The Educational and Social World of a Child
Discourses of Communication, Subjectivity and Cyborgization

UNIWERSYTET IM. ADAMA MICKIEWICZA W POZNANIU
SERIA PSYCHOLOGIA I PEDAGOGIKA NR 222

The Educational and Social World of a Child Discourses of Communication, Subjectivity and Cyborgization

Edited by
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WYDAWNICTWO NAUKOWE

POZNAŃ 2015

ABSTRACT. Krauze-Sikorska Hanna, Klichowski Michał, *The Educational and Social World of a Child. Discourses of Communication, Subjectivity and Cyborgization* [Edukacyjny i społeczny świat dziecka. Dyskursy komunikacji, podmiotowości i cyborgizacji]. Poznań 2015. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. Seria Psychologia i Pedagogika nr 222. Pp. 552. ISBN 978-83-232-2873-8. ISSN 0083-4254.

The book comprises nearly 50 texts written by Polish, American and Israeli researchers into the child's world and show the complexity of this world and underline the contemporary categories of its oscillation: discourses of communication, subjectivity and cyborgization. The texts are ordered into 3 parts, each of which devoted to a different contemporary axis of oscillation of the child's world. To bring order to the debate on the child of today, we have searched for categories that on the one hand would break with the schematic character and stereotypes in describing the child's reality, and on the other hand would present the actual, undetached from everyday life, space of life of the contemporary child. We also wanted them to be able to cover new phenomena, new ways of assigning meanings and new strategies for the construction and reconstruction of the life of a child that we observe in the world of today.

KEY WORDS: children, education, communication, subjectivity, cyborgization

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Publikacja dofinansowana przez Wydział Studiów Edukacyjnych UAM

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Korekta językowa: Alicja Jankowiak

Redaktor techniczny: Elżbieta Rygielska

Łamanie komputerowe: Eugeniusz Strykowski

Projekt okładki: Ewa Wąsowska

ISBN 978-83-232-2873-8
ISSN 0083-4254

WYDAWNICTWO NAUKOWE
UNIWERSYTETU IM. ADAMA MICKIEWICZA W POZNANIU
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www.press.amu.edu.pl
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Wydanie I. Ark. wyd. 38,00. Ark. druk. 34,50.

DRUK I OPRAWA: QUICK-DRUK, ŁÓDŹ, UL. ŁĄKOWA 11

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Introduction

We put at your disposal the book entitled *The Educational and Social World of a Child. Discourses of Communication, Subjectivity and Cyborgization* that comprises nearly 50 texts written by Polish, American and Israeli researchers into the child's world in order to show the complexity of this world and underline the contemporary categories of its oscillation: discourses of communication, subjectivity and cyborgization.

The texts are ordered into 3 parts, each of which devoted to a different contemporary axis of oscillation of the child's world. To bring order to the debate on the child of today, we have searched for categories that on the one hand would break with the schematic character and stereotypes in describing the child's reality, and on the other hand would present the actual, undetached from everyday life, space of life of the contemporary child. We also wanted them to be able to cover new phenomena, new ways of assigning meanings and new strategies for the construction and reconstruction of the life of a child that we observe in the world of today.

Without doubt, one of such categories nowadays is the broadly understood technology or engineering. The report prepared in 2012 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College Technology unanimously shows that contemporary children (that live in most of the developed countries of the world) "are growing up at ease with digital devices that are rapidly becoming the tools of the culture at home, at school, at work, and in the community".[1] However, children are not only technologically socialized; very

[1] National Association for the Education of Young Children & The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College Technology, *Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*, 2012, http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PS_technology_WEB2.pdf [access: 28.08.2014], p. 2.

early, they become users, and even creators of technology. In Poland, every tenth 3-year-old child uses new technologies, including computers. Among 4-year-olds this number increases to 37%, and among 5-year-olds it exceeds 50%. As far as older children are concerned, it is estimated that over 90% of them use computers and other new technologies.[2] At this point, it is worth underlining that these new technologies are not only a computer, a tablet or a smartphone. The latest technological solutions are more and more intensively and commonly implemented in everyday objects. We can quote BECTA and enumerate: electronic music instruments, Dictaphones, recorders, programmed toys, radio-controlled toys, as well as many other elements that can be found in the child's surroundings, e.g. remote controls, electronic office equipment, projectors etc.[3] This list can be further supplemented with computer games, virtual worlds and digital cameras, photo cameras and interactive boards.[4] Every day, the list is modified and – most importantly – radically increases. Yet, the technology that permeates the child's everyday life is just a sort of a prelude to the development of technoculture. The contemporary technological progress is directed at both permeating the reality and – more and more frequently – at permeating the man-child themselves, using technologies such as genetic engineering, electronic exoskeletons, glasses that augment reality, implants, stimulators and nanorobots that are inserted in the body.[5] Thus, more and more often we face both the technologizing of culture and the cyborgization of people, including (or maybe especially) of children.

