather rare in its contextual placement. Reports of the current Czech education reform in Czech literature have been infrequent, as described in Chapter One. In Western literature, only a few reports concerning the current Czech education reform have been published. A 2001 article by Polyzoi and Černá is one of the precious few. In their article, the authors report findings from a phase of their ongoing study of the Czech educational reform at the national level.

The authors examine the degree of usefulness of Fullan's model for studying the current Czech reform. They conclude that despite the apparent similarities of educational change in any location, the Czech change process has been speeded up by the political, social, and economic post-communist changes. This fast-forwarding mode has made the Czech case a "living laboratory", a place where reform happens differently from the stable conditions in the U.S. or Canada. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001, p.64)

In place of Fullan's three-phase model, the authors propose to use a conceptual model developed by Valeri Venda at the Institute of Higher Education and Research in Moscow. This model is characterized by four principles. One, systems in transition contain both the old and the new structures. Two, the further away the new model is from the old one, the more difficult the transition will be. Three, if the drop in efficiency between initiating and implementing change is too deep, the system may become chaotic and collapse. Four, the transformation process is influenced by multiple factors all at the same time. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001, pp.80-83)

Applying these two models to this research project helps us to see that it explores the coexisting old and new structures at the level of the classroom. Focusing on education change as lived by teachers in the micro environments of their schools and classrooms, it examines teacher attitudes toward change and their opinions of sources of inspiration and professional development support networks.

Within that context, this project examines mostly the first two stages of the change process as defined by Fullan. It poses questions about teacher willingness to change and their readiness to employ new methods and approaches, and teacher use of new methods and approaches since they began teaching in their current schools. Viewed through the Vanda model, this study is most centered around principle one, which stipulates the simultaneous existence of old and new structures.

Both these models in principle agree that, for educational change to succeed, it must be successfully implemented and the new order of things sustained. To sustain change in practice involves a transformation of beliefs and understanding. (Fullan, 2001, p.45). At the school level, teachers are those who put change into practice. Teacher willingness to try to change, and the degree of success they achieve in implementing and sustaining change depends on their ability to adapt their beliefs and understanding of their reality.

Internationally and in the U.S., the body of research and literature on teachers and reform or change is massive. In the U.S., numerous studies have documented over the years how teachers approach change and deal with it in practice. In the 1970s, Schon and Marris explained in separate studies that any change follows the inevitable cycle of

uncertainty and involves “loss, anxiety, and struggle.” (Fullan, 2001, p.30, 31)

Huberman in 1983 concluded that the pressures of classroom teaching force teachers to use only short-term perspective, isolate them from other adults including each other, exhaust them, and limit their ability for reflection. Ball and Cohen in 1999 reported that teacher learning is marked by “persistent superficiality”. Oaks reported in 1999 that teachers often fail to consider deeper implications of changes before adopting them. (Fullan, 2001, p.33-35).

Various psychological perspectives have been applied over the years to studying teachers and change. In 1993, Martin reported the results of her studies of teachers from the Vygotskian perspective. According to Vygotsky, individuals form their thinking on the basis of extracting important pieces of information from their surroundings. Teachers are both learners and experts in shaping their student thinking by communicating these important pieces of information, or social and cultural expectations, to them. Thus “acquiring new teaching practices...means learning new communication strategies and new ways to organize informative environments.” (Martin, 1993, p.81)

Studying three long-term projects of teachers and change, Martin found that few teachers put new ideas into practice after learning about them in workshops and other training sessions. In order to sustain changes in teaching, enough time and an extensive support system were needed by teachers. Teachers must have “opportunities to analyze their experience, to hear about those of others, and to exchange ideas.” (Martin, 1993, p.84) Martin concluded that teachers need “constructive interaction” with others,

including their colleagues and other involved individuals, in order to sustain changes in their teaching. (Martin, 1993, p.84)

This finding resonates with findings reported by Fullan from his own research and that of others. For teachers, the degree of change is directly connected to the mutual interaction among teachers, and teacher interaction with others around them. Successful implementation of changes at the classroom levels was accompanied by collegiality and frequent communication among teachers, by mutual support and help among teachers and other support personnel. (Fullan, 2001, pp.123, 124)

The topic of teachers and change was also studied from the behavior analysis perspective. Vaughan, an education consultant, reported that teachers rarely changed their teaching after taking her workshops. She found out that only by working with teachers one on one can help teachers determine, carry out, and maintain changes in their classrooms. Even when teachers are motivated to change their teaching, they often need help to determine what and how to change. Those teachers who are unmotivated to change did not see teaching as “changing behavior”, but simply as “imparting knowledge.” (Vaughan, 1993, p.124)

This finding is reminiscent of some findings from the most recent annual report of Czech schooling by the Czech School Inspection. In secondary school teaching methods, the CSI reported, “stereotypical work was prevalent, based on teacher lecture and [student] note taking.” Most subjects were taught by means of frontal teacher lecturing. Active conceptions of teaching and the use of cooperative learning techniques was less

frequent. (CSI, 2001, p.15) Without stating it, this report suggests that most Czech teachers in these schools view their teaching as “imparting information” to students.

In international studies, Stigler and Hiebert in 1999 reported the results of their study of mathematics teachers in Germany, Japan, and the U.S. They concluded that teachers may include more individual features of reform in their teaching, but “fail to alter their basic approach in teaching mathematics.” (Fullan, 2001, p. 34-35) A recent study of teachers in Australia, New Zealand, UK, and the US found a negative attitude toward teaching in general and toward introducing change into teaching. Teachers felt that the effects of increased workload and paperwork, and outside interference in teaching and educational change have decreased their desire to try to teach differently. (Fullan, 2001, p.122, 123)

Fullan succinctly summarized the critical point of all these studies when he stated that “*restructuring* occurs time and again, whereas *reculturing* (how teachers come to question and change their beliefs and habits) is what is needed” in order for change to be successful in the classroom. (Fullan, 2001, p.34) Interestingly, studies have shown it is not easy for teachers to reculture and/or develop a “common technical culture”, “professional learning community”, or “collaborative work culture”. (Fullan, 2001, Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992)

In real school life, developing working contacts with colleagues and others in order to create functioning and active professional cultures or communities requires extensive support on multiple levels. Schlechty in his volume called WOW, Working on the Work, reiterates the point made by other researchers when he explains that change in

the classroom in the interaction between teachers and students is the most important and the hardest to achieve. As other researchers, he too documents the importance of interaction, and stresses the need for simultaneous involvement at multiple levels. "Reform needs to be bottom up and top down simultaneously", he says, in order to achieve lasting success. The multiple levels that must be involved in change together with teachers include the principal, the superintendent, and the parents and communities at large. (Schlechty, 2002, p.45)

Studying the relationship between policy enactment and policy implementation by teachers in real life in the classroom, Knapp gives us a look at the interaction between the macro and micro levels in the course of change in teaching. Defining studies of teachers as "looking from the "Inside-Out"", he describes a case study of one teacher in a school implementing state reform measures in her classroom. (Knapp, 2002, p.7) He reports that the teacher felt she "has made major changes – a 'revolution' – in her teaching" in response to the reform requirements, while in reality this teacher "has not understood or realized much of what the curricular reform intended". (Knapp, 2002, p.10)

Other factors, besides teacher interaction and the need for the active simultaneous involvement of players at the macro and micro levels, influence teacher attitude toward change. Among these is the influence of the school site. The physical school site, school as an organization, and school as a center of culture is the place where teachers work on a daily basis, where they prepare their lessons, solve their problems, rejoice over successes, and grief over failures. In other words, a teacher's psychological state is shaped by the climate or culture of their school. (Fullan, 2001, p.84)

Two fundamental perspectives studying school sites are examinations of school climate and school culture. School climate is considered “the ‘personality’ of the organization”, a set of features distinguishing individual schools from one another. (Hoy, Tarter, Kottkamp, 1991, p.3, 4) School culture is rooted in hundreds of different definitions by various social scientists. In short, we may see it as “the collective manifestation of basic assumptions”, “a set of shared values” and “behavioral norms.” (Hoy, Tarter, Kottkamp, 1991, p.5, 6)

Parallel to these two perspectives in studying school sites, research can focus on the abstract in a school, the “institutional setting”, and/or the concrete in a school, the “school setting” (Nolan, Meister, 2000, pp.5, 18). Institutional setting refers to the organization, the way it functions, its mission and history. School setting refers to the outer and inner physical appearance of the school itself, its building, inside arrangement, classrooms, offices, etc.

Among many other school site studies, Lightfoot adopted a portrait approach to capture the observations of six different high schools. Calling the school sketches “reality-based pictures”, she aimed at creating something in between the “highly abstract descriptions of secondary schooling” and “charged anecdotal references” of high schools. (Lightfoot, 1983, pp. 9,10) She managed to create well-balanced portraits of these six high schools, written in detailed, dense prose. Her portrayal documents the significance played by the school sites in the life of teachers and students.

In order to connect all these perspectives when studying education reform in real life, it may help to consider Evans’ view of change and its implications. Evans stresses

the "...fundamental duality to our response to change: We both embrace and resist it." (Evans, 1996, p.21) Echoing Fullan, Evans also warns about the potential of change to achieve double effect. Introduced into a classroom, change can unintentionally "worsen the conditions of teaching, or it can provide the support, stimulation, and pressure to improve." (Evans, 1996, p.113) Also, an individual's willingness to use innovations depends on many factors, including "one's personality, life experience, and career experience." (Evans, 1996, p.92).

This broad and somewhat obvious conclusion is nevertheless a true indicator of the complexities entailed in implementing and sustaining change in teaching. The reasons for teachers to either embrace change or to reject it are as complex and multifaceted as the personalities of the teachers themselves. My task in this project was not to see teachers through the whole process of implementing and sustaining change in teaching. I solely explored teachers' self-perceived attitudes toward change, and the sources of inspiration they use when looking for changes or innovations. I approached this task with several assumptions about Czech state and non-state schools, and about the teachers in these schools.

Research Assumptions

My research assumptions were shaped by the post-communist political, social, and economic transformation in the Czech Republic. This broad transformation is reflected in the decentralization and privatization of schooling, and in experimenting with alternative and new teaching methods. The work of teachers would be de-politicized as the requirement to teach about the leading role of the communist party and to use the

communist philosophy-based teaching materials has been abandoned. Freed from the previously dictated approach, I argued that teachers could now question the traditionally used methods, and begin introducing a number of alternative methods and approaches.

But individuals react to change differently, either embracing it or rejecting it, to use Evans' words once again. There is a cautious third approach in between, the "golden middle road", as the Czechs like to say. In response to change, this third approach means carefully evaluating change and innovations to see whether they are worth trying in place of something old and proven. Polyzoi and Černá refer to this careful approach when they state that most Czech teachers remain "cautious participants" in the change process. (Polyzoi and Černá, 2000)s

I began to form my research questions and assumptions while taking into account these three responses to change. Does the political, economic, and social transformation inspire teachers to consider change, to be open to change, and to introduce changes into their teaching? Or does it make them shut down and cling to the proven old ways of teaching as a protective measure against change? What compromises do teachers make when trying to accommodate innovations while preserving the best of the old methods? Does school type, i.e., state or non-state school, play any role in determining teacher attitude to change?

Two broad parallel change processes, the political-social-economic-cultural transformation on the one hand, and the transformation of schooling on the other, were running through my research frame. My research assumptions formed two related strands. One concerned change in society and change in schooling at the macro level.

The other concerned change at the micro level as experienced by teachers in their schools and classrooms, and related to the different types of schools in which they teach, i.e., state and non-state.

My general assumption about change was simple. The post-communist political, social, and economic changes would cause changes in all spheres of life, including education. In other words, change begets change. I expected the power of the post-communist changes to be so great that it not only fosters the rise of new schools, but reaches the old schools. I expected the effects of the post-communist changes to reach individual teachers in the classrooms and make them change their methods and approaches to teaching and students.

Some great changes had already taken root in post-communist Czech schooling before I began my study. Most importantly, a number and variety of non-state schools, both private and church schools, had already been founded. There was a variety of alternative teaching approaches in use. I expected to find these innovations in non-state schools, but I also expected to find some in state schools.

Regarding the new privately owned Czech schools, it is generally known that they were favored by some but disliked by others who think of them as yet another money-making enterprise without any real interest in educating. In the U.S., private schools have often been viewed as "thriving and flourishing", while in reality they have displayed "great variations in success and resources." (Lightfoot, 1983, p.8) I reasoned that Czech non-state schools, too, would differ widely in their resources and approaches. How would these differences affect Czech teacher attitudes toward change and innovation?

Current Czech education literature and policy calls for the post-communist Czech education to create “a learning society” and “an information society”. Education is now to provide “lifelong learning for all” and in order to achieve this goal, schooling is to undergo great changes. (MSMT, 2001, Phare, 1999). I asked how these large-scale plans affected the current thinking of individual teachers in the classrooms. In order to “achieve a lasting reform”, Fullan says, there must be “changes in beliefs and understanding.” (Fullan, 2001, p.45). Have Czech teachers been changing their beliefs and understanding?

More interestingly, was there a difference in changes in beliefs and understanding between teachers in Czech state and non-state schools? The new non-state schools may be more innovative and less constrained by conforming to the habitual ways of teaching than state schools. The existing state schools, on the contrary, may be more rigid in conforming to the state-defined curriculum and the ministry-prescribed textbooks. Teachers in both types of schools would reflect their school approach, and their attitude toward change and innovation in teaching would be shaped accordingly.

Czech teacher attitude toward change and innovation in teaching would most likely also be noticeable in teacher professional activities. Numerous studies of teachers and education reform, for example by Lortie in 1975, Goodlad in 1984, Rosenholtz in 1989, and others in the 1990s, have found that interaction with others is one of the key factors promoting successful and sustained change in teaching. (Fullan, 2001) I therefore reasoned that those teachers who are more active in searching for sources of professional inspiration, are active members of professional teacher associations, and actively

participate in the Czech debates on education may enjoy the most intensive and extensive contact with other educators. They may also be most open to change and innovation in their teaching.

In my theory about Czech non-state schools, I reasoned that these schools are more open to new ideas, to innovations, and new teaching methods and approaches than state schools, largely by the nature of their alternative styles and approaches. By extension, I reasoned that non-state school teachers are more likely to be open to changes and trying new methods and approaches than state school teachers. I thought that this difference may demonstrate itself in teacher attitude to innovation and change in teaching. I also thought that non-state school teachers would use a greater number and variety of sources of inspiration to search for new teaching methods, and possibly be more active in professional associations, than state school teachers.

Regarding the influence of school sites, I thought that the new non-state schools may present teachers with richer and more inspiring school sites. These new schools would want to distinguish themselves by new ways of teaching, more flexible approaches, and more open ways of communicating than the pre-1989 state schools. I knew from my own experience as a student and teacher in the Czech Republic that state schools have traditionally allowed only limited public access on their premises and in their documentation. They often resembled enclosed capsules with ways and cultures of their own. My theory was supported by current Czech education literature which called for “developing... the openness [of schools] toward society and their connections to the community.” (MSMT, 2001, p.93)

Teachers are those who make change at the classroom level happen. As Fullan says, change in education “depends on what teachers do and think.” (Fullan, 2001, p.115) I formed a theory about teachers in state and non-state schools regarding what I expected to find after collecting and analyzing data in teacher surveys and teacher interviews. This was a three-pronged theory about state and non-state school teacher attitude toward change.

The first possibility was that the willingness to change and the desire to look continually for sources of professional inspiration is based on personal characteristics of individual teachers, regardless of the school they teach in, i.e., state, private, or church. Inspiration for change is driven largely by the personalities and qualities of individual teachers, their own ideas, initiative, their experiences. There would be some discernible differences between teachers in their attitude toward change and use of inspirational sources, but these would not be traceable to school type. Educational change at the classroom level would be largely driven from within the teacher as an individual.

The second possibility, standing in opposition to the first one, would be that the willingness to change and to look continually for sources of professional inspiration is somehow embedded in the schools in which teachers work. Possibly, these differences would be traceable to school type. There would be some discernible differences in teacher attitude toward change and use of new teaching methods between state, private, and church school teachers. These differences would be traceable, to one degree or another, to the school type. Educational change at the classroom level would therefore be driven from without the teacher, from teacher surroundings.

The third possibility would take the “golden middle road”, to use an appropriate Czech saying. There would be differences in teacher attitude toward change and sources of professional inspiration. These differences may be traceable to school type, but probably not consistently. There would be change-oriented educators scattered in all three types of schools, with or without an indication of a pattern. Educational change at the classroom level would therefore be driven both by the individual teacher characteristics and their school environment.

When I was starting my research, I was almost convinced that I would find open-minded teachers with flexible attitudes toward change mostly in the non-state schools. I expected most state school teachers to be frozen in a time of their own, tied to the state curriculum and state teaching materials, and unable or unwilling to consider changes. I also expected state schools to be very rigid, not allowing their teachers much freedom in using methods and approaches that differed from what was considered “normal” and “traditional” in state schools. I thought that non-state schools, and particularly private schools, would be more flexible in allowing their teachers to explore other than the customary, or traditional, ways of teaching.

Research Questions and Placement of Study

My research questions focused on teacher perceptions of their own attitudes toward change while teaching in their current school. What attitudes do teachers have toward change? How do teachers perceive their own attitudes toward change, and how do they describe those attitudes? What do teachers think about using new and alternative teaching methods? Do they consider it worth trying to teach in new ways, or do they

prefer the old and proven methods? Where do teachers look for professional inspiration when they want to change and/or improve their teaching?

The related level of questions concerned differences in these perceptions and attitudes between teachers in individual schools, and namely between state and non-state school teachers. Are there differences in attitudes toward change and use of new methods between teachers in individual schools? Are these differences traceable to school type, i.e., state or non-state? Are state school teachers more conservative or more open-minded than non-state school teachers? Conversely, are non-state school teachers more open-minded toward change and new methods as compared to state school teachers?

When asking my research questions during field research, I tried to use but not to abuse my particular perspective of a native Czech. I spent the first 27 years of my life in the Czech Republic and went through the communist Czech education system from grade 1 to graduating with a 5-year university degree in teaching language and literature. I also worked as a teacher there, having done brief internships in elementary and secondary schools, a two-year tenure as a language teacher at a Prague college, and numerous private tutoring sessions.

This rich native cultural experience provided me with a lot of insider insights, but also with a lot of insider bias. My insider point of view pushed me toward judging state school teachers as rigid, conservative, and cautious in their approach toward change. I saw them as the kind of educators who require centralized guidance at each step, and who get uneasy when considering teaching approaches or teaching materials that are not

sanctioned by the central authority, be it the Ministry of Education or their school leaders. At the same time, I thought some of them may be sick and tired of the central authority commands embodied in an endless stream of teaching aids and directives, and I thought some of them may rejoice in having some freedom to chose how to teach.

Having left the Czech Republic in 1991, shortly after communism collapsed, I did not know much about non-state schools or their teachers. The only information I had was second-hand, either from reading or from listening to Czechs who had their children in private schools. I had no direct experience with these schools. My expectations for non-state school teachers were mixed. I was trying to tame my high expectations for seeing open-minded, communicative teachers who use methods and approaches new to Czech schooling. At the same time, I hoped that these expectations may be justified. I disliked the general Czech public view of private schooling as purely a money-making enterprise, and hoped to prove it wrong by finding eager, honest educators, interested students, and engaged schools and communities.

In the course of my field research, it was not easy to disregard my personal emotions and my own personal history as a student and teacher in Czech schools. I was ready to jump to conclusions and make simplistic comparisons of school leaders and teachers on the basis of my personal experience. It was easy to throw personalities and school features into the boxes defined by the general public opinion which was pouring down at me willingly from my relatives, friends, and really just anyone I talked to about my project.

It was easier to analyze the data after my return to the U.S. I was freer of the in-country biases and freer of my own native prejudices. I was finally able to look at the data more objectively and analyze it for what it was saying. Gaining a certain distance in time from data collection was also beneficial.

When designing my study, I chose to study teachers in secondary schools. I wished to explore differences between state and non-state school teachers, and non-state schools are most numerous at the secondary level. This phenomenon, as described in Chapter One, is a direct consequence of the transformation from centralized communist economy with a large heavy industry sector to a free-market economy with an increasing number of professional jobs and a growing service sector and the corresponding changes in schooling. Where the state schools lagged behind in reorienting themselves toward the new type of training, new non-state schooling took over to provide the population with the training needed in the changing economy.

Originally, I decided to select a sample of ten schools within one administrative region. Studying schools within one region would provide me with a comparable sample of schools as secondary schools are governed by the regional and municipal authorities. Also, moving between schools in one region would provide me with easier and speedier access to schools than having to travel greater distances between towns further away.

I ended up studying schools in two neighboring administrative regions, named according to their capitals Kralovéhradecký and Pardubický regions. (See Appendix A, Map of the Czech Republic) These two regions are located side by side in the East Bohemian area of the country. I had several reasons to make this choice. For one, I grew

up in that area. This familiarity was both an advantage as it provided me with some insider insights and some possibilities to rely on old acquaintances and relationships with educators I knew personally. It was also a disadvantage because I had to focus on putting aside my ingrained opinions and assumptions especially about state schools and the educators working in them.

Also, working within these regions was personally convenient and feasible for me due to my young family requirements. My parents and other family members still live in these two regions. They provided me with much needed support, such as child care, transportation, and other hardware equipment. It would have been much harder and more costly to try to conduct this study without this extended family support.

Within the regions, I was eventually able to work in eight of the originally selected ten schools. I selected these ten schools from an initial larger pool of candidates in East Bohemia, primarily on the basis of school availability and willingness to participate in this research. Four of these schools are state schools, three are private schools, and one is a church school. Three state schools are college preparation schools, the so-called *gymnazia*, one is a business academy. Two private schools are *gymnazia*, one is a business academy. The church school is a *gymnazium*.

The two East Bohemian administrative regions each have its own regional capital. These regional capitals are the largest urban areas in each region, concentrating the best of each region's industry, services, and schools. They are also the regional governing and administrative centers. Most of the schools I selected are located in one of the two capitals, Pardubice and Hradec Králové. Three state schools and three non-state schools

are in one of the two regional capitals, and one state school and one non-state school are each located in another smaller town in one of the two regions.

I selected the two neighboring regions also for their many differences and similarities. Kralovéhradecký and Pardubický regions are comparable in size, industrial development, level of urbanization, and geographical features. Their capitals, Hradec Králové and Pardubice, are similar in size and regional significance. Both house several institutions of higher learning: Hradec has the Pharmaceutical Faculty of Charles University and its own College of Education. It has private secondary schools, such as the Secondary School of Applied Cybernetics, unique in the whole country. Pardubice has its own Technical College and College of Chemistry, and private secondary schools. It also has one of the first few Waldorf elementary schools in the country.

These regions have been known for their long-lasting relationship as friends and foes. Under communism, the two urban centers were combined in one administrative region within the East Bohemian region, and had Hradec as the region capital. For decades, Hradec Králové was the sometimes official and sometimes unofficial capital of the whole East Bohemian region. The city of Pardubice fought this choice for decades, arguing that Pardubice has everything that Hradec has and more. At the same time, Hradec liked to argue in its favor with its richer history as the seat of Czech kings, its bigger size, and its superior architectural design as an urban capital. Now they each have their own kingdoms to administer. The schools in each capital may now feel to a degree that they are providing a public service for their own populations and their own job markets.

Research Method

Studying change and innovation in a classroom means considering different ways in which change can be expressed. Fullan says that “innovation is multidimensional”, and explains the three fundamental dimensions in implementing innovations at the micro level, in the classroom: Use of new or revised materials, use of new teaching approaches, and alterations of pedagogical beliefs. (2001, p.39)

In performing my field research, I focused largely on the second dimension, use of new teaching approaches. At the same time, I expected to find alterations of pedagogical beliefs in those teachers who were in some way inspired by the new post-communist reality to make changes in their teaching approaches. Also, teacher responses collected during research pointed toward the use of new or revised teaching materials, especially in the case of foreign language teachers. The study findings therefore cover, at least partially, the three dimensions of innovation at the classroom level identified above.

The strategies I used to perform my field research and to collect data included school observation and collection of any available school materials, teacher survey, and teacher interviews. Each of these three strategies yielded distinct results, discussed separately in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. Chapter Six provides an overview of conclusions and findings from all three strategies.

In the first strategy, school observation and school data collection, I relied on a combination of direct and indirect measures which are commonly used in school climate research. (Freiberg, Stein, 1999). The direct measures refer to interaction with people in the field. These measures also include data collection strategies such as surveys,

interviews, journals, and audio/video recordings. (Freiberg, Stein, 1999, p. 18) I used direct measures also in my second and third strategies when I surveyed and interviewed teachers. The indirect measures include the use of existing records, and observation and analysis of the actual school buildings. (Freiberg, Stein, 1999, p. 23) I used these indirect measures in my first research strategy, school site observation.

I reasoned that schools as a whole shape the daily activities and thinking of the educators they house. Schools are studied from the psychological perspective as organizations molding teacher perspectives, attitudes, and decisions. Schools are also studied from the anthropological perspective as places of culture of their own, influencing teachers as human beings. (Freiberg, 1999, p.13)

I was interested in observing schools from both angles. Viewing schools as organizations, I collected data about school size, class size, number of students, placement of graduates, curriculum, and extra-curricular activities. I also tried to interview, formally or informally, the school leaders in order to understand any points relevant to the organizational structure of the schools.

Viewing schools as places of culture, I observed the school buildings from the outside and the inside, and the immediate and larger environment of the schools. I looked at the type of information posted on bulletin boards, at the number and kind of decorations and furnishings. I looked at teacher conference rooms and teacher offices. I stayed in the schools both during the class periods and during the breaks to observe the behavior and interaction of students and faculty. I also sat in the faculty meeting room to observe the behavior of faculty toward each other and toward me, the visitor, and the

conduct of students who come in to contact teachers. (See Appendix B, School Data Table)

I took written notes during my observation, and recorded an audio commentary immediately after leaving each school building in order to preserve my impressions firsthand and fresh. As I visited more schools, I asked myself questions about the similarities and differences I noticed in these schools as organizations and places of culture. In particular, I asked questions about the similarities and differences I observed between state and non-state schools.

I continued asking questions about differences and similarities between state and non-state schools as expressed by individual teachers. I tried to identify and explore differences between teachers in individual schools. My main research goal was to identify and explore differences and similarities between teachers in state as opposed to non-state schools.

To learn about differences and similarities traceable to school type, I asked teachers about changes in their teaching methods and approach to students since the beginning of their tenure in their current school. I asked teachers to inform me whether their previous tenures, if any, were in state or non-state schools. In this way, I was able to collect data to help me identify differences between teachers in separate school types as related to their current tenure, but also to differences caused by their previous tenures.

In teacher surveys, I asked questions which could be answered easily and briefly. I collected brief profiles of teachers, identifying the length of their teaching experience in state and non-state schools. Then I asked teachers about changes in their approaches to

teaching and students since the beginning of their current school tenures. I asked them to state the new methods and approaches they began to use. Finally, I asked teachers about their membership and activities in professional teacher associations and in the public debates on education. I chose to ask about those debates since the recently discussed topics included matters important to secondary school teachers, such as the preparation of the new secondary school exit examination, the so-called *maturita*. (For the survey questions, see Appendix C, Teacher Survey Form)

Teacher interviews were designed as a follow-up to teacher surveys. I thought that I would be recruiting teachers for interviews when collecting the surveys. Therefore all or most teachers that I would interview would have already answered the questions in the survey. I could therefore count on the interviewed teachers to be semi-prepared for the interviews through answering the survey questions.

In the interviews, I asked teachers again to identify the length of their current teaching tenure, and of the type and length of their previous tenure(s). I followed up with a question about their opinion of using new methods and approaches in teaching. After that, I probed teacher use of sources of professional inspiration. The next question concerned teacher perception of the influence of their school type, state or non-state, on their teaching. Simply put, I asked teachers whether they thought they would teach in any way differently if they taught in state as opposed to non-state schools or vice versa. I closed by asking about the role the central authority, the Ministry of Education, plays in their teaching. (See Appendix D, Teacher Interview Questions)

In my data analysis stage, I found invaluable the methodology described by Strauss and Corbin in their Basics of Qualitative Research. (Strauss, Corbin, 1998) When collecting the data, I tried to take the first step in their basic research analysis sequence: To ask effective questions. My next steps were to improve on my questions, form theoretical concepts for making comparisons, and identify the central category, the related categories, and the subcategories in my research.

