

## The Variety of Schoolchildren Entrepreneurship Education

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### Abstract

Rapid change of Lithuanian society, the processes of European integration, economic changes, progress of science and technology going over from industrial society to society of knowledge force to renew the whole system of Lithuanian education and science. Rapid development and application of new technology, economic globalization demand for more and more society members to have better and more qualitative education are recognized are not only in Lithuania but in Europe too.

Putting economic literacy and teaching entrepreneurship into practice, their stages and tasks are closely connected with the on going reform in education and science, its aims and tasks, and the real situation. Every schoolchild finishing school needs to develop entrepreneurship and have the principles of market economy knowledge, know what personal characteristics are needed and how to develop them successfully. That is why the necessity for schoolchildren's entrepreneurship education is analyzed in the article. The hypothesis that schoolchildren's entrepreneurship education is an indispensable condition to satisfy the requirements of the market economy is raised and research in Gargždai “Krantas” Secondary School was carried out.

**Key words:** schoolchild, changes in organizations, economic literacy, entrepreneurship, teaching entrepreneurship.

### Introduction

Management studies are becoming a more and more important factor for economic expansion in Lithuania. The importance of management research and practical application is increasing due to real processes of integration into the European Union because success of these processes depends a lot on the abilities of the staff and especially of the manager.

Integration into the Europe an market and into the system of the world economy is not easy. Not only a businessman but also almost every citizen needs to understand the principles and laws of economy and management and be able to put them into everyday

practice. It is necessary for young specialists to realize the basis of the market economy, to understand the problems of economy and their ways of solution, to be ready to take part successfully in modern economic and social processes, to compete effectively in the markets and cooperate with partners from different countries.

The changing technological, economic, political environment forces to think about teaching the youth how to adapt to changes which will happen in life. In order to help schoolchildren learn how to adapt to changing circumstances it is necessary to teach them entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship is important not only for every person but for every organization as well because it induces to renew, adopt innovations, helps to change oneself together with the changing environment. It is necessary to teach entrepreneurship in consecutive order starting from pre – primary classes, consequently learning more difficult notions and laws in primary, basic, secondary, vocational schools and universities.

**Research object:** teaching entrepreneurship in the system of education.

**Research aim:** necessity of teaching entrepreneurship at school.

#### Research tasks:

1. To perform theoretical analysis of teaching entrepreneurship in the system of education.
2. To present the ways of improvement of teaching entrepreneurship.

**Raised hypothesis:** if schoolchildren's entrepreneurship education is an indispensable condition to satisfy the requirements of the market economy.

**Research methods:** comparative analysis and synthesis of scientific literature and documents, questioning, graphic presentation, logical conclusions.

**Research methods:** Research was carried out in Gargždai “Krantas” Secondary School. 47 schoolchildren from senior classes and 30 teachers working with them took part in the research. Two classes – form 11, 25 schoolchildren, and form 12, with 22 schoolchildren, were randomly selected. It was tried to find out if entrepreneurship is taught at school; if it

is necessary; in what classes it should be taught; who and what stimulates entrepreneurship; what teaching methods are most acceptable and what entrepreneurship characteristics are most important.

### Teaching entrepreneurship in the educational organization

According to Valuckienė, Ruškus and Balčiūnas (2004), as Lithuania has become a member of the European Union, new political, economic and cultural processes of transformation have created a new type of society in parallel with society renovation and freedom, bringing to light different conflicts of values, interests, convictions and contradictions of socialization. They pose new demands for a person, who tries to integrate and adapt to the mentioned processes. In such environment trying to increase country's

competitiveness, to solve economic and psycho-social problems, a person's knowledge, *creativity and entrepreneurship*, as personal characteristics, become important factors just as capital, labor force, land and natural resources.

In modern civilisation there are inescapable changes in external and internal environment. An organization trying to survive in the changeable surrounding has to change itself (Lodienė, 2005).

Seilius and Šimanskienė (2006) affirm that organizations, run by general managers (owners), who know novelties of management, importance of changes, will stimulate and put into practice the newest organizational changes, stay competitive and ensure long existence.