The technologized world of cyborg children is also a world that is shredded, blurred, difficult to define, of a complicated interpretative structure, and above all built with unclear classes of notions, which we attempted at showing in the work published in 2014 entitled *Children in the Postmodern World. Culture – Media – Social Inequality*.[6] It is a world that is not fully defined, incomplete, having no intention of existing in a simple and quiet way. In such a world, it is more and more common to encounter problems with interpersonal functioning,

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[2] D. Batorski, *Poles and communication technology – access conditions and modes of use*, [in:] *Social Diagnosis 2013: Objective and Subjective Quality of Life in Poland*, "Quarterly of University of Finance and Management in Warsaw", 2013, vol. 7, p. 335–359.

[3] BECTA, *Foundation Stage Education and ICT* (information sheet), British Educational Communications and Technology Agency, 2001, http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/infosheets/html/foundationstage.html [access: 28.08.2014].

[4] R. Bolstad, *The role and potential of ICT in early childhood education: A review of New Zealand and international literature*, Wellington 2004.

[5] M. Klichowski, *Narodziny cyborgizacji. Nowa eugenika, transhumanizm i zmierzch edukacji*, Poznań 2014.

[6] *Children in the Postmodern World. Culture – Media – Social Inequality*, ed, H. Krauze-Sikorska, M. Klichowski, A. Basińska, Poznań 2014.

communication among the lost citizens of the postmodern world (along the lines of child-adult, child-child, child-elderly, and also child-avatar or child-cyborg), as well as with the feeling of subjectivity in processes that without doubt objectify human existence. Next to the cyborgization discourse, we also assumed the discourses of communication and subjectivity to be the axes of oscillation of the contemporary world of a child.

We hope that with these categories we managed to enclose the most important dimensions of the contemporary world of a child. However, we would like to add that it was not our aim to collect a coherent set of "strictly directed" texts, but to build a volume of a structure and section that reflects the specific characteristics of the social and education world of children; a volume with distinct oscillation axes, yet in some sense blurred and defining the directions of considerations with the logics of dispersal rather than with the logics of systemization. In short, we wanted this book to be a collection of many diversified stories (or maybe "tales") of the contemporary child's world rather than its one meta-story. We hope that this approach will make it possible for the reader to familiarize themselves more deeply and broadly with the reality of the child's life of today, and build their individual interpretation directed at constructing their own story of the contemporary child's world.

*

We would like to thank everyone who helped us carry out this project. First of all, we thank Professor Zbyszko Melosik, the Dean of the Faculty of Educational Studies at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, who made it possible for us to publish this book. We would also like to thank Professor Andrzej Twardowski, who provided us with substantive support while editing the texts, Mateusz Marciniak, PhD, and Paulina Gołaska, MA, who supported us in the collection of the material. We would also like to show our gratitude to Professor Ewa Jarosz, the reviewer of this publication, whose invaluable guidelines enriched the enclosed texts.

Hanna Krauze-Sikorska and Michał Klichowski

Part I

Discourses of Communication

Educational interactions at school in the light of Habermas's communicational action concept

Mariola Gańko-Karwowska

The name included in the title suggests a theoretical reflection on educational interactions at school. However, thinking about Habermas and his communicational action concept it is difficult to omit, at least in the beginning, the names of the intellectuals who contributed to the creation of this monumental and, in my opinion, particularly valid concept. The concept of social actions, including communicational actions[1], was born as a result of considerations on 1) Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg's concept of cognitively-moral development, 2) the psychoanalytic concept of ego development by Harry Stack Sullivan and Eric Erikson as well as 3) the concept of symbolic interactionism by George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer and Erving Goffman. Habermas recognized all of those as unique concepts because each of them points to, describes and explains exceptional relations between everyday world and the logic of visions of the world. None of them, however, presents the developmental processes in a holistic manner. Habermas combines the mentioned ideas in an effort to build a bridge between what is conditioned and individual and what is developmentally dependent upon human's existence in different socially-cultural groups. Habermas also tries to integrate those concepts with a reflection on Weber's idea of rationality. In his project, he includes the concept of communicational rationality created by Stephen E. Toulmin, Richard D. Rieke and Allan Janik. On this basis, he simultaneously builds a variety of types of rationality and interests that constitute cognition (of the world). For Habermas, it became crucial to seek intellectual solutions that would allow to separate from age-long reproduced reign entangled in violence towards actions entangled, in reign to tell the truth, but reign devoid of violence.

