

ANALYSIS OF THE SERBIAN TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOPS

NIS, NOVI PAZAR, BELGRADE AND NOVI SAD

21st October 2006 -4th February 2007

Summary and background:

The first Teacher Training and outreach phase of the JHP in Serbia comprised 1 Training of Trainers Workshop and 4 local teacher training Workshops, all of which took place between October 2006-February 2007.

The following document is a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the evaluative data gathered at the Teacher Training Workshops, drawn from questionnaires filled in by the participants.

The four Local Teacher Training Workshops took place in **Niš**, (October 21st 22nd, 2006) **Novi Pazar**, (November 25th 26th, 2006), **Belgrade**, (December 16th -17th, 2006) and **Novi Sad**, (February 2nd -4th, 2007).

In total, 16 trainers worked with 107 teachers during this Teacher Training phase of the JHP in Serbia.

Standardised questionnaires were created and given to each teacher who participated in a workshop in order to enable the CDRSEE to evaluate the four Workbooks and the quality of the Workshops. The teachers, as final beneficiaries, 'owners' and most valuable asset of the JHP, play the most central role in the project's success or failure. It is therefore of primary importance to not only ask for their opinions about the project, but also to ensure that the project is responsive to their evaluation and input, in the inclusive and democratic manner which its content promotes.

Format of the questionnaires:

The questionnaires consisted of eighteen closed ended questions, and eight open-ended questions.

The first set of eighteen questions was designed to prompt a 'ranked' response in order to extract quantitative data.

The open-ended questions were designed to encourage an unrestricted meaningful response, reflecting the full opinion of the respondent. Furthermore, the inclusion of open-ended questions ties into the JHP's overall philosophy and provides a vital mechanism for the assessment of the project as a whole: that the project is an on-going, inclusive process and that just because the CDRSEE has not asked a question about a specific aspect, does not mean that it is not a valid issue or a non-valuable piece of information. Further to this, not everything that is valuable can be measured in a 'closed-ended' question, even when that question asks for an opinion.

The open-ended questions have allowed for the greatest possible qualitative feedback about all aspects of the JHP, thus ensuring that the teachers have an on-going and responsive role in the progress of the project itself-not just as final recipients of a static product.

The following document contains a summary of the most significant responses, taken as an overall view of the 4 Workshops. Detailed analyses of each workshop can be found below.

Analysis of the ranking questions

Teachers were invited to rank their replies to each question with one of the following:

strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree

The reply categories of each question were summarised and converted into percentages. Table 1 presents a brief of some of the most central questions .

Table 1

Questions	Yes	No	Blanks			
Have you studied the 4 Workbooks? (Wbs)	91.1%	5.6%	3.3%			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
The 4 Wbs need a lot of improvement.	5.6%	38.9%	12.2%	30.0%	2.2%	11.1%
The 4 Wbs have a lot of positive aspects.	42.2%	45.6%	3.3%	1.1%	0.0%	7.8%

In general, the teachers showed great interest in the Wbs and 91.1% of them took part in the evaluation of the 4 Wbs. Even though 44.5% of those who responded said that all of the Wbs need a lot of improvement, 87.8% nonetheless agreed that each Wb has many positive aspects. 91.1% of the teachers stated that they would use the new teaching material as a tool for enabling students to respond effectively to the misuse of history for political ends.

Pie Chart of Responses: All workshops:

I would definitely use this material in my classes

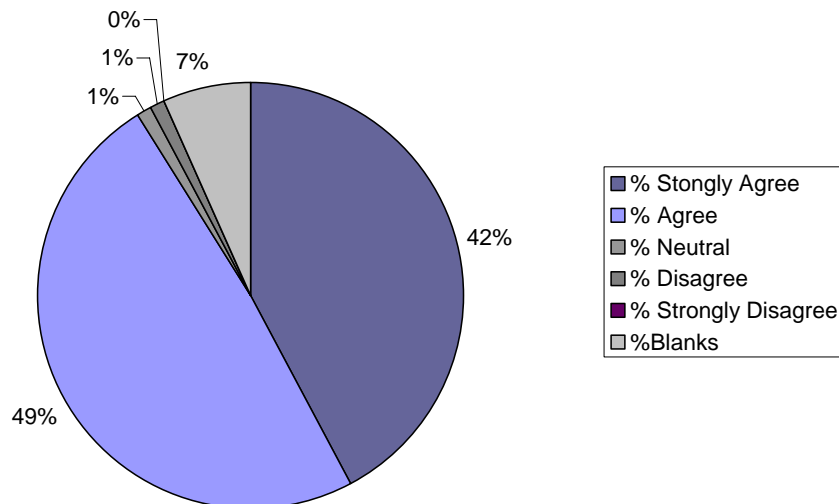


Table 2 presents the teachers' opinion about the quality of the Workshop and its organisation.