Zakarevičius (2003) states that different changes particularly influence the processes of organization management (Table 1).

Table 1

### Classification of changes

From the point of content	From the point of development in time and nature of on going process	From the point of volume dimension	From the point of place where reasons for changes are formed and their initiative realization	From the point of completion
1. Technical, technological. 2. Economic. 3. Organizational, managerial.	1. Evolutionary. 2. Revolutionary.	1. Microchanges. 2. Macrochanges.	1. Initiated "from the bottom". 2. Initiated „from the top“.	1. Partial (local). 2. Systematic.

Source: compiled by the authors according to Zakarevičius, P. (2003). Pokyčiai organizacijose: priežastys, valdymas, pasekmės. Kaunas: VDU.

According to Kudokienė (2005), every organizational, Lithuanian **school of general education** too functions in changeable and constantly developing environment. Continual **School's**, as an organization's, **improvement** and becoming different, qualitatively new organization. A *learning school* seriously evaluates needs of schoolchildren, parents and teachers, keeps in touch with the environment consciously and consequently. Its organizational culture and management tend to novelties and changes. It is the school, where it is possible to develop new visions and put them into practice evaluating advantages and disadvantages.

Jonušaitė and Valuckienė (2007) point out that in the last few decades in the world's social, economic, political, educational and science space it is discussed how to improve quality in all spheres. The quality of education (as one of the main aims of management functions realization) has direct reference to changes and work improvement putting into practice new educational models of services.

At the Lisbon summit in March 2000, European Union leaders set out a new strategy based on a consensus of Member States to modernize Europe. This became known as the Lisbon Strategy. After initially moderate results, the Lisbon Strategy was simplified and relaunched in 2005. It is now making a strong contribution to Europe's current economic upturn.

The Lisbon Strategy is an action and development plan for the European Union. Its aim is to make the EU "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and respect for the environment by 2010".

One of the aims of the Lithuanian education management and teaching systems is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the system of education and teaching, instilling coordinated systems of quality assurance.

The aims of school education, looking from

the perspective of a schoolchild, according to Fidler (2006), in essence consist of four main groups:

1. Personal self – realization;
2. Preparation for life as an adult;
3. Preparation for democratic society;
4. Preparation for work.

Today the present demands are not only to give knowledge but to teach young and elder people to live among people. The notion of *sociologization* appered. It is something like an ability to understand processes happening in society and to see ourselves as a part of society. The school still takes care of schoolchildren and directs them to the social surroundings. It is harder when a schoolchild finishes school. According to schoolchildren, their way to life is disturbing; they are not always ready to join society independently. Thus, it is still a problem of today to teach social things, develop independence and active position (Talalienė, 2003).

A person intending to work in business has to have knowledge about business, its nature, understand peculiarities of such activity and gain some abilities which could help him to evaluate the business environment and possibility to adapt himself to constantly changing external environment.

On 19–20 June, 2000 The European Charter for Small Enterprises was approved by EU leaders at the Feira European Council. The Charter calls upon Member States and the Commission to take action to support and encourage small enterprises in ten key areas. One of them, teaching entrepreneurship, general knowledge about business and enterprise should be taught at all levels of school; separate optional subjects connected with business should be included into the programs of secondary schools, colleges and universities. Thus, entrepreneurship is stimulated and educated.

The importance of economy is so big that we must understand the principles and practice of the market economy as well as we need to know the most important things about health, art, culture, music and even religion. Economy influences everyone, not only economists or businessmen. It is “business” of all

of us (Kublickas, Žilinskas, 2001).