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[1] J. Habermas, *Teoria działania komunikacyjnego*, Warszawa 1999, vol. 1, 2.

In the light of the formulated title, the aim of this article is to prove the following thesis.

In the presence of:

1. A dispute over the intelligibility and rightness of IES's (Internal Evaluation System) regulations concerning relations between the subjects of school education – a dispute stemming from the lack of accordance of the law and higher grade rules.
2. Tension being the result of the need to conform to school authorities and resulting from this acknowledgement of a false consensus as the only possible goal of the process of achieving an agreement.
3. The lack of consent for cognitively-moral and social repression and regression which demonstrate themselves in the carrying out of the school's educational function by IES.

There is a need for:

1. Questioning the content of the IES and its changes according to higher level laws in a way that would allow the IES to implement itself in its educational function in the spirit of critical thought supporting cognitively-moral development of the subject that constitute this socially peculiar although not professionally uncommon everyday world of students, teachers and parents.

The analysis and reflection will focus on both the content of the regulations included in the IES and social actions[2] which make up this content:

1. Completed in a school environment.
2. Shown as: a) objective state of matters (objective world); b) standards regulating lawful order (social world); c) private evaluations to which subjects of educational interactions have privileged access (subjective world)[3].
3. Established in the world of structural elements[4] of everyday life world functioning in a fashion of a mind entangled in relations between what can and cannot be accepted and what was recognized as neutral[5] to eve-

[2] Social actions should be differentiated from other types of interpersonal communication e.g. conversation, chat, exchange of opinions. The aim of social actions is a conscious preservation or change in everyday world resources that include the process of transferring the content between the zone of acceptance, rejection and neutrality. I am not trying to imply that other types of communicational interactions have no influence on preservation or change in structural elements of everyday world. I want to underline, however, that this goal is not a direct factor in the mentioned communicational interactions.

[3] J. Habermas, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 163–173.

[4] Confer: A. Schütz, *O wielości światów: Szkice z socjologii fenomenologicznej*, Kraków 2008.

[5] Confer: R.B. Cialdini, R.E. Petty, J.T. Cacioppo, *Attitude and attitude change*, "Annual Review of Psychology", 1981, vol. 32, p. 365; Ch. Perelman, *Imperium retoryki*. *Retoryka i argumentacja*, Warszawa 2004, p. 35–36.

ryday school practice; relations that pertain to a) culture, meaning knowledge and models of interpretation; b) society, meaning the lawful order; c) personality, meaning communicational competence making a subject able to talk and take actions.[6]

4. Reproduced in everyday situations oriented on the school completing its educational function.

In social actions that in the broadest meaning are understood as coping with situations[7] (problem, conflicts) in educational interactions, the very actions take a double status. Firstly, in a situation where the content of IES is being criticized, social actions are the background that is not spoken of. The type and character of actions reproduce in an action on reaching an agreement on the problematic content of the IES. Secondly, in situations where the type and character of these actions are being criticized, the content of the IES can be both the background and the source of reasoning behind accepting a certain action orientation (coordination of actions or realization of a plan) in school environment that is a distinctive but not unique place for realization of the thought included in the idea of a democratic, lawful country.[8]

The latter case is a special one in the light of how interactions between teachers and students are rather oriented on questioning student's controversial actions (also parents'). Whether social actions of school education subjects (especially teachers) allowed in the school environment by the regulations included in the IES help to complete the principles of democracy and a lawful country or not depends on the content of those documents, the manner of its completion as well as reactions in situations when this content is being questioned.

In Habermas's concept it is crucial to recognize understanding as an essential prerequisite of every social action. This category is a source of a lot of controversy (especially emotional) amongst intellectuals (also teachers). However, rejecting this questions the initiation of any communicational interactions that aim at dealing with a problematic situation. At this moment it becomes crucial whether the process of achieving an agreement is an outcome of a plan of action in strategic actions and its result is a false consensus (compulsion of approval) or is it achieved in the manner of coordination of actions that results in real consensus (agreement without compulsion).[9]

After these introductory thoughts I can continue with proving the thesis advanced at the beginning. This reasoning will be accompanied by further explanation of social actions that will be presented on the background of:

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[6] J. Habermas, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 238–244.

[7] Ibidem, p. 225.

[8] Ibidem, p. 238–239.

[9] Confer: idem, *Niektóre trudności próby związania teorii z praktyką. Wprowadzenie do nowego wydania*, [in:] idem, *Teoria i praktyka*, Warszawa 1983, p. 41.

