

UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
EDUCATION AND SOCIETY
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

NORBERT TÓTH

**Pedagogical anthropological study of school
performance of Gypsy/Roma students**

Thesis of Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Supervisors:

Dr. habil Aranka Híves-Varga

associate professor

Dr. habil Anna Orsós

associate professor

Pécs, 2023

I. Introduction

The research results show that a positive trend can be observed in the education indicators of the Gypsy/Roma population in the last decade, but the gap between the education of the Hungarian Gypsies and the majority society is not reduced (*Kertesi and Kézdi, 2010; Forray and Hives, 2013*). Tamás Hives draws attention to the data of the 2011 census in this regard. Quantitative data show that 22.3% of the Gypsies did not graduate from primary school, but this proportion is only 4.5% in relation to the majority society (*Hives, 2015*).

Reflecting on the above phenomenon, the topic of the dissertation starts from the fact that in today's Hungary, the school progress of students of Gypsy/Roma origin is less successful than that of their non-Gypsy peers. From the point of view of our study, we mean success in the case of Gypsy/Roma students with a higher rate of school dropout than among non-Roma students, as numerically indicated in the latest literature (*Bocsi, Varga and Fehérvári, 2023*).

In order to clarify the conceptual framework, it is necessary to point out that the conceptual definition of dropout is possible along several alternatives. Anikó Fehérvári points out that dropping out can mean a status when the individual does not progress further on his school path, and as a consequence does not obtain a school qualification (*Fehérvári, 2015*). At the same time, dropout can also be interpreted as a process. In this case, it is possible to detect the behaviour patterns and attitudes that can predict the fact of school failure and dropout (*Hörich and Bacskai, 2018*). Our research combines the two aspects, so in our case, dropout means repeating a grade, lower-than-average school performance, and student behaviours that can potentially induce school failure.

In addition to all of this, we consider it necessary to emphasize that, apart from the fact that the school failure of Gypsy/Roma children can be seen in their poorer school performance and higher dropout rates, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those in need of speech therapy is also higher than among the children of the majority society (*Babusik, 2001*). The focus of our investigation is therefore a current social issue that is important from a practical point of view, and this partly gives the relevance of the research topic.

Considering the scientific-systematic location of the topic, on the one hand, we are talking about research with a sociological approach to education, since we are looking for an answer to what happens in school. Is there a real transfer of knowledge, an activity promoting social mobility, a socialization process? If so, in what way or how does the institution connected between the family and society work? On the other hand, since we also conducted field research in three settlements located in the county of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, we are therefore talking about research with an anthropological and pedagogical anthropological approach.

Pedagogical anthropology, which is a subfield of the science of anthropology, is also related to the above thought process. Pedagogical anthropology primarily deals with local communities, since according to its basic concept, it is not possible to generate general solution proposals that can be valid for all communities. The main reason for this is that the social mechanisms in individual communities are situational, so the solution attempt must also be situational (Spindler, 2000). From the point of view of our research topic, the phenomenon of situativity functions as a guiding thread, and from the point of view of empirics, it can be considered a starting point.

It is also necessary to focus on the scientific examination of local scenes, because typical life situations help us formulate typical solution proposals (e.g. closed settlements, settlements inhabited by Vlach Gypsies, segregated areas inhabited by families with stronger ties to conventional values, etc.) From the point of view of our dissertation this is important because we also selected the locations of our research in such a way that the possibilities and conditions of typing are ensured to a certain degree.

In light of this, we selected an urban environment, Ibrány, where we find ghettoized neighbourhoods, but services are more accessible to people, and an integrated school environment can be ensured. In addition, two smaller settlements located in the neighbourhood of Ibrány form the scene of our research, Kótaj, which is also characterized by good conditions, and Tiszabercel, which can be considered a more closed settlement, but has a school with slightly more than a hundred students, where the phenomenon of segregation can also be observed.

It is clear that the situational milieu of the metropolitan environment and village life justify the formulation of different concepts. At the same time, we consider it important to point out that we do not assume that the empirical data collected in relation to three communities create an opportunity to create a static typification category system. In our case, we consider typification as the outline of a possible future research direction.