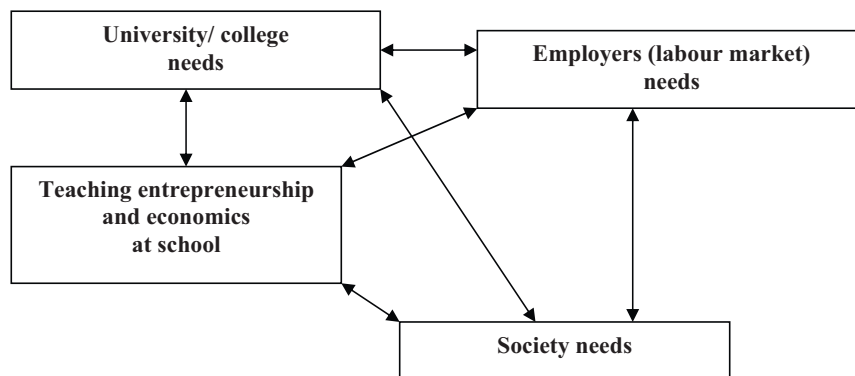
We live in the rapidly changing world. In the future today’s schoolchildren will have to work not in today’s, but in tomorrow’s conditions. The changing technological, economic, political environment makes to think if we teach those things which we will need tomorrow and if we teach the youth how to adapt to changes which will occur all life. If young people are ready to live and work in the conditions of uncertainty and competition, if they know how to find a job, keep it, change requalifying or changing a place work and maybe in unfavorable circumstances they will be able to start their business. If we want to help schoolchildren learn how to adapt to changing circumstances, we need to teach them entrepreneurship (Mincienė, 2004).

It is very important to start person’s economic thinking development as early as it is possible, giving the principles of applied economy and management because people’s thinking is formed all life starting with childhood and finishing in old age. So, the lowest level of this system is learning the principles of economy and management in a secondary, vocational and higher school (Žilinskas, 2000).

*The aim of teaching entrepreneurship* is to form schoolchildren’s skills and abilities needed for them as individuals and society members. They will help them prepare for adult life, schoolchildren will better use its possibilities and will be able to take up responsibility.

The mission of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania in the field of universal economic literacy and teaching entrepreneurship is to create conditions and preconditions for teaching young people to form values, abilities, to know the principles of business and economic knowledge which will help them become active participants in economic activity and creators of democratic society (Ekonominio..., 2004).

Teaching entrepreneurship and economics is a product of reciprocity between schools of general education, high schools, employers and society (figure 1).



**Fig. 1.** Teaching entrepreneurship and economics as reciprocity between education, society and labour market  
Source: compiled by the authors.

Trying to ensure high quality specialist training, which satisfies the requirements of the XXth century: to study all life and increase human capital, it is important to pay attention to teaching entrepreneurship because insufficient use of knowledge and skills and unconcern about their further development do not let funktion successfully in the conditions of the market economy.

According to Mincienė (2004), teaching entrepreneurship is based on schoolchildren's active, independent activities, which influence thinking and work. Teaching and learning entrepreneurship is oriented to education of schoolchildren's individual skills and abilities. A schoolchild is the main participant in the process of education and a teacher is a consultant, adviser, assistant. Every schoolchild or a group is unique, so it is needed to organize the teaching process adopting teaching material and methods.

The result of teaching entrepreneurship is motivation and responsibility of an individual for the development of general abilities, getting a profession, skills improvement prequalification and knowledge how to put all that into practice looking for a job, working as an employee or starting ones owns business.

*The mission of every teacher* is to prepare schoolchildren for life: teach self – confidence, independence, creativity, and initiative, analyze problems and make decisions, think critically, try to attain an aim,

be able to evaluate possibilities and take, risk and use possibilities given by life. Education of these characteristics increases schoolchildren entrepreneurship which rises in importance with the growth of economic activity of society and a need of the development of small and medium – sized business.

### Analysis of research results

Analysing scientific literature questions arise, whether it is possible to train businessmen, whether they can be trained only in a formal educational institution, whether other external means can be used. Mitchell (2007) (Gronskienė, Almas, 2008) thinks that entrepreneurship skills can be completely taught in an educational institution.

Gargždai “Krantas” Secondary School trying to attain its object and aims teaches schoolchildren to communicate, cooperate, think critically and self – critically, create, evaluate activities, develops schoolchildren's communication skills, independent learning skills and a need to learn all life. Therefore, research results showed that 95,74% of schoolchildren and 93,33% of teachers think that entrepreneurship education is needed at school.