1. Understanding of the terms adult – child in the light of social actions.
2. The status of IES and functions realized by it.
3. Conclusion.

Adult – child in the light of the concept of social action

There is a small twist hidden in Habermas's concept that from the perspective of defining and understanding terms such as adult or child can be controversial for intellectuals that deal with the pedagogy of small children. Habermas's ideas allow to separate (at least for a while) from the time caesura used by Piaget and Kohlberg in the description of cognitively-moral development and allow to turn to different interpretations of those terms.

An adult is the one who in the face of a necessity to cope with difficult situations, a collision of different everyday life world, educational interactions is oriented towards communicational actions, meaning actions that[10]:

1. In a procedural depiction is guided by the rule of subjective and argumentative inclusion – which means that nobody that could have crucial influence because of the process of achieving consensus (a real one) will be excluded on the basis of, for example, his age, maturity, gender, minority that he belongs to, knowledge, education. It is a procedure that frees an adult from the way of thinking that imposes privileged argumentative groups.
2. In a process depiction organizes educational interactions according to the importance of claims and carries out the process of communication in the spirit of adequate discourses:
   a) Explicative when the claim pertains to the understandability of uttered sentences,
   b) Theoretical when the authenticity of the content (in opinions and arguments) is being questioned,
   c) Practical when the rightness of the content is being questioned (e.g. decisions). The complexity of communicational interactions allows to presume that each of them can contain a few importance claims. However, one argumentative act can take only one importance claim. Not respecting this rule is the source of creating further barriers in the process of coordination of agreement-oriented actions.

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[10] Confer: idem, *Teoria działania…*, ed. cit., vol. 1; idem, *Działanie komunikacyjne i detranscendentalizacja rozumu*, Warszawa 2004, p. 38.

3. In a subjective depiction it represents fallibilism meaning that its subjective or social world of truths and reasons is at most propositional with regard to other individual and social worlds. The starting point of respecting this rule is to assume that in a discourse the source of cognition and the quality of content is not as important as what a subject is doing with the content in agreement-oriented communicational interactions. From the interactive point of view it has to be added that the idea of learning is instilled in the frame of communicational actions. By this it should be understood that a subject explaining his opinion not only tries to interfere with structural elements of the everyday life world of others but can also learn something from others' counterarguments and change the relations between what is acceptable, unacceptable and neutral for him.
4. In the context of structural elements of everyday life world processes arguments in a manner that makes relations between the zone of acceptance, rejection and neutrality devoid of bursts of passion and oriented on substantial processing to an extent that shifts of content between what is acceptable, unacceptable and neutral will not only be respecting the constituted law but also in a situation when this law will be in conflict with ethical rules it will take actions in accordance with rules governing the ethic of speech.
5. In the context of the logic of visions of the world an adult differentiates between the objective world of states of things, the world of social standards and values and the world of subjective evaluations to which he has a privileged access, however he does not use it as a power obligatory for everyone.

In this light a child is the one who takes actions standing in opposition to the communicative actions explained briefly above. Therefore:

1. In a procedural depiction it orientates in accordance with the rule of subject-argument exclusiveness accepting the idea of privileged argumentative groups whose selection is in agreement with child's individual preferences as the main rule of determining all governing rules of execution.
2. In a process depiction it employs mechanisms belonging to covertly strategic actions. The basis for those actions is mythical rationality allowing to isolate two types of action: a) unconscious misleading and b) conscious misleading (manipulation).
3. In a subjective depiction it is led by dogmatism that makes it impossible to take an insight into one's own thoughts and words and in the process of argumentation the very opinions and stands taken regarding what happens in the world of objective state of matters, the world of social norms and the world of subjective evaluations. These are reasons strong enough to explain why they are in force.

4. In the context of structural elements of the world of everyday life a subject will show a naïve relation with resources instilled in the structural elements of this world. The horizons of what is acceptable, unacceptable and neutral establish an ossified structure of knowledge and models of interpretation.
5. In the context of the logic of visions of the world everything appears as objective cultural facts not criticized by importance claims.