Table 2

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
My decision to accept the invitation to this workshop was the correct one.	83.3%	15.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
The training session provided me with knowledge and information that will be useful to me in my work.	63.3%	33.3%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
The training session provided by the Trainers was clear and easy to understand.	61.1%	34.4%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%

98.9% of the teachers agreed that they made the correct choice to participate in the workshops. 95.5% of the teachers believed that the trainers gave them understandable instructions and 96.6% of the participants confirmed that they obtained knowledge that will be useful to them in their work.

Analysis of the open-ended questions

Text:

The teachers from all of the workshops indicated that they were very satisfied with the Workbooks. The participants agreed that the Wbs are very well organised and they very much liked the general structure of the publications. Furthermore, the teachers agreed that the Wbs followed a well thought out and well developed mode of presentation.

Visual content:

With regard to the use of illustrations, the participants indicated that the images in the Workbooks were effective. The broad range of visual input, such as photographs, posters, caricatures, lithographs, paintings, illuminations, adverts, postcards, stamps, bank notes etc. was assessed as being very interesting for young people. The illustrations could also help students envision the past more vividly.

Methodology:

Although the activities and organisation of the workbooks lend themselves towards a participative teaching methodology, the manner in which a teacher uses these books is neither prescribed nor curtailed by the workbooks; a variety of approaches to using these materials is encouraged.

At the workshops and through the questionnaires, the teachers demonstrated that they were very pleased that they could introduce and encourage simulations, role plays, independent research, active learning and debate into their classes through this material. This positive engagement with new methodologies extended to a commitment to utilise these in the classroom, but many teachers noted that doing so would present a challenge, both in terms of preparation as well as implementation in the class. The challenges notwithstanding, the majority of teachers showed themselves willing to use some of the new methods discussed at the workshops.

Conclusions:

Although teachers suggested that the Serbian documents in the Wbs needed some improvement, they nonetheless agreed that the fact that the Wbs include a wide range of historical documentation from eleven countries, could be helpful for presenting multi-perspective views about one historical event. The presence of testimonies from more than one perspective challenges the notion that the past is made up of unique, certain and exclusive truths, and although this principle could present difficulties in the classroom, the teachers agreed that this approach is vital in allowing students to develop critically reflective skills and come to their own considered opinions.

Moreover, due to the teachers' positive reaction to the Wbs and their potential for bolstering critical and cooperative skills, empathy and independent thought among students, the teachers expressed great interest in participating in further seminars in which teachers and experts from all over the region could take part and work towards using history education as a tool for reconciliation in Southeast Europe.

ANALYSIS OF TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP 1

NIS, SERBIA

21st - 23rd October, 2006

Following the successful Training of Trainers' conference in Belgrade, the first Teacher Training Workshop took place in Nis (October 21st-23rd, 2006) facilitated by trainers who had attended and completed the Trainers' conference.

24 teachers attended and 5 trainers facilitated the workshop.

The following contains an overview of the most significant responses to the questionnaires given to the teachers at the end of the workshop.

Analysis of the ranking questions:

Table 1

Questions	Yes	No	Blanks			
Have you studied the 4 Workbooks? (Wbs)	90.5%	9.5%	0%			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
The 4 Wbs need a lot of improvement.	9.5%	33.3%	9.5%	28.6%	4.8%	14.3%
The 4 Wbs have a lot of positive aspects.	23.8%	57.1%	4.8%	4.8%	0%	9.5%

The teachers expressed great interest in the Wbs and 90.5% of the respondents to the questionnaire had already read them thoroughly. Although 42.8% stated that all of the Wbs need to be improved, 80.9% of respondents stated that that all of the Wbs contain many positive characteristics. 80 % of the respondents claimed that they would use the material as a tool for supporting the emergence of democratic societies.