II. Presentation of the research problem

In the dissertation, we seek the answer to why the school progress of the children of the Gypsy/Roma community living in the examined settlements (Ibrány, Kótaj, Tiszabercel) is weaker compared to their non-Roma peers. We are investigating what connections can be established between the socio-cultural conditions of Gypsy/Roma families and their children's school progress. What effect does the education of Roma parents and their opinions about learning have on their children's school performance? What role do the educational institutions

of the investigated settlements (primarily primary schools in our case) play in promoting social mobility?

As it was mentioned earlier that our topic is outlined along the lines of educational sociology and cultural anthropology, and pedagogical anthropology from a scientific and systematic point of view. During the presentation of the research problem, we consider it important to clarify the cause-and-effect relationship between the approach and explanation of our topic. According to this, the starting perspective is the sociology of education, since we primarily examine what differences can be observed between the academic progress of Gypsy and non-Gypsy students, that is, we examine the issue of school disadvantage with sociological tools. After that, in a pedagogical anthropological context, we discuss how the disadvantages articulated in the case of Gypsy students are produced on the local scene, so we examine the socio-cultural background of the disadvantages.

To outline our research questions, we start from the peculiarities of pedagogical anthropology, so we would like to refer to case studies that were born from the perspective of pedagogical anthropology (*Auerbach, 2009; Sen and Mullick, 2019*). In American Indian communities, research with a similar profile searched for the answer to the reason why Indian children find it difficult to fit in and achieve results in schools operating according to the conditions of the majority society. The researchers came to the conclusion that the real roots of the problem are to be found in cultural differences.

Our main research questions are based on the above analogy. We are therefore curious as to how, in the case of Gypsy/Roma students, the teachers see the elements of cultural difference compared to the children of the majority society, and what they see as the reasons for Gypsy/Roma students' failure at school. We know from research that pedagogues often blame Gypsy families exclusively for school failure, and their argument does not even mention that the school system should to a certain extent adapt to minority students (*Forray and Hegedűs, 2003*) and implement culturally identical pedagogy (*Boreczky, 2000*). We are curious as to how this phenomenon is articulated in our sample. Reflecting on this is also important because we want to receive information on the processes related to the self-fulfilling prophecy (Pygmalion effect) (*Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968*).

Furthermore, we want to investigate, and the anthropological approach of our research provides an opportunity for this, what kind of attitude parents of Gypsy/Roma origin have regarding their children's schooling, and what behaviour patterns this manifests itself in. We are curious as to whether parents strive to indirectly support their children's school performance and thus their social mobility by getting involved in school activities. We consider it important

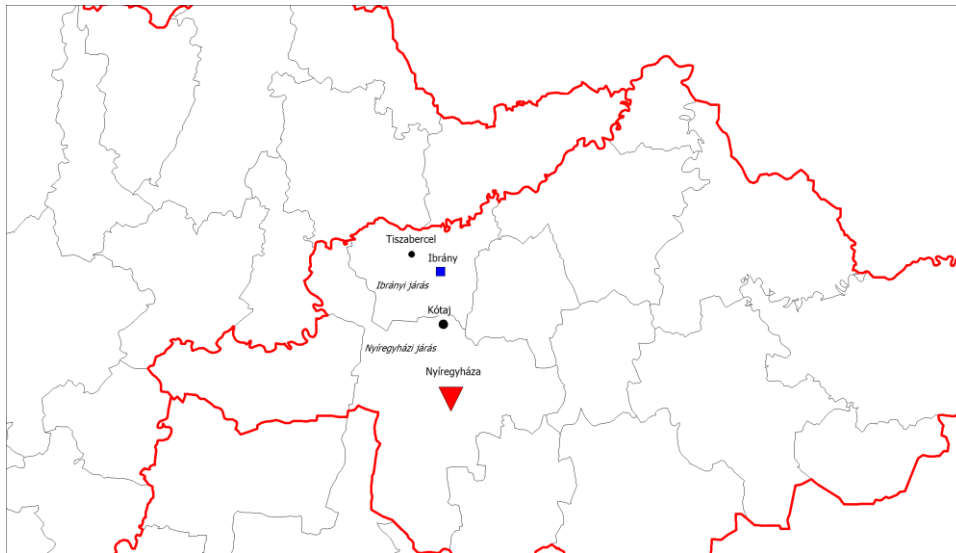
to bring this phenomenon into focus because social policy does not have an effective tool to raise the education level of parents in a meaningful way, but at the same time, parents may be able to compensate for the disadvantages by actively participating in various school activities (e.g. parents' work community, family day, other school events).