In Habermas's concept, adulthood resembles postconventional cognitively-moral level (ethic of speech), while childhood belongs to the rules of preconventional behaviours. In this case one can also speak of a growing up subject for whom the law and order is a peculiar type of authority explaining the order both from an individual's actions' perspective as well as in reference to the social world. It is a transitional phase, in which the subject seeks his own way of action since he is able to tell facts apart from norms making it possible to manage reasons according to the rules of the world to which the reasons pertain. Moreover, on the one hand the growing up freed himself from the fool's cap of preconventional stupidity, "the playful Jack syndrome[11]", dogmatic schemes of thought, the joy of power/violence, uncontrolled bursts of passion that disturb the substantial way of processing information. On the other hand, the rules of communicational actions, oriented to the ethic of speech, are still not fully understood and internalized since the growing up have not separated himself from the social world that he belongs to. Therefore he cannot yet differentiate his own private evaluations of phenomena, facts or norms from the evaluations that he is entitled to as a result of being an independent, free subject taking responsibility for his own actions. The responsibility is located in the normative-evaluating social culture which can manage practical rationality and not connect this specific way of thinking with technical rationality. The communicational rationality still remains incomprehensible for him.

If we can see that the everyday life world of school – the school that nowadays is the place where one can experience different models of interpreting events, facts or other states of matters, clashes of multiple reasons and different systems of evaluating what happens in the objective world (knowledge) or social world (norms) – has broken down in a way that subjects of school education have trouble reaching a real consensus, then the understanding of the law in force on the school grounds should be seen as an instrument of reproduction of the social order of this area, which is an integral part of a social system as such. What is more, a reproduction of this order, i.e. the necessity of maintaining the agreement, is an element protecting the school system from self-

[11] M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, *Między dostosowaniem a zmianą. Elementy emancypacyjnej teorii edukacji*, Szczecin 1995, p. 106.

destruction. The paradox is, however, the fact that 'children' strategically functioning in this environment, by orientating to the compulsion of false agreement, create situations in which the structural resources of this world collapse leading to a loss of sense, anomy and create pathological personalities.

Internal Evaluation Systems – between the freedom and frolic

Although it is difficult nowadays to clearly define the idea of democracy, it leaves no doubt that the established law (although not perfect) and the natural law are what should suggest the understanding of ideas such as freedom and frolic. Freedom ends where the other's rights begin. In social actions the rules of freedom are defined by adulthood characteristics listed above, which is also characterized by the ability to take responsibility for one's own thoughts, words and actions, both those aimed at oneself as well as at others (other adults, children). In this peculiar case when an adult is forced to make a decision for a child, on behalf of a child or otherwise it (the child) will be called to cease taking certain actions, freedom does not conflict with its rights. Moreover, he guards those laws that do not allow freedom to be identified with frolic devoid of reason and responsibility.

The everyday life world of school, reflected in the state of matters, norms and connections between different personalities, seems to create its own land where the teachers' frolic – their objectified reason in the form of the content of IES – does not allow the thought of opposing frolic (childhood), not only do we demand respect towards student's or parent's rights but also demand respect for teachers (their adulthood). One should not seek deceit in the proposed way of thinking and the logic of the sentence 'caring for the interests of a student or a parent is caring for the interests of a teacher' should be interpreted through the prism of communicative actions. Only in this background will one be able to see the rightness of this establishment.

In the school environment the internal evaluation systems have a double status. Firstly, as an act of law it has the power to be in force and as such it establishes the background for social actions as well as the content of IES's defines the character of those actions. In this sense, they fulfil the following functions[12]:

1. Stabilizing the relations between the subjects of school education in situations when the school order is in danger.

[12] T. Chauvin, T. Stawecki, P. Winczorek, *Wstęp do prawoznawstwa*, Warszawa 2013, p. 164–165.

2. Acting, by proposing changes in different spheres of school life (e.g. the spheres of education, care, cooperation with parents and other institutions).
3. Protective, concentrating on elimination behaviours endangering the protected values.
4. Organizational, reflected in defining the terms of cooperation between subjects of school education.
5. Repressive, consisting in the ability to punish subjects violating laws included in the IES.
6. Educational (socialization) since thanks to them structural elements of this world and logics of visions of the world are being reproduced in actions.

Secondly, as a school document they are acts of law of a lower level, meaning that the everyday school life world included in them (i.e. the knowledge and models of interpretation of the states of matters, norms regulating relations between subjects of education and the personality of subjects constituting this world) cannot be contradictory to the laws of higher level that are included for example in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland adopted on April 2, 1997, the System of Education Act adopted on September 7, 1991, the Teacher's Chart Act adopted on January 26, 1982, the Minister of Education's Decree adopted on April 30, 2007 regarding the terms and conditions of evaluating, classifying and promoting students as well as conducting tests and exams in public schools. The Act on the Protection of Personal Data, the Act on the Protection of Intellectual Property, the Act on the Access to Public Information, Human Rights, Children Rights, Penal Code, Civil Code. In this context the IES can be subject to importance claims in the light of understandability and rightness of their contents. Taking the procedural aspect of preparing the content of an IES into consideration, it has to be emphasized that in this phase they violate the rights of the adults. They are prepared by teachers and accepted by the Board of Teachers. Parents taking part in this process do not question their content and students that have to obey those laws are excluded from the process of their formulation.