Using some of the “open coding” techniques, I began by identifying the main concepts and naming their properties and dimensions. (Strauss, Corbin, 1999, p.101) I first read through survey responses and the interviews in order to analyze the text for words, phrases, and sentences. I underlined and extracted the concepts that were repeated, emphasized, or otherwise noteworthy. Next, I extracted and named the main concepts and categories. I coded the central category, **teacher inspiration**, and the related categories, **teacher use of new methods**, and **distrust toward private schools**, and **tradition in state schools**. The last two categories, distrust and tradition, were taken directly from the data and coded as in vivo concepts. After that, I proceeded with the “axial coding”, relating subcategories to the main categories within their defined context. (Strauss, Corbin, 1999, p. 123)

The categories, subcategories, and the context for my conceptualizing relating categories were determined by the researched school types and my research questions. My goal was to identify differences and similarities in the central and related categories between state and non-state school teachers. Therefore the categories of teacher inspiration and teacher use of new methods had subcategories defined by their occurrence

in state and non-state schools. The subcategories for distrust toward private schools included distrust by state school educators, the authorities, and the public, as well as perceptions of that distrust by private school teachers. The subcategories for tradition in state schools included expressions of tradition in state schools, and lack of tradition in private schools.

The case of the church school was different in regards to distrust and tradition. Historically, and as noted in Chapter Three in the school description, this school considers itself the bearer of the local Jesuit college-preparation secondary school tradition. As such, it is not concerned with lack of tradition or distrust aimed at new schools.

After coding and relating categories and subcategories, I was ready to begin constructing my research notes as a preparation for writing. The analysis and the writing of my research were defined by my three research strategies and by the central and related categories. The strategies, school observation, teacher survey, and teacher interviews, each yielded distinct data to be written up in separate chapters. The data in these three chapters are related through the main research categories and through differences between state and non-state schools.

In the first research strategy, school observation, I divided the data into school or cultural settings, such as appearance, location, decoration, cleanliness, student and staff behavior and interaction, and institutional or organizational settings, such as size, number of students and faculty, activities, and academic ranking. I wrote down the similarities and differences in these settings between state and non-state schools, and used these

research notes in writing Chapter Three on school observations. This technique enabled me to see more clearly both the differences between individual school settings and between state schools and non-state schools as group types.

Analyzing teacher surveys, I created tables for each school data set and wrote down all responses for each school. (See Appendix E, Teacher Survey Results) I was then able to compare the data for individual schools as well as between state, private, and church schools as group types. The table format enabled me to make numerical and conceptual comparisons. The numerical comparisons include, for example, length of teacher tenure in individual schools and by school type. The conceptual comparisons include, for example, degree of changes in teaching methods reported by teachers, again in individual schools and by school type.

The table format also enabled me to see the relationships and influences between concepts and categories. One of the most important relationships I discovered in this way is the relationship of teacher transfer between different school types, i.e., between state and non-state, to the degree of changes teachers make in their teaching methods and approaches to students. The tabular format also helped in performing frequency counts of categories and concepts mentioned by teachers, such as types of new methods, distrust toward private schools, and tradition as a strength in state schools.

The tabular format proved highly useful in identifying and analyzing teacher membership in professional associations, and their participation in public debates on education. The tables helped me group teacher association membership by individual schools and between different types of schools. I could do frequency counts of teacher

membership, but also identify other phenomena, such as how much additional information teachers wrote down about their membership in associations, and how helpful such membership was for their teaching. Again, I could discover differences between individual schools and between school types.

Analyzing teacher interviews, I wrote down the main categories and subcategories. I then grouped data from teacher responses under the labels. Because some teachers were very spontaneous and talkative without prompting in the interviews, they told me much more than simply responses to my questions. Such data, not fitting under any of the existing labels, I wrote down separately under its own labels.

I then extracted and wrote down common themes repeated by state school and non-state school teachers alike, themes specific to state school teachers, and themes specific to non-state school teachers. This approach enabled me to see and extract similarities and differences between the two types of schools. It also enabled me to perform frequency counts of the important and frequently repeated concepts and themes.

This technique also yielded some unexpected results. For example, I was able to make comparisons on the basis of subject matter taught by the interviewed teachers. I did not plan for subject matter related data and did not ask about subject matter because I did not know how the Czech teachers would respond to being recruited for my research. In other words, I did not want to limit myself to subject matter-defined research design only to find out after arrival in the Czech Republic that such design would not work for lack of suitable human subjects. My goal was to recruit as many teachers in each school as possible, regardless of their subject matter. I found, however, that the teachers often felt

compelled to identify themselves by their subject matter. I could also identify their subject matter through the professional associations in which they reported membership as these associations are often defined by subject matter.

After analyzing and grouping all data collected in teacher surveys and teacher interviews, I was able to begin writing for presentation. The writing process consisted both of inclusion and exclusion. On the one hand, I needed to include all data that was pertinent to my research questions and the main research categories. On the other hand, I had to exclude most data that was not pertinent to my research questions and research categories, mostly due to space and relevance considerations. This approach eventually yielded the present research report, written out in Chapters Three through Five, and summarized in Chapter Six.

I followed two main objectives in writing my research report. First, I aimed to create a clear and easily understood research report. Reporting the data in three separate chapters according to the employed research strategy guaranteed clarity of reading and ease of following. Two, I aimed to write the data in such way that it could later be easily separated into individual units for potential publication as articles. In this way, I may be able to extract individual chapters, amend and edit them, and prepare them easily for publication as articles. Also, Chapter Six: Conclusions, may easily be converted into a lecture format for either teaching or conference presentation.

Finally, a note on my translation technique is in order. Needless to say, all collected data was in the Czech language. As a professional translator of texts from English into Czech and Czech and Slovak into English, I am well familiar with

translation techniques and danger points. I am also equipped with tools such as dictionaries and glossaries which I have collected for more than a decade now.

As a native speaker of Czech, I collected all research data and relevant documents and literature in the Czech language. As soon as I began the data analysis, I started translating. I was thus able to keep a train of thoughts on the data both in Czech and in English. For example, I transcribed all interviews in the Czech language, and then proceeded to analyze them in English. I could thus put the concepts and terms side by side immediately from the initial stages of the analysis, and refer to them later in writing the actual research report. Also, for reader ease of understanding, I created a basic Glossary of terms used in this report.

The following chapters examine research data and present research findings. Chapter Three contains brief school sketches created from the data collected during school observations. Chapter Four analyzes data from teacher surveys. The important issues analyzed in that chapter include teacher readiness and willingness to change, types of new methods they incorporated in their teaching, types of sources of professional inspiration they use, and teacher participation in professional associations and discussions in education. The analysis culminates in examining differences between state and non-state school teachers in the named issues.

Chapter Five focuses on data collected in teacher interviews. This chapter presents a closer look at teacher readiness and willingness to change, sources of professional inspiration teachers use, including the Ministry of Education as such source. It also presents state teacher opinions of private schools, and private teacher opinions of

private and state schools. Again the chapter analyzes differences between state and non-state school teachers.

Finally, Chapter Six brings together the findings presented in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. It integrates the findings from all three research approaches, draws conclusions and implications. It also relates the findings of this study to findings from educational research in the Czech Republic, the U.S., and elsewhere in the world.

Chapter 3:

THE SCHOOLS: PLACES OF WORK, PLACES OF INSPIRATION

School Climate and Culture

Studying school sites has come to mean examining school climate and school culture. School climate is generally regarded as “the ‘personality’ of the organization”, a set of features distinguishing individual schools from one another. (Hoy, Tarter, Kottkamp, 1991, p.3, 4) School culture, rooted in hundreds of different definitions by various social scientists, may be viewed as “the collective manifestation of basic assumptions”, “a set of shared values” and “behavioral norms.” (Hoy, Tarter, Kottkamp, 1991, p.5, 6) The cultural approach, aimed at determining “the underlying forces that motivate behavior in organizations”, is appropriate for this qualitative study of teacher inspiration. (Hoy, Tarter, Kottkamp, 1991, p.7)

Another dual approach to the study of schools sites involves focusing on the abstract as opposed to the concrete characteristics of schools, that is, the “institutional setting” and the “school setting”. (Nolan, Meister, 2000, pp.5, 18) Institutional setting refers to the organization, the way it functions, its mission and history. School setting refers to the outer and inner physical appearance of the school itself, its building, inside arrangement, classrooms, offices, etc.

Reports of school site research have been written in different forms and used a variety of data collection strategies, including surveys, interviews, observations, school documentations, student artwork, and others. For example, Sara Lightfoot in her portraits

of six high schools aimed to create “reality-based pictures” of the schools. Writing in dense prose throughout her account, she achieved an effect almost akin to fiction.

(Lightfoot, 1983) In this report, I use the school site descriptions as an introduction into deeper probes of teachers and change in these schools analyzed in the following chapters. The writing is sketchier than in a true portrait technique, and my lengthy or narrative research notes are reduced to serve the purpose of presenting only the most relevant data.

In collecting the school data for this study, I used direct and indirect measures for school climate research. Direct measures refer to interaction with people in the field to collect data such as surveys, interviews, journals, and audio/video recordings. (Freiberg, Stein, 1999, p.18) Indirect measures include the use of existing records and observation and analysis of the actual school buildings. (Freiberg, Stein, 1999, p. 23) In this first research strategy, school observations, I used indirect measures, including observation of the exterior and the interior of schools, and collection of school documentation.

One research goal in this project is to examine teacher attitudes toward change in teaching and sources of inspiration teachers use when looking for new teaching methods and introducing changes in their teaching. The related research goal is to examine differences between teachers in state and non-state schools between their attitude toward change, and their use of sources of professional inspiration. I reason that the appearance, inner atmosphere, furnishings, and facilities of the schools, their general culture, and their surroundings closely affect teachers in their initiative and inspiration.

When observing the schools, I saw that each school was different and yet there were points of resemblance among some schools. Similarities in appearance, institutional

setting, and culture are noticeable especially among the state schools. But under the all-embracing, unifying heritage left behind by four decades of communist state schooling, even the state schools have each developed features of their own. The individual, different nature is more noticeable among the private schools, in their appearance and institutional setting.

Finding both similarities and differences between Czech state and non-state schools, and a greater degree of individual expressions among the non-state schools, is not surprising. In comparing private and public schools in the United States, studies have found similarities between public schools and some private schools, and great variation among different types of private schools. In a 1981 study of public and private schools, Coleman found, among other things, that private schools have a safer, more disciplined and structured learning environment, that they have a lower student/teacher ratio, and that they are more focused on academic subjects. (Viteritti, 1999)

Using results of a 1993-1994 U.S. Department of Education survey, Henley reports in a recent article that public schools tend to have better qualified teachers, more students, are more likely to have libraries and to offer programs and services to students with special needs than private schools. (Henley, 2000)

In a 1996 comparison of organizational qualities of American public and private schools, Broughman and colleagues found that "school sector is not a simple organizational faultline". (Broughman, Baker, Han, Keil, 1996) Among many other things, the authors found in their study some "significant similarities between public schools and some types of private school", and "considerable organizational variation

among different types of private schools. They also concluded that the most important goal of public and many private schools was academic excellence, topping religious development of students in religious private schools. (Broughman, Baker, Han, Keil, 1996)

As we shall see in this chapter, there are similarities both among state schools, and among state and non-state schools. At the same time, the non-state schools in this study display more individualized features or variations than the state schools. All eight Czech secondary schools, state and non-state, are united in holding academic excellence as their primary goal, and in complying with the state requirements in order to keep being accredited and to obtain the desired per-student state funding.

The crucial academic requirement focuses on the secondary exit examination, the so-called *maturita*. All secondary schools must strive for academic excellence because their goal is to produce graduates who successfully pass this exit examination. Other requirements include organizational measures, such as producing an annual school report and annual accounting according to the ministry requirements. The path to reach these goals differs according to school status, philosophy, size, location, teaching approaches, and other factors.

Table 1 contains relevant organizational and academic information about the eight secondary schools included in this research, and collected in during the months of September, October, and November, 2001. In the following section, I create brief sketches of the individual schools, using the schools' physical, organizational, and academic features.

Table 1: The Schools.

School code, type	Academic description	Students	Faculty	Location
ST1, state school	Gymnazium 4 and 8-year course	360 students total 25-30 per class 70% graduates entered college in 1999-2000, of which 74% were from 8-year course and 63% from 4-year course	30 full time	Small town Shares building with local elementary and middle school
ST2, state school	Gymnazium 4, 6, and 8-year course	1000 students total 30 per class 86% graduates entered college in 1999-2000	64 full time	Reginal center Has its own building
ST3, state school	Gymnazium 8-year course	1000 students total	60 full time	Regional center Has its own building
ST4, state school	Business academy 4-year course	436 students total Full capacity: 520 30 per class 50% graduates entered college in 1999-2000	35 total, including full time and part time	Regional center Has its own building
PR1, private school	Gymnazium with reinforced foreign language curriculum 4 and 8-year course	400 students total 10-11 per class 80-85% graduates entered college in 1999-2000	45 total, including full time and part time and visiting foreign lecturers	Regional center Has its own building
PR2, private school	Gymnazium 8-year course	106 students total 15 per class "Very successful" (per staff oral report) in number of graduates entering college, no numbers available	10 full time, 3 contract lecturers	Small town Has dedicated space in town castle building

Table 1 (continued).

School code, type	Academic description	Students	Faculty	Location
PR3, private school	Business academy 4-year secondary course 1, 3, and 4-year post-secondary courses	180 students total 15 per class Number of graduates entering college not available	11 total, full time and part time	Regional center Shares building with local elementary school
CHI, non-state church school	Gymnazium 4 and 8-year course	600 students total 25-30 per class Number of graduates entering college not available	47 full time, around 30 additional part-time lecturers	Regional center Has its own building and dormitories for out-of-town students

School 1. State academic school: ST1.

Enter a yellowish box of a red-roof school building in a centuries-old small town of about ten thousand inhabitants. The main door does not look very solid, but it is locked and one supposedly has to ring a bell to be let in. This seemed an improvement since the days of my attendance at this *gymnazium* back in the 1980s when the main door used to be open all day long to anyone. However, the people inside the school building gladly opened the door for me without ever bothering to ask who I was or what I wanted.

This school is located in a small semi-industrial town in the heart of the river Elbe lowlands, not far from the two main East Bohemian district centers. Residing on the uppermost floor of a schoolhouse, it shares the building with one of the two local elementary/middle schools. It is the only school of its type in this town. It was founded in the early 1950s. After some trying, one can even locate this school's minimal website.

The school interior is relatively spacious, with a lot of light. It shows signs of wear and tear. The walls in the hallways of the first story, the elementary school, are richly decorated with art and student work. The second story, the middle school, is much less decorated. By the time one gets up to the third floor, the home of the *gymnazium*, the walls are starkly bare, with only a couple of bulletin boards containing data and numbers about the school, such as the official school code, number of students, placement of graduates, and some Ministry of Education public decrees.

Academically, this school is a combined four and eight-year *gymnazium*. The principal mentioned to me that at first he despised the idea of eight-year *gymnasia* because he believed that they robbed middle schools of the best students four years early, leaving the classes in poor shape and the remaining students struggling. He soon realized, however, that running an eight-year *gymnazium* in his institution benefits his school by bringing in a number of gifted students each year, and keeping up the desired number of students for the per-pupil Ministry of Education funding formula. He told me, "It saves the school at this time of population decline, dropping student numbers, and struggles to keep enough students to justify a school existence". (Interview IP2ST1)

The school has been rated consistently slightly above average in the periodic regional school evaluation. This, the principal concedes with a proud smile, is "a very positive evaluation for a small school in a small provincial town," considering the competition from the bigger, better-known schools in the district centers nearby. (Interview IP2ST1) At the same time, the principal raises his concern about the difficulties many of the graduates still face in college and in the job market not because

of their lack of skills or knowledge, but due to “lack of self-confidence, creativity, and ability to act aggressively.” (Interview IP2ST1) The principal concludes this is in a large part due to teachers’ conservative style and approach to students and teaching. This teacher approach is probably rooted both in the communist past and in the traditionally conservative small town setting.

The school currently enrolls about 360 students, with 25 to 30 students per class. At the end of the 2000-2001 school year, almost 70% of its graduates entered college. The rest entered post-secondary non-college courses or the job market.

Class periods were quiet, as is common in Czech schools. One could stand behind the classroom door of any classroom and hear a single voice quietly lecturing. Immediately after the bell announced break time, the students loudly spilled out of the classrooms and throughout the hallways, mingling and interacting very lively. The teachers meandered in between on their way from classrooms, stopping briefly to greet colleagues.

The teaching staff numbers 30. The principal commented that many of the older teachers “tend to cling to old ways”, while the younger ones are better in showing students how to “make it”, how to be aggressive and sell their skills (Interview IP2ST1). As an example, the principal described the story of a Japanese student who was visiting in his institution for the duration of the 2001/02 academic year. While the principal and the younger teachers were enthusiastic about enrolling a foreign student at their school for the first time ever, seeing it as an opportunity for positive change and learning for all

participants, the principal said he “had to fight opposition from some of the older faculty members” to enrolling the student. (Interview IP2ST1)

The faculty meeting room is relatively small in this school, barely seating all the teaching staff for meetings, and filled with the smell of black coffee and cigarette smoke. The non-smoking director complained bitterly but remained helpless as the Czechs do not have any anti-smoking code. Groups of 2 to 5 teachers share an office, grouped by subject matter. Teacher offices also serve as subject matter libraries and storage for teaching aids and lab equipment. Although the principal has a computer in his office and uses e-mail, I have not seen any computers in faculty offices.

Overall, the principal, assistant principal and the teachers were all instantly friendly toward my observation and research. At the same time, I collected only 6 completed surveys out of 10 distributed in this school. The principal preferred to distribute the surveys to the teachers himself and therefore I had no direct contact with the whole teaching staff. I only met individual teachers for prescheduled interviews. I managed to interview 5 teachers, a high number for one school. Three of the five were younger, post-1989 teachers, the other two were the principal and assistant principal, who have both been teachers in this school since well before 1989.

School 2. State academic school: ST2.

This school, located in the smaller of the two East Bohemian district centers, is housed in a boxy, gray, communist-era building with bleak rows of windows. The patch of dying grass in front of the school building is decorated with an unsightly communist-era piece of art, a tall concrete non-descript structure in gray color. The building houses a

large educational institution with a reputation of one of the toughest and best *gymnazia* in the whole East Bohemian region.

Although the multiple main entrance doors seemed all locked, I only needed to wait a few minutes to see an employee enter by one of side doors which, apparently, is kept permanently unlocked for the locals. The entry hallway is decorated with more nondescript communist-style artwork and full of rows of gray lockers. Just like in other state schools I visited, I was greeted by a frowning janitor who was in distress over my fresh footsteps on her still-wet just-washed floor.

Inside, the large building is a maze, with one main, broad staircase and several narrow, windowless side staircases. The hallways are mostly windowless and scarce electric lighting keeps them somewhat dark. Artwork and academic displays are rather limited. There are no bulletin boards with data about the school and information for students. The school data is posted in the faculty meeting room and in the principal's office. There was not much information for students.

This institution is a local giant both in size and in reputation. It enrolls about 1000 students, combining them in four-year, six-year, and eight-year academic tracks. The average class size is 30. The school history goes back almost a century to its founding in 1910. An overview is proudly posted on the well-designed and informative school web site.

The students were mostly invisible, staying inside the classrooms even during breaks, although some were scattered in the hallways, talking quietly, reading, and waiting. I saw two students enter the faculty meeting room to leave a message for a

teacher, and they were quiet and patient, waiting to be allowed by someone to do their chore. Overall, the students must be hard at work. Their school occupied the 9th place in the 1999-2000 national assessment of college entrants from 355 *gymnazia*. In that year, 86% of graduates entered college, up from 72% in 1994-95 and 81% in 1997-98. Several students also won national competitions, e.g., in chemistry, physics, and English language conversation.

The teaching staff numbers 64 full-time teachers. The school has a large faculty meeting room with large bulletin boards for announcements, spacious faculty mail boxes, and several computers and copiers. Two or three teachers occupy offices together, grouped by subject matter. I was at first impressed by the spacious and well-equipped faculty room, but as I spent time there over several mornings, various teachers were happy to confide their complaints. They told me that the brand-new copy machine broke down the very first week due to improper use as no one instructed the teachers in its proper use. The school e-mail system had been out of order for some weeks, and school leaders had a hard time finding trained people to fix it.

The principal and assistant principal gave me a nice welcome, the principal commenting that research such as mine “must be done so that we could learn something and figure out how things work” (ST2 principal welcoming comments, 10/23/2001). They also asked me to send them a copy of my research results, and asked that I promise my research will not cause the school’s closure or a law suit against the school.

Upon hearing the description of my project, the principal commented that “teachers are still conservative” and that he was “skeptical” about teacher willingness to

use new methods and approaches in teaching (ST2 principal welcoming comments, 10/23/2001). Interestingly enough, a teacher from his staff later commented to me that the principal is widely regarded as “old-school and conservative”, unwelcoming toward new things and change. (IT4ST2) The teacher illustrated her claim by telling me that it took her 20 years of teaching in this school to be promoted to the status of head teacher, a promotion which usually takes only a few years.

Despite that, however, this teacher remained faithfully employed in this school for years, together with other teachers I met here. This longevity may be the result of several things other than loyalty to this particular school. For one, there appears to be strong loyalty to the teaching profession, especially among women. This may be caused by shortage of other suitable job opportunities. These teachers also have, like most Czechs in general, preferences regarding the place of their employment. It is not common among the Czech people to move for a job because it is not easy to find housing. Once someone is settled into a suitable apartment or house, it is not advisable to move. The long, steady tenures of teachers in this and other schools may be the result of these combined causes. Loyalty to a particular school may or may not play a role.

I distributed 12 blank surveys and collected 10 completed surveys in this school. The principal made his own decision about survey collection, assembling for me his 10-member senior faculty committee during the 20-minute morning break, and letting me use the time as I deemed fit. I could therefore address this group of teachers in person. I recruited 3 teachers out of this group for interviews.

School 3. State academic school: ST3.

Located in the bigger of the two East Bohemian district centers, this school resides pleasantly in a mid-1920s Art Nouveau building in a park on the river bank. It is within walking distance of the old town and the modern downtown business district. The building was designed by a famous Czech architect, Josef Gočár, who also designed the efficient layout of this city and many buildings in it. A gracious statue of a famous Czech playwright of the 19th century, whose name the school bears, adorns the school entrance. Historically, the school considers itself the heir of the local 14th century Latin schools and the Jesuit *gymnazium* founded in 1636, as stated in the school web site.

The main entrance faces the river, and the door is always open. The building is spacious inside, walls richly decorated with art work, student work, hanging glass cabinets with current displays of subject matter teaching material, and bulletin boards containing all sorts of interesting information. The bulletin boards appear actively used both by students and teachers, a refreshing change from Schools 1 and 2. The interior bears the impression of a rich and active academic environment, efficiently used and well maintained. The school also has a good-looking but barely informative web site.

This school is as large as School 2, enrolling about 1000 students in a typical college-preparation four-year academic program, with classes of 28 to 30. Similarly as in other academic schools, students can chose regular humanities curriculum, or reinforced mathematics and natural sciences curriculum. There is also a number of elective subjects for students to reinforce their course of study.

The students were livelier during breaks in this school than students in School 2, although not quite as rowdy as those in School 1. They chatted amongst themselves

animatedly as they walked along the spacious staircases and hallways. When entering the faculty room to find teachers or leave messages for teachers, they behaved quietly, but seemed less subdued than students in School 2 in a similar situation.

The teaching staff in this school numbers 60. The faculty meeting room is very large, even more spacious than in School 2. There was more room around the tables and there were more extra chairs. The shelves and teacher mail boxes were larger and appeared in a better organized shape than in School 2. Teachers share offices in small groups according to their subject matter.

I never had a chance to meet the principal of this school. Instead the assistant principal met with me twice in her office, apologizing for the principal's lack of time. She stressed that the leadership welcomed my presence in the school. She spent time with me in her office discussing many issues, including her insights into teacher training.

I was able to collect 16 surveys in this school. The assistant principal distributed blank surveys to 25 teachers, and returned 16 completed surveys to me a week later. At that time, she also scheduled teacher interviews for me. She arranged interviews with four teachers, and three teachers actually showed up for the interview. The interviews were conducted in the faculty meeting room. While this was a well-organized and convenient arrangement, it deprived me of the chance to either address the faculty as a group, or to see the actual faculty offices.

School 4. State business academy: ST4.

This state school resides in a large four-story bright pink building located on one of the main highways in the smaller of the two district East Bohemian centers. The

bright pink exterior stands in stark contrast with the communist-style interior. The hallways and staircases are narrow, the walls grayish, and the interior is divided into small, cramped rooms. The walls on the first floor are hung with bulletin boards containing a lot of information about the school, classes, students, and placement of graduates, as well as announcements of various activities and performances.

The main entrance is on a quiet side street, but most of the school building faces the busy highway running along its length. The door is locked at all times, and one has to ring the bell and introduce oneself to the school secretary. The secretary then unlocks the door from her second-story office. Exiting the building is unrestricted.

This four-year business academy was created in 1992 out of the old communist-era secondary School of Economics, the secondary vocational track for students aged 15 to 19. It has been listed in the official school network by the Ministry of Education since 1996. Although this institution appears relatively young, it is not, since it was founded on the resources of the decades-old and well-established state School of Economics. Thus the public and many educators regard it as an established school with a long tradition. The school web site is not very informative, presenting a series of photographs of the school but little else.

The full capacity of the school is 520 students, although it currently enrolls only 436 students in a total of 15 classes, making the average class size 28 to 30. The main school bulletin board announces that in 2000-2001, there were 119 graduates out of

which 60 went on to college, 10 continued in 2-year post-college vocational courses, 14 went to full-time 1-year foreign language courses, and 2 became au pairs abroad.¹

There is only one course of study, a program called Economics and Business Management. In addition to the mandatory general subjects for graduation (Czech language, foreign language, social sciences, and mathematics), the students graduate in one specialized subject, Economics and Entrepreneurship, popularly known as business management. Final tests for this subject are in economy and accounting.

The school runs an associated state language school in the same building. The students can study a parallel course in a foreign language. The language school, although a state school, charges a tuition payment of 4,000 Czech crowns per year, about \$125.00, for an elementary intensive language course, and 3,800 crowns, about \$118.00, for a refresher course.²

The teaching staff numbers 35. The principal happily informed me that the school has been running "like a well-oiled watch" and that the faculty members are all very disciplined and "listen to their superiors without reservations" (ST4 principal comments, 11/6/2001). The faculty meeting room is not very spacious, although bright with daylight and nicely furnished. The faculty offices are small and crowded with desks, two or three teachers sharing one office.

The principal was welcoming but guarded. In her comments, she expressed skepticism about change in education and teaching practice. She commented that

¹ Becoming an au pair in a Western European country, on the North American continent, or even in Australia or New Zealand has been regarded as a matter of prestige and good choice since the end of communism. Some schools keep a good track of its graduates so that they can post such information.

education is like the Titanic, slow and clumsy, and that any change in schooling involves change in generational issues and takes a long time. She advised “not to harbor any illusions about what you find because schooling changes only slowly [in this country]” (ST4 principal comments, 11/6/2001).

The assistant principal was welcoming and talkative, and expressed fewer reservations regarding change in schooling. She pointed out the great differences in quality of education and school culture across the secondary school sector, especially between academic schools, business academies, and technical schools. She noted the existence of noticeable differences between older and younger teachers, and younger teachers and parents. She also expressed her conviction that teacher colleges, which train teachers for both college –preparation and vocational tracks of secondary schools, lately deviated from their purpose of teaching methodology, didactics, and pedagogy in favor of expanding preparation in subject matter (ST4 assistant principal comments, 11/6/2001).

The assistant principal also pointed out that schools are enclosed communities in which outer influences occur rarely. She herself claimed to welcome visitors such as myself and the change they bring. Both she and the principal warned me rather starkly that this school leadership will not persuade the teaching staff for me to participate in the research. I had to do this myself. They further warned me that people are not “willing to cooperate with anyone, that they distrust anyone and anything coming from outside of the school” (ST4 principal and assistant principal comments, 11/6/2001).

² Average monthly salary in the first half of 2001 was 14,466 Czech Crowns (CZK). The exchange rate was approximately 32 CZK to \$1.00.

I assured them I was well aware of that, and then watched in disbelief as they did the exact opposite. They selected about half of the teachers for my survey and interviews and called them into the faculty meeting room for the mid-morning break. As soon as the teachers were assembled, I was asked to wait in a neighboring office while the assistant principal went in to prepare them. She then came for me and informed me about what she had told the teachers. She had told them that they needed to cooperate with me and had to complete the survey per Ministry of Education orders.

I was astonished and did my best, once I was left alone with the teachers, to explain that my research was completely independent and not associated with the ministry. The teachers were guarded, and two of them actually walked out before even looking at the survey. I eventually collected 14 completed surveys in this school and managed to do two interviews, and each took repeated visits to the school and some persuasion. Interestingly, one of the interviews then turned out to be one of the stormiest and most interesting of all interviews I did in this research.