Pie chart of responses: Nis

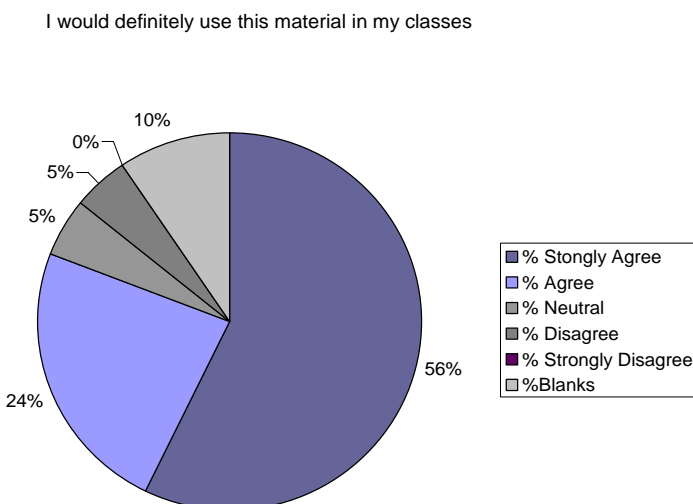


Table 2 indicates responses to questions about the quality of the Workshop and its organisation.

Table 2

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
My decision to accept the invitation to this workshop was the correct one.	85.7%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The training session provided me with knowledge and information that will be useful to my work.	61.9%	38.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The training session provided by the Trainers was clear and easy to understand.	52.4%	42.9%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

All of the teachers felt that they made the correct decision in deciding to participate in the workshop. 95.3% of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the guidelines given by trainers were understandable and each one of the teachers claimed that knowledge and information that they obtained at the seminar would be useful for their history classes.

Analysis of the open-ended questions

Overall, the teachers stated that the Workbooks and the quality of the Workshop were very good. Although the participants would like to see more visuals used in the Wbs, they indicated that the illustrations that have been incorporated are useful and well chosen. Although many teachers suggested improvements that could be made to the historical sources from Serbia, they nevertheless agreed that the Wbs contain a good range of first-hand documentation and analysis from all of the Balkan countries. The participants agreed with the view that these presentations of differing views of same event could help students develop critical thinking skills.

Furthermore, the teachers discussed the challenges that using these materials and multi-perspective approaches might contain, highlighting the fact that students come into every learning situation with a store of prior knowledge. In the case of history learning, this set of prior knowledge can often include beliefs in one true narrative of the past. The Wbs ask students to examine the idea that there can be only one true set of facts about any historical event and even though the teachers agreed that requiring students to question their prior knowledge might be challenging, the rewards of encouraging students to think, see things from many points of view and debate issues far outweighed the difficulties that doing so might entail.

The participants indicated that the quality of the Trainers' work in facilitating, coaching and guiding the Workshops was high and that their instructions were clear and useful.

To conclude, all of the teachers were satisfied with the use of a variety of visual input and the first-hand documents in the Wbs and they were pleased that these Wbs encourage students to further develop critical thinking skills and to form considered opinions of their own.

ANALYSIS TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP 2

NOVI PAZAR, SERBIA

25th – 27th November, 2006

The Second Teacher Training workshop took place in Novi Pazar between 25th-27th November, 2006.

31 teachers attended and 5 trainers facilitated the workshop.

The following contains an overview of the most significant responses to the questionnaires given to the teachers at the end of the workshop.

Analysis of the ranking questions:

Table 1

Questions	Yes	No	Blanks			
Have you studied the 4 Workbooks? (Wbs)	96.3%	0.0%	3.7%			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
The 4 Wbs need a lot of improvement.	0.0%	37.0%	11.1%	40.7%	0.0%	11.1%
The 4 Wbs have a lot of positive aspects.	55.6%	37.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%

The teachers agreed that the Workbooks were interesting and 96.3% of respondents had already read them thoroughly. Although 37% of the respondents remarked that the Wbs require some further material development, 92.6% agreed that the Wbs contain a significant number of encouraging characteristics. 96 % of the participants stated that they intended to use the supplementary material in their classes.