We consider it a particularly important factor to compare the values and expectations conveyed to the children by the Gypsy parents in relation to the school, with the values conveyed by the school and the teachers. In this regard, we must refer to the theory of loyalty conflict. Children find themselves in a situation of loyalty conflict when the set of norms preferred and conveyed by the parents does not correlate with what the school and teachers represent. We speak of conflict when the child cannot decide which party's value system to consider as authoritative (*Cooper and Tom, 1984; Bryk, 2002*).

III. Research tools

At the beginning of our research work, in the fall of 2018, we conducted field research in eight settlements in the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county (Ibrány, Nagyhalász, Gávavencsellő, Buj, Balsa Paszab, Tiszabercel, Kótaj). Our primary goal was to get to know the society of the settlements, to collect information about the living situation and coexistence patterns of the minority and majority society, and after evaluating these data, to select the settlements that we would like to deal with deeply and systematically within the framework of the dissertation.

We tried to approach the investigation of the given settlement and local society by using the snowball method, using the tool system of cultural anthropologists, visiting the given settlement and engaging in conversations with local people, so when choosing the settlements that are the subject of the research, we relied to a large extent on the conclusions drawn from the discourses with local people, which were adequate they helped him to analyze the situation. Taking into account the proportion of the Gypsy/Roma population living in the given settlement, its socio-cultural conditions, and the main characteristics of the settlement, the following three research areas were selected: Ibrány, Kótaj and Tiszabercel.



Scenes of the research: Ibrány, Kótaj, Tiszabercel
(Edited by: Tamás Híves PhD)

Héra and Ligeti (2014) draw attention to the fact that in the case of fieldwork it is essential for the researcher to contextualize social phenomena. Starting from this research methodology paradigm, in relation to the three settlements that are the subject of the research, we tried to map the socio-economic characteristics of the settlement, the roots of the geographical, historical and social background, and their effects on the current local society. For this work, on the one hand, we relied on the analysis of the documents published publicly by the municipality (Local Equality Program; Integrated Settlement Development Strategy), and above all on the data of the semi-structured interviews with the mayors. We wanted to find out from the leader of the given settlement how the settlement can be characterized from a demographic, economic and infrastructural point of view, what are the strengths and difficulties of the settlement, and what problems can be expected in the future. Furthermore, we collected information on how the settlement can be characterized from an ethnic point of view, what the sociocultural and educational situation of the Gypsy/Roma communities is like, and how Gypsy-Hungarian coexistence can be described on the local scene.

Due to the educational sociology aspect of our research, the starting point of the sampling procedure is the elementary schools of the three investigated settlements (Ibrány, Kótaj, Tiszabercel). Due to the pedagogical anthropological approach of our research, it is not only necessary to examine what processes and mechanisms can be observed in mixed-class schools, but it is at least as important to extend the sample to the students' parents and the socio-cultural environment where the children live. Accordingly, we want to explore the previously

defined cultural difference and bicultural socialization by comparing the two "color spaces" and contrasting the individual elements. One arena is therefore the elementary schools, which operate based on the norms of the majority society, and the other is the socio-cultural milieu from which the students come to the educational institutions.

At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the cultural difference in our research does not mean that the Gypsy children are in a forced adaptation situation in which they cannot adapt, but it is also necessary to examine how the school can function in such a way as to put the Gypsy children in a situation where to be able to adapt. The phenomenon can therefore be described as a two-way process, which is also recorded by the theory of bicultural socialization.

It can be linked to the above factors that pedagogical anthropology behaves like a trend, in the sense that it uses the problem of pedagogy, the tools and concepts of pedagogy to understand the basic situation. Only the interpretation of the operation of the school as a scene is an applied anthropological problem, because in this case the school examines how it can become inclusive, in the light of the knowledge that Gypsy children come from a national culture and a special situation in the educational system.