School 5. Private academic school: PRI.

This private school, the first Czech non-state school I ever visited, resides in communist-era kindergarten and preschool buildings in the larger of the two district East Bohemian centers. The buildings are boxy and dark gray, with a small fenced front garden. They are built around a square inner yard, meant originally for a children's playground. The yard is now neglected, full of overgrown grass and a collection of nice but untended trees. It also has some large pieces of construction litter scattered around as the school has been under remodeling. Despite the neglect, the greenery provides a

welcome respite against the mercilessly dark gray walls of the boxy school buildings. The school is located near the outskirts of the city, but on convenient bus and trolley lines, easily and quickly accessible from the city.

Both the garden gate and the main door were open and freely accessible. Passing through a narrow, dark corridor, I noticed groups of students standing around among the lockers. They all greeted me very politely in clear, loud voices, somewhat unusual behavior for the often reserved Czechs. The corridor led me into the large, open-sky inner yard where paved walkways wind around the walls with doors to classrooms and teacher offices in the surrounding two-story building. Despite the remodeling at the time, the school already had some nice new facilities, such as fully equipped and updated language and computer labs. The leadership offices are located in a one-story building attached in the front, shutting the inner courtyard from the street.

The environment was inviting, friendly, and informal. There was a large bulletin board on the mezzanine containing a great number of official and unofficial announcements. Along the hallways, there were more lively bulletin boards and poster spaces full of information for students. There was no artwork or class work exhibited, only informational types of material, and all displays seemed purely practical and not necessarily decorative.

The principal, assistant principal, and all teachers were friendly and talkative, and very busy. The students freely contacted teachers during breaks in teacher offices or in the hallways, requesting advice, appointments, delivering invitations, notes, etc. Teachers were very friendly toward students, always ready to talk and listen. During

each of my visits, I noticed several other visitors and also foreign instructors, including at least two instructors from the U.S.

Overall, the school environment and the atmosphere make a different impression than the more formal environment and more subdued atmosphere of the four observed state schools. The difference is especially noticeable in the active and friendly relationships between teachers and students. When I mentioned this observation to the assistant principal, she smiled with delight and said that building such relationships between teachers and students is the cornerstone of their school mission, and that they are all very proud of doing it successfully.

Academically, this school is a combined four and eight-year *gymnazium* with a reinforced foreign language curriculum. Students can take the so-called state examination in one of the available foreign languages. This examination is recognized statewide as a measure of an individual's skills in a foreign language, and is regarded highly in the job market, even required by some employers for certain jobs.

The school is currently full, with enrollment up to its capacity of 400 students. The students are divided into small classes, 10 to 11 students per class. The 1999-2000 annual school report stated that 80-85% of school graduates entered college in that year. The report also lists the excellent results the students scored in a number of national and international competitions. It also reported that this school scored as number 29 among all *gymnazia* in the nationwide school rating performed by the Ministry of Education. This school had no web site at the time of my visit.

The teaching staff numbers 45, including foreign lecturers who usually stay for a year or two. Groups of 4 to 6 teachers are seated in offices by subject matter. The offices are small, and teachers are often crammed at small desks and sharing shelf and cabinet space. When two or three students enter during breaks, it is hard to move through an office. I noticed that individual teachers scheduled consultations with students during lessons when all other teachers from the office were in the classrooms.

The principal was very welcoming, ready for me with his annual school report, which not every school has offered for perusal. His time, however, was very limited. He spent 10 minutes with me, quickly passed me on to the head English language teacher and departed for his next task. The assistant principal was very busy as well, dealing with her regular duties and principal's young daughter who happened to be left with no child care that morning. I managed to speak with the assistant principal during my next visit.

She explained that the school is founded on the principle of open communication among teachers, and among teachers and students. Teachers are required to reserve several hours each week for consultations with individual students, a practice unheard of in state secondary schools.

The school leadership also aims to develop mutually respectful relationships between teachers and students in an attempt to change the accustomed conduct of teachers toward students and vice versa. For decades, students have been asked to fully respect teacher authority in Czech schools. Teacher respect for students as individuals with their own rights, however, is a newly introduced post-1989 concept. Only some

schools adopt it. In this school, the assistant principal noted, they are very proud of what they achieved so far in teacher-student relationships. Positive and mutually respectful relationships between teachers and students represent a cornerstone of their mission and distinguish them from many other secondary schools, she noted.

I was left entirely to my own devices in this school for collecting surveys and conducting interviews. I went in the teacher offices and asked them to complete the surveys and give interviews. Most were not willing at all, excusing themselves for lack of time. I collected 7 completed surveys and recorded 2 interviews. Additionally, I conducted shorter, unrecorded interviews with 3 more teachers in this school.

School 6. Private academic school, school code: PR2.

This small eight-year *gymnazium* is located in a centuries-old town square of a picturesque hill town in the easternmost corner of the East Bohemian region. It is housed in one wing of the town chateau, overlooking a nice large old chateau park. The building itself is beautifully repaired and remodeled, housing also a very elegant restaurant and some municipal offices. The school occupies space on 3 floors of the chateau wing.

I was invited to enter through a side entrance inside the chateau. I had to ring the bell, introduce myself over a speakerphone to the secretary, who then came downstairs to unlock the door for me. The main entrance is locked for the duration of the morning, as I learned later. The school officials seemed very mindful of whom they let enter their school.

The interior of the school is very tidy and richly decorated with examples of student work, various art work, academic exhibits, reports, quotes by the famous as well

as by the school teachers, and more. A unique piece is a knit-and-sewed multi-colored centipede, winding its way around the walls up the three floors. This is the school symbol and signature item, although no one could explain to me the origins or meaning of its symbolism. But the school is so famous for it that there were both local radio and TV reports about it.

This is an eight-year *gymnazium*, founded and open in the academic year 1993-1994 as a subsidiary of a larger *gymnazium* based in Moravia, the easternmost region of the Czech Republic. Its modest web site lists basic information for prospective students and tuition of 900 crowns per month.

The *gymnazium* enrolled 106 students in 2000-2001, grouped in classes of 11 students on average. There was no data available for the number of college entrants, but teachers maintained that their graduates have been very successful in entering college. Teachers also proudly pointed out that their student grades did not drop after transferring to their *gymnazium* from elementary school. Commonly, student grades drop on average by one point on the nationwide five-point scale after transfer to eight-year *gymnazia* from elementary schools (welcoming comments by PR2 teachers, 10/25/2001).

The students were outgoing, polite, and active communicators. At one point, as I was waiting in the hallway, a group of students came to me and began to tell me about their experiences in the school and ask me questions. They thought I was a journalist writing a story on their school. The students frequently approached and addressed teachers in a polite and friendly manner. Teachers paid immediate attention to all students and addressed them in a friendly manner. They knew each student very well and

always addressed them by their first name while maintaining the officially polite way of addressing individuals by the plural form of personal pronouns and verbs.

Similarly as in School PR1, all teachers in this school are required to reserve several hours a week for consultations with individual students. The friendly and relaxed demeanor observed in teacher-student contact in this school is most likely the result of close relationships between teachers and students developed in small classes and individual consultations. Thus the small school size and the low number of students per class contribute directly toward forming and sustaining positive relationships in this school.

The teaching staff is composed of ten full-time permanent teachers plus three part-time lecturers with full-time employment elsewhere. All ten teachers have their desks in one large office which also serves as the faculty meeting room. The teachers do all their work there, including some student consultations. Teacher-student meetings and consultations also take place in the hallways, which are spacious and peaceful during lessons and furnished with coffee tables and armchairs.

During interviews and informal talks with teachers in this school, several teachers commented that this private school is a much more peaceful place to teach than any state school. They cited lack of school leadership pressure on teachers and students to perform up to standards, smaller classes, positive and enthusiastic approach by students to learning and attendance as the main factors in making this private school a more pleasant place to teach than a state school.

I could not meet with the principal since he was always busy with more important meetings during my visits. The secretary brought the signed consent for my research and communicated the principal's apologies. All teachers spoke well about the principal. Several teachers stressed in their informal hallways talks with me that a principal's personality and the role a principal decides to play in a school are often the decisive factors in how well teachers teach and how much or how little teachers keep up with their professional development.

I spent my time in this school guided by the assistant principal. She was a very welcoming young teacher with a busy teaching schedule. She was kind enough to devote all her free time to me. With apparent pride, she showed me the whole school and pointed out all the improvements done since the school was founded. She stressed the school's focus on creating and maintaining a home-like atmosphere and friendly relationships among the teachers. "The teachers are a close-knit group", she said, "providing each other with mutual support in both professional and personal lives" (PR2 assistant principal comments, 10/25/2001).

Confirming the points made above about the effects of the small class size, she pointed out that one of the cornerstones of their success is having only 11 students per class on average. The small class size allows teachers to work closely with individual students, and to be accessible to students as much as possible. She stressed the school mission of creating and fostering mutual support between teachers and students.

In interviews, teachers confirmed the commitment and support devoted to teacher-teacher and teacher-student relationships in this school. I collected 7 completed surveys

in this school. I conducted recorded interviews with three teachers, took away notes from unrecorded interviews with two other teachers and from other shorter informal talks.

School 7. Private business academy, school code: PR3.

This business academy shares space in a large building with an elementary school in the smaller of the two East Bohemian district centers. The building is not new, but it is freshly painted beige and yellow on the outside and remodeled and newly furnished on the inside. The main school door is kept open, and the tidy, spacious interior immediately evokes a business atmosphere. Bright white and yellow-painted hallways are well-lit with natural light, decorated with a number of well-kept indoor plants, and furnished with coffee tables and armchairs.

The long walls are hung with a lot of information on large bulletin boards, listing matters of interest to current and potential students, teachers, and also parents and the general public. It was probably the most comprehensive display of information I have seen in any of the eight observed schools. It included detailed descriptions of courses, curriculum, study texts and textbooks for all courses, schedules broken down by classes, subjects, and teachers, information on daily and long-distance study courses and re-qualification courses, and changes in schedules. It also included individual teacher schedules and office hours for all teachers. There was also detailed information about the school, its founding, accreditation, and annual school activities. Also posted was basic information about Czech private schooling, including a summary of relevant legislation. This academy also has a well-built and informative web site.

The school enrolled 180 students at the time of my visits. Classes were small, 15 students per class on average. The school runs two different programs. It offers the typical business management course geared primarily toward entry into the job market, similar to the program run by the state School 4. Unlike ST4, this private school also runs the so-called economic lyceum geared more toward academic college preparation, but specialized enough to allow graduates to enter the job market as well.

The school also recently began to expand into the post-secondary vocational sector, offering post-secondary three-year and four-year courses in finances and taxes, and 1-year intensive course in foreign languages, offering English, German, Russian, and French. The principal and assistant principal told me that it took them six years to get this new post-secondary course of study accredited by the Ministry of Education. With pride, they said that they could finally open the program in the fall of 2001. Reportedly, there is great interest among students in this program, and the school has no shortage of applicants (PR3 principal and assistant principal comments, 11/12/2001).

This school was founded in the academic year 1994-1995 with a single program, and it soon began to offer more than that. The principal and assistant principal consider their ongoing introduction of new programs an edge over state schools. They reason that state schools are well-known to the public and therefore never have a shortage of applicants to choose from. In their opinion, students and parents regard state schools as reliable educational institutions, proven by time and tradition, and do not mind the limited choices state schools offer. The new private schools, however, have to keep

inventing new and interesting things to attract students (PR3 principal and assistant principal comments 11/12/2001).

The principal and assistant principal stated they wished their school graduates to emerge with many different skills and a flexible multifaceted education. They view state school graduates' education as more limited for use in real life. They claim that the only edge the local state business academy has over their private academy is the state-certified foreign language program. Their private foreign language program does not yet offer the state final examination.

This private academy also runs a number of events throughout the year. One great annual event is the fictitious "Business Fair". Many Czech business schools teach the subject "Fictitious Business" in which the students must start their own fictitious company. There is a coordinating Center for Fictitious Companies at the College of Economics in Prague, run by the college students, where secondary school students get help with running their businesses, obtaining their business licenses, etc. At the business fair in this school, the businesses behave just like real ones, having to sell their products, make new clients, and earn a profit.

The fair is usually attended by prospective future students from current eighth and ninth grades of middle schools, by local and state politicians, by the TV, press, and observers from other schools, state and private. The last fair was attended by about 500 middle school students (PR3 principal and assistant principal comments, 11/12/2001).

The academy also organizes frequent trips abroad all over Europe. At the time of my research, this school had an active partnership with a business school in Italy.

Making contacts with foreign schools and starting partnerships is not easy since it is hard to evoke and maintain foreign schools' interest in such partnerships (PR3 principal and assistant principal comments, 11/12/2001).

The teaching staff is composed of 11 teachers, and not all of them full-time. I collected 10 completed surveys in this school, but could not schedule even one interview with any of the teachers. Their schedules were too busy, and none of them was willing to meet after school. Instead, I spent my visits in the hallways and in the office shared by the principal and the assistant principal. We maintained an ongoing dialogue while the two were running in and out on errands, taking phone calls, and talking to teachers who popped in. The principal and assistant principal also distributed and collected my surveys.

This leadership team seemed perfectly tuned to one another. It was hard to tell which of them was the principal and which was the assistant principal. They seem to run the school truly together, making their decisions as a team and consulting each other on many issues. One used to be a teacher and the other a bank official before they started this academy together. When asked what drove them to start this school and to keep it going, they said that as friends before 1989, they always had a vision of how they would like to see education done at the secondary level in this subject matter. After times had changed, they immediately started the school and, once up and running, it has been really difficult, if not impossible, "to jump off a speeding train." (PR3 principal and assistant principal comments, 11/12/2001)

School 8. Church academic school: CH1.

This large church *gymnazium* is located in the bigger of the two East Bohemian district centers. It occupies a unique place among schools in this research. By nature of its state funding, it belongs among state *gymnazia*. At the same time, it is funded through church and charity sources, which the state does not restrict. But it seems to fit in better among the new private schools, because it is founded on the pre-communist tradition of church schooling revived after the end of communism in 1989, and because it runs a unique selection of courses of its own, as private schools often do.

This school resides in a hundred-year-old building which used to be a home for poor, delinquent boys in the pre-communist era. The building is now freshly painted a dark yellow color, and it sits pretty on the river bank in a fenced-off park with beautiful large trees, within walking distance to both the modern downtown and the old town district. The building itself is locked at all times and protected by an electronic security mechanism. Visitors have to ring the secretary to introduce themselves and be let in, and ask for the door-opening code upon leaving the building.

The inside of the building is as old as the interior, but clean and brightly decorated with student artwork. The walls are hung with updated bulletin boards, subject-matter and academic displays, and course descriptions. The most striking and vivid thing inside was the great number of beautifully kept indoor plants. They were everywhere, on windowsills, on the floor, in hallways corners, on staircases and mezzanines, large and small green and blossoming gems. Someone takes great care of all the plants, and they add a touch of brightness and warmth to the school atmosphere.

This *gymnazium* is a combined four and eight-year college track school. Founded and run by a church order, it appears quite well-off. It was founded in 1991, and the first classes began in the academic year 1992-1993. It has been included in the official network of accredited schools ever since. It is also one of the 50 Czech secondary schools which currently are associated UNESCO schools.³

The school mission, posted visibly on a bulletin board by the principal's office, is introduced by a quote from a document of the Second Vatican Council, "The Church Dimensions of Education in Catholic School", proclaiming that "The Church school is a place of true evangelization, a place where the pastoral mission of the Church becomes accomplished." The mission itself is to "give the students the possibility to begin to see the interrelations of social and natural sciences which lead toward philosophical inquiry." (School Mission, 1991)

The school code is posted next to the mission and is a lot more elaborate and specific than in any other of the eight observed schools. Not surprisingly, it states that the school goal is to educate in the spirit of Christian ethics and to reach a high quality standard of education. In student discipline, the students are expected to behave according to Christian ethics, learn to cultivate good social relationships, an open and welcoming mind, truthfulness, and respect for self and others (School Mission, 1991).

The overall atmosphere in this school was quiet and relaxed. All staff members except for the loud principal spoke in soft, quiet voices, and there was the usual silence

³ The Associated UNESCO School status means that a school is a member of an international school cooperation project focused on educating students to a positive attitude toward the environment, human rights, and the protection of cultural and natural heritage. See also the entry in Appendix F: Glossary.

during class periods. But during breaks, the students spilled into the hallways with the zest and stamina expected of any other group of teenagers. They walked from class to class, sat on benches and the floor, and talked loudly in pairs and groups. At the same time, they were polite and considerate, readily making way for me in the crowded hallways as I was passing, and greeting me politely.

The school enrolled a little over 600 students divided into 21 classes. It enrolled 141 new students in the eight-year track and 44 in the four-year track in fall, 2000. In summer, 2001, a total of 70 students in three classes attempted to graduate, with three not passing. Out of the three classes, 61.7%, 92%, and 90% respectively from each class were admitted to universities and colleges. In 1999-2000, the Czech School Inspection rated this school with grade 2 on a five-point national scale, where 1 is the best grade, and it highly praised the friendly relationship between students and teachers (Annual school report, 1999/2000).

The school uses the state curriculum and adds classes on religion, which can be taught only to students who wish to attend these classes. The school also adds a great number of electives and extracurricular subjects and activities. The curriculum is very strong in foreign languages, offering English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Latin. The focus on social sciences, with which the school started in 1992, has lately changed in a certain number of classes to a general academic focus, giving students greater flexibility in entering higher education. Some of the electives appear unique, such as a "personality course", posted on one of the numerous bulletin boards in the school hallways. It aims to teach social skills through sincere and truthful

communication, self respect, respect for others, empathy, assertiveness, and ability to share and help without claim for reward.

There is a great number of diverse interest groups and extracurricular activities in this school. The school has two successful choirs and an organ music group, and its curriculum is generally strong in music. The principal proudly gave me a gift of the school choir recording. There are frequent visits to theaters, concerts, movies, lectures, discussions, various field trips, and sports events. The school has partnerships with schools in Ireland, Denmark, Germany, and Poland. Not surprisingly, there are many bulletin boards in the school informing on charity activities and related student groups.

There were a few more interesting things in this school. One was the conspicuously posted information on several classes and discussion groups dealing with alcohol and drug use, smoking, sexual activity, student bullying and harassment. I have not seen so much visibly displayed interest in these sensitive matters in any other of the observed schools. Another unique thing was a newly opened student reading room, with regular hours, again not seen in any other of the observed schools. This school also has an informative and well-organized web site.

The teaching staff numbers 47 full time permanent teachers and almost 30 more temporary or part time lecturers. The staff also includes a conduct advisor for students, an anti-drug coordinator, and two spiritual advisors. Unfortunately, I was not able to meet with any of the teachers. The principal mentioned teacher lack of time during breaks, and their inability to meet before or after school. After some discussion, the

principal agreed to distribute 25 blank surveys to the teachers, and I picked up the completed surveys a week later. I collected 18 completed surveys.

The principal himself was quite welcoming but extremely busy. He devoted 15 minutes of his time to me in his office, and I understood I should feel honored. Two large desks and a conference table in his office were flooded by paperwork. The principal is an energetic, fast-moving man, an eloquent priest with a loud and clear voice.

His vision is apparent from his introduction to the annual school report for the year 2000-2001. Citing the reasons for parents to choose his school, he wrote about high academic standards, strong emphasis on issues of conduct and discipline, a positive atmosphere in his school, friendly relations among students, and good working relationships among students and teachers. Other goals of the school include providing a wide array of interest groups and a variety of subjects, and maintaining rich international contacts and participation in various European educational programs. "In [all] this", he wrote, "we are as successful as the high demand for our school proves." (Annual school report, 1999/2000)

Conclusion.

The findings in this section of research confirm my expectations of discovering both similarities and differences among the observed Czech state and non-state schools. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, studies of U.S. public and private schools have found both similarities and differences between public and private schools, and a great variation among the different types of private schools. The findings from observing these eight Czech schools brought similar results.

First of all, there were some obvious physical similarities and differences among the schools. While the state schools and the church school reside in large buildings constructed specifically for use as schools, the historically much younger private schools found their homes in structures not necessarily designed as secondary schools, but available and suitable for use as such.

There were great variations in the interior design and decoration among the schools. Three state schools, ST1, ST2, and ST4 were rather bare inside, devoid of art work and student or class work displays, and with only minimal bulletin boards. The fourth state schools, ST3, the church school, CH1, and two private schools, PR1 and PR2, were richly decorated and full of various busy bulletin boards. The last private school, PR3, was tastefully furnished and had a number of informative bulletin boards.

Organizational similarities among the state schools include large school size and large class size. State school classes tend to be larger than in private schools even in smaller, provincial schools, such as ST1. While state school classes averaged 28 to 30 students, private school classes had only 11 to 15 students. The number of teachers in individual schools is proportionate to the number of students. State schools tend to have large faculty, anywhere from 30 to more than 60 teachers, while the smaller private schools employ as few as 10 teachers. PR1 is an exception in this case, enrolling 400 students and employing 45 teachers.

Also, the private schools and the church school appear to be more concerned about their building and student safety. Only one state school, ST4, truly enforced the policy of locked main door, allowing the visitor to enter only after a personal introduction

to the school secretary. At all other state schools "locked" doors were easily opened. Two private schools, PR1 and PR2, and the church school kept their door truly locked to all outside visitors. PR3 school was freely accessible from the street.

There were also differences in student and teacher conduct between state and non-state schools. In the state schools, students tended to be more reserved toward myself as a visitor during breaks. More importantly, teacher-student interaction appeared limited and initiated mostly by teachers rather than equally by teachers and students. In the private schools and in the church school, students were less reserved in greeting me and attempting to interact with me as a visitor. Teacher-student interaction in two private schools, PR1 and PR2, was active, with teachers addressing students in a very friendly manner, and students addressing teachers frequently and without hesitation.

Finally, the differences and similarities described above all together combined to create a different atmosphere. Three state schools, ST1, ST2, and ST4, appeared somewhat cool and unwelcoming, with little or no signs of active academic life, and an appearance of reserved relations among teachers and students. One state school, ST3, the three private schools, and the church school all formed the impression of a rich academic environment, with many displays of an academic, artistic, and organizational nature. Also, the relationships among faculty and among teachers and students appeared warm and friendly in ST3, PR1, PR2, PR3, and CHI.

In considering similarities and differences among Czech state and non-state schools, one has to bear in mind the historically young age of the Czech non-state schools. Czech private schools are just about a decade old as a sector, and some of them

have been running for only a few years. Czech church schools claim their pre-communist heritage, but as individual institutions, they are no older than the private schools. Over time, differences and similarities are likely to develop and crystallize as the non-state schooling sector develops.

Chapter 4:

TEACHERS, CHANGE, AND INSPIRATION

Introduction.

For decades, Czech teachers have been taught to impart prescribed information to students. Most teaching is still done by lecturing, note taking, and memorizing. But since 1989, the situation has been slowly changing. Teachers are no longer expected to simply educate in subject matter information, but rather prepare students for life in a new and constantly changing world, and to teach them how to analyze the world and information around them. In real teacher life, the requirements for education for life in a “knowledge society” call for a fundamental transformation of teacher work and teacher approach to students. (Kotásek, Švecová, 1999) If teachers are to teach well, they need a well-designed, strong, and accessible training and professional development system.

The post-communist changes in the Czech Republic have found a parallel at the international level. Referring to the “profound social, economic, political, and cultural transformations” of the current world, Hargreaves states that teachers now have “much more access to networks of professional learning” worldwide. At the same time, he warns against the “deprofessionalization” of teaching caused by increased work pressures and demands, and reduced opportunities to learn from colleagues. (Hargreaves, in Cheng, Chow, Tsui, 2001)

In the same volume, Cheng sees new ways for transforming schooling and teacher development for the future world. This author proposes that new education and new teachers ought to aim to develop “contextualized multiple intelligences” in their students.

These intelligences include integrated technological, economic, social, political, and cultural areas. They should be taught through a triplization process involving globalization, localization, and individualization. (Cheng, Chow, Tsui, 2001)

The goals of Czech educational policy for teachers in this new age have been stated in key documents on education. The principle of “consistent care devoted to the school personnel, especially to the teachers”, newly termed the “development of human resources”, has been proposed in an important document, called Teacher: Leading Agent in School Transformation, and prepared for the Ministry of Education. (Kotásek, Švecová, 1999, p.1) The seminal document of current Czech educational policy, National Program of Education Development, generally known as the White Book, asks that teachers be “prepared for changes resulting from [newly instituted] school autonomy and a new concept of teaching aimed at developing and motivating students for independent learning” (MŠMT, 2001, p.95).

How is this transformation to be achieved? The White Book proposes a “network of centrally managed pedagogical centers in regions”. (MŠMT, 2001, p.95) The Czech School Inspection recommends that a new plan for professional development and growth of pedagogical employees be prepared. (ČŠI, 2001, p. 48) Petra Buzková, the woman who became the new Minister of Education in summer, 2002, wishes that teachers “feel that they can find support from the Ministry” in their work, and that their professional status be generally improved. (Lidové noviny, 7/27/2002)

Change is slow, however. As Evans stated, individuals both embrace and resist it. Change can also disappoint us in its capacity to achieve double effect, both improving

and worsening teaching conditions. (Evans, 1996) A fundamental transformation of teaching methods and teacher approaches to students is bound to take some time and some trials. It is both comforting and sad to know that the predominance of learning by memorizing facts is not endemic just to Czech schooling. In his 2002 report on local theories of teacher change in the U.S., Spillane states that the axiom “teaching is telling and learning is remembering” is still prevalent in societal thinking. (Spillane, 2002)

How do Czech secondary school teachers fare in this regard? In its annual report for the year 2000/2001, the Czech School Inspection reported on secondary school teacher methods. “In methods and ways of teaching”, it states, “stereotypical work based on teacher lectures, [student] note taking and lecture review was prevalent.” It further stated that “Active concepts of teaching by use of cooperative methods of learning were less frequent”, and that “Teachers most often focused on rote memorization”. (ČŠI, 2001, pp. 15, 16) At the same time, the report claims that state and church secondary schools in general provide academic education of better quality than private schools, as measured by the Inspection rating system. (ČŠI, 2001, p. 15, Table 4)

How do Czech teachers themselves feel about this new and changing professional world? Where are they educated, and how do they keep their work up-to-date? Where do they go for their professional development? What sources of professional inspiration, and development are available to teachers, and how do teachers use them? What sources of professional development and inspiration do teachers find and use in the changing post-communist reality? What do education experts say about the current state of teacher education and professional development?

Learning to Teach: Training and Professional Development.

As is true in all professions, being a teacher involves not only the initial training, but constant development throughout one's professional life. Globally, the trend toward lifelong learning has been growing in all professions, including teaching. In the U.S., for example, it has been shown that the emphasis on life-long learning for teachers has increased in the past 25 years. (Long, Riegle, 2002) After all, teachers are expected "to create a vigorous community of learners among students", and they cannot do that without being life-long learners themselves. (Grossman, Wineburg, 2000)

Becoming a teacher in the Czech Republic may have been somewhat easier than in some other countries because there has been no teaching certificate requirement. No national teaching certification process exists, and some schools do not even require their teachers to have a degree in teaching. Thus many teachers, especially those teaching specialized subject matter in vocational, technical, and business secondary schools, do not have any teaching credentials at all. They usually have an education or working experience in the subject matter. Indeed, knowledge of the subject matter is considered fundamental for a person to become a teacher. Also, some young Czechs end up attending teacher colleges with no intention to become teachers, simply because they are easier to enroll in and graduate from than many other colleges or universities.

Future teachers earn their degrees at vocational secondary schools, teacher colleges, or non-teacher colleges and universities with degrees in subject matter, but not teaching. Some teachers trained in non-teacher colleges complete the so-called pedagogical minimum, a series of courses designed to provide one with essential

pedagogical knowledge and skills. The amount of teacher training differs depending on the grade to be taught. Preschool and kindergarten teachers are trained at four-year vocational secondary schools and generally do not have college degrees. Elementary school teachers usually have a college degree from four-year teacher colleges, or a subject matter degree from a non-teacher college or university.

Secondary school teachers are required to have a college degree, but it does not have to come from a teacher college. These teachers must have credentials in the subject matter, but schools may not always require them to graduate with teacher credentials or the pedagogical minimum in order to hire them. An inspector from the regional Czech School Inspection office in East Bohemia mentioned lack of teacher credentials as one of the major problems in teacher training and, consequently, in the quality of teachers in general. In an interview, he told me that “many teachers teach without teacher credentials, without the pedagogical minimum, especially at secondary vocational schools, mainly private ones.” (Interview IINSPCSI, 11/5/2001).