In Figure 2 we can see further choices of “Krantas” secondary school leavers. About 40% of them chose universities in Lithuania or abroad.

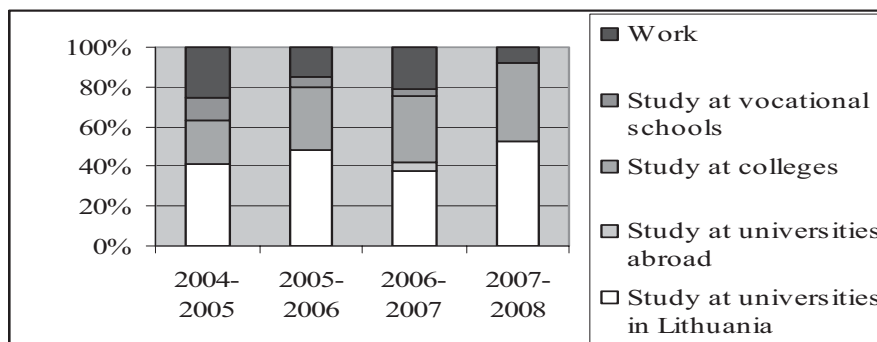


Figure 2. School – leavers' choice after finishing secondary school

Source: compiled by the authors according to the data of the questioning.

“Krantas” Secondary School is one of schools where economic literacy and entrepreneurship has been educated since 2004–2005 school year. Success of teaching every subject is decided by methodical maintenance. So, preparation of textbooks is becoming one of the most important aims. Teaching economics as a separate subject needs to have the main textbook (textbooks) for different classes and it should be written keeping to the standard of economic literacy. Schoolchildren are taught according to “Program and Standards of Teaching Economics” (2002), prepared by School Improvement Centre under the Ministry of

Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and optional subjects of economic programs, suggested by Lithuanian Junior Achievement.

Although it is obvious that teaching entrepreneurship from early age has influence on child's further development, educates important personal characteristics which will be useful in his life, 36,66% of teachers and 42,55% of schoolchildren think that entrepreneurship ought to be taught in classes 11–12. 26,66% of teachers approve teaching entrepreneurship in classes 5–10. 17% of schoolchildren agree with teachers. 17,02% of schoolchildren think that it

is purposeful to teach entrepreneurship in classes 8–12. Only 8,51% of teachers and schoolchildren agree that entrepreneurship ought to be taught from class 1 until class 12.

Research shows that teachers educating entrepreneurship more often use tasks based on projects (63,33%), group work and surveys (50%), presentations (46,66%), discussions and debates (40%), and schoolchildren approve most group work (68,09%), visits (46,80%), surveys and tasks based on projects (34,04%), discussions and debates (31,91%).

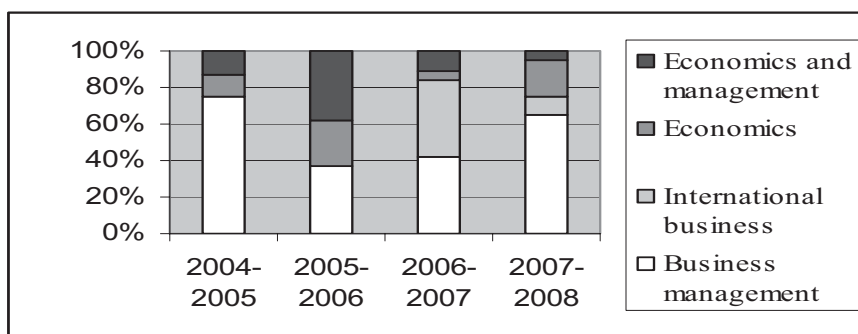
Schoolchildren from “Krantas” School learn about the world of business taking part in meetings with business representatives, in lessons, visiting enterprises, organizing Young Enterprise (YE), and using computer simulated and media programs.