We want to map the outlined situation by conducting semi-structured interviews with certain members of the teaching staff of the elementary schools of the three settlements, in an effort to obtain information from the teachers teaching in the lower and upper grades as well. We regard the lower school as an important factor because, based on our experience so far, Gypsy students in the lower grades are still "manageable" and more open to the values conveyed by the school.

Of course, the fact is that the learning performance of Gypsy children deteriorates already in the lower grades, and a difference develops compared to students belonging to the majority society, but at the same time, we believe that the difference can still be managed at this age. Looking at the upper grades, it can be seen that the previously developed disadvantages are increasingly conserved, and the children are less receptive to education and respect for school rules and requirements. We do not think that this phenomenon is entirely ethno-specific, since puberty is accompanied by a tendency to non-conformity, but based on the fact that Gypsy children mature earlier and are considered adults sooner at home, it is worth examining the school aspect of the problem.

Regarding the methodological apparatus of the research, we rely on qualitative research methods. We are investigating the Gypsy/Roma community of three settlements, and the qualitative methods (field research, participant observation, interviews) provide the opportunity to gain deeper, more nuanced knowledge, since the data collection is done on a relatively small

sample. In addition, qualitative research methods help us to meaningfully explore the driving forces of different forms of behaviour and behavioural characteristics. From the point of view of our research, this is a particularly important finding, because during the recording of the empirical data, we conduct an attitude and mentality examination in several aspects.

After getting to know the local scenes and the local society, we continued the empirical part of our research in the elementary school of the given settlement. The reason for this, as we have already written about it above, is related to the cause-and-effect relationship of the approach and explanation of our thesis.

We began the systematic recording of empirical data by interviewing the heads of institutions of local elementary schools. However, in the case of the elementary school in Kótaj, it seemed more expedient from the point of view of the research to conduct an interview with the deputy head of the institution, because it is a teacher who has been working at the school for several decades, and who, as a local resident, was able to provide a comprehensive picture of the school's development history and the social characteristics of the settlement. The current head of the school has only been a member of the faculty for four years and is not a resident of the village, which is partly why we thought that an interview with the deputy head of the institution would be more helpful in obtaining information that would provide a comprehensive analysis.

We divided the interview with the heads of the institutions and the deputy head of the institution into three larger blocks of questions: (1) local society, (2) general questions related to the school, (3) the school's pedagogical practice.

Within the first block, we were primarily interested in what kind of insight the head of the institution has on local society and the local community. We started from the basic concept that, as a result of daily contact with children and their parents, they can provide information about the socio-cultural characteristics of the local society.

In the second block of questions, we tried to get to know the school as thoroughly as possible. We obtained information about the circumstances of the establishment of the institution, how the number of children has developed in recent decades, what can be considered the school's recruitment base. We were curious about how the proportion of students of Gypsy origin has changed in the last period, and what causes the current trend can be traced back to.

In the third block of questions, the pedagogical practice of the school was scrutinized. The interview questions focused on the following topics: Is there a difference between Gypsy and non-Gypsy children in terms of school progress, dropout or even further education, and if so, how big is it? How can the majority of Gypsy children's school failure, dropping out of

school or their lack of adaptability be explained? From an academic point of view, why are Gypsy students often not successful even when the family has a satisfactory financial background?

After the interviews with the heads of institutions, we continued the collection of empirical data with the members of the teaching staff of the given school. The interview questions tried to cover all important segments of pedagogical practice. We considered as key information the length of time the given teacher has been teaching at the school, because in light of this, we tried to find out how the situation of the institution developed during the period spent at the school, in the sense of what were the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the teacher's institutional career at the beginning, and how the circumstances changed at the time the interview was recorded.

We considered it important to find out what differences students think they discover. Regarding progress at school, is the fact that the student is from a minority considered an authoritative factor, or does the social situation of the student's family play a much greater role in the development of success at school? From an academic point of view, why are Gypsy students often not successful even when the family has a satisfactory financial background?