One aspect of this situation is that teacher colleges, in the words of a professor at the College of Education at Charles University in Prague, “face tough competition with medical, law, natural science colleges.” (Interview IPROF1COE, 11/11/2001) Additionally, those who do graduate from teacher colleges often do not remain true to teaching. Also, teacher colleges tend to have a high dropout rate. The situation is worst with future foreign language teachers who “run away to more lucrative occupations, such as interpreting, translating, and business.” (Interview IPROF2COE, 10/30/2001) Those who do enter the teaching profession do not always last through the first few years.

Similarly as in many other countries, they tend to be deterred by low salaries and poor working conditions in teaching.

But the majority of teachers who are loyal to the profession face difficulties with professional development throughout their teaching tenure. The regional office inspector quoted the latest conclusions of the Czech School Inspection, assessing the current professional development of teachers as “spontaneous, disorganized, without any sense of direction.” (Interview IINSPCSI, 11/5/2001) Many teachers often cannot attend educational events or courses, the inspector added, because they have no substitutes to take over for them so they could attend. Also, lack of time and family considerations often prevent teachers from attending professional development courses. (Interview IINSPCSI, 11/5/2001)

Professors of education at the College of Education at Charles University in Prague had varied opinions of the situation. The Chair of the Special Education Department was optimistic as she stated that “the system of lifelong education [for teachers] is in place and is functional.” (Interview IPROF2COE, 10/30/2001) She noted that things are about to improve as the new concept of “in-service learning” is being introduced into Czech teacher training. She mentioned the post-1989 nationwide project of retraining Russian language teachers to become English language teachers as an example of a successful project in professional development of teachers. The public, however, has viewed the results of that particular project as dubious. The newly trained English language teachers have often been only one lesson ahead of the class, with poor

or no training in conversation skills, pronunciation, and the cultural aspects of the English language.

The Chair of the Pedagogy Department at Charles University was less optimistic in her assessment of professional development and teacher training in general. In her opinion, professional development had been very good for decades before 1989, with a functioning nationwide system. After 1989, the whole network was torn down and nothing systematic has been built in its place. She pointed out that there is no equivalent of "in-service education" for teachers in the Czech Republic. She also stated that the practice of mentoring incoming teachers in schools has changed. It used to be that the principals assigned an older colleague-mentor to each new teacher. This practice, reportedly, is being abandoned in schools. (Interview IPROF1COE, 11/11/2001)

Opinions of educators in the field vary, but tend to be largely unfavorable. ST3 assistant principal complained of poorly organized and very brief internships done in her school by local teacher college students. Teachers in her school, she noted, are often reluctant to let unprepared teachers/observers into their classrooms. She and the principal must constantly convince their teachers to let student teachers work with them in order to maintain an active connection with the teacher college. She also noted that teacher training in methodology is unsatisfactory and insufficient. (ST3 assistant principal welcoming comments, 11/5/2001).

ST4 principal stated that there is "literally nothing in lifelong education for teachers". She added that, generally, no lifelong education or professional development system exists in the Czech Republic for any profession or trade. (ST4 principal

welcoming comments, 11/6/2001). ST4 assistant principal said with disappointment that colleges of education "have lately deviated from their purpose of teaching methodology, didactics and pedagogy in favor of expanding preparation in subject matter." (ST4 assistant principal welcoming comments, 11/6/2001)

What, in reality, exists in professional development for teachers? The Center of Further Education for Teachers (Centrum dalšího vzdělávání učitelů) at the College of Education at Charles University in Prague provides accredited teacher-training for professional educators. It is a part of Charles University, a state-funded higher education institution. Taking one of its courses brings a college-level diploma or certificate to its graduates.

The Center runs two types of courses, graduate subject matter courses for teachers, and professional development courses for teachers. The two types are each subject to different funding policies, and schools, both state and private, can use state funds to pay only for the second type, the professional development courses for their teachers. Course schedules combine long-distance study with daily classes and independent study. Long-distance study requires all-day attendance every other Saturday. The length of both professional development and graduate subject matter courses was generally four semesters, i.e., two academic years.

The Center itself is located in one of many Charles University buildings scattered around the city. There is a small office and a modest library with a helpful staff member. The professors themselves are not easy to meet with because their busy teaching schedules are burdened with the commute between different buildings. There is a

bulletin board with a lot of information about classes in the dark windowless entry hallway, and the Center has an informative web site at www.pedf.cuni.cz/~www_uvrs/.

While the courses look interesting, attendance by teachers is not very high. Reasons abound. Local and state funding for such courses is limited in some schools. Funding attendance from a regular teacher salary is out of the question for most teachers. Also, only some full-time teachers are willing or able to commit time and means to the attendance, the work, and the regular commute. To many teachers, time considerations for studying are incompatible with their family needs and lives. Additionally, the commute is sometimes made difficult by lack of private transportation and cost or inconvenience of public transportation.

The regional Pedagogical Centers seem a better alternative for teachers seeking inspiration and improvement in professional development. All educators encountered in this research, be they education professors, school leaders, administrators, or teachers, mentioned the Centers as primary places of professional development for teachers. These Centers are a remake of the pre-1989 pedagogical centers. Each region has several, and both Pardubice and Hradec Králové have one. The Centers are funded by the state through the Ministry of Education which allocates the funds through the regional authorities for education. They are staffed and administered locally, which is one reason for these Centers to differ widely, depending on the individuals who run them.

The Center in Pardubice is open only per request, and reaching it by telephone or by e-mail turned out to be a chore. Its web site at www.pcpce.cz does not provide any information because it does not allow a visitor beyond its welcoming page. The Center in

Hradec Králové is a different story. My phone calls and e-mail were answered promptly, and I was offered a visit and the use of their services. The web site at www.pgchk.cz is well-built, informative, and easy to navigate. It lists courses by subject matter, and informs about the library, video rental, and copy/publishing center for schools. The Center has a total of 5 offices in 5 different towns in East Bohemia, and all are named at the web site with addresses, names, and phone numbers.

Aside from courses and events organized by the Pedagogical Centers, there have been numerous and often privately run courses for teachers since 1989. The biggest hit currently, the Special Education Department chair told me, is school management. (Interview IPROF2COE, 10/30/2001) Indeed, courses in school management are named in the Center of Further Education for Teachers at Charles University in Prague, and in the Pedagogical Center in Hradec Králové. And a quick search of Czech teacher college web sites reveals school management courses named by each of them.

Associations and professional organizations represent an important part of teacher professional development. These groups aim to provide a source of inspiration and guidance for teachers, a connection to the teaching world outside their schools and sometimes outside their country. Many groups flourishing today were founded after 1989, the end of communism. Under communism, professional associations had to be approved by a government authority, and had to prove that they were properly disseminating the communist ideology. Although many of the subject-matter associations have existed since before 1989, new ones have been founded since then.

Some post-1989 important associations include PAU, Friends of Engaged Teaching (Přátelé angažovaného učení), and NEMES, Independent Cross-Subject Group for the Transformation of Education (Nezávislá mezioborová skupina pro transformaci vzdělávání). Some important subject-specific groups, both pre-1989 and post-1989, include associations for foreign language teachers, such as the British Council, the Alliance Francaise, SGUN (Association of German Linguists and Teachers), and for teachers in other subject matter areas, such as JČMF, Unity of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists, or ASUD, Association of History Teachers.

Some specialized groups for educators and other interested individuals include AŘG, The Association of Principals of Secondary Schools (Asociace ředitelů středních škol), and Unie rodičů ČR (The Union of Parents of the Czech Republic). Founded in 1991, the Union is a national association representing the interests of parents, and working with the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education (www.unierodicu.cz). There is also Scio, the national testing organization, preparing and selling sample and real tests for all levels of the education system.

The newly-founded associations seem to be a professional lifeline for some teachers. PAU, for example, is one of a kind. Friends of Engaged Teaching, aim to “make school effective and humanly pleasant” and apply principles of democracy in the schools. (www.pau.cz/onas.html) They also “strive to improve the mutual relations between teachers and students, school and parents, teachers, school and community...”. (it.pedf.cuni.cz/~pau/cile_htm)

PAU is accredited by the Ministry of Education, and open for membership to professional educators as well as the general public. Founded in 1994, it has grown into an association with close to 500 members including teachers, principals, and other education professionals, but also parents and others. It works with teacher colleges, Pedagogical Centers, and other organizations, such as the Open Society Fund, in developing and giving teacher education courses.

PAU is also involved in both national and international educational projects, such as *Dokážu to?* (Can I Do It?), a project about teachers, child development, and innovative teaching methods, or RCWT (Reading and Writing to Critical Thinking), an International Reading Association and Open Society Institute project designed to help teachers in many countries learn about active teaching methods and critical thinking in teaching (it.pedf.cuni.cz). PAU also prepares and publishes opinions about proposed legislation in education, and encourages teachers to express their opinions in such matters.

NEMES is also accredited by the Ministry of Education and open for membership to professional educators and the general public. It focuses on the transformation of education and is actively involved in teacher education, giving courses and publishing opinions. It often publishes articles on proposed legislation and regulations in teacher education in Czech education journals, such as "Učitelské listy" (Teacher Gazette). It provides its own detailed proposals in teacher professional development.

The British Council, the Association of German Linguists and German Language Teachers (SGUN), and the Alliance Française are the most popular professional associations among surveyed foreign language teachers. Among the three, the British

Council is the most frequently quoted one, probably due to the current popularity of English language studies in Czech schools. The Council is run by the British Embassy as a part of their cultural activities in the Czech Republic. The Council has a network of offices in many Czech cities, including Hradec Králové. The Council is involved actively in professional development activities for English language teachers, giving courses and organizing teacher exchange stays between Czech and British schools. (www.britishcouncil.cz).

There are other professional associations in Czech education. Some are established associations for academics and other interested educators, such as the Czech Education Research Association, (aix.upol.cz/~capv/), and the Czech Pedagogical Society (www.mendelu.cz/~rybicka/cpds/). Both publish their own journal, organize annual conferences, and boast membership by academics from the largest teacher colleges in the country. New organizations still appear. One of the latest examples is AMATE, the New Initiative of Methodologists, formed in June, 2001. Such a lively scene should have something to offer to any teacher.

Surveying the Teachers: Notes on Method.

I used teacher surveys to learn about teacher attitudes toward their students, changes they have made in their teaching, and sources they use for inspiration and professional development. The survey forms were brief, to allow teachers to fill them out during breaks between lessons. In each school, regardless of its size, my goal was to collect a minimum of ten completed surveys. I came close to meeting this goal, collecting between 6 and 18 surveys in each school. In the larger schools, including all

state schools and the church school, I asked for a greater number of surveys to be completed than in the smaller private schools. The manner of distribution and numbers of distributed and collected surveys are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Teacher Survey Distribution and Rate of Return.

School	Manner of distribution	Number of surveys distributed	Number of surveys collected	% rate of return	Total number of surveyed teachers by school type
ST1	By Principal	10	6	60%	State school teachers: 46
ST2	By researcher to a group of teachers selected by Principal	10	10	100%	
ST3	By Assistant Principal	25	16	64%	
ST4	By researcher to a group of teachers selected by Principal and Assistant Principal	16	14	87.5%	
PR1	By researcher	8	8	100%	Private school teachers: 25
PR2	By researcher	7	7	100%	
PR3	By Principal and Assistant Principal	10	10	100%	
CH1	By Principal	25	18	72%	Church school teachers: 18

The manner of distribution varied according to the wishes of school leadership. In two state schools, I handed out the survey forms to a selected group of teachers in the faculty meeting room during the morning break to fill in immediately. In two state school, one private school, and the church school, the principals and/or assistant principals preferred for me to leave the survey forms for distribution by them, and to

collect completed surveys a week later. In the remaining two private schools, I was left to my own devices to distribute and collect the surveys.

I was never able to meet all teachers in all the schools. In three state schools, I met only a group of teachers, pre-selected for me by the school leadership. In one state school, I met only the teachers whom I interviewed. In one private school, I never met the teachers, but interviewed the school leadership team in depth. In two private schools, I met and spoke with every teacher on staff. In the church school, I met only the principal and no teachers at all.

In the survey, teachers were asked several initial questions regarding the type of their current school and the school in which they taught immediately prior to this school. I was then able to group teachers by type of school. Teachers answered questions about the length of their teaching tenure and length of their stay in their current school. Teachers were not asked about their subject matter, but it often became apparent in responses about teaching methods and membership in professional associations. I compiled the answers by type of school, and for all schools combined. (Appendix D)

Some of these questions yielded interesting outcomes. For example, Czech teachers in these secondary schools display considerable longevity both in the teaching profession and in individual schools. Teachers in state schools stated long tenures in their current schools, often close to or over 20 years. Even teachers in the recently founded private schools showed stable tenures, even if still brief. (Appendix D, questions 1 and 2)

The most important categories examined by the survey include sources of inspiration for teachers in looking for new approaches and teaching methods, teachers' own perceptions of changes in their approach to students and teaching, teacher membership in professional associations, and teacher participation in public discussions on education. (Appendix B, questions 4 through 10). Responses to these questions are analyzed in the following section.

Teacher Approaches To Students and Teaching Methods: Perception of Changes.

Teachers answered questions about their perception of changes in their own approach and teaching methods in questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the survey. Teachers were asked to consider changes since the beginning of teaching in their current school. How did these teachers perceive their own change making in teaching? Were there differences between private, state, and church schools teachers? (See Appendix B: Teacher Survey Form, for questions)

Table 3: Teacher Responses by School Type to Question 4: How has your approach to students changed since you have begun teaching at this school?

Response scale:	State school teachers:	Private school teachers:	Church school teachers:
Changed fundamentally	0	1	0
Changed a lot	10	6	5
Changed somewhat	16	3	6
Changed a little	17	8	7
Changed not at all	3	6	0
Total by school type:	46	25	18

As apparent, teachers in all schools most often perceived the changes in their approach to students as moderate. Most teachers in state schools responded in the middle

and below the response scale, but a high number of them, 10 responded changing a lot. In private school teachers, most responded in the low end of the scale, changing little or nothing at all. One private school teacher, however, reported changing fundamentally, the only such answer to this question of all school teachers. Church school teacher responses were evenly distributed in the middle of the scale. (see also Appendix D, question 4 for details and percentages).

Teacher perception of changes in student independence and capability was similar in all schools. All teachers tended to view their current students as equally capable as the students in the schools where they taught previously. Private school teachers considered current students either more or equally independent, and equally or more capable than in previous schools. Most state school teachers rated their current students equally or more independent than students in previous schools, and most considered their students equally capable. Church school teacher responses were distributed along the whole response scale, but most rated their current students equally independent and more capable than students in previous schools. (Appendix D, question 5 for details and percentages).

Teacher responses about their own perception of changes in their teaching methods differ somewhat according to school type. While most teachers in each of all three school types responded predominantly in the middle of the scale, the rest of the response distribution differed according to school type. The greatest and the smallest degrees of changes were reported by no or single teachers in each school type, but the responses in middle of the scale were slightly different in each school type. The responses are captured in Table 4.

Table 4: Teacher Responses by School Type to Question 6: How have your teaching methodologies changed since you have begun teaching at this school?

Response scale:	State school teachers:	Private school teachers:	Church school teachers:
Changed fundamentally	1	1	0
Changed a lot	6	4	4
Changed somewhat	23	8	12
Changed a little	15	11	2
Changed not at all	1	0	0
Total by school type:	46	25	18

Most private school teachers reported changing their methods a little or somewhat since the beginning of their tenure in their current private school. Only a few reported changing their methods a lot and 1 teacher reported changing her methods fundamentally. At the same time, 18 out of these 25 private school teachers taught at state schools immediately before they started teaching at their current private school. All 5 teachers who reported changes in their methods at the uppermost section of the scale, a lot and fundamentally, had previously taught at a state school. These same 5 teachers also reported changing their approach to students a lot.

Most church school teachers again responded in the middle of the scale, changing their teaching methods somewhat. 4 changed their teaching methods a lot, and 2 changed a little. Of these 18 church school teachers, 12 previously taught at a state school, 3 taught at a private school, and 1 at another church school. All 4 teachers who reported changing their methods a lot previously taught at a state school. Interestingly, this finding is similar to that of the 5 private school teachers with the highest degree of changes who also all previously taught at a state school.

Among state school teachers, most responded in the middle of the scale and reported changing their methods in their current school somewhat or a little. A few reported changing their methods a lot and a little respectively, 1 teacher reported fundamental changes, and 1 no changes at all. Of these 46 state school teachers, 26 previously taught at another state school, 9 at a private school, and the rest have only taught at this state school. Of the 9 teachers who previously taught at a private school, 5 reported changing their methods either a lot or fundamentally.

Two factors, transfer between school types and length of teacher tenure in state schools, seem to raise the probability of teachers changing their methods and even their approach to students. In all three school types, the highest degree of changes in approach to methods was connected to teacher transfer between school types. All private and church school teachers who changed their methods or approach to students a lot or fundamentally came to their current school from a state school, although not all those who came from a state school reported such high degree of changes. A slight majority of all those state school teachers who came to their current school from a private school also reported the highest degree of changes.

Length of teacher tenure shows as a decisive factor only in state school teachers. It cannot be ascertained for non-state school teachers because non-state schools have not been around long enough. 4 state school teachers who changed their methods and approach to students a lot have taught at their current state school over 20 years, 1 for 10 years in the current school and for over ten years at another state school. 3 teachers who

reported changing either their approach to students or their teaching methods a lot have taught at their current state school for less than 10 years.

What are the new methods teachers in all types of schools began to use in their teaching? The term itself, "new methods", is a buzz word in current Czech education. Some teachers smiled when they saw or heard it from me, some cringed. Since 1989, there have been contradictory trends in teaching methodology. One trend has been to discard the existing teaching methods and introduce new ones. The opposite trend has been to preserve the existing teaching methods, buttressed by the thinking that what has worked until now must be good for the future as well. Lodged in the middle, the third trend has been to hold on to the existing methods and approaches, but keep a careful eye open for anything new and useful. Some teachers believe that "new methods" have done more harm than good to current Czech schools, while others are convinced that only new approaches may save the health and good learning in schools.

The biggest group of teachers in this study, however, seem to be moderate mid-stream thinkers. For one, the largest numbers of both private and state school teachers responded to the question about changing their teaching methods precisely in the center of the scale, and most church school teachers responded in the center and one step below. (Appendix D, question 6). In the next question, teachers were asked to name and describe the new methods they began to use since teaching in their current school. Most teachers individually named 1 to 3 new methods, and teachers in all types of schools frequently named the same methods.

Some of the most frequently named new teaching methods in this study include group teaching, problem teaching, games, and integrated teaching. Foreign language teachers also named more than once the use of discussion, conversation, and more communication in class, including pair work. These most commonly used new methods and approaches in teaching are also described in the Glossary.

The most frequently named new methods and approaches by teachers in all types of schools are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Teacher Responses by School Type to Q 7: What new methods of teaching have you started to use since you have begun teaching at this school? Please name and describe methods:

Type of new method	Number of state school teachers reported this method	Number of private school teachers reported this method	Number of church school teachers reported this method
Group teaching	28	15	10
Problem teaching	23	15	9
Games	14	7	11
Integrated teaching	9	6	2
Discussion, conversation, more communication in foreign language classes	3	2	2

Group teaching is the most frequently named new method of teaching by all teachers. This is most likely due to the ease of using this method, which involves teaching students in small groups, as opposed to teaching the whole class at once. Problem teaching is the next most frequently stated new method. It involves presenting and teaching an issue as a problem to solve, rather than presenting it in a lecture or narrative mode. Problem teaching and group teaching are sometimes combined.

Games in teaching were the third most frequently named new method, mentioned by teachers of different subjects in all school types. The next method is integrated teaching, which involves teaching topical lessons that span across several subject matter areas, such as natural sciences as opposed to only physics. This is a step away from the traditional way of teaching in separated subject-matter defined blocks of time.

Finally, foreign language teachers in all school types named active communication approaches, involving discussion, conversation, and pair work. Other new methods and approaches named no more than once in each school type included the use of audio and video, listening and comprehension exercises, and work with foreign journals and song texts in foreign language lessons. In other subjects, teachers named independent student work, frequent discussion, drama, workshops, different ways of testing, greater active inclusion of students, and critical thinking.

What Inspires Teachers.

Question 8 of the survey inquired about professional inspiration and asked to name specific sources. Teachers in all types of schools named a broad range of options. All teachers, regardless of school type, most often named their own readings and sources, frequently using the terms "self-education" and "self-study" Courses taken outside of their schools but not in the Pedagogical Centers were the second most frequent source of inspiration for state and private school teachers. The third most frequently named source of inspiration was getting ideas from teachers from other schools. For church school teachers, taking courses and communicating with teachers from other schools ranked

exactly the same. Table 6 shows the most frequently named sources of inspiration by school type.

Table 6. Teacher Responses by School Type to Question 8: Where have you looked for and found inspiration for the changes you have just described?

Sources of inspiration named:	Number of state school teachers reported this source	Number of private school teachers reported this source	Number of church school teachers reported this source
Own readings and own sources	28	8	10
Courses taken outside of their school	15	8	9
Teachers from other schools	7	5	9
Foreign models of teaching	6	4	6
Pedagogical Center courses	3	4	0

Following the first three most frequently cited sources, the fourth was employing foreign models and methods of teaching. Only private school teachers reported additional comments on this source, two of them naming the Waldorf school approach, and two further unspecified models of teaching learned at the British Council seminars. The last source named by more than 1 or 2 teachers in each school was taking the Pedagogical Center courses, named by state and private school teachers.

Other than that, only one teacher, from a private school, named the association Friends of Engaged Teaching (PAU). Only one teacher, from the church school, referred to the post-communist changes and the associated change of the climate as a source of inspiration for teaching (Appendix D, question 8, church school). Only 2 teachers, one

from a private and one from a state school, named methodical materials published by the Ministry of Education as a source of inspiration in improving/changing their teaching.

State school teachers in general named a greater number and range of sources of inspiration (Appendix D, question 8, compare all school types). This may be caused by the fact that I surveyed a greater number of state school teachers than private and church school teachers. At the same time, it may indicate broader interests in professional development by state school teachers, or better options for attending courses for some state school teachers, including richer local funding and/or better school options, such as a greater number of substitute teachers for such occasions.

Private school teachers named fewer sources of professional inspiration than state school teachers. At the same time, more private school teachers than state school teachers elaborated in greater detail and more words when asked about sources of inspiration for improving/changing their teaching. One teacher explained that she began using more methods with an emphasis on problem education in her current private school, and that she is inspired by students and her own ideas of "effective learning". Another teacher stated that she is "very creative", and "does not adhere to the dogmas of professional articles or even the methodological advisers." Another teacher explained that the new foreign-published textbooks, teacher aids, and courses in foreign language teaching presented a source of inspiration. Yet another teacher explained the importance of free-flowing communication and conversation in her English language classes, and how letting students talk a lot inspires further ideas on how to teach them better. All these private school teachers previously taught at a state school.

Church school teachers also shared more information on sources of inspiration than state school teachers. One teacher explained the importance of taking individual initiative in improving one's teaching. Another teacher responded by asking questions about differences between teachers in state and private schools: Do private school teachers teach differently from state school teachers because of better salaries, smaller class sizes, and better equipment in private schools? Do private school teachers perform better because of these better conditions, or would they work harder anyway because it is in the interests of their students? Or do private school teachers perform better for the sake of good impressions their school wants to make to attract more students?

Another church school teacher pointed out that she gets a lot of inspiration from the foreign schools with which their school has a partnership. In its web site, this church school includes partnerships with schools in Germany, Denmark, Poland, Ireland, Switzerland, and France. It has active partnerships with more foreign schools than any other schools in this study. Its status as a church school may help forge and maintain these partnerships, although it is not clear whether the partner schools are also church schools.

One church school teacher mentioned theological sources and courses as an inspiration in changing/improving her teaching. Unique among teachers from all schools, one church school teacher explained that the post-communist social changes brought changes in the student body and enabled teachers to express ideas in the classroom they could not have mentioned before 1989 (Appendix D, question 8, church school summary).

Teacher search for inspiration, regardless of school type, is defined primarily by teachers' individual quest for professional improvement and learning. This finding is true for teachers at all school types as individual teacher "self-study" was the most frequently reported source of professional inspiration. It may also say something about the easy accessibility and convenience of such learning, done on personal terms and free of major financial expenses.

The second and third most frequently named sources were, respectively, courses taken outside of their schools and ideas from teachers from other schools. This finding indicates that, after the first choice of individual self-study, contact with others is the second preference for these teachers' learning.

At the same time, type of school is relevant for teacher choice of sources of professional inspiration in this study. State school teachers named a greater number and range of sources of inspiration. Church school teachers also named a great number and range of sources of inspiration. Some of their choices were understandably defined by their school type, such as theological seminars and partnerships with foreign schools. Private school teachers named a smaller number of sources of inspiration for changing/improving their teaching than either state or church school teachers. At the same time, private school teachers shared the greatest number and length of extra commentary on the sources of inspiration they like to use.

Active Teachers, Passive Teachers: Participation in Associations and Discussions.

Teacher participation in professional associations and discussions on education was the last survey measure of teacher initiative in improving/changing their teaching.

Question 9 of the survey asked teachers about their membership in professional organizations. Teachers were asked to name and/or describe the organizations, and state how much their participation helped their teaching. Table 7 shows teacher responses by numbers and percentages by school type.

Table 7. Teacher Responses by School Type to Question 9: Do you participate in or are you a member of any local, regional, national or other associations or initiatives in education?

State school teachers reporting active membership	Private school teachers reporting active membership	Church school teachers reporting active membership
14 = 30.5% of the total 46 surveyed	6 = 24% of the total 25 surveyed	10 = 55.6% of the total 18 surveyed

Conversely, we can see that about 70% of state school teachers, 76% of private school teachers, and close to 45% of church school teachers named no membership in any professional associations. Expressing perhaps the feelings of others, a private school teacher commented in writing that teacher associations have “no authority at all”, [participation] “is a waste of time and effort”. (Appendix D, question 9, private schools summary)

Those teachers who do participate in professional associations named a wide array of organizations. The most popular associations are those organized around subject matter: Two or more teachers in two or more schools of all three types named the British Council, the Unity of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists (JČMS), the Association of German Teachers and Linguists (SGUN), the Association of Teachers of French, and the Regional Committee for the Olympic Games in Mathematics (KV MO). Other such associations, each named by only one teacher, included the Association of History

Teachers (ASUD), the Association of Art Teachers, the Association of School Sports Clubs, and the Union of Classical Philologists (Alfa).

Other than subject-matter professional associations were also named, including the Association of Private Schools of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, and Friends of Engaged Teaching, (PAU), each named only once by a private school teacher. The Committee for Upbringing and Education of the Czech Bishop Conference was named by the church school principal. The Diocese Committee for Schooling, Upbringing, and Education in Hradec Králové and the Club of Ecological Education were each named once by a church school teacher. The Association of *Gymnazium* Principals was named by a state school principal, and the Association of Secondary School Teachers by a state school teacher.

Most of the teachers who claimed membership in professional associations also stated that their participation in these associations is helpful in their teaching practice. Many teachers in all three types of schools marked their participation in professional associations as helpful "in all aspects of teaching". Some teachers elaborated further, explaining that participation helps them in keeping better informed, and in providing them with ideas about teaching methodology and topics and materials for teaching. Several teachers also noted the human contact benefits of such participation, noting that they enjoy learning about other teacher experiences and getting the "psychological support" inherent in meeting with other teachers.

Question number 10 asked teachers about their active participation in public discussions on topics in education. These discussions on education are initiated by the

Ministry of Education and open for commentary to all educators and the general public in several rounds for a certain period of time. If reporting active participation, teachers were asked how much their participation helped in their teaching. Table 8 shows the responses in numbers and percentages grouped by school type.

Table 8. Teacher Responses by School Type to Question 10: What discussion in education have you participated in?

State school teachers reporting active participation	Private school teachers reporting active participation	Church school teachers reporting active participation
18 = 39.1% of the total 46 surveyed	12 = 48% of the total 25 surveyed	9 = 50% of the total 18 surveyed

Conversely, we can see that about 60% of state school teachers, 52% of private school teachers, and 50% of church school teachers do not participate in such discussions. The most frequently discussed topic among participating teachers was the preparation of the new *maturita*, the secondary school exit examination. 15 state school teachers, 10 private school teachers, and 5 church school teachers named this topic in their responses.

Teachers' responses as to how much their active discussion of this topic helps their teaching are mixed. Several teachers in all schools stated it did not help at all in their teaching. Several teachers, on the other hand, stated that their participation helped their teaching. Other teachers were specific, suggesting that participating in such discussions may benefit teachers. A private school teacher commented that this discussion "raised my interest in approaching this issue with a critical mind". A private and a church school teacher reported that discussing this topic taught them about requirements for students to pass the test, and adapting student learning to the new test.

A state school teacher commented that she learned about the differences between the lower and higher skill levels of the exam.