95,75% of schoolchildren are interested in organizing YE, because it is an alternative way to learn economics. Economics and entrepreneurship teachers, agrees that taking part in YE strengthens schoolchildren’s ability to solve problems, it has influence on the ability to make a decision, understand economic processes, has a positive influence on the formation of team work skills, stimulates schoolchildren to start own business in the future. They gain entrepreneurial skills; are interested in learning about business and economics using active teaching methods. 93,33% of teachers think that YE program gives schoolchildren both practical and theoretical knowledge and also elementary business skills.

The course of economics lets open new possibilities for schoolchildren’s professional career and talents (Kublickas, Žilinskas, 2001). Talented schoolchildren, who are oriented to economics and management at school studies, just as to physics, chemistry, mathematics, computer studies, do not stayed noticed. Thus, from school age economically thinking people are educated, future businessmen and managers, who could successfully use gained skills for the national economy and improvement of personal wealth. 14,89% of schoolchildren and 23,33% of teachers marked self – discipline as one of the most important entrepreneurship characteristics. The same number of schoolchildren (14,89%) thought that innovation, determination and self – confidence are also very important characteristics.

25,53% and 19,15% of schoolchildren thought, that the least important characteristics are innovation and intuition. 20% of teachers pointed that the least important characteristics are intuition and aspiration to carrier.

Figure 3 shows that the number of schoolchildren who want to study economics, management or international business has been growing at Gargždai “Krantas“ Secondary School. In 2004–2005 school year there were only 8 schoolchildren who wanted to study economics or business management, but in 2007 – 2008 school year there were 20 such schoolchildren.



**Fig. 3.** Number of schoolchildren who want to study economics, management or international business

Source: compiled by the authors according to the data of the questioning.

Schoolchildren’s interest in economics and management should be stimulated by different contests, competitions, reviews at schools, between schools and internationally (Žilinskas, 2000). Schoolchildren from Gargždai “Krantas” Secondary School take part in some programs of LJA (Lithuanian Junior Achievement). Schoolchildren of the basic school take part in programs: Personal Economics, Enterprise in Action, International Marketplace and CAPS Computer Simulated Program. Schoolchildren from the second

ary school take part in programs: Economics and Business (theoretical course), Young Enterprise and MESE (Management Economic Simulation Exercise). Schoolchildren from senior classes and teachers take part in championships: Omnitel Business Championship, Trade Fair, Trips to enterprises, meetings with businessmen, seminars for teachers and the CAPS Championship.

Teachers of different subjects such as Lithuanian, mathematics, biology, chemistry, English,

Russian and French, computer studies, geography, physical training, history, art, ethics and economics took part in the survey. Teachers of history educate schoolchildren's entrepreneurship talking about the country's political situation, the level of the country's economic development; a teacher of economics implemented different projects organizing YE and taking part in different competitions; a teacher of chemistry in practical activities and doing tasks; a teacher of biology in lessons on the production of agriculture, doing projects and surveys; teachers of mathematics – teaching how to calculate percentage, incomes and expenditure, profit, price increase, discount and taxes; teachers of English – talking on shopping, money, professions, family, also doing and presenting different projects; a teacher of Russian – explaining topics “Healthy way of living”, “My hobbies”, doing projects; teachers of Lithuanian – teaching to plan, think critically, taking part in an action “How a future businessman reads the novel “Altorių šešėlyje” by Putinas”, going to Vilnius fair of studies “My Entrepreneurship Choosing a Profession”; teachers of geography and art – also doing projects and stimulating self – confidence and creativity.

Thus, 95,74% of schoolchildren and 93,33% of teachers think that education of economic literacy and entrepreneurship is necessary at school. Only 4,25% of schoolchildren and 6,67% of teachers do not know about it.

## Conclusions

We can affirm that the hypothesis, that schoolchildren's entrepreneurship education is an indispensable condition to satisfy the requirements of the market economy, has been confirmed.