During the interview, we attached particular importance to the knowledge the teachers have about Gypsies in Hungary, for example, they are aware of which Gypsy groups live in Hungary and what proportion of them attend the given school. In this context, we tried to map the teachers' perception of the Gypsy culture and, based on their previous pedagogical practice, whether they can mention any cultural factors that directly or indirectly hinder the school progress of students of Gypsy origin. In this respect, we paid special attention to the situation of female and male students.

The other content elements of the interview were articulated along the following questions, among others: How do you see the parenting style of Roma parents? What do parents expect from the school, and how involved are they in school programs? What do you see as the solution to Roma students falling behind in school? What does the school do to reduce disadvantages? How did the school performance of students of Gypsy origin develop during the online education ordered as a result of COVID?

Due to the pedagogical anthropological approach of our research, after getting to know the educational institutions in detail, we continued the further recording of empirical data in the Gypsy communities of the given settlement. We were curious about how our interviewees characterize their own local community in terms of quality of life, labour market situation, education. What cultural characteristics can the community be characterized by (customs, use

of language, choice of partner, gender roles, etc.) What opportunities are there for the Roma population living in the settlement to break out?

In the course of our investigation, we also analyze the role that Gypsy families play in the schooling of their children. We were curious about how today's gypsy culture and its traditions affect children's school performance and aspirations for further education. At the same time, we also scrutinized how the educational characteristics of Gypsy families interact with other factors influencing school progress. At the same time, we consider it necessary to emphasize that, similarly to other social groups, families of Gypsy origin are also different, and as a result, they show different behaviour in relation to their children's schooling.

During the research carried out in Gypsy communities, we tried to map the extent to which certain sociocultural factors (education, workplace, housing conditions, gender and age) influence parents' attitudes towards school.

During the empirical data collection that ensured the "discovery" of Gypsy/Roma communities, we relied on a qualitative research methodology. In the first phase of the field research, we conducted participant observation on several occasions and recorded our experiences in a field diary. Although the author of the thesis had prior knowledge of the terrain and a network of contacts in all three settlements, it seemed more expedient - especially at the beginning of our research work - to systematically map and familiarize the terrain according to the guidelines of the head of the local Roma minority municipality. Based on the snowball method and our field experience and network of contacts, 15 semi-structured interviews were recorded with parents living in the Gypsy/Roma communities in Ibrány and Kótaj, while 10 semi-structured interviews were processed in Tiszabercel.

Due to the qualitative nature of our research methodology, field research and semi-structured interviews provide an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the behaviour patterns of Roma parents related to education and schooling (*Babbie, 2008*). At the same time, we are also aware of the limitations of our research, no results can be expected from this thesis that make scientific findings regarding the description of a large population.

The sample was created in such a way that we kept in mind the principle that the local Roma community should be represented as widely as possible in a socio-cultural sense. This means that we interviewed parents living in good and bad financial circumstances, younger and older people, as well as parents whose children have good and poor academic results. This classification was developed based on participant observations and informal conversations with the local Roma community during the field research.

We also emphasize that although the formal empirical data comes from 15-15 semi-structured interviews in the case of Ibrány and Kótaj, and 10 in the case of Tiszabercel, the conclusions and correlations formulated by the author of the thesis are the consequence of a much more complex - primarily used by cultural anthropologists - researcher experience observation. are formulated.

IV. Summary

In the dissertation, we were interested in the local communities that are the subject of the investigation, to what causes can be traced back to the difficulties related to school progress typical of the children of the relevant Roma community. After mapping and interpreting the situational milieu, we tried to provide adequate answers to the questions that can be considered as primary factors in relation to the difficult school performance of Roma students.

In the course of our research, we started sampling in primary schools, but the data collection in educational institutions was preceded by the mapping of the terrain - the Gypsy/Roma community of the given settlement. During the experiences gained during participant observation, we were able to ascertain already in the initial phase of our research work that the deprived living conditions that live in the public consciousness of the segregated Gypsy groups in Hungary are not characteristic of the Gypsy/Roma communities that are the subject of our research.