There were also skeptical comments. A church school teacher commented that the Ministry of Education does not heed the comments of educators and the public and “does what it wants anyway”. Another church school teacher stated that participating in the discussion made him/her “acutely perceive the shortcomings in teaching students by means of a written test”. A state school teacher commented that there are deficiencies in the preparation of the new examination. Another state school teacher lamented the fruitlessness of his participation, saying “I raised my voice many times, but to what effect?”. Yet another state school teacher expressed frustration, writing that “...no one is able to tell me yet what the new *maturita* will be like”.

Teachers who participate in these discussions named few topics other than the new *maturita*. One church and two state school teachers reported participating in the discussion on the White Book in education. Another church school teacher reported participating in various parliamentary and academic discussions. A private school teacher and a state school teacher admitted an interest in the topics, but stated that they do not contribute official comments, but discuss the topics with friends and colleagues instead.

As a share of the whole in individual school types, more of the church school teachers than either private or state school teachers reported an active status in both professional associations and public discussions on education. More state school teachers than private school teachers reported an active membership in professional associations

than private school teachers. More private school teachers than state school teachers reported active participation in public discussions on education.

Interpreting these results for individual school types suggests a number of possible conclusions. The higher level of activity by the church school teachers may mean that their school is a true forerunner in actively involved academic secondary school education, and that the school is as active and excellent as its principal claims it to be. The lower levels of participating in associations by private school teachers may mean that these teachers are very busy, spending more time in individualized instruction and in the required individualized student advising sessions than state school teachers. The higher levels of participation by state school teachers may suggest that these teachers may have more time to devote to such matters as individualized instruction and student advising is largely voluntary at state schools.

Higher levels of participation by state school teachers may also be related to their longer professional experience and longer tenures at their current school. For teachers in all school combined, the average length of working as a teacher was 18.39 years for state school teachers, 15.66 years for church school teachers, and 14.28 years for private school teachers. The average length of teaching in their current school was 14.28 years for state school teachers, 4.72 years for church school teachers, and 4.04 years for private school teachers. (See Appendix D, Teacher Survey Results) It is useful to remember that the short average teacher tenure in church and private schools is not controlled by the teachers. Rather, it is dictated by the historical circumstances as these schools have only existed since after 1989. In this, state school teachers appear to have an edge over both

private and church school teachers, benefiting from the stability an educator may enjoy from an extended tenure in a school.

Conclusion.

This chapter examined teacher survey responses. Teachers answered questions about their school type, length of their tenure, attitude toward changes in teaching and toward students, membership and participation in professional associations and in discussions on education. The findings were analyzed throughout and are summarized in this conclusion. The next chapter, Chapter Five, examines data collected in teacher interviews. Finally, Chapter Six combines the survey and interview findings together with the school site observation findings in a final overview.

Findings from this survey indicate that Czech teachers have been looking for changes to introduce in their teaching. Even though the Czech School Inspection recently reported that non-traditional, active approaches in teaching were “less frequent” in secondary schools, Czech research literature lists the use of innovations in education as one of the most radical and influential post-communist changes. (CSI, 2001, Průcha, 2001). According to this literature, alternative methods have been tried by teachers in both state and non-state schools. (Průcha, 2001).

This survey found that the attitude of teachers toward introducing change into their teaching is influenced by a number of factors. Personal choices, individual preferences, and available options, as we shall see in the interviews, play a role in determining how teachers approach changes in their teaching methods.

School type, i.e., state or non-state, is another factor affecting teacher attitude toward changes in teaching. In itself, however, school type does not noticeably influence teacher attitude toward changing teaching methods. Most teacher responses about their attitude toward change in teaching in all schools were in the middle range of the scale. Either none or only a few in the different school types checked one of the extremes, i.e., changing their methods fundamentally, a lot, or not at all.

However, school type is significant in influencing teacher attitude toward change in teaching through transfers between different types of schools. In all three types of schools, the type of a school where a teacher taught immediately prior to teaching in their current school was a factor in determining the degree of teacher changing their methods. All church and private school teachers who reported changing their methods fundamentally or a lot taught at a state school immediately prior to teaching in their current school. More than half of all state school teachers who reported changing their methods fundamentally or a lot in their current school had taught at a private school immediately prior to teaching in their current school.

Other factors possibly influencing teacher attitude toward change found in this survey include length of teaching tenure. A small number of state school teachers who reported great degrees of changes in their methods or approach to students have taught at their current state school over 20 years, and one such state teacher had a combined tenure of over 20 years at her current school and another state school. This factor is measurable only for state school teachers. Non-state school teacher tenures are not long enough due to the short existence of non-state schools.

In sources of professional inspiration, teachers named a great range of those sources. Teachers in all types of schools most frequently reported self-education activities as their professional source of inspiration. This is not an unexpected finding. Self-education activities are relatively easy and inexpensive to perform, as compared to other options involving time and financial investment. Also, this finding resonates with some U.S. research of teacher professional development. Researchers have found that, in U.S. schools, structures for collective teacher learning in the workplace mostly do not exist. As a result, teachers end up learning individually, in their personal free time. (Mok, Cheng, 2001, Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth, 2000, p.10)

The next two most frequently named sources of inspiration were courses taken by teachers outside of their schools, and ideas taken from teachers from other schools. This finding indicates that, after individual learning, teachers like to network with others. This finding, again, is not surprising. Studies of U.S. teachers have found that contact with others, from within and without teachers' own schools, enhances teacher learning and indicates successful implementation of change in their teaching. (Fullan, 2001)

Finally, the last two sources of inspiration named by more than one teacher in each type of school were foreign models of teaching, and courses taken at the Pedagogical Centers. Czech teachers have experimented with foreign models of teaching and education since the end of communism. Some of the models named by teachers in all schools include the Waldorf and the Montessori school methods, and ideas and models of teaching gathered at the British Council courses by the English language teachers.

Regarding courses taken at the Pedagogical Centers, fewer teachers overall reported taking those over taking courses offered by a variety of other organizations.

Some differences in reporting on sources of inspiration were traceable to school type. Private school teachers named the smallest number and range of sources of inspiration, caused perhaps by the low number of surveyed private school teachers. At the same time, private school teachers shared the greatest number of added comments on their sources of inspiration.

Church school teachers named a great number and range of sources, some of them specific to their school type, such as theological courses. Church school teachers also seem to find a rich source of inspiration in the great number of their school partnerships with foreign schools.

State school teachers named the most sources of inspiration, but shared the fewest added comments of the three groups of teachers. Teachers in all schools favored associations organized around subject matter, such as the British Council for teachers of English.

This finding of greater range and higher degree of activities by Czech state school teachers as opposed to private school teachers resonates with findings about teachers in the U.S. public and private schools. It was recently reported that that public school teachers were more likely to participate in professional development activities than private school teachers. These professional development activities included both the use of educational technology in the classroom, and in-depth study of subject matter.

(Henley, 2000)

To summarize, important findings from teacher surveys concern differences between school type, i.e., state, private, and church, in teacher attitude toward change. The different school types provide teachers with specific ideas and sources of inspiration, such as partnerships with foreign schools in case of the church school. Most importantly, transfers between different school types proved to be a factor influencing teacher attitude toward change. All teachers who transferred from state to their current private or church schools, and some teachers who transferred from private to their current state schools reported the greatest degree of changes in teaching in their current school.

Length of teacher tenure also appears important in shaping teacher attitude toward changes in teaching. Several state school teachers with tenures over 20 years in their current school, and one state school teacher with a combined tenure of over 20 years in two schools reported the greatest degree of changes in teaching. This finding cannot be replicated for non-state school teachers due to the short existence of these schools.

All teachers reported a great number of sources of inspiration they use for changes and improvement in teaching. All school teachers most frequently reported their own self-study as a source of inspiration, followed by courses taken outside of their schools and ideas gained from teachers from other schools. In some cases, the sources of inspiration were defined by school type, such as theological courses taken by the church school teachers.

Finally, church school teachers were the leaders in participation in professional associations. The largest number of them as a share of all surveyed church school teachers reported active membership in professional associations. State school teachers

were second in participating in professional associations as a share of all surveyed state school teachers, and private teachers were the least active. (see Table 7) At the same time, private school teachers added the most comments about their participation.

In a related finding about participating in discussions on education, church school teachers led once again as the largest share of them as a whole reported actively participating in these discussions. They were followed closely by private school teachers. State school teachers were the last, as the smallest number of them as a share of the whole reported participating in these discussions. (see Table 8).

As noted above, these findings will be combined with findings from teacher interviews. The following chapter, Chapter Five, will present and analyze data from teacher interviews. The final chapter, Chapter Six, will combine findings from Chapters Three, Four, and Five, and draw combined conclusions.

Chapter 5:

TEACHERS INSPIRED: A CLOSER LOOK

Introduction.

“Educational change depends on what teachers do and think...” (Fullan, 2001, p.115). Indeed, only teachers can make changes in the classrooms happen. Without teachers being inspired to introduce, implement, and sustain changes, any reform will fail. And what inspires teachers so much that they change their approaches and teaching methods? After all, “all of us are resistant to change...” (Evans, 1996, p.92). What did teachers in this study think about change in teaching? Most importantly, were there differences in attitudes toward change between state and non-state school teachers?

In the U.S. and elsewhere in the Western countries, unlike in the Czech Republic, issues concerning teachers and change or reform in education have been subject to extensive and intensive scrutiny by the research community. Similar conclusions have been reached by a number of studies: Teachers are often overworked, stuck in a rut, and without a view of suitable opportunities for learning in order to consider change in their teaching. And yet, change is needed precisely “because so many teachers are frustrated, bored, and burned out”. (Fullan, 2001)

In studying obstacles to educational change in the classroom, research has repeatedly come up with one issue: The importance of interaction teachers have among themselves and with others around them. This includes the degree of collegiality teachers develop among themselves, often called teacher community. Teacher community has

been given different names, such as “common teacher culture”, “professional learning community”, and “collaborative work culture”. (Fullan, 2001, p.124)

The purpose and importance of teacher community is multifaceted. It plays a role in teacher learning and teacher willingness and stamina to introduce changes. It has been claimed that teacher community “provides an ongoing venue for teacher learning”. The logical argument behind this claim is that if teachers are to create a “vigorous community of learners among students”, they must have a “parallel community to nourish themselves”. (Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth, 2000, p.10, 49)

The significance of teacher community and its links to successful change in teaching and improvements in student performance has been studied and proven repeatedly. Studies performed in the 1990s by Newmann and Wehlage, and Louis and Kruse have found that in successful schools, teachers purposefully work together to examine teaching practices and make improvements. More recent studies by Bryk and colleagues, Goldenberg, and McLaughlin and Talbert have confirmed the key importance of sharing and collaborative practices for successfully changing and improving teaching practices. (Fullan, 2001) Fullan’s phrase about the need for educational change to happen through a personal development in a social context, quoted at the beginning of Chapter One, captures well the need for active teacher communities.

The problem, as shown by research in the U.S., is that teachers “do not develop a common technical culture.” (Lortie, 1975, in Fullan, 2001, p.118). There are multiple reasons for this seemingly incomprehensible state of affairs. For one, teaching tends to be an isolating occupation, with teachers working individually in classrooms, meeting for

only brief periods in between lessons, and being overburdened, overworked, and thus unable and even unwilling to meet as a group. Another reason is that in many schools, opportunities for teachers to work as a group on a regular basis are limited. In the words of authors of one report on teacher community, "in the typical American high school the structures for on-going intellectual [teacher] community do not exist." (Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth, 2000, p.10) Teacher learning, these authors report, is then done outside of the workplace during individual teacher personal free time.

Other factors influencing teacher implementation and sustenance of change include the sum of teacher qualities as individuals, as research has shown. One report of change in schooling claims that the main factors shaping an individual's openness to innovation include the personality, life experience, and career experience of that individual. (Evans, 1996, p.92). More recently, another author explained that the "personal-professional qualities" of the teacher, together with organization support in some cases, are responsible for successful implementation of changes in teaching. (Day, in Day, Fernandez, Hauge, Moller, 2000, p.119).

In this project, the goal has been to identify and explore differences between state and non-state school teachers. Such differences have not been yet examined sufficiently in Czech education. In the U.S., however, differences between public and private schools, and also between teachers in these schools, have been under ongoing and almost constant scrutiny.

One author recently reported the following in an article about differences between these two types of schools. Teachers in U.S. public schools tend to be better qualified

and better paid than teachers in private schools. Teachers in private schools, however, reported greater satisfaction with their working conditions. Also, private school teachers felt more in control over some school policies, such as policies in discipline, curricular issues, and choosing in-service training topics. At the same time, private school teachers showed greater turnover than public school teachers. (Henley, 2000)

In a 1996 report by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics, public and private school teachers reported on their sense of community. This report started with claims made in 1995 by McLaughlin, O'Donnell, and Ries who found that private school teachers, despite their lower salaries, show greater levels of job satisfaction than public school teachers. This U.S. DOE and NCES report has found that the sense of community was greater for private school teachers than public school teachers, regardless of the school size. Within each sector, public and private, teacher sense of community was greater in smaller schools as opposed to large schools. (U.S. DOE, NCES, 1996)

In this chapter, we will see what the interviewed Czech teachers think about introducing change into teaching. We will also see where these teachers go for their professional inspiration. The teachers talked about the types of professional development which are available to them, and which such sources they prefer to use, including the Ministry of Education as a possible source of professional inspiration. This chapter further examines the differences between these state and private school teachers in their attitudes toward change in teaching, their choice and use of sources of inspiration, and their opinions of differences between teaching in state as opposed to private schools.

Teacher Interviews: Notes on the Method.

I conducted teacher interviews to expand the findings from teacher surveys and to further distinguish commonalities and differences between private and state school teachers in their approaches to change and inspiration. My objective was to look more closely at teacher attitude toward changing and improving their teaching, and at sources of inspiration which the teachers find accessible and useful in their quest to improve their teaching.

The questions I posed to teachers concerned their opinions on changes in their teaching, using new methods, and looking for sources of inspiration and ways of professional development. I asked the teachers to elaborate on how the status of their school, i.e., private or state, may be influencing their approach and methods of teaching. Finally, I asked teachers how they viewed the role of the Ministry of Education in their teaching. (See Appendix C for interview questions)

In four schools, I recruited teachers for interviews when distributing or collecting the surveys. In two schools, where the school leadership distributed the survey for me, they also arranged teacher interviews. Overall, I recorded 20 interviews in seven schools, four state and three private. I was unable to conduct any interviews in the CH1 school. In PR3, I could interview only the principal and assistant principal; the teacher schedules did not allow for interview appointments. Of the 20 interviews, 14 were with state school teachers, and 6 with private school teachers. Additionally, I had spontaneous, less structured interviews with 4 more private school teachers, not included in the count below. The number of teachers interviewed in each school are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Number of Interviewed Teachers by School.

School	ST1	ST2	ST3	ST4	PR1	PR2	PR3
Number of interviewed teachers	5	3	3	3	2	3	1
Total by school type	Total state teachers interviewed: 14				Total private school teachers interviewed: 6		

Seven of the interviewed teachers turned out to be English language teachers. I did not specify any subject matter requirements when recruiting teachers for the interviews. A specific subject matter was not relevant to my research, and I did not wish to limit teacher selection or discourage any of the teachers from volunteering. The English language teachers may have volunteered because they knew I was coming from an English-speaking country, and it may have been interesting for them. However, I did not ask any of the teachers about their reasons for volunteering.

Conducting the interviews provided me primarily with the opportunity to meet the teachers in person, to have a direct interaction with them, and to get detailed direct answers to my questions. In four schools, it also enabled me to visit teacher offices. In ST2 and ST3, I was asked to conduct the interviews in the faculty meeting room, and was never able to see teacher offices. In PR2, the faculty meeting room doubles as teacher offices. All teacher desks are in that one large room, including the assistant principal's desk, and there are no separate individual teacher offices. Only the principal has a separate office. Generally, teacher offices were similar in all schools, small and crowded, seating two to five teachers grouped by subject matter. None of the schools provide

single teacher offices. It is the norm to share an office with one to four colleagues, depending on subject matter.

New Methods in Practice: Teacher Approach.

What do the teachers think about trying new methods of teaching? Do they believe that looking for and testing new methods of teaching is a worthwhile endeavor? When asked, teachers in both private and state schools responded in varied ways. In both types of schools, teacher responses could be classified as follows:

Table 10. Teacher Response about Trying New Methods: Is it worth trying to use new methods of teaching?

Teacher response:	1. Yes, it is worth trying.	2. Yes, but with caution.	3. No, the old proven is best.	4. Undecided.
Number responded and school type:	5 private teachers 4 state teachers	1 private teacher 6 state teachers	2 state teachers	2 state teachers

1. The first type of response entailed no hesitation and no exceptions: It is good and worth it to try new methods. This response was typical of private school teachers, five out of six gave this positive, unreserved response. Of the four state school teachers who responded in this way, three of them were younger generation teachers.
2. The second type of response entailed a moderate degree of caution. It is worth trying new methods, but proceed with caution. The reservations included making sure that a new method is suitable for the needs, that it would not interfere with methods established in the school, that it would not hinder the curriculum, and that school equipment allows it. This response was typical of

state school teachers, with six state school teachers and one private school teacher responding in this way.

3. The third type of response was negative or strongly doubtful about trying new methods. Two state school teachers responded in this way, expressing their conviction that the old proven methods work best
4. The remaining two interviewed state school teachers responded indecisively.

As this count shows, state school teachers did not respond about trying new methods as positively as private school teachers. State school teachers more frequently expressed reservations when applying new methods, and doubts about the usefulness of new methods. The one private school teacher who expressed reservations about using new methods said that it was no use trying to come up with something new since everything is prescribed by the textbook and the curriculum. "It is no use to try being more pope-like than the pope himself", this PR1 teacher said about new approaches to teaching, indicating that everything new has been thought up already.

State school teachers expressed various reservations and limitations to using new methods. Two educators talked against "American methods". An English language teacher in ST1 said some methods are usable, but others "which came from the Americans are hard to use here because ... everything is a little different here than there." She specified that the American style of testing only in writing is unusable since in Czech schools, teachers "must test orally as well." The ST1 principal spoke strongly against "the Americanization of [Czech] education". "In my opinion, introducing the American methods of teaching and lesson content, for example new comprehensive subjects such as

social sciences in place of civic education... and testing in writing only is not appropriate for the Czech educational system.”

State school teachers also felt strongly about not deviating from the norm in their school. An ST1 teacher introduced response by saying “...it depends on what is considered a new method” and followed up by specifying that a teacher does best using “the method which is established” in a school. An ST4 teacher stated that new methods are useful, but that she cannot use them as much as she would like. “One not only needs to include all these games and activities, but also follow the lesson plan, cover all the grammar and coordinate it all so that you cover the whole curriculum.”

Other state school teachers expressed doubts about the usefulness of introducing new methods. An ST1 teacher stated that trying new methods is worth it since it may help “in teaching the kids more information and motivate them”. However, she continued, “it is problematic what a new method brings, there may be a lot of ado about it but then it brings nothing new.”

An ST3 teacher expressed strong doubts about using new methods. She reported to have been “completely frightened by what happened after the year 89 in some schools where they felt that they had to introduce the so-called new methods ... and began introducing them without knowing what was in the term. And they did such great damage that I think that it completely discredited a lot of the methods which one would otherwise like to see used in the school, and it hurt the children of course, too.”

That same teacher, however, later expressed her belief in using new methods, even if indirectly. When criticizing the role of the Ministry of Education in Czech

education, she said that “the new methods are in fact based on Comenius. Comenius says that the teacher is obliged to give an opportunity to every student, but our ministry acts in such a way that whoever does not fit our needs is going to the garbage. And I think that is a very obsolete method.”

Two other state school educators had a different outlook on using new methods. The ST1 assistant principal believes that the use of new methods suffers from “the influence of the Czech teaching system, which is aimed at teaching only factual knowledge by memory.” An ST2 teacher was passionate when expressing her opinion on the need to use new methods. “There should be a different approach” in the schools, she said, “They [teachers] keep teaching in the traditional method of chalk-blackboard-pen-notebooks...it is terribly verbal...the students are dictated to constantly...the teacher-student interaction is missing here.” “New methods take a lot of work”, she concluded.

Some responses by both private and state school teachers indicate that state school teachers may be expected to follow established ways in teaching more loyally than private school teachers. An ST4 teacher thinks that teaching in a private school “could make her hands freer” in terms of following the curriculum in teaching. Another ST4 teacher who previously taught in a private school said that “here [in the state school] the demands are higher ... I was freer in the private school, I did [my work] as I wished there ... here I have to adopt the ways in which it [the subject] is taught here.”

Three private school teachers, at the same time, expressed their opinions on differences between teaching in state and private schools. All previously taught in a state school. One of them, a PR2 teacher, believes there is “much less pressure on teachers

than in a state school” in terms of what is taught to students and how. Another PR2 teacher thinks that this private school “is certainly much more peaceful for class work than state schools, there is much less pressure on teachers and students.” Both these teachers attribute the more relaxed environment in their private school to smaller class size, close and warm relationships among teachers in their schools, and positive student attitude toward school attendance and learning. A PR1 teacher also thinks that private schools provide a more relaxed environment for teachers: “I think that here [at the private school] I am a little freer, that no one orders me to teach according to these specific textbooks, or checks on my lesson plans ... the only measure is that the children are successful at the *maturita* exam...”

These teacher responses to questions about using new methods outline some of the differences between private school teachers and state school teachers, and the way teachers think about and approach the use of new methods in their teaching. Interviewed state school teachers may be more loyal to the curriculum, textbooks, and an established style of teaching than private school teachers. Possibly, there are tighter controls and regulations in state schools on following the curriculum, and more loyalty to local school traditions in teaching. At the same time, the environment in private schools is more relaxed for both teachers and students, and teachers feel freer in choosing their teaching methods and structuring their classes.

The differences between teaching in these state schools as opposed to these private schools outline the difference between emphasizing the process as opposed to the outcome of teaching. These teacher responses indicate that in the state schools, the

process of teaching and learning is as equally tightly controlled and regulated as the outcome of that process. In the private schools, there are fewer regulations and less control on the process of teaching and learning, and more emphasis on the outcomes of that process.

Teacher Inspiration: Sources and Ideas.

When I asked teachers about sources of inspiration for changes and improvements to introduce into their teaching, state and private school teachers at first responded similarly. They reported relying on their own devices as individuals to locate and use sources of inspiration for improvement and learning. Five state school teachers and two private school teachers said they relied entirely on themselves when looking for inspiration in teaching methods and professional development. "Mostly by myself, myself, myself", an ST2 teacher concluded.

Besides relying on themselves, teachers reported various sources of inspiration in their teaching. Sources repeated by both state and private school teachers included learning from colleagues, taking courses in the pedagogical centers, and working with the British Council.

Four state school teachers and two private school teachers reported learning from colleagues as their favorite sources of inspiration. These teachers primarily rely on colleagues from their own school for information and experience exchange. All these teachers also said they meet teachers from other schools at various courses and training opportunities. A PR2 teacher reported having contact with other teachers at the British Council courses. An ST2 and an ST3 teacher said they rely on their own personal

contacts with colleagues from other schools, mostly with former teacher college classmates and family members who are also teachers, or even their own former teachers.

Generally, teacher responses indicated that there is little contact with teachers from other schools. There is no formally organized contact for teachers from different schools to meet for the purpose of information and experience exchange. Courses and seminars seem to be one venue where teachers from different schools meet. As an ST2 teacher said, "I do not have any contacts to other *gymnazium* teachers". A PR1 teacher reported exchanging information with colleagues from her own school but having little contact with teachers from other schools. "I completely miss the connection between schools..." she said. Another PR1 teacher said the best place to meet teachers from other state and private schools are the courses in the pedagogical centers.

In fact, courses in general and in the pedagogical centers prove to be a good source of inspiration for some teachers in both state and private schools. Three state school teachers and one private school teacher reported attending courses at the pedagogical centers, and another private school teacher reported taking courses without specifying where. A PR1 teacher believes in the usefulness of the centers and the courses. "The center in Hradec Králové functions well," this teacher said, "bringing together teachers from different schools" and providing an opportunity for both "passive participation and proposing and teaching a course there."

An ST2 teacher, on the other hand, described a less positive experience with the center courses. She thought the courses she had taken at the local center were "almost a waste of time", explaining that she expected "to perhaps learn something new there".

While contending that the courses were quite entertaining, she thought they brought nothing new to her teaching. She also regarded the courses as detached from classroom teaching. She said the university and college professors who usually give those courses lacked knowledge of what really goes on in a classroom. As an example, she described a professor's sample lesson, demonstrated at a course she had taken. "The lesson was great," she said, "but preparing for such a lesson would be virtually impossible in a real teacher's life" for lack of time and resources. Simply put, the lesson was too complex.

Among English language teachers, British Council is the leading source of ideas and inspiration for teaching. As an ST1 teacher responded, "...for English language teachers, there is only one option, and that is the British Council." Four out of six interviewed English language teachers, three from state and one from private school, responded that they rely primarily on the British Council for inspiration and ideas for their teaching. Other foreign language teachers find inspiration and ideas in associations in their fields. An ST2 German language teacher reported taking courses at SGUN, the Association of German Linguists and Teachers, and an ST3 French language teacher relies similarly on the Alliance Francaise and the French Institute courses.

The teachers reported a wide range of other sources of inspiration. Two state school teachers and one private school teacher reported learning from the Internet. Among those, an ST4 teacher acknowledged not owning a personal computer and having to do all her internet studying at school after hours. A PR1 teacher who also owns all the necessary equipment reported actively using not only the Internet, but also the satellite for listening to the foreign language she teaches in TV broadcasts.

Two state school teachers said they build on their own experience from teaching when looking for inspiration and ideas for teaching. Of these two, an ST1 teacher also reported learning from her own students, and another ST1 teacher said she was most often inspired by what she learns from her own two children. An ST3 teacher reported finding inspiration and ideas in her work with future teachers who come to their school to do teaching internships. She believed these young future teachers bring with them new and fresh ideas which she willingly incorporates into her own teaching. "These students ...are a true mirror..." she said, and continued, "they keep bringing impulses and so the inspiration is never a completed process."

Foreign-related sources of inspiration and ideas proved interesting especially for private school teachers. Three of them said they find inspiration for teaching in foreign-related sources. Among them, a PR1 teacher spent a year at a university in Jordan and was inspired by the work of local teachers and British and U.S. lecturers who taught there. Another PR1 teacher looks for every opportunity to talk with foreign lecturers/native English speakers to get inspired for her classes. A PR2 English language teacher reported finding her inspiration with British lecturers in summer courses given by the British Council.

Two state school teachers also named foreign-related sources as their inspiration. An ST3 teacher reported being inspired by the work of British lecturers, looking specifically for any contact with them. "The most precious [learning] activities for me are those where the teacher is put in the role of the students. And so I absolutely love any

courses given specifically by British lecturers...”, this teacher said. And an ST2 English language teacher reported relying solely on foreign methodical aid books.

Finally, an ST2 teacher reported looking for ideas in other schools during her participation in a regional school inspection project, and from various methodical aid books. She concluded, speaking perhaps for many other educators, “...you have to keep working on yourself constantly ... the process of self-education is in fact truly for the whole life ... I keep changing things, redoing things, coming up with something new all the time.”

Teachers and the Ministry of Education: Help or Hindrance?

After talking about sources of inspiration, I followed up with a question about the role of the Ministry of Education in their teaching. I wanted to know how the teachers felt about its influence because the ministry is heavily involved in the daily operation of Czech schools. Does the ministry and its activities play any role in what teachers do in the classrooms? Does the ministry provide teachers with any sources of inspiration, such as the methodical aids published by the ministry?

Teacher responses were either negative or neutral. Five teachers, two from state and three from private schools, responded that anything coming from the ministry is pure theory, far removed from the practice of teaching. An ST3 teacher said the ministry “influences my practice fortunately very little because we have leadership which respects us [the teachers] and does not allow any unreasonable order which would tie our hands to fall on us from above.” She added, “I truly do not believe that the ministry is interested in the real consequences of what is rolling over us from above...”

A PR1 teacher said “I don’t see a practical approach [by the ministry], that they let some experienced practitioners advise them and listen to them and perhaps even follow their advice.” Her colleague added, “The work and rules of the ministry are still far from the reality. The minister should first be required to teach several years at an elementary school and then 15 years at a secondary school and then such a person could become a minister...”

This same PR1 teacher said there was “no connection between the ministry and the practice in schools.” A PR1 colleague said, “I really miss a connection with the ministry... the ministry is somewhere far away and perhaps it would not hurt if they [the ministry] came to see the people [in schools] to know what it looks like in reality.”

Only one of all the interviewed teachers, an ST1 teacher, mentioned reading the White Book on education, the most recent overview of the national strategy and mission of schooling. She said she found in it “many opinions to which I can relate”, but none of these were new for her. “So the White Book”, she said, “did not change my thinking... did not influence me in any significant way.”