Pie Chart of Responses: Novi Pazar

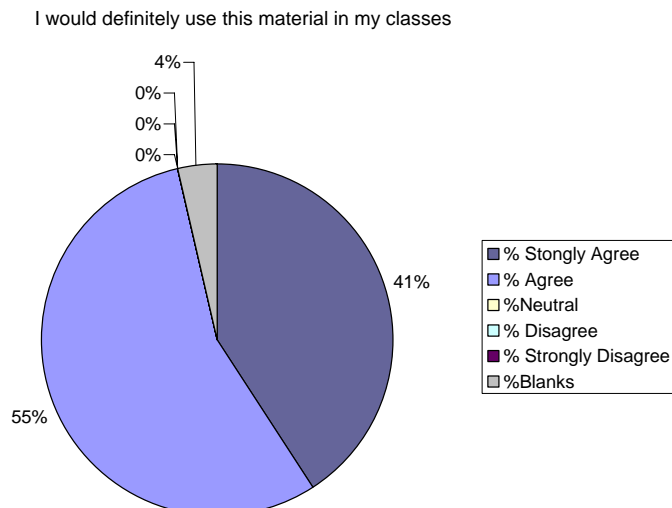


Table 2 indicates responses to questions about the quality of the Workshop and its organisation.

Table 2

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
My decision to accept the invitation to this workshop was the correct one.	81.5%	18.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The training session provided me with knowledge and information that will be useful to my work.	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The training session provided by the Trainers was clear and easy to understand.	55.6%	44.4%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

All of the teachers felt that they had made the correct decision when they decided to participate in the workshop. 95% of them claimed that the guidelines given by trainers were comprehensible and all of the participants agreed that the Workshop had provided them with relevant skills and knowledge for their history classes.

Analysis of the open-ended questions

The teachers noted that the documents and activities in the Wbs are of a high quality, and that these could be used in class. The participants liked the writing style of the Wbs and the manner in which the books were organised, and the texts presented.

Although the teachers remarked that to re-examine the misunderstandings students may have about various concepts would present a challenge, they nonetheless claimed that the multi-perspective approach and inclusion of testimonies from a variety of angles of the same event would be useful in enabling students to develop key critical thinking skills. In addition, the teachers noted the role that the use of the Wbs could play in reducing the potential for harm that possible attempts to manipulate the past for political ends could cause. In allowing students to look at the past through a variety of perspectives, the teachers agreed that students would be better prepared to effectively deal with nationalistic accounts of history being used for specific means.

ANALYSIS OF TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP 3

BELGRADE, SERBIA

15th – 17th December, 2006

The Third Teacher Training workshop was held in Belgrade between 15th-17th December, 2006.

30 teachers participated and 5 trainers facilitated the workshop.

The following contains an overview of the most significant responses to the questionnaires given to the teachers at the end of the workshop.

Analysis of the ranking questions:

Table 1

Questions	Yes	No	Blanks			
Have you studied the 4 Workbooks? (Wbs)	95.5%	4.5%	0.0%			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
The 4 Wbs need a lot of improvement.	9.1%	22.7%	13.6%	40.9%	4.5%	9.1%
The 4 Wbs have a lot of positive aspects.	59.1%	31.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%

95.5% of the teachers claimed that they had read and analysed the Workbooks. Even though 31.8% of the participants remarked that improvements to the were necessary, 90.9% believed that a reader could nonetheless enhance his/her understanding of democratic values as a result of the numerous positive traits of the Wbs. 95 % of the teachers said that they would use the Wbs in schools*(pie chart 1).

Pie Chart of Responses: Belgrade

I would definitely use this material in my classes

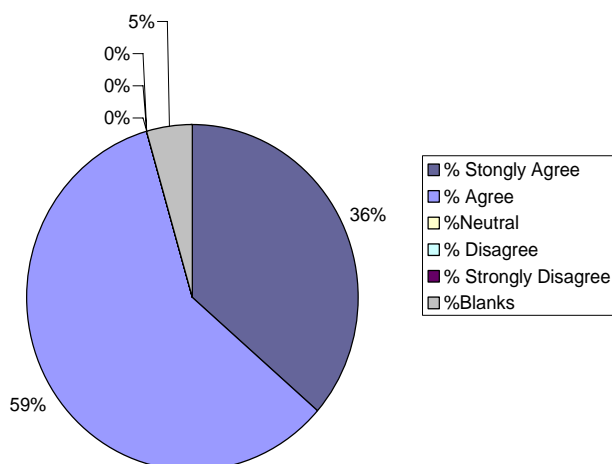


Table 2 indicates responses to questions about the quality of the Workshop and its organisation.