At this point I will skip the analysis of the acts of law of the higher level which are superior to IES. I am doing this only because of a limited length of the article. I believe in the idea that teachers should know the laws they are supposed to oblige to. If they do not know them or they think that one of the arguments seems to be implausible, omitting them will be an impulse for getting to know them or an inspiration to question the further content of this article.

A selection of IES regulations (regarding the completion of the process of education, regarding the school's support for the educational role of the family):

- For a lack of homework a student receives a negative grade.
- During each lesson it is checked whether the homework was done and its quality is being checked depending on the need for it, however not less frequently than once per semester.
- A teacher can create the possibility for a student to improve his or her exam grade.
- A student with a psychological opinion or other special clinical opinions signs a contract with a teacher. The student is obliged to apply to the stipulations of the contract. In case of not applying to the contract by the student, the teacher is allowed to give a negative grade at the end of a semester or school year.
- In case of taking a classifying exam, a student cannot ask for assigning a different teacher to the exam committee.
- A teacher does read out grades in front of the whole class.
- A student that received grade '0' is obliged to take the exam (other form of knowledge evaluation) on an extra date determined by the teacher.
- Students and parents have access to evaluated and graded papers under the conditions determined by a teacher.
- In order to access an evaluated and graded exam paper a student files an application to a teacher.
- In reply to a student's or parent's (legal guardian) application a teacher grading the exam has to justify the grade.
- It is allowed to use different forms of evaluation of student's educational achievements.
- A student's presence on a previously announced exam is obligatory! Unexcused absence results in a negative grade. An excused one forces the student to pass the exam in time and form determined by the teacher. In case of an unexcused absence on the extra date the student receives a negative grade.
- Using educational help forbidden by a teacher will be seen as theft of intellectual property and a negative grade will be given without the possibility of improving it.
- The class tutor decides whether an absence is excused or not.
- A negative grade for behaviour is given to a student who does nothing positive for the benefit of the class or school.
- A student will be punished for using a cell phone during a lesson.
- In case of an unexcused absence a student is subject to a system of disciplinary actions, formulated in an adequate procedure:
  - 5-10 hours of absence per month – tutor's rebuke (written note),
  - two more rebukes or 20 hours result in tutor's reprimand (official school note for parents to sign),

  - no improvement (20 to 30 hours) – disciplinary talk with a teacher, tutor and parents.
- Not fulfilling the duty of learning is subject to execution in accordance to the regulations regarding executive administrative proceedings.

Conclusion. IES – the fallen angel of educational interactions in school in the context of teachers' childhood and students' demand for adulthood

In the light of the above-mentioned laws included in IES, the everyday world of school presents itself as an objective monolith functioning after the fashion of a not criticized armour that teachers are connected to with a naive link separated from higher level laws. The fact that it is not being criticized objectifies itself in social actions that create an unproblematic background for interaction for teachers. It is being presented in teachers' reactions to claims made towards the above laws regarding their understandability and rightness of application.

In situations where the basis of the interaction is the necessity of understanding the explanation of IES laws, teachers decline the claim saying 'What is there that cannot be understood? Everything is clear!' The compulsion of argumentation appeared in situations where the demand for explanation is being created in the context of claims towards the understandability and application of higher level laws (e.g.: respect, esteem for its dignity, necessity of care for student's well-being or support for his or her development, the need for pursuing the complete personal development of a teacher, grading system in force, necessity of substantial explanation of grades) The repertoire of explanations for the rightness of laws included in IES is significantly bigger, and their form and content depend on whether an interaction is limited to teacher-student relations or maybe also teacher-parents relation.

Claims made by students regarding the rightness of regulations are being tackled from the perspective of power-violence (e.g.: 'I am the law! You are not in the position to tell me how to understand what I created', 'Your bluntness knows no limits!', 'You will not tell me what are YOUR rights!', 'I do not have to do anything! "Guilty" is my privilege not my duty!', 'You want something from school? Did your parents contribute financially to the school?').

The same model of actions is present in interactions between teachers and parents. The attempts at maintaining discourses in accordance with importance claims face an opposition and their arguments show a system of behaviour entangled in the rules of strategic actions in the fashion of unconscious misleading and the necessity of maintaining an order present at school by accepting a false consensus as the only possible way of reproduction.