Several teachers were more specific about the ministry’s policies. An ST2 teacher talked about a recent endeavor of the ministry, called “Internet into Schools”. Under this 2001 decree, all schools were to be equipped with a certain number of computers by a certain date. Initially, teachers were excited about the state funding more computers in their schools. However, deadlines have passed, funds have proved short, and only some schools obtained new computers. The selection criteria for who gets new computers have been blurry at best (www.indos.cz). Eventually, “the whole thing is dragging on... and it

will end nowhere”, an ST2 teacher said. “The ministry needs to provide better support” for computer technology equipment to schools, this teacher added.

An ST4 computer technology teacher talked about another poorly managed policy of the ministry. The ministry provided funds for computer-related education of teachers, but released the money to schools in October, 2001, only three months before the end of the fiscal year, just as I was conducting my interviews (LN, 11/6/2001). It simply meant that all the funds had to be spent before the end of December, leaving very little time for schools and teachers to use the money in a meaningful way. “...it is unimaginable, we will now be taking 5 four-hour courses, learning what we already know, just so the money is spent...”, this ST4 teacher told me.

The preparation of the new *maturita* examination was another issue teachers mentioned in connection with the ministry. An ST2 teacher described a visit by a deputy minister of education to her school. “He gave us no information,” she said. “We asked him how it will be with the new *maturita* and he said he did not know when exactly the new exam would be introduced...” This teacher criticized such an ignorant approach by the ministry personnel, adding that officially, per an earlier ministry announcement, the new examination was due to begin by 2004.

ST1 and PR3 school leaders alike complained about the ministry. The ST1 principal pointed out the lack of stability at the state education management. “Since 1948,” he said, “8 reforms of education have been carried out, since 1991, the functional life span of a Czech minister of education has been not quite two years...” His assistant

principal added that the “newly gained freedom has been stifled by the burgeoning new bureaucracy and constant restructuring since 1989.”

The PR3 principal and assistant principal said that “the bureaucracy has ballooned” since 1989, and that “the machinery is terrible.” Also criticizing “Internet into Schools”, they said it was an example of “an unfair approach and lack of transparency in selecting [schools for new equipment] by the ministry.” On top of criticizing the ministry as an organization, this leadership team also spoke against individual ministry employees. Describing them as “the new bureaucrats”, these school leaders said that “ministry officials think as individuals, that is, they let themselves be governed by envy which they reflect in their work...”

Some teacher responses were less specific. An ST1 teacher stated that “ministry of education does not inspire me to do any searching. The ministerial products are more likely to enrage me...” An ST2 teacher and an ST3 teacher echoed this opinion in a milder way, saying that the ministry’s work is “good for nothing” and “does not help me at all.” An ST4 teacher said she had no opinion at all about it because what the ministry does “does not seep through to me at all.”

Generally, teachers were bitter about school financing policies. Two PR2 teachers spoke specifically about school financing and teacher salaries, all governed by the ministry of education. “Overall, very little financing is devoted to schooling in the Czech Lands... and there is lack of money in schools for teacher professional development... and teacher salaries are too low to allow teachers to pay for conferences or seminars by themselves...” said a PR2 teacher.

His colleague begged me to mention poor teacher salaries when I write my research results. "The salaries are miserable", she said, "it is an expression of utter lack of respect toward the teaching profession. My salary is 8,400 Czech crowns per months 4 years before retirement... it is a disgrace." This PR2 teacher knows that her salary would be a little higher in a state school. Despite that, she says, "I would not teach at another [state] school because I would have to deal with the terrible pressure there is on teachers."

As these responses show, interviewed teachers are not happy with the ministry of education management style, the process or the results of its work. Teachers in both state and private schools complained of the ministry's lack of connection to real life, overemphasized theoretical approach, inadequately managed policies, and poor financing. Their wishes include that the ministry be more knowledgeable about and more closely connected to the real life of teachers, to what goes on in the classroom, and to what the teachers have to live and deal with on a daily basis. These teachers also wish for higher and more efficiently managed financing of education, including higher teacher salaries.

Tradition Meets Distrust: State and Private.

Asking educators about their perception of differences between teaching in state schools on the one hand and private schools on the other brought interesting responses. Two concepts, tradition and distrust, tended to reoccur in this connection. "The problem with private schools", an inspector and analyst with the Czech School Inspection in East Bohemia told me, "is that they are new, without any rooting, without equipment ... they

have a brief tradition ... the quality [of education] is worse there ... and they suffer from general distrust. State schools have a rooting and a tradition.”

Educators in the field also mentioned tradition in state schools and distrust toward private schools. The PR3 principal and assistant principal insisted that “private schools are regarded with distrust, both by the public and the education officials. Our private business academy”, they continued, “must constantly develop new fields of study in order to reach new students, ... more extracurricular activities than state schools, such as the annual fictitious business fair, and frequent trips abroad.” “State schools,” they continued, “are regarded by the public as stable institutions with tradition... automatically guaranteeing them enough interested students.”

Although at first it would seem that private schools are on the wrong side of this balancing act, PR3 leaders concluded it may actually disadvantage the state schools. “The [local] state academy”, they told me, “keeps having enough students and therefore they fell asleep with only one field of study. State schools are like enclosed cans, they do not change fields of study or teacher schedules.” State business academy graduates thus “graduate with a limited education”, while private business academy students graduate with an education which is “more closely tied to the current situation and technologies used in the job market.” The PR3 leaders thus try their best to turn this situation in their favor.

A PR 2 teacher explained the whole notion of distrust in a broader societal context. He noted that the Czechs still, after 10 years of free market, hold “a lot of distrust against the private sector, including private schooling, and this distrust is

harbored by most of the general population as well as the [state] school authorities.”

“People just keep thinking,” this teacher said, “that if someone makes some money, they must be thieves, ... and state authorities regard private schools with distrust for different reasons ... and the result is a generally hostile attitude.” This teacher quickly added that the distrust is often unfounded. For example, he said, “this private school pays their teachers only about two thirds of average state school teacher salary”, so that any distrust based on envy of greater financial gains is unfounded in this case.

The notion of distrust or at least carefully guarded attitude toward private schools defined some state school teachers’ opinions. Mostly these teachers do not trust the quality of education in private schools. They often acknowledge their lack of direct knowledge of or experience with private schools. At the same time, they credit hearsay by different individuals, including some of their students who transferred into private schools.

An ST3 teacher admitted knowing about “several excellent private schools” which she would love her own child to attend. However, this teacher also knows about private schools which are very “business-like, which means that they give in to parents and what the parents want is not always the most reasonable.” This ST3 teacher never taught in a private school and admits to having “very little experience” with private schools, but thinks that a school’s status is not the decisive factor in the quality of a teachers’ work.

An ST2 teacher had stronger opinions on teaching in private schools. This teacher, again, has never taught at a private school. She bases her opinion on what she heard about private schools from two of her students who transferred into private schools

and then came back to this teacher to report their experiences. This teacher was “in shock” over what she heard about teaching and classes in private schools from her two students. So she believes that teachers in private schools are subjected to student whimsy and to “whether the students want or do not want to work”. She is convinced that her teaching is superior to any private school teacher’s because her two students were behind in class material after returning to her classes from a period of private schooling.

Another ST2 teacher, again with no direct experience in private schooling, believes that “business plays a great role there [in private schooling]... keeping the students in so that the money keeps flowing... and so, often, I think, the commercial factor is greater than any endeavor to really do some teaching...” And so, this teacher believes, private schools are not yet “what they ought to be” in terms of quality of education.

Three state school teachers and two private school teachers stated they believed that it makes absolutely no difference whether they teach at a state or a private school. “I think this [teaching at a state school] has no influence.”, an ST1 teacher said. Another ST1 teacher believes that the influence and guidance of her mother, also a teacher, has been more instrumental in her teaching than the school environment. An ST2 teacher considers the quality of her teaching “a matter of personal prestige”, and thus she thinks she would be exactly the same educator if she taught at a private school.

A PR1 teacher, who previously taught at a state school, sees “absolutely no difference” between her teaching in a private school as opposed to a state school. She believes that school leadership, principal’s style and specialty are the decisive factors in

influencing and steering teachers' work. As an example, she told me about a principal who is very generous toward his foreign language teachers because he is an English language teacher himself.

A PR2 teacher responded seeing no difference in her teaching at a state school as opposed to a private school. This teacher also taught at a state school before. She ascribes greater influence to the school level (elementary as opposed to secondary), and to student talent. In the last moment, however, she added that her current private school is "more motivating" for her teaching because she has fewer students in class and teaches the same class from the beginning till the end of their attendance in this school.

An ST3 teacher, who previously taught at a private school specializing in teaching foreign languages, believes that teaching at both types of schools is very similar. To explain, she noted that the quality and talent of students was comparable in both schools. Also, "the freedom to decide about using various methods is I think... exactly the same" in both types of schools, she added.

At the same time, other interviewed state and private school teachers named a number of differing influences occurring separately in each type of school. An ST1 teacher, although admitting to having no experience with private schools, thinks that she may have "more options, perhaps in self education and so on" in a private school that she would like to take advantage of. She was the only state school teacher who acknowledged that she may not regard private schools without bias. "I have never taught at a private school and I don't have any close friends who teach at a private school. So

what I know is from the media or from what you hear, but I do not consider that objective.”

An ST3 teacher believes that teaching in a state school is easier than teaching in a private school. “I think that perhaps teaching here at this state school is better for me, I know colleagues who teach at a private school, and the students there are sometimes more difficult because their parents pay for it, and maybe sometimes they are also less talented...”, she said.

An ST4 teacher echoed this opinion, saying that “perhaps I would be a more frustrated educator [in a private school]...” and that “the children there do not put in so much effort [because] they have this feeling that... that they are paying for it. And my colleagues and my old students who transferred to a private school confirmed for me that discipline there is not great...”

This same ST4 teacher thinks, however, that “perhaps I would have more freedom on my hands” in a private school in terms of what and how to teach. Her colleague, another ST4 teacher who previously taught at a private school, has similar opinions. “Perhaps at the private school, the children were a little more difficult, we had to work with them individually.” At the same time, she said, “there [in the private school] I had greater freedom because there I could do as I wanted...”

Another ST4 teacher who previously taught at private schools made a clear distinction between equipment at the two types of schools. Teaching business correspondence and computer classes, she complained bitterly about the inadequate and

poorly functioning electronic equipment at ST4. "At the private school", she said, "they simply have the equipment, it is better there. I have not seen such problems there."

Four private school teachers believe that there are differences in teaching between state and private schools. All four teachers previously taught at a state school. A PR1 teacher said "I think that I have a little more freedom here, no one orders me what textbooks or plans to use..." Another PR1 teacher believes that "teachers in private schools are much greater enthusiasts and put a lot more into their teaching than teachers at state schools." This teacher is a veteran with over fifty years of teaching experience in both state and private schools. Among other endeavors, she founded and is still running a private elementary school in her small native town.

A PR2 English language teacher who had taught at a state school for most of her life said that she was completely amazed when she first began teaching at PR2. "There is lot less pressure on teachers in terms of student academic performance" thanks to the small class sizes, the calm school atmosphere, and the excellent small collective of teachers who know each other well and always help each other. "Teachers have a much better attitude toward teaching here... they respect students and do not treat them like little kids as is common with teachers in state schools... and they pay more attention to the quality of their class work than teachers in state schools."

Her colleague, another PR2 teacher, believes that "this school is certainly much calmer for teaching work than state schools. There is lot less pressure on teachers and on students, smaller classes... which makes teaching better and easier, the students like it in school and in class so much that they ask for homework when there is none..."

The PR3 principal and assistant principal believe, however, that teachers' work at private schools is more difficult because the demands on students are greater there. Also they say that private school teachers are more in the spotlight because the schools are more open to parents and the public in general than state schools. They explained that private schools in general tend to have "an open door policy", meaning that parents and other visitors are allowed to visit the school and the lessons any time they like. State schools, they added, can only be visited after first asking for permission, and sometimes not even then.

Another aspect of their private school openness, PR3 leaders continued, is that they publicly post all teacher and class schedules on their hallway bulletin boards. State schools, they said, do not usually have such a policy. Having seen four state secondary schools, I must confirm that I have not seen teacher or class schedules listed in any of them. All three private schools and the church school had teacher and class schedules posted on their bulletin boards.

When I inquired about the details of this particular policy, the PR3 leaders explained that in state schools, senior teachers customarily get to teach their preferred schedules, while the newer teachers are left to teach all the undesirables, such as early mornings. Teacher and class schedules therefore are not posted publicly so that the schedules may be shuffled around and adjusted at the last moment, and also to avoid teacher envy over other's schedules.

One more aspect of private school openness, PR3 leaders said, is that private schools are better in providing the public with information. A 1999 law states that all

public institutions are obliged to provide free access to all their information, and PR3 leaders believe that private schools are better in abiding by this law. In their opinion, state schools often do not provide parents with information, or not as much or as frequently as they should. Private schools, on the other hand, take care to provide information to parents and students.

It seems fitting to conclude this section with a demonstration of a conflict between two teachers at ST4. This confrontation occurred after I conducted an interview with an ST4 teacher who previously taught at private schools. This teacher, a young-looking woman probably in her late thirties, complained bitterly about the poor and inadequate equipment for her business correspondence and computer classes. Her colleague, who teaches the same subject, has taught at ST4 for 10 years and has only 4 years to go to retirement, shares the office and listened to the whole interview. As I was about to leave, she stopped me and expressed a strong need to address the issue of poor equipment.

This older teacher was glad to have the current equipment at ST4, stating that things were much worse 10 years ago. "We should be thankful for what there is..." she said, scolding her younger colleague for being too demanding. A fierce and loud argument between the two teachers developed. The younger teacher claimed teachers must be assertive and ask for what they need for their work in order to get anywhere. The older teacher opposed that opinion, saying that teachers "should not shout loud and express their unhappiness", and instead be "grateful for what they have."

This conflict exemplifies multiple differences. To begin with, there is the generational difference between the older, outgoing generation of teachers and the

younger generation who began teaching shortly before or even after the end of communism. The older teachers spent their lifetime teaching under the communist schooling system where it was often best not to draw attention to oneself and to do quietly the best one could under the circumstances. The younger teachers, on the other hand, have been gaining their formative work experience in times of great social and economic changes in their country.

This generational difference is not just a mere difference in age. It coincides with the divide representing the start of the post-communist political, social, and economic changes in the Czech society. The period since 1989 has been one in which teachers, together with the rest of the society, have been forced to reevaluate their attitudes and opinions. They have been learning to respond to the open-minded, demand-oriented schooling which looks forward toward the new needs and new technologies in the changing economy and society.

These two groups of teachers, older and younger, also often carry different heritage in terms of their own education. Some older educators grew up and were trained as teachers in the middle of the communist years. Their teacher training reflects the ideological and practical aspects taught then. Other older educators may have been trained in the 1960s, the period of opening up and brief renewal, before the 1968 Prague Spring¹ crushed the hopes. Some of the younger teachers were trained still before 1989,

¹ In the 1960s, there was a reformist movement in the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Under the President Alexander Dubček, the political restrictions eased, and the Czechoslovak economy, society, and culture flourished. In August, 1968, the Soviet Army invaded Czechoslovakia, and the Soviets restored tight Communist control of Czech and Slovak politics, economy, and society.

while others got their training in the 1990s, and learned to approach teaching from an entirely different perspective.

The difference in age may be related to another paradigm in Czech society. During communism, many people learned to conduct their lives quietly, do what they are told, and keep their opinions, if they had any, to themselves. I referred to this pattern of behavior as one of “non-reactive followers” in my unpublished paper on leadership and education in the Czech Republic. (Koenig, 1999) Another author refers to this phenomenon as “inertia of acquired attitudes and behavior patterns”. (Kalous, in Polyzoi, Černá, 2001)

In explaining the “non-reactive follower” pattern of conduct, I argued that under communism most people learned to live according to instructions. They learned not express or even not to form opinions of their own. They learned to do things according to prescribed norms. Kalous, in explaining the “inertia of acquired attitudes and behavior patterns”, ascribes it to “work habits deeply rooted in the past”. In education, these included acting only according to the instructions from above, and using outdated methods and approaches. He claims that this heritage presents a serious obstacle to education reform in the Czech Republic. (Kalous, in Polyzoi, Černá, 2001)

This “paradoxical coexistence of old and new structures is typical of states in transition”, says the director of the Institute of Education Sciences in Bucharest (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001). The result of this old/new mixture is a curiously intermingled stream of different patterns in thinking, attitudes, and conduct. This stream flows through the life of all, resulting sometimes in silent, unfriendly encounters, sometimes in clashes such as

the argument between the two teachers described above, and sometimes hopefully in discussion, reflection, and renewal.

In this research project, I met both forward-thinking educators and those who prefer to carefully guard their established ways and attitudes. Often these differences have been connected with age, making the younger teachers more open to new methods of teaching and new ways of regarding education, and the older teachers more guarded toward such novelties. The argument between the two ST4 teachers outlined above is a good illustration of such neatly distributed differences in attitudes.

At the same time, I also met those who defy this attitude paradigm of younger generation/forward thinking versus older generation/guarded caution. The PR1 veteran teacher who, in her retirement age and after decades of teaching in state schools, founded her own private school, is a good example of an older teacher for whom the post-communist changes signaled the opportunity to think differently and look beyond accustomed ways and attitudes. The church school principal is another older but dynamic educator who delved into new endeavors after 1989. Also, the PR2 English language teacher, who says, after teaching for most of her life in a state school, "I would never teach in another school now, I am very happy here, and at a state school my salary would be only a bit higher and I would suffer from all that pressure that they put on teachers there."

But I also met forward thinking educators, younger or older, in state schools who have been trying to do things differently than is accustomed, with varying success. The ST4 English language teacher who said she tried "the more active methods" taken from

the foreign textbooks which, she said, are “conceived quite actively”, only to find out that she must first “cover the lesson plan, cover all the grammar...” before trying to teach differently. The ST3 French language teacher who works with student interns and uses them as an inspiration and a “mirror” is another example of a forward-thinking state school teacher.

All in all, this attitude paradigm of younger generation/forward thinking versus older generation/guarded caution does not always coincide with the difference between private and state schools. Clearly, the new sector of private and church schooling has provided opportunities for both younger and older educators who have had the desire to break out of the old molds and approach teaching in different and new ways. At the same time, such forward-thinking and change-oriented educators can also be found in some state schools. And there are probably many Czech older state school teachers who have learned the value of change after spending a lifetime of teaching in very tradition and custom-driven schools.

Conclusion: Commonalities and Differences.

At the beginning of this chapter, I posed two basic research questions: What do teachers in this study think about change in teaching? Are there differences in teacher attitude toward change in teaching between state and non-state school teachers? This conclusion reviews the main findings from teacher interviews, and puts those findings in the greater context of educational research. In Chapter Six, findings from teacher interviews will be integrated with findings from teacher surveys, discussed in Chapter Four, and school site observations, discussed in Chapter Three.

Various studies of teachers and educational change in the U.S. have concluded with similar findings and recommendations for teachers. Fullan states that the biggest problem for teachers, and the biggest obstacle to educational change, has been for teachers to be stuck in the quandary of “routine, overload, and limits to reform” (Fullan, 2001, p.116). Other research findings he shows demonstrate that some of the most common obstacles to change encountered by teachers include isolation and lack of contact with colleagues, and limited learning opportunities on the job. (Fullan, 2001, pp. 118, 121, 122).

Many teachers in this study considered change in teaching worth the effort of trying. As shown in Table 10, most teachers responded positively when asked about the worth of the effort devoted to introducing changes into teaching. Most private school teachers responded positively about their attitude toward change in teaching, while the highest degree of caution and doubt in approaching change in teaching was expressed by state school teachers. A rare Czech report on the Czech education reform corroborates this finding when it states that, even though teachers most often initiate educational change, most teachers remain “cautious participants in the change process.” (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001)

Change in teachers’ work is “strongly related to the extent to which teachers *interact* with each other.” (Fullan, 2001, p. 123, 124). Research has shown that teachers need to develop “collegiality” among themselves, including frequent communication and mutual help. (Fullan, 2001, p.124). And yet, research has shown that teachers usually “do not develop a common technical culture”, meaning that they do not share, observe, or

discuss each other's work, and instead "struggle with their problems and anxieties privately." (Lortie, 1975, in Fullan, 2001, p.118). At the same time, U.S. schools considered successful by research have been shown to develop such cooperative, sharing common cultures among their teachers, also referred to as "professional learning communities" or "collaborative work cultures". (Fullan, 2001, p.124).

The importance of teacher community for successful teachers has been shown by other authors. These authors claim that an active and functional intellectual community of teachers enhances teacher learning and helps teachers implement and sustain changes and improvements in their teaching. If teachers are to create communities of successful learners of their students, they need to have an equivalent learning community for themselves. At the same time, this study claims that American high schools typically lack the structures that would allow for the ongoing existence of intellectual teacher communities. (Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth)

Learning opportunities are limited for Czech teachers by the changes that occurred after the end of communism. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the communist system of professional development for educators was dismantled after 1989, and is slowly rebuilding itself. There seem to be enough opportunities for learning now that new activities and organizations stepped in to fill the void. At the same time, there are other obstacles, such as lack of time and poor funding, to teachers taking full advantage of these opportunities.

Research studies elsewhere have also shown that teacher personality is among the chief factors in accepting and implementing change in teaching. One report concludes

that a person's "openness to innovation depends on a combination of factors, chief among them one's personality, life experience, and career experience." (Evans, 1996, p.92).

Another claims that the "personal-professional qualities" of the teacher, together with organization support in some cases, made the difference in making changes in teaching (Day, in Day, Fernandez, Hauge, Moller, 2000, p.119).

As shown by teacher interviews in this chapter, Czech teachers in both state and private schools are no exception to these research findings from other countries. The most common response to finding sources of inspiration for changes in teaching was relying on self-education and self-directed learning activities, individual professional learning, and doing it all "on your own". Learning from others was the second most frequently cited source of inspiration after self-directed learning activities. Teachers said they liked to learn from colleagues in their own and other schools, from foreign lecturers, and even from their teaching interns and their students. At the same time, there appeared to be no formally established and regularly used structures for such learning.

At the same time, these teachers complain of missing links and ties. Teachers noted lack of contact among themselves within schools, and with teachers in other schools. Missing the links between different levels of schools, and between the ministry, schools, and teachers was a common complaint among both private and state school teachers. "Far removed from practice" was the most common teacher comment about the ministry of education and its work.

Although these interviews have not asked teachers specifically about issues of common teacher culture in their schools, a certain reality arises from the picture painted

by teacher responses. In only one school, PR2, did teachers mention the importance of good and close relationships in their collective of teachers as a key factor in their professional happiness. The fact that theirs is a small private school is relevant, as such school allows teachers to develop such close teacher-to-teacher relationships.

Developing a common teacher culture in Czech schools may have been difficult. Teachers and their students are dealing with the realities of the post-communist social changes and the transition to a market economy. Each school appears to develop its own culture, characterized by the type of school and the particular group of individuals who form its leadership and teaching staff. Within these school cells, teacher relate to each other on the basis of subject matter relationships and a host of differences, including personality and generational ones.

In the Czech case, there is also the heritage of “non-reactive following” or “inertia of acquired attitudes and behavior”, typical of states in transition as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Thus for Czech teachers, the generational differences may be wedded to the political and social divide represented by the end of communism. In such complex reality, it will take a lot of effort and some time to bridge the differences between state and private, and allow teachers from all schools to develop a broader “professional learning community”.

Uniquely in the Czech context, this project explored differences between private and state school teachers. Research of differences between U.S. public and private schools and their teachers suggests some points where the Czech and the U.S. realities coincide. Teachers in Czech state schools may be required to follow the established

traditional methods of teaching more closely than private school teachers. State schools thus appear to control the process as much as the outcome of teaching. Private schools, on the other hand, seem to control less the process of teaching, and focus more on the outcome of teaching. This may leave private school teachers somewhat freer in choosing and structuring the process of their teaching. A related finding in the U.S. private schools states that private school teachers felt more in control over some school policies, including curricular issues, than public school teachers. (Henley, 2000)

Concerning the use of policies and support from the highest central authority in education, both Czech state and private school teachers reported being unhappy with the Ministry of Education and its policies and practices. Both complained of overly theoretical approach by the ministry and lack of connection to the practice of teaching. Some were harsh in their assessment of ministry officials' work and approach. State and private school teachers felt alike that the ministry has little to do with their teaching.

In terms of human contact on the job, both state and private school teachers reported little contact with other teachers, both within and outside their schools. In the case of one private school, teachers specifically referred to the importance of high collegiality in their close-knit teacher staff. At the same time, both state and private school teachers liked to get ideas from other teachers to change or improve their own teaching. In this sense, private school teachers more often than state school teachers looked toward foreign lecturers for inspiration.

Research about the importance of human contact on the job in the U.S. public and private schools has shown differences in teacher sense of community. It was found that

private school teachers reported a stronger sense of teacher community than public school teachers, regardless of school size. At the same time, teachers reported a greater sense of community in smaller schools in both types of schools. (U.S. DOE, NCES, 1996)

Finally, Czech private school teachers in this study believe that teaching at private schools is better than at state schools. They cite more freedom in teaching, smaller class size, less pressure on teachers in terms of attaining desired student academic outcomes, calm atmosphere, better teacher-to-teacher relationships, happier students, and greater teacher enthusiasm as factors in making private schools superior to state ones.

On the other hand, some state school teachers in this study believe that teaching at state schools is better because the students are less difficult. Other state school teachers believe that the quality of education in private schools is generally poor, blaming the commercial aspect of private schools for demoralizing student approach to teachers and learning. State school teachers often base their opinions on information gained largely from hearsay and sometimes poorly founded personal reports.

In the U.S., private school teachers have been found generally happier on the job than public school teachers. (U.S. DOE, NCES, 1996). Despite the fact that private school teachers generally receive smaller salaries than public school teachers, private school teachers reported greater satisfaction with their working conditions. (Henley, 2000) Also, private schools have been shown to have greater success in retaining their best newly recruited teachers, and in developing their teachers' teaching skills. (Ballou, Podgursky, 1998)

Only time will tell how this public/private, or state/non-state dichotomy will develop in the Czech reality. This project found that, right now, the levels of distrust toward the private sector in general, private schooling notwithstanding, are still somewhat high among state educators and the general public. The state/private dichotomy is only one of old and new phenomena forming the “paradoxical coexistence of old and new” which is so “typical of states in transition” (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001). Although change in thinking about private and alternative schooling is apparent, it will take more time before the majority of Czech teachers and the general public can come to terms with all the intermingled elements of this curious mixture.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Research Goals and Findings.

The goal of this research project was to explore Czech teacher attitudes toward and their opinions about change in their teaching methods. Another goal was to identify and describe sources of inspiration these teachers look for and find useful in their quest to change and improve their teaching. Additionally, this project explores differences in these attitudes and opinions between teachers in private, state, and church secondary schools.

This project explores attitudes and opinions of teachers as reported by the teachers themselves. It does not examine actual teacher practices in the classrooms. It does not ascertain whether the new methods and approaches which the teachers reported about produced positive or desired results. The tools I could feasibly use in this project defined the data I could collect. The limitations to other ways of collecting data, such as class observations, have occurred due to the complexities in the U.S. human subject approval procedures, and are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

The background of this project is situated within the context of the post-communist political, social, economic, and cultural changes in the Czech Republic. These changes include general de-politicization and decentralization, and the emergence of a private sector. The Czech non-state schools, including privately owned and church-owned schools, have emerged since the end of communism in 1989 within this new private sector.

The tools I used to carry out this research project included school site observation, teacher surveys, and teacher interviews. Each of these three tools yielded results of its own, discussed respectively in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. This concluding chapter provides a brief discussion of meeting the research goals, theories, and assumptions. It also aims to review and integrate the research findings from all three tools.

I conducted field research for this project in eight secondary schools in the East Bohemian area of the Czech Republic. Within East Bohemia, I selected schools for research in two neighboring administrative regions, the Pardubický region and the Královéhradecký region. Four of the researched schools are state schools, three are private schools, and one is a church school. Three of the four state schools are *gymnazia*, i.e., college preparation schools, and one is a business academy. Two of the three private schools are *gymnazia*, and one is a business academy. The church school is a *gymnazium*. I selected the schools from a larger pool of candidates in East Bohemia, primarily on the basis of school availability and willingness to participate in this research project.

School site observations enabled me to see the environment in which teachers live and work on a daily basis. Specifically, I looked for differences between state, private, and church school sites and the environments they create and maintain for their teachers and students. I looked for signs of active/passive approach to teaching and students, and for indications of closeness/openness to alternative teaching approaches and methods traditionally not used in Czech schools. I tried to notice the general school attitudes toward visitors and outside influences.