Later, based on the teachers' narratives and interviews with community members, we got a comprehensive picture of the socio-cultural conditions of the three Gypsy communities. Based on these, we can state the following:

- The majority of Roma families in the Ibrány and Kótaj segregates live in houses with a suitable level of comfort. Compared to recent years, a positive process has also begun in Tiszabercel, but here, compared to the other two settlements, there are still more houses that do not have public utilities and are in need of renovation.
- We found adequate hygiene conditions in all three communities. The number of families living in untidy houses and flats was minimal.
- The everyday clothes of the members of the communities are clean and their appearance is well-groomed. Their behaviour is not blatant, extreme manifestations, and we did not encounter any conflict situations within the community in any of the settlements.

The positive situation observed in Ibrány, Kótaj and Tiszabercel is related to the survival strategies of the Roma communities. One of the main "beneficiaries" of the upswing observed

in the construction industry in the last decade are the Roma communities that are the subject of our investigation, because the construction sector provides continuous work for Roma men who are basically untrained but suitable for auxiliary work, who can thus provide adequate living conditions for their families.

Due to the educational sociology focus of our research, we were interested in what effect the sociocultural conditions of the Gypsy communities have on the school progress and further education aspirations of the Gypsy children. In this regard - in the light of our empirical data - one of the most important consequences is that, although progress can be seen in all three communities in terms of socio-cultural conditions, the better existential conditions did not induce a positive change of attitude of Roma parents regarding school and education. As a result, poor academic progress and dropout are typical for Roma children living in better financial conditions. From this point of view - in the light of the data collected on local scenes - we must refute, but in any case shade, the sociological findings that explain the school difficulties of Roma students primarily and/or exclusively with the poor financial conditions of the families.

The case of Kótaj is particularly interesting from this point of view, where we have seen several times that precisely because of better living conditions, the parents (and therefore also the children) do not develop the realization that it would be important for their children to have such expectations and impose obligations that require good academic results. The lack of parental perception in this regard is to be found in the fact that the positive change in the lives of Roma families is not due to the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired at school.

The question may arise as to whether it is necessary to overemphasize the role of the school, in the event that a local Roma community can provide itself with living conditions similar to those of the middle class through other livelihood strategies that are not linked to school or vocational training. Based on our field experiences, we take the position that in all three investigated communities it is necessary to orient parents, and therefore children, in the direction of educational institutions. We explain the necessity of this for two reasons.

1. On the one hand, the construction industry provides the primary source of livelihood in the three settlements, but it cannot be considered a stable livelihood strategy that can be counted on in the long term, especially if we take into account the current economic processes, which lead to the conclusion that in the coming period a decline in construction industry investments in Hungary can be predicted. In addition, the situation is further complicated by the fact that Roma men are mostly unregistered workers, rather the daily notification, or even the failure to do so, is typical. As a result, neither tax

benefits nor family support options are available for the Roma families of Ibrány, Kótaj and Tiszabercel, and in the long term the right to pension benefits is also uncertain.

2. On the other hand, we believe that in the examined local Roma communities, the middle class in the traditional sense can only begin if, in addition to the existential conditions, a stratum that is educated and highly qualified "develops" in the given micro-community. Otherwise, in the long run, the Roma communities of Ibrányi, Kótaj and Tiszabercel also have to reckon with the dangers of the precariat: *"The work of those belonging to the precariat is insecure, they have no occupational identity or career prospects, they have no social memory they can rely on, the shadow of the future is not cast on their relationship, and the range of their rights is limited and precarious."* (Standing, 20112, id. Forray, 2023:132.)

In relation to socio-cultural conditions and schooling, we would like to highlight one more factor, the relationship of families living in modest financial conditions to school. In particular, in the Roma community of Tiszabercel, we experienced that in families where daily livelihood is not ensured, the motivational horizon related to education and teaching the children is of secondary importance. It is most difficult to achieve positive change in these families, as the lack of basic needs restricts the families' room for movement. The situation is made worse by the fact that we encountered "learned helplessness" primarily in these families. The concept is of psychological origin and is primarily characteristic of those in a disadvantaged situation. The point is that the individual or the family, due to previous negative experiences, learns to accept their hopeless situation, and due to their lack of motivation, they do not even make efforts to change their current situation (Seligman, 1975).

In relation to the above, our research results showed that basically those children of Roma origin are successful in school, whose parents monitor the children's school life closely and support and encourage them to fulfil the school requirements.