Entrepreneurship is one of a person's competences which is almost the most necessary, stimulates self – expression in everyday life. Entrepreneurship is revealed only in activity. So holistic education of a personality has to be directed at a result: to train the personality able to work independently and responsibly. Training in early age should be written in all programs of the system of education. Solid foundation of business oriented attitude and entrepreneurship should be put in primary, secondary and high school.

Summarizing survey results we can state that both schoolchildren and teachers understand the necessity of teaching economic literacy and entrepreneurship but they do not agree in what classes it should be done. The biggest part of respondents understands entrepreneurship as natural or gained personal characteristics which let think innovatively and work actively and take risk. However, innovation is ascribed to the least important entrepreneurship cha-

acteristics. According to them, organization is most important.

Almost all respondents know that entrepreneurship is taught at Gargždai “Krantas” Secondary School, more than half of them evaluate it well. But the biggest part of schoolchildren and teachers thinks that entrepreneurship is stimulated by teachers, who teach economics or entrepreneurship.

Teachers suppose that tasks based on projects more stimulate entrepreneurship, meanwhile schoolchildren particularly mark group work.

Not all teachers were able to answer the question how they educate schoolchildren's entrepreneurship, but more than a half of respondents agreed that stimulating entrepreneurship lets prepare young people for life adults as consumers, producers, managers or parents in today's changing environment.

Without Educating economic literacy and entrepreneurship schoolchildren will not be completely prepared for adult life in today's uncertain and complicated environment. That is why motivated and confident teachers able to use a lot of various teaching methods are necessary. It is important to educate entrepreneurship in the programs of different subjects.

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## Moksleivių verslumo ugdymo įvairovė

### Santrauka

Šiuolaikiniame pasaulyje kiekvienos šalies stiprybė ir gerovė lemia žinios ir gebėjimas jomis pasinaudoti. Lietuvos rytdiena priklausys nuo to, kaip šiandien parengsime savo jaunimą praktiniam gyvenimui. Moksleivių ekonominio ir verslumo mokymo bei žinių tobulinimo ir ugdymo klausimai yra aktualūs ir turi būti deramai įvertinti pertvarkant šalies švietimo mokymo planus, nes su ekonomikos ir verslo klausimais susiduriama kasdien ir visose gyvenimo srityse. Būtina sudaryti sąlygas moksleiviams pateikti susistemintas žinias apie šiuolaikinę rinkos ekonomiką ir verslą, efektyvaus jų funkcionavimo sąlygas, apie valstybės vaidmenį šioje srityje bei Lietuvos ekonomikos ir verslo plėtros problemas, kad būtų galima susivokti gyvenimo pokyčių realijose bei išmokti analizuoti interesų įvairovės, suprasti slypinčius pavojus, pajėgti kompetentingai koreguoti nevykusius sprendimus. Tikslinga pabrėžti, kad verslumo ugdymas nėra tapatus ekonominiam raštingumui. Verslumo ugdymas yra atskira sritis, tačiau jį galima

sėkmingai derinti bei integruoti su ekonominiu švietimu ir kitais mokomaisiais dalykais. Įgytos ekonominės ir verslo žinios turi padėti jaunimui mokėti pasirinkti optimalias verslo sritis, priimti reikalingus efektyvius sprendimus ir racionalius šiuolaikinius ūkininkavimo metodus. Todėl perteikdami ekonomikos ir verslo pagrindus padėsime jaunuomenei pažinti savo galimybes, skatinsime jas realizuoti ekonominiame gyvenime ir kurti savo bei visos šalies ateitį.

Ar jaunuoliai bus pasirengę gyventi ir dirbti neužtikrintumo ir konkurencinėmis sąlygomis, ar mokės susirasti darbą, išsilaikyti jame, keisti jį persikvalifikuodami, ar sugebės įkurti savo verslą? Straipsnyje analizuojama moksleivių verslumo ugdymo švietimo sistemoje būtinybė. Iškelta hipotezė, kad moksleivių verslumo ugdymas yra būtina priemonė rinkos ekonomikos poreikiams tenkinti, atliktas tyrimas Gargždų „Kranto“ vidurinėje mokykloje.