Teacher surveys enabled me to obtain information from a pool of teachers in each school. In some schools, I was able to address all or most teachers all at once. In other schools, the school principal and/or assistant principal preferred to distribute and collect the surveys for me. Teacher responses to survey questions proved a good introductory step toward analyzing teacher interviews in each school. I analyzed teacher responses within individual schools and between schools.

Teacher interviews enabled me to meet several teachers from each school in person. I was able to ask teachers the same prepared set of questions in scheduled interviews, and then compare their responses not only within schools, but between schools. I was able to hear teachers discuss any topics they themselves introduced in spontaneous, unscheduled, and often unrecorded talks. Unfortunately, I was not able to conduct teacher interviews in all schools. Teachers in PR3 and CH1 schools were, according to their school leaders, too busy to spend time in interviews.

Altogether, the results yielded by these three tools painted an interesting picture of where Czech teachers see themselves a decade after the end of communism in their country. I met my research goal of identifying and exploring teacher attitudes toward change and sources of inspiration teachers use in their search for new methods and new approaches. I also met my goal of identifying differences in teacher attitudes toward change and sources of professional inspiration between private school teachers, state school teachers, and to a degree also church school teachers. At the same time, I also formed a better understanding of the current Czech teacher reality, and realized ways to

approach schools and teachers in possible future research projects. These ideas are briefly discussed at the end of this chapter.

Starting this research project, one of my fundamental theories was that Czech non-state schools would be more open to new ideas, to innovations, and new teaching methods and approaches than state schools. I reasoned that this may be so partially from personal experience, partially from my previous research and writing, and partially from readings in research literature on Czech education after 1989.

My native experience with Czech education informed me that state schools and most of their teachers tend to be rigid in their teaching approaches, accustomed during four decades of communism to follow orders and the prescribed state curriculum to the letter. I built on this experience when researching and writing an unpublished paper on leadership theory and Czech private schooling. In this paper, I coined the concept of “non-reactive followers” when describing Czech educators who prefer the customary, follow-the-rules-from-above structures. (Koenig, 1999) The Czech researcher Kalous refers to this phenomenon as the “inertia of acquired attitudes and behavior”, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five. (Polyzoi, Černá, 2001)

I thought that this heritage of the communist past would be more alive in the existing state schools. The non-state schools would, by their very newly founded nature, have a chance to begin with a cleaner slate and keep themselves freer, if not entirely free, of the inherited rigidity and of clinging to the comfort of the old ways.

By extension, I reasoned that non-state school teachers are more likely to be open to changes and trying new methods and approaches than state school teachers. I thought

that this difference may demonstrate itself in ways teachers approach the introduction of changes into their teaching methods. I also thought that non-state school teachers would use a greater number and variety of sources of inspiration for new teaching methods, and possibly be more active in professional associations.

Findings from studies of teachers and change in the U.S. also inspired this thinking. It has been reported that the degree of change teachers make in the classrooms is directly related to their interaction with others. Interacting with each other within their schools and outside of their schools, teachers create "professional learning communities". (Fullan, 2001)

The importance of teacher community in successfully implementing and sustaining change has been discussed by many researchers as well. Teacher community has been shown to provide a venue for teacher learning. (Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth, 2000) It has been demonstrated that teachers purposefully working together are better in improving teaching and student results (Newmann and Wehlage, Louis and Kruse, in Fullan, 2001). Recent studies also showed the significance of teacher sharing and collaborative practices in successfully changing and improving their teaching practices. (Bryk, Goldenberg, McLaughlin and Talbert, in Fullan, 2001) Additionally, studies of teachers in U.S. public and private schools showed that private school teachers generally have a greater sense of community in their schools than state school teachers. (U.S. DOE, NCES, 1996)

All these findings and the effects of the political, social, and economic transformation happening in the Czech Republic since 1989 gradually shaped my

research assumptions and theories. The large-scale post-communist changes, as discussed in Chapter One, were reflected in the decentralization and privatization of schooling, and in experimenting with alternative methods and approaches in at least some schools. Czech education policy and research reports depicted teachers in this new era as “leading agent[s] of transforming the schools” and “bearers of change”.

I wanted to know how much teachers in this new reality truly were “bearers of change” and active change agents. I asked what inspired teachers to consider change, to be open to change, and to introduce changes into their teaching. Most importantly, I was attracted by the new sector of non-state schooling, and especially by the new private schools. Czech research, published both within the country and abroad, showed very little about non-state schools, or about teachers and change. Comparing this void with the great body of research literature on these topics in the U.S. and elsewhere, I wondered why there was this apparent lack of interest on the part of researchers.

Thinking about teachers and their attitude toward change in teaching, I formed a three-pronged elementary theory about state and non-state school teachers, with two opposing prongs and the third nestled in between them. I described this theory in Chapter Two. On the one hand, teacher willingness to change and look for sources of inspiration comes from within teachers as individuals regardless of the environment in which they teach, i.e., state, private, or church schools. Or, on the other hand, teacher willingness to change and look for sources of inspiration comes from without teachers as individuals, and it is traceable to the school type in which teachers work. Finally, third, teachers take

the "golden middle road" when approaching change, and are motivated both by the internal personal drive and by the environment they teach in, notably the school type.

The findings of my study show that teacher attitude to changes in teaching are traceable to school type, albeit in an indirect manner. Data from teacher surveys indicate that transfer between school types strongly influences the degree to which teachers change their teaching methods and approaches. All private school teachers who taught at a state school immediately prior to teaching in their current school, and more than half of state school teachers who taught at a private school immediately prior to teaching in their current school reported changing their methods a lot or fundamentally since the beginning of teaching in their current school.

At the same time, this study found teachers whose behavior is not traceable to the school type. There were forward-thinking educators in state schools, and cautious educators in private schools. There were also older former state school teachers currently teaching in private schools. In Chapter Five, I defined the teacher attitude paradigm of younger generation/forward thinking versus older generation/guarded caution. This attitude paradigm did not always coincide with differences between private and state schools.

The interview findings showed that the new sector of private and church schooling has provided new opportunities for both younger and older educators. The private schools in this research generally do provide fertile soil for those who have the desire to try alternative approaches and new methods and approach change with an open mind. But a few such forward-thinking and change-oriented educators have also been

found in some state schools. As shown in Table 10, many teachers considered new methods worth trying, and most of these open-minded teachers came from the private schools. State school teachers tended to express the highest degree of caution and doubt when trying change in teaching.

The results are therefore somewhat mixed in the sense of confirming or refuting my theory about teachers and change and connection to school type. On the one hand, school type does affect teacher attitude toward change. Private and church schools do influence teacher attitudes, either directly, or indirectly through transfers between state and non-state schools. On the other hand, there are some, mostly veteran, teachers in state schools whose attitudes are oriented very much forward and toward change, and who prefer to remain in state schools.

School Sites: Shaping Teachers or Shaped by Teachers?

In my first research strategy, I observed the school sites in order to find out and examine differences between the individual schools, and between state and non-state schools. One goal was to explore whether academically richer and more vibrant school sites would produce more inspired, active, and involved teachers. A related step involved examining how the differences between academically richer and more inspiring school sites would correspond with differences between school types, and between teachers more open to change on the one hand, and less open to change on the other hand.

Findings from school site research informed me that school sites make a difference in teachers' psychological functioning and daily work. (Fullan, 2001). Findings from research of U.S. public and private schools informed me that differences

between these schools include smaller size, lower student-teacher ratio, safer and better structured learning environment, and a greater focus on academic subjects. (Viteritti, 1999) At the same time, significant similarities between public and private schools, and great variations among different types of private schools were also reported.

(Broughman, Baker, Han, Keil, 1996)

As described in detail in Chapter Three, there were immediately noticeable differences between the observed state, private, and church school sites. Three state schools, ST1, ST2, and ST4, exhibited an academically somewhat barren environment and an uninspiring, stifled atmosphere. One state school, ST3, all three private schools, and the church school displayed academically a much richer interior than the three state schools. Also, the ST3 school, the private schools and the church schools displayed varying degrees of appealing and nicely maintained interior decoration, including art, furniture, and even houseplants.

Connecting the school sites to teacher responses in the surveys and the interviews brings an interesting mixture of findings. Measured by teachers' own perceptions of changes in their teaching and attitude toward students reported in the surveys, the teachers who listed the greatest changes were those who transferred from state to private or church schools, or from private to state schools. As reported in Chapter Four, all private school teachers who taught at state schools and most state school teachers who taught at a private school prior to their current school reported changing their teaching methods fundamentally or a lot in their current school.

Another finding important for determining the influence of school site on teacher attitude toward change is length of teacher tenure. Most state school teachers who reported changing their teaching methods fundamentally or a lot in their current school had a tenure of over 20 years in that school, and one such teacher has combined tenure of over 20 years in two state schools.

However, the state school teachers who reported such great changes in their teaching methods were distributed evenly in all four state schools. Measured by these teacher survey findings, it does not follow that ST3, the state school with academically richer interior and atmosphere produces teachers who are more open-minded toward change in teaching.

Measured by what teachers said in the interviews about worthiness of trying new methods, the private school teachers responded positively. All teachers interviewed in PR1 and PR2 reported an open-minded attitude toward change and testing new methods in their teaching. Also, one of the most forward-thinking and open-minded educators was a retirement-age teacher currently teaching in PR2 while running a small elementary private school of her own.

That in itself would support the theory that more vibrant and inspiring non-state school sites produce more active and inspired teachers. The fact that more interviewed state school teachers than private school teachers expressed caution about trying new methods further corroborates this theory. Also, only state school teachers responded that the old proven methods are the best, or spoke against new methods currently used in Czech schools.

At the same time, two of three teachers interviewed at ST3, the school with an academically rich atmosphere, reported using progressive teaching approaches, such as drama and learning from student interns. At the same time, one of the most forward-thinking teachers was a retirement-age teacher interviewed at ST2, the academically barren school.

By these measures, the theory that more vibrant and academically richer school sites produce more open-minded and active teachers holds only partially. One could almost turn it around and theorize that more forward-thinking, open-minded, and active teachers make more vibrant and active schools. The academically barren atmosphere of a school site as a physical place does not always directly correspond with an “intellectually barren atmosphere” of schools as organizations and places of culture. (Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth, 2000).

Findings about the degree of teacher activity in professional associations ascertained in the surveys make the picture even more complex. The church school teachers were the most active in the greatest number and range of professional associations, with only 45% of them not being members of any such groups. To compare, 70% of state school teachers and 79% of private school teachers reported not being members of any professional associations.

At the same time, state school teachers listed a much greater range of professional associations than private school teachers. Private school teachers were members of the smallest number and range of professional associations than either the church or state school teachers. However, private school teachers added the greatest number and length

of comments about their membership in professional associations, presenting themselves as the most talkative and sharing group of teachers of the three types of school teachers.

Interpreting these results is not simple. It does not help that there is no research yet of differences between state and non-state teacher participation in development activities, and possible links between such participation and teacher attitude toward change in the Czech Republic. In the U.S., research of differences between public and private school teachers showed that public school teachers were more likely than private school teachers to participate in professional development activities. Also, teachers in public schools were much more likely to participate in mentoring or formal induction programs. (Henley, 2000) Unfortunately, this report does not analyze the causes for such differences.

It is possible that, in this study, the church school teachers have better options for activities in professional associations than either state or private school teachers. Church school teachers may also have the advantage of better developed professional relationships between church schools.

Private school teachers may be busier with their teaching and therefore may have less time and energy available for active membership in professional associations. In the interviews, some private school teachers reported that teachers in private schools have more difficult students, spend more time in individualized instruction and advising, and face greater demands on student results than state school teachers.

Active participation in discussions on education topics showed a slightly different pattern. 50% of both church and private school teachers reported participating in such

discussions, as compared to about 40% of state school teachers. For teachers in all types of schools, the single most frequently reported topic of interest in these discussions was the new secondary school exit examination, the *maturita*. In this regard, private school teachers together with church schools teachers reported slightly greater degrees of activity than state school teachers.

Teachers and Change in Teaching: Attitudes Toward and Use of New Methods.

Many studies of teachers and change, as summarized by Fullan, concluded that the degree of change teachers make in the classroom is directly related to their interaction with others. (Fullan, 2001, pp.123, 124) When teachers interact with each other and with others in their schools and around, they eventually form what is known as a “professional learning community” (Fullan, 2001, p.124).

In my research project, I looked for the degree of teacher change and explored sources of inspiration for change. I also tried to find out how change in teaching relates to school type, i.e., state, private, church. Change introduced by teachers into their teaching and its relation to school type was one of the two main research categories examined in the surveys and the interviews.

Teacher survey responses show that school type is relevant for teacher change in teaching methods. The most powerful factor in teachers changing methods and approach to students turned out to be transfer of teachers between different types of schools. All private and church school teachers who transferred to their current schools from state schools reported the greatest degrees of change in their teaching methods and approach to students since the beginning of teaching in their current schools. A majority of state

school teachers who transferred to their current schools from private schools also reported the greatest degrees of change in their teaching methods and approach to students since the beginning of teaching in their current schools. (see Chapter Four, Table 4, and the following discussion)

This finding supports my fundamental research theory about change as discussed in Chapter Two. At the beginning of my research, I theorized that the post-communist political, social, and economic changes would cause changes in all spheres of life, including education. Simply put, change begets change. Therefore I expected to find changes in teaching in state schools, but even more, I expected to find alternative and other than traditional approaches to teaching in private and church schools.

Interestingly, I found that teacher transfer from state to private or church schools, and from private to state schools represents one of the engines that fuel teacher willingness, desire, or need to change what they do in the classroom. In this finding, change truly seems to beget change. Teachers were not compelled to change their attitudes toward using new methods or approaches simply because of the school environment in which they taught. They were compelled to change their teaching methods and approaches after they had personally experienced the different school environments.

Another interesting and powerful factor in teachers changing methods is length of teacher tenure. Several state school teachers with tenures of over 10 or 20 years reported great degrees of change in their teaching methods. This finding could not be replicated for private and church school teacher because of the short existence of these schools.

Among state school teachers, however, such finding seems almost counterintuitive to the theory of “non-reactive followers” and “inertia of acquired attitudes and behavior”. A logically expected finding for long-time teachers in state schools would be that the longer they may have been exposed to the restrictive system, the more they may have conformed to its requirements. This finding suggests that, at least in some cases, the prolonged duration of teacher tenure may actually create exactly the opposite effect. It almost seems that the longer the teachers are exposed to the restrictive system, the better some of them learn “to work it” or to work around the restrictions, i.e., find ways to function and perform as they wish regardless of the restrictions.

The interview findings complement the survey findings. In the interviews, more private school teachers than state school teachers responded positively when asked whether trying new methods is worth the effort. More state school teachers than private school teachers preferred a cautious approach to new methods, and only state school teachers stated a preference for the old, proven methods instead of trying something new. (see Chapter Five, Table 10)

At the same time, all teachers interviewed in the PR1 and PR2 private schools indicated that they have a greater freedom in choosing how to teach than they would have in a state school. Even two teachers interviewed in the state school ST4 believed that in private schools they would have had more freedom in choosing how to teach. These private school teachers indicated that the most important thing for them is to show the end result of their work, i.e., how many students graduate and with what grades. State

school teachers, on the other hand, talked about having to conform to the curriculum and not having sufficient space or time in the classroom to try to teach in new ways.

This finding indicates there is a difference in approach to the process and outcome of teaching between state and private schools. In state schools, the process and the outcome of teaching are treated as equally important. In private schools, the outcome of teaching is of key importance while the process of teaching remains partially or entirely in the teacher's discretion. This finding is directly related to teacher autonomy in the classroom, and it shows that teacher autonomy in Czech state and non-state schools would present a compelling research topic.

Teacher Inspiration: Sources and Their Use.

Sources of inspiration teachers use to change their teaching was the other main research category examined by the surveys and the interviews. In the surveys and in the interviews, all teachers regardless of school type most often stated their own learning and individual search for information as the main source of inspiration.

This finding is related to two strands of thought in the sphere of teacher professional development. On the one hand, research has shown that when teachers collaborate, form a professional teacher community, or simply team, they improve quality of teaching and student performance. (Grossman, Wineburg, Woolworth, 2001, (Newmann and Wehlage, Louis and Kruse, Bryk, Goldenberg, McLaughlin and Talbertin Fullan, 2001). Reasons for teaming stated by U.S. teachers in one study included, among others, reducing teacher isolation, getting to know students better, having more

flexibility in time, and expanding professional growth opportunities for teachers.

(Wasley, 1994)

On the other hand, self-study or self-directed learning of educators has been a topic of recent research in education as well. It has been argued in a recent research report that teachers need to be self-directed learners in order to “construct their own [individual] understanding” of reform in education, and to “create new knowledge”. This research report further discusses the importance of self-learning in this age of constant reforms. It also warns against misinterpreting a “self-directed learner” as an “isolated learner”, and emphasizes “the need for self-directed learning to be well organized in a larger social context”. (Mok, Cheng, in Cheng, Chou, Tsui, 2001)

In the second and subsequent choices in sources of professional inspiration, surveyed and interviewed teachers reported activities requiring human contact. In doing so, they supported research findings concerning teacher learning, teacher community, and professional development of educators. Over and over, research has ascertained that for teachers, individual learning is best done when performed in a social context. The development of professional teachers communities is a direct consequence of this principle. Czech teachers in this study were no exception, as shown by the kind of sources of professional inspiration listed after the first choice of self-study.

Courses taken outside of school represented the second most frequently stated source of inspiration in the surveys. In the interviews, teachers reaffirmed the importance of such courses, referring to them as an important source of inspiration. They most

commonly attended courses given by the Pedagogical Centers, followed by courses given by foreign language teacher associations.

In the surveys, both state and private school teachers noted that they liked to learn from colleagues in and outside of their schools, making this source the third most frequently named one. In the interviews, both state and private school teachers complained of little contact with teachers in other schools. Also in the interviews, only private school teachers, and not state school teachers, stressed the importance of a closely-knit and/or small collective of teachers in their school.

In the surveys, state, private, and church school teachers listed foreign-related sources of inspiration, making them the fourth most frequently named source of inspiration. The church school teachers named partnerships with foreign schools as a source of inspiration more often than either state or private school teachers. In the interviews, private school teachers talked most frequently about being inspired by and learning from foreign-related sources, and specifically from foreign lecturers.

Overall, state school teachers named the greatest number and range of sources of inspiration, followed closely by the church school teachers. Private school teachers listed the smallest number and range of sources of inspiration, but added the greatest number and length of comments about the listed sources.

This finding is similarly unexpected as the finding concerning the length of state school teacher tenure and its relation to the greatest degrees of change in teaching introduced by these teachers. Once again, it seems to defy the theory of "non-reactive followers" and "inertia of acquired attitudes and behavior". At the same time, it remotely

resonates with the finding about U.S. public school teachers being more likely a part of professional development activities and teacher-induction programs than private school teachers. (Henley, 2000)

Teacher opinion of the Ministry of Education as a source of inspiration for their teaching was generally unfavorable. In the surveys, only one state and one private school teacher mentioned the methodical materials published by the ministry as a source of inspiration in their teaching. In the interviews, both state and private school teachers stated that the ministry was far removed from the daily reality of schools. Other comments by the interviewed teachers included complaints about poorly designed and implemented policies, low funding and poorly managed funding policies by the Ministry, ignorance on the part of ministry officials, and insufficient expertise generally displayed by the persons in the Minister's post.

Final Report: Does School Type Matter?

This research project examined teachers in eight different secondary schools of mixed types. Four were state schools, three private, and one church. Starting this research project, one of my fundamental research assumptions was that Czech non-state schools would be more open to new ideas, to innovations, and new teaching methods and approaches than state schools. By extension, I reasoned that private school teachers would likely be more open to changes and trying new methods and approaches than state school teachers.

I reasoned that this difference may demonstrate itself in ways teachers introduce changes into their teaching methods, and in a greater number and range of sources of

inspiration they look for and use. I also reasoned that non-state school teachers may be more active in professional associations, or may be more often members of new, post-communist professional associations.

In examining differences between state and non-state school teachers, I asked whether teachers in non-state schools had greater freedom in choosing how to teach, whether they used a greater number and range of sources of inspiration, and whether they may have had better options in professional development. I asked whether there would be any differences between state and non-state schools in this regard.

This study yielded some findings which lend themselves to definite claims. On the other hand, the findings may also be seen at least as mixed as the school types studied in this project. Findings from school site observations, discussed in Chapter Three, show that there are some immediately noticeable and identifiable differences between state and non-state schools. Findings from surveying and interviewing teachers in these schools, discussed respectively in Chapters Four and Five, show the existence of more deeply rooted differences between state and non-state school teachers. These findings also show some similarities between teachers in these different types of schools.

It is fitting to begin this final research overview with a brief discussion of the relationship between the Czech post-communist public and private sectors. Generally, this relationship rests in the uneasy balancing act of trusted tradition and suspicious distrust. In education, this dichotomy is expressed by educators, administrators, students, parents, and the public by believing that state schools inherently provide higher quality of education because they rest on decades of tradition and know-how. Non-state schools, on

the contrary, are often regarded with distrust because they are still recent, if not entirely new anymore, untried by time, and with a lack of tradition that somehow hurts them.

This uneasy dichotomy is exacerbated by the general distrust of the Czech public of enterprises connected with monetary gains. Schooled by decades of communism under which bribery was common and honest practices in earning money did not pay, many members of the Czech public remain suspicious of any enterprise that may be profitable. Thus non-state schools are regarded with doubt and perceived as yet another money-making enterprise in which the educational aspect may get lost. Also, the obligation by students to pay tuition is perceived as making the students more demanding, less hard-working, and putting their teachers at the mercy of student whimsy.

In the interviews, as many as six state school teachers expressed some doubts about private schools. They believed that education in private schools is of poor quality, and that the necessity to make a profit steers the management and learning in private schools. These state school teachers believed that teaching in private schools is more difficult than in state schools since the students are more difficult to handle, less talented, and less hard-working. None of these state school teachers had any first-hand experience with private schools and based their opinions largely on hearsay and sometimes on unfounded reports. Only one of these state school teachers recognized that her opinion of private schools may not reflect the reality because she formed it largely from hearsay.

Three state school teachers and three private school teachers believed that there is no difference between teaching in state or private schools, and that their teaching would be the same in either school. Two other state school teachers thought that they may be

freer in private schools in terms of choosing their methods of teaching. A state school teacher who taught in a private school before noted that she had more freedom teaching in a private school, and the equipment used for computer classes was superior in the private school.

Finally, four interviewed private school teachers and two private school leaders noted distinct advantages for teachers in private schools. These included more freedom in choosing how to teach, smaller class sizes, greater stability due to teaching the same group of students from the beginning to the end of their school attendance as opposed to teaching the same course repeatedly in only one grade, lack of pressure on teachers and students, generally calm atmosphere, and small and close-knit collective of teachers.

All interviewed private school teachers also believed that they worked harder with the students as they spent more time with them in individualized instruction and in individual advising sessions, arrangements virtually non-existent in state schools. Also, they viewed private school teachers as having more enthusiasm for teaching, and private school students as liking school and learning more than their state school counterparts.

The church school teachers could not be interviewed, but one of them expressed an opinion about potential differences between state and private schools. Writing in the margins of the survey, this teacher opined that private schools simply "teach to create impressions" in order to attract more students. But "true differences", this teacher wrote, rest in the degree of teacher enthusiasm, teacher salaries, degree of student interest in learning, class size, and school equipment rather than in school type. Interestingly, I found in this research study that greater degree of teacher enthusiasm, greater student

interest in learning, smaller class sizes, and better school equipment occur more frequently in private schools than in state schools.

Does school type, i.e., state as opposed to non-state, including private and church, make a difference for teachers in their approach to teaching? Do teachers report acting differently in state as opposed to non-state schools when they look for ways to change and improve their teaching methods and their approach to students?

The answer, constructed from findings in this project, is as multifaceted as the individual schools in this study. Unquestionably, school type does matter in teacher attitude toward change in some respects. At the same time, school type does not always follow the easy dichotomy of more or less open to change, more or less professionally active, and more or less active and inventive in the choice and range of sources of professional inspiration. These following final paragraphs show the key findings, and discusses implications for Czech teachers and for possible further research.

Interestingly and importantly, this study shows that change begets change. This simple, yet profound principle is most obviously demonstrated in the post-communist context by the spontaneous and almost untamed growth of private schooling as soon as the changed political, economic, and social conditions allowed. In this study, this principle is demonstrated in the relationship between differences in teacher attitude toward change and teacher transfer between state and non-state schools. Many of those teachers who transferred between school types reported the greatest degree of changes since the beginning of teaching in their current schools.

An important finding regarding teacher attitude toward change in teaching methods and approach to students showed that teacher transfer between different types of schools is a significant influencing factor. Teacher surveys found that all private and church school teachers who transferred into their current school immediately from a state school reported the greatest degree of changes in their teaching and approach to students since the beginning of teaching in their current schools. Also, a slight majority of state school teachers who transferred into their school immediately from a private or church school reported the greatest degree of changes in teaching and approach to student since the beginning of teaching in their current schools.

This finding indicates that simply teaching in one type of school, as opposed to another, does not necessarily cause teachers to become open minded to change, or, on the contrary, to become cautious toward change or even reject it. At the beginning of this research, I theorized that non-state school teachers would be more open to change simply by the more open nature of their schools. In reality, being open minded toward change may require more than an eye-opening environment. It may require experiencing differing environments which possibly provide mental food for forming and testing comparative strategies regarding change.

The next important finding from both teacher surveys and teacher interviews showed that the most important source of inspiration for all teachers regardless of school type is self-directed learning. In this, Czech teachers in all schools are no different than teachers elsewhere in the world, as shown, for example, by Mok and Cheng. The other preferred sources of professional inspiration included, in this order, human contact with

colleagues from the teachers' own as well as other schools, taking external courses, and using foreign-related sources of inspiration, such as foreign lecturers and their ideas, foreign models of education, and ideas gained from partnerships with foreign schools.

The fact that all teachers listed sources of inspiration involving human contact immediately after naming self-directed learning again directly relates them to their colleagues in the U.S. and elsewhere. Fullan, Grossman, Wasley, and other researchers have shown that teacher community, teacher collectives, or teacher teaming is a factor of crucial importance in teacher learning.

In a related teacher survey sub-finding, church and state school teachers listed a greater number and range of sources of inspiration than private school teachers, while private school teachers listed the greatest number and length of additional comments about the listed sources. Private school teachers were more interested in learning from colleagues and in foreign-related sources of inspiration than state school teachers.

The church school teachers were members of the greatest number and range of professional associations, followed first by state and then private school teachers, as ascertained in teacher surveys. Only one teacher, from a private school, listed membership in a well-known post-communist professional association.

These findings are interesting for several reasons. They seem to refute or at least throw in confusion this study theory about non-state school teachers being more open to change and more active. At the same time, the realities they picture may result from greater time constraints on the part of private school teachers who are most likely busier with more individualized teaching than state school teachers. They may also indicate

greater familiarity of state school teachers, who have generally had longer professional lives than private school teachers, with available professional associations. At the same time, they may also indicate better funding options in professional development for state school teachers. Also, the church school teachers may have a greater number and scope of professional development connections within the network of Czech and foreign church schools.

The next important finding related to differences between school types concerns teacher satisfaction. Teacher interviews found the most satisfied teachers in two private schools, PR1 and PR2, with close-knit, communicative, and mutually supportive teacher collectives. These schools may be doing the best job of all schools in this study in building "professional learning communities" of teachers. These schools, by their own admission, consciously emphasize active and open teacher-teacher, teacher-student, and teacher-parent communication. Only private school teachers, and not state school teachers, mentioned and sometimes stressed the importance of a closely-knit and small collective of teachers to their well-being as teachers.

The last two findings parallel research findings from comparisons of U.S. public and private school teachers. Henley, for example, reported that public school teachers tend to be more active in professional development activities than private school teachers. At the same time, a study by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Center for Educational Research reported that private school teachers have a greater sense of community in their schools than state school teachers. Perhaps private school teachers

feel less of a need to participate in professional development activities precisely because they develop better and more involved communities within their schools.

Another finding related to the difference between school types and endemic to the Czech post-communist reality concerns teacher perceptions of the mutual relevance and relationship between state and private schools. In the interviews, six state school teachers expressed doubts about the quality of private schools. Three state school teachers and three private school teachers believed that there is no difference between teaching in state or private schools, and that their teaching would be the same in either school. Four interviewed private school teachers and two private school leaders noted distinct advantages for teachers in private schools as opposed to state schools.

It is important to note that the state school teachers who expressed distrust in private schools based their opinions largely on hearsay or unfounded reports. Only one such state school teacher acknowledged that her opinion may not reflect the reality of private schooling. The private school teachers reporting on their opinion of the difference between teaching in a state as opposed to a private school, on the other hand, had first-hand experience with teaching in state schools.