Parents' behaviour patterns related to learning are not influenced by their financial situation. We can mention two determining factors in this regard:

1. One is the education level of the parents. We also interviewed parents with college degrees and high school diplomas, and in their case, the expectations regarding their children's further education were clearly evident.
2. The other factor is related to the life history of the parents, because during the recording of the data we encountered several parental narratives in which it was stated that although the parent had ambitions to continue his education as a child and had a concrete

career plan, his parents did not support him, or because they were afraid of being separated from the local community, or their financial circumstances did not allow for schooling.

Due to the pedagogical anthropological nature of our research, we collected the cultural characteristics of the three Roma communities and examined their possible impact on the school performance of Roma students.

Cultural elements considered traditional can be observed primarily in the communities of Ibrány and Kótaj, in the case of the community of Tiszabercel they play a more marginal role in people's lives. The primary reason for this is that the Oláh Gypsy community lives in Ibrány and Kótaj, while Tiszabercelen is inhabited by Romungros, among whom the process of "explanation" can be traced for a long time.

From the point of view of everyday life organization, behavioural culture, and mentality, mainly the people living in the Roma community in Kótaj are characterized by the cultivation of local traditions. The most striking example of this is their relationship with the Romani language. Communication interactions within the segregated are almost exclusively in Romani, and they consider it important that their children also learn the language. On the other hand, in Ibrány we could ascertain the process of language loss. Although the elderly generation still speaks the language, their mother tongue is not conveyed as a value to their children.

Although it can be said as a whole that traditional Gypsy customs, superstitions and beliefs are "fading" in Ibrány and Kótaj, but the life of the community is still greatly influenced by the "Romani kris", i.e. the "Gypsy law". This can be specifically observed with regard to the role of Roma women within the community, as both the Ibrány and Kótaj communities can basically be considered a community organized along patriarchal principles.

This is also an important factor from the point of view of the education of Roma children, because boys are already seen as young men in adolescence, who take up work at the age of 15-16 under the supervision of their fathers, so they often interrupt their studies. The position of girls is also determined by cultural patterns. In both the Ibrány and Kótaj communities, we found that the community basically takes the position that girls should prepare for having children, and they harbour negative feelings about the possibility that a Roma girl might leave the local community due to further education. All these cultural characteristics are not or only minimally observable in the Romungró community of Tiszabercel.

An important part of our research was the mapping of teachers' knowledge about Roma culture. Our general experience is that the teachers in the examined elementary schools have minimal knowledge about the cultural characteristics of Roma students, their knowledge is limited to primary perception, and they do not possess the basic knowledge of educational sociology and Romology that would be indispensable for the successful education of Roma students.

This is one of the reasons why, when exploring the cause and effect factors of Roma children's unsuccessful school performance, the teachers in each institution were characterized by the mechanism of transfer of responsibility. Failed school performance was primarily linked to the parents' parenting style, and the majority of Roma children were not considered school-ready. The teachers teaching in the upper grades mostly reported that Roma children do not possess the basic cognitive abilities. As a result of all this, pedagogical practice based on the principle of performance reduction is typical, primarily in the Tiszabercel elementary school, but the phenomenon is increasingly observed in the state-run Ibrány elementary school as well. Performance reduction is less articulated in the pedagogical practice of primary school teachers in Kótaj. The reason for this is that, in terms of student composition, the Kótaj school is in the most favourable position, because the proportion of children with good abilities is still significant.

According to the above, our research revealed that none of the examined educational institutions have the professional conditions, primarily related to human resources, that would enable the practical application of the guidelines of culturally identical pedagogy. In addition, we see a minimal chance of implementing successful bicultural socialization, because the majority of teachers are not able to fulfil the role of mediator.

Based on our research results, we recommend further training of teachers along targeted guidelines. In the state-maintained primary school in Ibrány, and especially in Tiszabercel, which has become a segregated institution, we consider meaningful positive change to be unthinkable without further training of teachers in the field of Romology. It is necessary to develop a new approach and more innovative pedagogical practice, the focus must shift from catch-up to inclusive pedagogy.