Examples of teachers' verbal reactions shown below, the quality of arguments and the form of utterance suggest that they take one of the forms of behaviour shown by Leirman (conformity, evasion, rebel, showing disagreement). The transparency of those actions allows (at least hypothetically[13]) to assume that reactions demonstrated by teachers are not a part of a system of behaviours where subjects are aware of the violence they employ (the consciousness of applied violence which may result in the omnipotence of school authority and restless executive purism[14]).

Examples of teachers behaviour:

- 'You cannot be serious! It was always like that at our school!', 'He's not studying! That's why he has bad results!', 'I grade small papers either A or F!', I check extra tasks only if the student will complete all remaining tasks!', 'It is ME who decides what the rules of evaluation are!', 'She will be allowed to pass X if she shows progress in other parts of material', 'I never repeat the same thing twice!', 'I am very successful! My students win competitions! I know what teaching is about! I will not discuss the way of conducting a lesson with you! I have nothing to accuse myself of!', 'Dear Mrs., at home he is supposed to study!', 'I will not copy the exams! I cannot allow for somebody to violate my copyrights!', 'Article 13 of the civil code allows me to sign contracts with students!'
- 'The statute allows me to give negative grades for absences!', 'You could've texted me and informed the tutor that the child will not come to school! He wouldn't have received a negative grade! The teacher did well! This right is written in our statute! We need to discipline them somehow!'
- 'The rules included in the statute are not duties but privileges that the teacher can take advantage of but doesn't have to!', 'As long as we don't change our internal regulations teachers have the right to employ them and students have to respect them', 'They learn their behaviour at home'
- 'You must have nothing else to do at home but to deal with school matters!', 'We won't do any good here! Let's go home!'

It is unsettling that attempts at protecting children rights taken by parents are facing an opposition even in those moments where it is not only shown verbally but also takes a written form and is aimed against the educational wilfulness of school.

The examples shown above are in this case everyday life of more than just one school in Szczecin where took the role of educator which was the result of

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[13] M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, op. cit., p. 170–173.

[14] See: eadem, *Emancypacja czy izonomia? (Dylematy współczesnej edukacji)*, [in:] *Edukacja wobec pluralizmu ideologiczno-politycznego*, ed. eadem, Szczecin 1996, p. 46–51.

being a parent. If I failed at proving the thesis advanced in the beginning, showing childish behaviour of teachers, then at least I hope that what I presented in this article will trigger a reflection on the everyday life of school which in my opinion hinders rather than supports the cognitively-moral development of students, teachers and parents who accept this type of actions. IES in force in these schools become an instrument used to block and reproduce the power entangled in the use of violence.

Social fear and selective mutism as communication disorders in middle and late childhood: Seeking common denominators

Kinga Kuszak

When taking up considerations focused on the issues related to disorders such as social fear and selective mutism, it seems justified to define the basic frames that set the area for the analyses carried out. This, in turn, requires explaining the basic notions. In the first place, the notion of "speech" and "speaking" should be defined, which for the purpose of this paper shall mean the activity of communicating through language. Speech is a tool consisting of a system of signs necessary for effective communication. However, communicating with other people requires much more than using speech and the ability of speaking. In the process of interpersonal communication it is necessary to use a set of communication competences that allow to "plan, organize, regulate and transmit the acquired knowledge, thoughts, emotions and achieving agreement with other people".[1] The components of communicative competences include, among others, verbal, social (interpersonal) and emotional competences. In more detail:

- verbal competence – ability and skill of formulating messages that consist of words used appropriately in terms of articulation, grammar and syntax, expressed in speech. Thanks to it "meanings of communicated ideas and feelings are expressed provided that sounds and symbols are understood by all the participants of the communication process".[2]
- social (interpersonal) competence – linked to the individual's functioning in various social situations, in relations with people of different social positions and with different skills and communication experience.
- emotional competence – allows the individual, among others, to be aware of their own emotional state, notice and rightly interpret the manifestations of emotions in other people.

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[1] K. Kuszak, *Kompetencje komunikacyjne dzieci w okresie późnego dzieciństwa w aspekcie rozwojowym*, Poznań 2011, p. 100.

[2] B. Dobek-Ostrowska, *Podstawy komunikowania społecznego*, Wrocław 2007, p. 25.