Finally, a seemingly minor finding from both teacher surveys and teacher interviews indicates that private school teachers may be the best communicators in this research study. Private school teachers shared the greatest number and length of additional comments in their survey responses. Also, private school teachers were generally open to informal, unrecorded talks within their schools, while state school teachers were more guarded and hesitant in informal contact.

Some of the biggest surprises in this study included matters learned in the field research about actual differences between school types. Generally, I found private school teachers open to change. However, I did not find them as engaged in testing new methods and alternative approaches as I expected. Neither did I find all state school teachers as inflexible and frozen in time as I thought they would be. A related surprise was to find private school teachers less active in professional associations than state school teachers.

Possibly, there may be a lot of change among state school teachers, and it would take more in-depth research and additional research strategies to uncover it. I remember the two state school teachers, one in ST2 and one in ST3, one retired and one close to retirement, who both talked to me about change in teaching with great enthusiasm. One has used alternative strategies such as drama in her teaching and is a great fan of British lecturers' work. The other talked for a long time about the dire need to change the traditional Czech chalk-board-notebook approach to teaching, and how she approaches teaching differently in her German language classes.

Interestingly enough, they both talked a lot against private schools, while neither of them had any direct experience with a private school. There are also former state school educators who embraced the new private schooling sector. I remember the retirement-aged private school teacher who taught at a state school her whole professional life. The end of communism came at the same time as her retirement. She greeted the change by founding and running her own private elementary school while teaching in a private secondary school.

It will be interesting to follow what road Czech schooling will take in the future. There are many issues to deal with. The general overall development will continue to be defined by the decentralizing and privatizing tendencies, however slow they may be in the Czech conditions. The sector of private schooling is very likely to keep doing well as the value of education keeps rising among the Czechs, and as more educated Czechs support the reform movement. (Hraba, Mullick, Lorenz, Vecernik, McCutcheon, 2002)

Czech private schooling will most likely follow some of the generally known trends in private education. For example, in the U.S. private schools, as opposed to public schools, teacher salaries are generally lower. However, private schools are better in retaining their best teachers and developing the professional skills of their educators. They do so by having a flexible pay structure, by mentoring new teachers, and by keeping the freedom to dismiss teachers for poor performance. (Ballou, Podgursky, 1998)

U.S. private school teachers also report greater job satisfaction than public school teachers. (Henley, 2000) This study has shown some very satisfied Czech private school teachers, albeit with salaries lower than those of teachers in state schools. It remains to be seen whether the existing Czech private schools manage to keep their teachers as satisfied and enthusiastic as the teachers in this study.

At the same time, Czech schooling currently exists in the context defined by the general public preferences for the "traditional" state schools and the general "distrust" of private schools. This uneasy dichotomy will in time subside as the public and the educators all learn to practice and accept new and different approaches to education.

Also important in this regard will be the development of collaboration between schools, and especially between state and non-state schools. Lack of sharing information concerning teaching methodologies and alternative approaches specifically between the state and non-state sectors has already been noted. (OECD, 1996, Polyzoi, Černá, 2000) If the private schools, and the small share of alternative state schools, are to be a true “living laboratory” for testing other than traditional methods and approaches to teaching, then the results of their experimentation will need to be publicly reported and made known to as many other schools and educators as possible.

Teacher training will most likely become more rigorous, with a national certificate procedure soon in place. Professional development for educators will remain chaotic for some time, before stabilizing into a system organized better than a demand-driven collection of privately-run courses. The Pedagogical Centers may play an important role in this development, if they manage to provide the support and cover the topics that teachers desire and need.

In research, there is a lot to be done in Czech education. As noted, there is a general shortage of research on Czech teachers and reform or change. Also, the issue of teacher autonomy, and specifically of the differences between state and non-state school teacher autonomy, calls for the attention of researchers. There is also a great need for systematic research of Czech non-state schools, including private and church schools, at all levels. For that matter, there is a great need for the research of all alternative approaches, no matter if used by state or non-state schools.

For this project, follow-up or extension studies may take a number of forms. A follow-up study could keep examining the differences between private and state school teachers concerning teacher autonomy, ways of teacher professional development, differences in conditions of teachers' work, or differences in teacher motivation to employ different approaches to teaching.

There are also some more general questions that lend themselves to further investigation in the Czech context. Motivations and reasons for people to become teachers is one such question. When Fullan asked Canadian teachers why they wanted to become teachers, the most common answer he obtained was: "I want to make a difference". It would be interesting to ask this question of Czech teachers and find out why the Czechs want to become teachers in private as opposed to state schools.

Most importantly, it would be interesting and important to examine in a possible follow-up study whether changes such as teachers reported in this study have been accompanied by "alteration of pedagogical beliefs and understanding" (Fullan, 2001). Indeed, only profound alterations of beliefs and understanding can transform Czech schooling, and help diffuse the communist heritage of distrust and misinformation.

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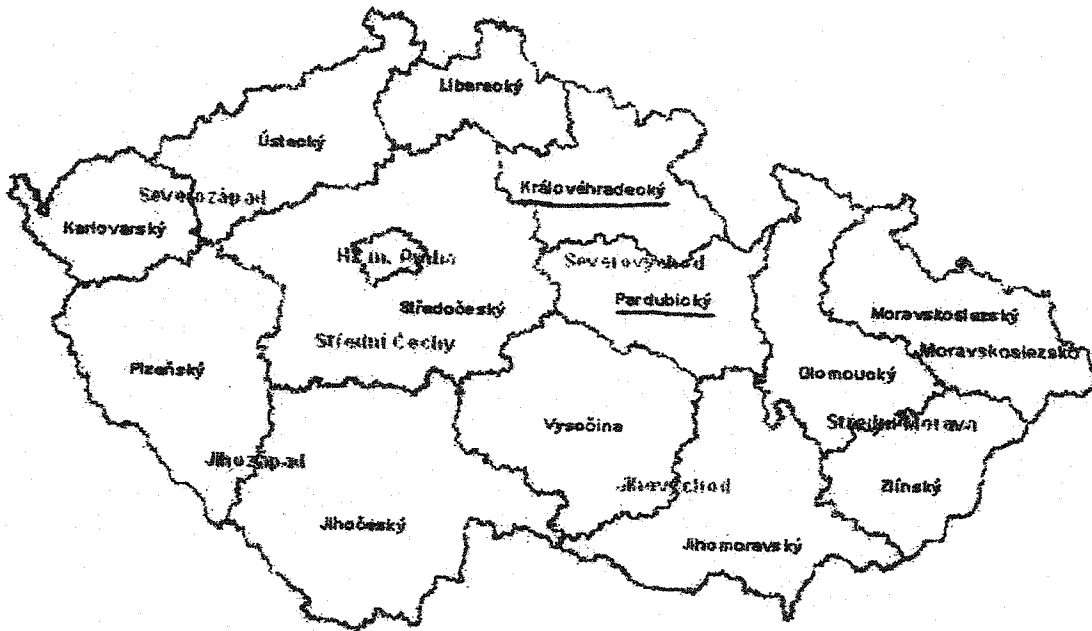
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APPENDIX A: MAP OF THE CZECH ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS.



6. How have your teaching methodologies changes since have begun teaching at this school?
- _____ fundamentally
 _____ a lot
 _____ somewhat
 _____ a little
 _____ not at all
7. What new methods of teaching have you started to use since you have begun teaching at this school? _____ integrated teaching
 _____ problem teaching
 _____ group teaching
 _____ teaching by games
 _____ other, please describe:
8. Where have you looked for and found inspiration for the changes you have just described? (e.g., the Ministry of Education and its guidance, policy, and methodology aids, other teachers from private and/or state schools, Czech or foreign models of teaching or methodology, courses or seminars taken, own readings and sources, other).
9. Do you participate in or are you a member of any local, regional, national or other associations or initiatives in education?
 If yes, what organizations are they? Please describe:
 If yes, how has it helped your teaching?
 _____ in all aspects
 _____ not at all
 _____ in some aspects, please describe:
10. Do you participate in any of the public discussions on education (e.g., the discussion on White Book in education, on the new *maturita* exams, etc.)?
 If yes, which discussion are they?
 If yes, how has that participation improved your teaching?
 _____ in all aspects
 _____ not at all
 _____ in some aspects, please describe:

APPENDIX C: TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Baseline questions asked of teachers in teacher interviews, performed September-November, 2001.

1. How long have you taught at this school?
2. Have you taught at another school before?
3. What type of school was that – state, private, church, other?
4. What do you think about testing new methods and new approaches in teaching?
5. Where do you look for inspiration When: looking for something new OR trying to improve your teaching OR trying to keep up with your professional development?
6. Is your own approach to your teaching OR changes in your teaching OR your professional development OR influenced by the fact that you are teaching at a state school OR private school?
7. How does your school support you in your search for inspiration for new methods of teaching OR professional development?
8. How does the Ministry of Education (e.g., its methodical and teaching aids, courses, etc.) influence your work as a teacher?

APPENDIX D: TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS:**I. ANALYZED BY TYPE OF SCHOOL.****PRIVATE SCHOOLS.**

Number of private schools in which teachers were surveyed: 3

Total number of teachers surveyed in all 3 private schools: 25

1. Average length of working as a teacher: 14.28 years/teacher

2. Average length of teaching in current private school: 4.04 years/teacher

3A. How many teachers taught at another private school before: 7

3B. How many teachers taught at a state school before: 18

4. How much teacher approach to students changed since the beginning of teaching in current school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 6 = 24%
- A little: 8 = 32%
- Somewhat: 3 = 12%
- a lot: 6 = 24%
- Fundamentally: 1 = 4%
- No response: 1 = 4%

5. Compared with teaching in prior schools, see students in current school as (1 = 1 occurrence):

- More independent: 11
- Equally independent: 11
- Less independent: 3
- More capable: 8

- Equally capable: 13
- Less capable: 2

6. How much teaching methods changed since the beginning of teaching in current school

(1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 0 = 0%
- A little: 11 = 44%
- Somewhat: 8 = 32%
- a lot: 4 = 16%
- Fundamentally: 1 = 4%
- No response: 1 = 4%

7. New methods teachers began to use in this school (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Group teaching: 15
- Problem teaching: 15
- Games: 7
- Integrated teaching: 6
- Pair work (conversation, drills): 1
- Work with video: 1
- Work with magazines: 1
- Critical thinking: 1
- Communication as primary tool in teaching foreign language: 1

8. Where do you find inspiration for improving/changing your teaching methods (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Own readings, own sources: 8
- Courses taken: 8
- Other teachers from state and private schools: 5

- Foreign models of teaching and methodology: 4 (2 Waldorf school, 2 ideas and models of teaching from the British Council seminars)
- Pedagogical Centers: 4
- Own ideas: 2
- Exchange of ideas with colleagues: 2
- Own students: 2
- Methodical aids, unspecified: 2
- Experience from practical teaching: 2
- Methodical aids authored by the Ministry of Education: 1
- Courses by PAU (Friends of Engaged Teaching): 1
- From what I learned in my teacher college education: 1

9. What professional associations do you participate in:

- NONE: 19 teachers = 76% of all teachers surveyed in this group of private schools

(one comment: "Teacher associations have no authority at all, it is a waste of time and effort")

- CERMAT (Center for the Reform of *Maturita* Examinations): 1, test preparation, helpful in all aspects of teaching
- British Council: 1, helpful in all aspects of teaching
- SSŠCMS (Association of Private Schools of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia): 1, helpful in all aspects
- PAU (Friends of Engaged Teaching): 1, helpful for teaching in all aspects
- YES, org. not revealed: 1

10. What discussions on education have you participated in:

- NONE: 13 teachers = 52% of all teachers surveyed in this group of private schools

- *New maturita*: 10, no help at all in teaching: 2, helps in some aspects: 2
 (“Introducing new methods in working with language”, “I learned about practicing all language skills in foreign lang. teaching”, “It raised my interest in approaching this issue with a critical mind”, “Adapting student learning to the test content”), helps in all aspects: 3
- “I follow discussions, but do not participate”: 1

STATE SCHOOLS.

Number of state schools in which teachers were surveyed: 4

Total number of teachers surveyed in all 4 state schools: 46

1. Average length of working as a teacher: 18.39 years/teacher

2. Average length of teaching in current state school: 14.28 years/teacher

3A. How many teachers taught at another state school before: 26

3B. How many teachers taught at a private school before: 3

4. How much teacher approach to students changed since the beginning of teaching in current school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 3 = 6.5%
- A little: 17 = 37%
- Somewhat: 16 = 34.8%

(one comment: “I am a milder, lazier teacher now”)

- a lot: 10 = 21.7%
- Fundamentally: 0 = 0%

5. Compared with teaching in prior schools, see students in current school as (1 = 1 occurrence):

- More independent: 18
- Equally independent: 25
- Less independent: 4
- More capable: 8
- Equally capable: 20
- Less capable: 6

6. How much teaching methods changed since the beginning of teaching in this school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 1 = 2.2%
- A little: 15 = 32.6%
- Somewhat: 23 = 50%

(one comment: "Change due to long years of practice")

- a lot: 6 = 13%
- Fundamentally: 1 = 2.2%

7. New methods teachers began to use in current school (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Group teaching: 28
- Problem teaching: 23
- Games: 14
- Integrated teaching: 9
- Discussion, conversation, more communication: 3
- Song texts: 2
- Listening texts and comprehension exercises: 2
- Audio and video: 2
- Elective courses: 1
- Term papers and projects: 1

- Spontaneous improvization: 1
- Minimizing use of native language in foreign language teaching: 1
- Drama in teaching: 1
- Alternative study programs: 1
- Shift from theory to verifying rules in practice: 1
- Limiting lecture mode & greater active inclusion of students: 1
- More work with printed media: 1
- Assigning more independent work to students: 1
- Different ways of testing: 1
- Pair work: 1

8. Where do you find inspiration for improving/changing your teaching methods (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Own readings, own sources: 28
- Courses taken: 15
- Other teachers from state and private schools: 9
- Foreign models of teaching and methodology: 6
- Pedagogical Centers: 3
- Exchange of ideas with colleagues: 3
- Methodical and didactics courses taken in college: 3
- Experience from practical teaching: 3
- Internet: 3
- Own ideas: 2
- Own students: 2
- Courses by Goethe Institute: 2
- Courses by the British Council: 1
- Methodical aids, unspecified: 1
- Methodical aids authored by the Ministry of Education: 1

- Methodical aids published by College of Ed. in HK: 1
- Work with dyslectics and dygraphics: 1
- Special education courses at University Brno: 1
- Seminars at college of Economics in Prague, University Brno: 1
- Student interns: 1
- Satellite TV, foreign journals: 1
- New textbooks: 1

9. What professional associations do you participate in:

- NONE: 32 teachers = 69.5% of all teachers surveyed in this group of state schools
- Association of *Gymnazium* Principals: 1, helps in all aspects
- JČMS (Unity of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists): 3, helps
- KV MO (Regional Committee for the Olympics in Mathematics): 1, helpful in all aspects of teaching
- British Council: 3, helpful in many ways
- Association of Secondary School Teachers: 1, helps in all aspects
- Goethe Society in Prague: 1, helps in all aspects
- SGUN (Association of German Linguists and Teachers): 1, helps in all aspects, 1, helps, "I am better informed about lifelong education, especially after 1989"
- Association of Art Teachers: 1, helps in all aspects
- Socrates: 1, helps in all aspects
- Comenius I: 1, helps in all aspects
- Association of Teachers of French: 1, helps in all aspects
- AŠSK (Association of School Sports Clubs): 1, helps in some aspects
- Alliance Francaise: 1
- Alfa (Union of Classical Philologists): 1, "Helps minimally in teaching, but good for keeping in touch with colleagues and old college classmates"

- Regional Committee for the Olympic Games in Mathematics: 1, helps in some aspects, “Especially because I work with Olympic participants”

10. What discussions on education have you participated in:

- NONE: 28 teachers = 60.9% of all teachers surveyed in this group of state schools
- New *maturita*: 14, no help at all in teaching: 4, (1: “... but at least I have an idea what the new *maturita* will look like”), helps minimally: 1, helps in some aspects: 4 (1: “I raised my voice many times, but to what effect?”, 1: “It clarified the differences between the basic and higher levels of difficulty of the exam”, 1: “It confirmed that we have deficiencies in approaching the new exam”), helps in all aspects: 3
- CERMAT (Center for the Reform of *Maturita* Examination): 1, helps in some aspects, “... but no one is able to tell me yet what the new *maturita* will be like”
- Pedagogical Center: 1, helps in some aspects, “I found areas of interest in teaching”
- National seminars: 1, helps in all aspects
- “I am interested in discussions, discuss topics with colleagues and friends, but do not participate”: 1
- *Bila kniha* (White Book): 2, 1, not helpful, 1, “Some help, but questionable, since as the comments we [the participants] raise are seldom heard”

CHURCH SCHOOL.

Number of church schools in which teachers were surveyed: 1

Total number of teachers surveyed in the church school: 18

1. Average length of working as a teacher: 15.66 years/teacher

2. Average length of teaching in current private school: 4.72 years/teacher

3A. How many teachers taught at another church school before: 1

3B. How many teachers taught at a private school before: 3

3C. How many teachers taught at a state school before: 12

4. How much teacher approach to students changed since the beginning of teaching in current school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 0 = 0%
- A little: 7 = 38.9%
- Somewhat: 6 = 33.3%
- a lot: 5 = 27.8%
- Fundamentally: 0 = 0%

5. Compared with teaching in prior schools, see students in current school as (1 = 1 occurrence):

- More independent: 4
- Equally independent: 8
- Less independent: 3
- More capable: 6
- Equally capable: 5
- Less capable: 2

6. How much teaching methods changed since the beginning of teaching in this school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 0 = 0%
- A little: 2 = 11.1%
- Somewhat: 12 = 66.7%
- a lot: 4 = 22.2%
- Fundamentally: 0 = 0%

7. New methods teachers began to use since the beginning of teaching in this school (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Games: 11
- Group teaching: 10
- Problem teaching: 9
- Integrated teaching: 2
- Pair work: 1
- Workshops: 1
- Teaching by thematic topics: 1
- Independent student work in lessons: 1
- Working with foreign journals in English lessons: 1
- Lecture as a way of summarizing preceding discussion: 1
- Frequent discussions: 1
- Dialogue followed by drawing an evaluative conclusion: 1

8. Where do you find inspiration for improving/changing your teaching methods (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Own readings, own sources: 10
- Courses taken: 9
- Other teachers from state and private schools: 7
- Foreign models of teaching and methodology: 4
- Foreign literature, foreign methodology: 2
- Courses on didactic at college of education: 2
- Methodical literature, unspecified: 2
- Pedagogical Centers: 1
- Methodical aids authored by the Ministry of Education: 1
- Professional publications from the publisher Portál: 1

- British Council: 1
- “Change of situation after 1989, change in the composition of student body, better climate for using ideas which could not be ascertained earlier [before 1989]”: 1
- Inspiration from and comparison with some schools in Germany: 1
- Foreign school with which we have partnerships: 1
- Colleagues from our school: 1
- Teaching experience: 1
- Theology of the Third Age, courses on ethical upbringing and catechism: 1
- No response: 2

9. What professional associations do you participate in?

- NONE: 8 teachers= 44.4% of teachers surveyed in this church school
- SGUN (Association of German teachers and linguists): 2, helps in some aspects, “The methodology materials published in their journal are an inspiration in preparing own lessons”
- JČMS (Unity of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists): 1, helps in some aspects: “... in ways of regarding the content of learning material”, “It provides psychological support, [such as] meeting with other teachers”
- Teacher Trainer program for Eastern Bohemia: 1, helps in all aspects
- Parliamentary School Committee for KDU-CSL (Christian Democratic-Czech Socialist Party), CBK (Czech Bishop Conference): Committee for Upbringing and Education, the Diocese School Committee: 1, helps in all aspects, “I am better informed about the plans of the Ministry of Education”
- Association of Teachers of English: 2, 1: helps in all aspects, 1: helps in some aspects: “... in providing methods of teaching, topics to teach, materials, other teacher experiences”
- the Diocese Committee for Schooling, Upbringing, and Education in HK: 1, helps in all aspects

- Club of Ecological Upbringing, Moravian Ornithology Association, Czech Geographical Society: 1, helps in all aspects
- ASUD (Association of History Teachers): 1, helps in all aspects
- No response: 1

10. What discussions on education have you participated in?

- NONE: 9 teachers = 50% of teachers surveyed in this church school
- New *maturita*: 5, no help at all in teaching: 1, helps in some aspects: 4, “I learned about requirements which will be put on students at the state *maturita* testing”, “I acutely perceive the shortcomings in testing student knowledge and skills by means of written tests”, “The Ministry [of Education] will most likely do what it wants anyway, it will pay minimum attention to the public and the teachers, and whatever [comments] it will heed, it will do it great length and under strained limits (bureaucrats)”
- *Bila kniha* (White Book): 1
- Parliamentary and academic level of various discussions: 1, helps in all aspects
- No response: 1

II. ANALYZED FOR ALL SCHOOLS COMBINED.

Number of all schools in which teachers were surveyed: 8

Total number of teachers surveyed in all 8 schools: 89

1. Average length of working as a teacher: 16.7 years/teacher

2. Average length of teaching in current school: 9.5 years/teacher

4. How much teacher approach to students changed since the beginning of teaching in current school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 9 = 10.1%
- A little: 32 = 36%
- Somewhat: 25 = 28.1%
- a lot: 21 = 23.6%
- Fundamentally: 1 = 1.1%
- No response: 1 = 1.1%

5. Compared with teaching in prior schools, see students in current school as (1 = 1 occurrence):

- More independent: 33
- Equally independent: 44
- Less independent: 10
- More capable: 22
- Equally capable: 38
- Less capable: 10

6. How much teaching methods changed since the beginning of teaching in current school (1 = 1 teacher):

- Not at all: 1 = 1.1%
- A little: 28 = 31.5%
- Somewhat: 43 = 48.3%
- a lot: 14 = 15.5%
- Fundamentally: 2 = 2.5%
- No response: 1 = 1.1%

7. New methods teachers began to use in this school (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Group teaching: 53

- Problem teaching: 47
- Games: 32
- Integrated teaching: 17
- Discussion, conversation, more communication: 4
- Pair work (conversation, drills): 3
- Work with video and audio: 3
- Work with journals, including foreign journals and magazines: 2
- Song texts: 2
- Listening texts and comprehension exercises: 2
- Critical thinking: 1
- Communication as primary tool in teaching foreign language: 1
- Elective courses: 1
- Term papers and projects: 1
- Spontaneous improvisation: 1
- Workshops: 1
- Teaching by thematic topics: 1
- Independent student work in lessons:
- Lecture as a way of summarizing preceding discussion: 1
- Dialogue followed by drawing an evaluative conclusion: 1
- Elective courses: 1
- Term papers and projects: 1
- Spontaneous improvisation: 1
- Minimizing use of native language in foreign language teaching: 1
- Drama in teaching: 1
- Alternative study programs: 1
- Shift from theory to verifying rules in practice: 1
- Limiting lecture mode & greater active inclusion of students: 1
- More work with printed media: 1

- Assigning more independent work to students: 1
- Different ways of testing: 1

8. Where do you find inspiration for improving/changing your teaching methods (1 = 1 occurrence):

- Own readings, own sources: 46
- Courses taken: 32
- Other teachers from state and private schools: 21
- Foreign models of teaching and methodology: 16 (2 Waldorf school, 2 ideas and models of teaching from the British Council seminars)
- Pedagogical Centers: 8
- Own ideas: 4
- Own students: 4
- Exchange of ideas with colleagues: 6
- Own experience: 3
- Methodical aids, unspecified: 5
- Methodical aids authored by the Ministry of Education: 3
- Methodical aids published by College of Education, Hradec Králové: 1
- Methodical and didactics courses taken in college: 6
- Experience from practical teaching: 4
- Courses by PAU (Friends of Engaged Teaching): 1
- Professional publications by the publisher Portál: 1
- Courses by British Council: 2
- Courses by Goethe Institute: 2
- Internet: 3
- Work with dyslectics and dygraphics: 1
- Special education courses: 1
- Seminars at College of Economics in Prague, at University of Brno: 1

- Student interns: 1
- Satellite TV, foreign journals: 1
- Change of situation after 1989: 1
- Foreign schools with which we have partnerships: 1
- Some schools in Germany: 1
- Theology of the Third Age: 1
- No response: 2

9. What professional associations do you participate in:

- NONE: 59 teachers = 66.3% of all teachers surveyed
- British Council: 4
- Goethe Society: 1
- CERMAT: 1
- British Council: 1
- SSŠČMS (Association of Private Schools of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia): 1
- PAU (Friends of Engaged Teaching): 1
- YES, org. not revealed: 1
- SGUN: 3
- JČMS (Unity of Czech Mathematicians and Physicists): 4
- Teacher Trainer program for Eastern Bohemia: 1
- Parliamentary School Committee for KDU-CSL (Christian Democratic-Czech Socialist Party), CBK (Czech Bishop Conference): Committee for Upbringing and Education, the Diocese School Committee: 1
- Association of Teachers of English: 2
- The Diocese Committee for Schooling, Upbringing, and Education in HK: 1
- Club of Ecological Upbringing, Moravian Ornithology Association, Czech Geographical Society: 1
- ASUD (Association of History Teachers): 1

- KV MO (Regional Committee for the Olympic Games in Mathematics): 2
- Association of Secondary School Teachers: 1
- Association of Art Teachers: 1
- Socrates: 1
- Comenius I: 1
- Association of Teachers of French: 1
- AŠSK (Association of School Sports Clubs): 1
- Alliance Francaise: 1
- Alfa (Union of Classical Philologists]: 1
- No response: 1

10. What discussions on education have you participated in:

- NONE: 50 teachers = 56.1% of all teachers surveyed
- New *maturita*: 29
- Bila kniha (White Book): 3
- Parliamentary and academic level of various discussions: 1
- CERMAT: 1
- Pedagogical Center: 1
- National seminars: 1
- I follow discussions but do not participate: 2
- No response: 1

Vita

Dagmar Kotlandova Koenig

EDUCATION:

University of Washington, Seattle, 1997-2003

Ph.D., 6/2003

College of Education: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

Research topics:

Education of immigrants in the U.S., present and past, focus on immigrant women

Bilingual education, English as a Second Language

Dissertation: Czech Teachers as "Bearers of Change": Teacher Inspiration and Attitudes

Toward Change in Secondary State and Non-State Schools.

University of Washington, 1995-1997, Seattle

Master of Arts in International Studies, 6/1997

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies: Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies

Regional focus: Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary

Disciplines: History, political science, literature

M.A. thesis: Moderate and Sensible: Higher Education and the Czech Women's Rights

Movement

Charles University, 1985-1990, Prague

Magister, 6/1990

Degree description: Czech and English language and literature, teaching credentials.

Institute of English and American Studies

Department of Slavic Languages and Literature

Department of Pedagogy

Thesis: Comparative Analysis of Newspaper Headlines in British Newspapers Before WWII and in the 1980s

EMPLOYMENT & EXPERIENCE:

TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER

English into Czech, Czech and Slovak into English, 1992-present.

Areas of specialization: Medical, subtitling, education, personal and education documents, genealogy, legal, business and finance, software manuals, travel & tourism, nature, botany, environment, fiction, music.

Consecutive and telephone interpreting for hospitals, courts and legal proceedings, social service appointments, community and business meetings.

Other language skills:

Conversational and reading skills in French and Russian, reading skills in Polish

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR

University of Washington, Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, 9/1995-6/1998, Seattle

Instructor: Czech language classes. First year/beginning, second year/intermediate, and advanced Czech language classes. Intensive first year/beginning Czech in summer 1996 and 1997. Official student evaluations available upon request.

Washington Academy of Languages, 1995-present, Seattle

Instructor: Czech as a foreign language. Occasional custom-designed classes and programs for small groups and individuals, scheduled per client requests and needs.

Green River Community College, 1994-1995, Seattle

Instructor: English as a Second Language.

Czech Technical University, Department of Language Teaching, 1989-1991, Prague.
Associate Professor: English as a Foreign Language. Czech language for foreign students.

PUBLICATIONS:

Barron's Educational Series. Travel Wise Czech: An Introduction to the Language ... Culture ... and to the Rich Experience of International Travel. Illustrated phrasebook and dictionary, Barron's 1998, translated by Dagmar Koenig from Czech and German into English.

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

Koenig, Dagmar. Educating the Immigrant Woman: Seattle, 1909- 1930. Part of panel: Powerplays and Partnerships: Case Studies of the History of Education in Seattle. AERA Annual Meeting 2001, Seattle.

Koenig, Dagmar. Teaching Cases in the Czech Language Classes. Independent paper, roundtable discussion. AATSEEL Annual Meeting, 1996, Washington, D.C.