We believe that this problem can be detected not only in the three settlements, but in all small schools where teaching and education work operates within the framework of a similar set of conditions. It would be necessary - following the example of the University of Pécs - that teacher training in Hungary reflects on this phenomenon and prepares teacher candidates so

that, with sufficient knowledge, they are able to play the role of mediator and implement culturally identical and inclusive pedagogical practice.

We do not regard our research as a closed file. During the processing and interpretation of the empirical data, a new research direction was outlined. On the one hand, in the coming years, we want to monitor the contrast between the state and church-maintained elementary schools in Ibrány. We are curious as to whether the public school will become a completely segregated institution, and if so, how long it will take. Furthermore, it is worth making the subject of scientific discourse what kind of tension the current situation induces in the local society of Ibrány. To what extent the current harmonious Hungarian-Gypsy coexistence is overwritten by the fact that the intergroup relationship between Roma and non-Roma children ceases at school.

In the case of Tiszabercel, we would like to examine in the future whether it is appropriate to maintain the status quo, that is, to conserve the hopeless situation associated with segregated education and the extreme conditions observed in the institution. The author of the thesis takes the position that the school district should consider closing the school, even if this would induce tension in the local Roma community, and probably among the teachers as well.

We believe that the Roma children of Tiszabercel could have a real chance to "break out" if an integrated school milieu were ensured, where they could learn together with children belonging to the majority society, without performance reduction.

Cited works in the thesis booklet

Auerbach, Susan (2009): Walking the walk: Portraits in leadership for family engagement in urban schools. *The School Community Journal*. 19. 1. 9-23.

Babbie, Earl (2008): *A társadalomtudományi kutatás gyakorlata*. Balassi Kiadó, Budapest

Babusik Ferenc (2001): Kutatás a roma gyerekeket képző általános iskolák körében *Esély*. 13. 1. 21-46.

Bocsi Veronika – Varga Aranka – Fehérvári Anikó (2023): Chances of Early School leaving – With Special Regard to the Impact of Roma Identity. *Education Sciences*. 13. 5. 1-14.

Boreczky Ágnes (2000): Kultúraazonos pedagógia. *Új Pedagógiai Szemle*. 50 7-8. 81-92.

Bryk, Anthony S. – Schneider, Barbara (2002). *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York

Cooper, Harris – Tom, David Y. H. (1984): Teacher Expectation Research: A Review with Implication for Classroom Instruction. *The Elementary School Journal*. 85.1. 77-89.

Fehérvári Anikó (2015): A lemorzsolódás és a korai iskolaelhagyás trendje. *Neveléstudomány*. 3. 31-47.

Forray R. Katalin - Hegedűs T. András (2003): *Cigányok, iskola, oktatáspolitiká*. Új Mandátum Kiadó, Budapest

Forray R. Katalin – Híves Tamás (2013): Az iskolázottság térszerkezete, 2011. *Educatio*. 24. 4. 493-554.

Héra Gábor – Ligeti György (2014): *Módszertan. A társadalmi jelenségek kutatása*. Osiris Kiadó, Budapest

Híves Tamás (2015): A hátrányos helyzet területi aspektusai. In: Fehérvári Anikó – Tomasz Gábor (szerk.): *Kudarok és megoldások. iskolai hátrányok, lemorzsolódás, problémakezelés*. OFI, Budapest. 13-30.

Hörich Balázs – Bacskai Katinka (2018): Az iskolai lemorzsolódás intézményi jellemzői. *Magyar Pedagógia*. 118. 2. 133-156

Kertesi Gábor - Kézdi Gábor (2010): Iskolázatlan szülők gyermekei és roma fiatalok a középiskolában Beszámoló az Educatio Életpálya-felmérésének 2006 és 2009 közötti

hullámaiból. In Kolosi Tamás – Tóth István György (szerk.): *Társadalmi Riport 2010*. TÁRKI, Budapest.371–406.

Rosenthal, Robert – Jacobson Lenore (1968) *Pygmalion in the classroom: teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston Inc., New York

Seligman, Martin E. P. (1975): *Helplessness: On Depression, Development and Death*. W. H. Freeman, New York

Sen, Paramita – Mullick, Pinaki Dey (2019): Anthropology and school education in Indian context: an outline. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*. 6. 6. 505-521.