Table 2

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
My decision to accept the invitation to this workshop was the correct one.	90.9%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%
The training session provided me with knowledge and information that will be useful to my work.	68.2%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%
The training session provided by the Trainers was clear and easy to understand.	68.2%	22.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%

95.4 % of the teachers believed their decision to participate at the workshop was the correct one. 90.9% of the teachers agreed that the trainers' instructions were clear and useful and 95.5% of the participants claimed that the Workshop gave them knowledge that could be applied in their classes.

Analysis of the open-ended questions

The teachers responded positively to the innovative teaching techniques that the Wbs' contents and activities lend themselves to.

Although some improvement of the Serbian documents was recommended, the teachers felt that the wide range of historical sources offers a good understanding of historical events from many different points of view. Thus, the teachers considered the Workbooks to be valuable and agreed that they could help students develop deeper critical thinking skills.

There was broad agreement among the teachers that the trainers were very well organised and that they were dynamic and interesting in their presentation and guidance.

ANALYSIS TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP 4

NOVI SAD, SERBIA

2nd -4th February, 2007

The Fourth Teacher Training workshop was held in Novi Sad between 15th-17th December, 2006.

22 teachers participated and 6 trainers facilitated the workshop.

The following contains an overview of the most significant responses to the questionnaires given to the teachers at the end of the workshop.

Analysis of the ranking questions:

Table 1

Questions	Yes	No	Blanks			
Have you studied the 4 Workbooks (Wbs)?	80.0%	10.0%	10.0%			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
The 4 Wbs need a lot of improvement.	5.0%	65.0%	15.0%	5.0%	0.0%	10.0%
The 4 Wbs have a lot of positive aspects.	25.0%	60.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%

The teachers all remarked that the Workbooks were very appealing and 80% of them had already studied them in depth. Even though 70% of the respondents mentioned that the Wbs require some improvements, 85% nonetheless believed that all of the Wbs have many positive characteristics, and 90% of the participants agreed upon the important role that this material could play in the formation of democratic societies. 90% of the respondents stated that they would use the materials in their classes.

Pie Chart of Responses: Novi Sad

I would definitely use this material in my classes

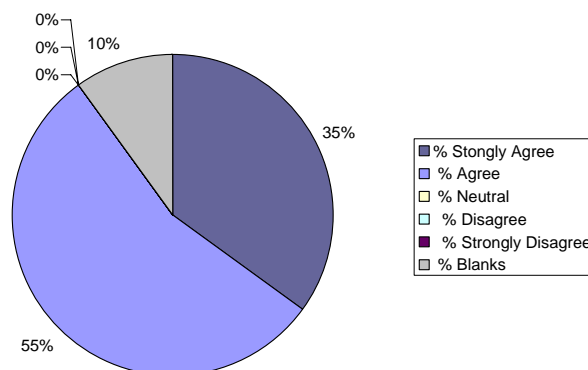


Table 2 presents the teachers' opinion about the quality of the Workshop and its organisation.

Table 2

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Blanks
My decision to accept the invitation to this workshop was the correct one.	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
The training session provided me with knowledge and information that will be useful to my work.	55.0%	35.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
The training session provided by the Trainers was clear and easy to understand.	70.0%	25.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

All of the teachers replied that their decision to attend the workshop was a good one. 95% of all the teachers agreed they were given clear and understandable instructions and 90% of the participants agreed that the Workshop provided them with skills or ideas which would be valuable in class.

Analysis of the open-ended questions

The participants agreed that the Workbooks were excellently thought out and very interesting. They confirmed that the Wbs contain many useful illustrations such as maps and photographs which could be successfully used in the classroom in order to convey knowledge to their students about the social position of the historical characters.

Although some improvement of the Serbian documents in the Wbs was mentioned by a number of the participants, they agreed that the content of the Wbs is varied and well chosen. The use of a broad range of sources that look at events from more than one perspective was highlighted as a very useful approach in allowing students to reach their own conclusions about historical characters and narratives. Even though the teachers agreed that a multi-perspective methodology could be challenging to implement in the classroom, they felt that the benefits in introducing some of these activities far outweighed the difficulties. Moreover, many of the teachers mentioned that it would be a pleasure for them to undertake activities and present materials in the classroom, which could encourage and motivate students in further developing their critical thinking skills.

The teachers were confident in the abilities of the trainers, and noted that they presented the methodologies and handled the discussions with clarity and enthusiasm. They provided the teachers with knowledge and clear guidelines. Furthermore, the teachers felt that the trainers and the environment had provided them with the opportunity to openly express their opinions and share their experiences and ideas with their colleagues.