Insufficient mastering of these and other component competences[3] of the widely defined communication competences makes it difficult or sometimes even makes it impossible for the individual to function in the relations with other people. An especially unfavourable situation includes one when the individual experiences disorders in the verbal communication sphere. The notion of verbal communication disturbances itself can be defined from different perspectives and leads to the emergence of various classifications of disturbances. From the perspective of these considerations, I use the definition suggested by Stanisław Grabias, who "adopts a stance that allows to identify speech with language communication, and speech disorders are treated as an aspect of this communication".[4] What is more, the author perceives speech disorders against the background of "a full picture of language communication".[5] He distinguishes:

1. Communication (speech) disorders that are a consequence of undeveloped perception skills.
2. Communication (speech) disorders that are related to the lack or insufficient development of completion skills (with the competences achieved).
3. Communication (speech) disorders that are a result of a collapse of competences related to speaking.[6]

In the second group, the author places those disturbances that are linked to the fear of speaking, and thus feeling a range of negative emotions in communication situations.

The mechanism of a vicious circle of communication and emotional disorders

In the literature on the subject[7] it is underlined that:

- Communication (speech) disorders can be primal in relation to emotional disorders. Difficulties such as: disorders of analysis, auditory synthesis, disorders of the dyslalia type, delayed speech development and stuttering can cause emotional tension and in consequence avoiding verbal communication situations. Both theoreticians and practitioners dealing with the therapy of communication disorders underline that e.g. speech disorders

[3] More on the subject in: K. Kuszak, op. cit.

[4] S. Grabias, *Teoria zaburzeń mowy. Perspektywy badań, typologie zaburzeń, procedury postępowania logopedycznego*, [in:] *Logopedia. Teoria zaburzeń mowy*, ed. idem, M. Kurkowski, Lublin 2012, p. 49.

[5] Ibidem, p. 49.

[6] Ibidem, p. 54–57.

[7] E.g.: B. Sawa, *Dzieci z zaburzeniami mowy*, Warszawa 1990, p. 103.

such as stuttering are linked to experiencing the following thoughts by the individual: "what will the others think of my stuttering", "I will be laughed at", "they will pity me", which very often leads to anxious behaviour and as a result to stopping communication in certain situations or in relations with certain people.

- Communication (speech) disorders can also be a consequence of primal emotional disorders. Emotional tension leads to impediments in the process of communication and withdrawal from relations with others.

At this point, it is worth focusing on a few frequent emotional determinants of communication disorders:

1. Frustration – an individual "who cannot effectively communicate their emotional states to the environment, signal needs, participate in the exchange of information, and consequently cannot satisfy many of their needs and feels frustration".[8] This experience makes effective communication more difficult, and what is more worrying is that it leads to aggression, acting irrationally, acting leading to damage or blocking activity (including verbal activity).
2. Fear of being ridiculed or humiliated. S. Gerstman underlines that "the experience of being ridiculed creates an attitude of fear of the child towards themselves. Fear of really being ridiculous and deserving derision is created".[9] This usually leads to withdrawing from the relation (including communicative relations) with other people. Such behaviour triggers the child who has not yet mastered the skill of "parrying blows, verbal duel and taking revenge on the aggressor by means of derision aimed at their weak points".[10]
3. Unjustified embarrassment that is defined as "a specific type of emotional attitude or an inclination to experience fear in social situations, or even in moments of awaiting them".[11] Embarrassment, especially when ungrounded, is a destructive emotion; "it is a rather negative and very painful state, because it leads to disturbing the current behaviour, muddled thoughts and inability to speak".[12] Negative intense emotions are an "attempt to destroy the system of I"[13]; the individual is afraid of other people noticing their shortages and defects (that in their mind become dis-

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[8] K. Kuszak, *Społeczny kontekst rozwoju dziecka z zaburzoną mową*, "Szkoła Specjalna", 2007, no. 2, p. 101.

[9] P. Gerstmann, *Rozwój uczuć*, Warszawa 1976, p. 169.

[10] Ibidem, p. 169.

[11] M. Tyszkowa, *Nieśmiałość i zahamowanie*, [in:] *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna*, ed. W. Pomykało, Warszawa 1993, p. 457.

[12] M. Lewis, J.M. Haviland-Jones, *Psychologia emocji*, Gdańsk 2005, p. 787.

[13] Ibidem, p. 787.

proportionally big) and thus tries to free themselves from negative emotions, e.g. by situations that require relations with others.

4. The feeling of loneliness understood as "a sum of emotions of a negative and destructive character".[14] "With regard to the child, these will mean long-lasting states of sorrow, degression, fear and anxiety (…); most often, however, defencelessness and escape into the world of inner experiences".[15] It can be a result of an inner conviction that one is "different", a "misfit", which is linked to the lack of acceptance towards oneself. Psychopedagogical literature points the attention to the relationship existing between the feeling of loneliness and the interpretation of a neutral message directed at the individual in negative categories. "The feeling of loneliness influences the reception and interpretation of messages".[16] Research conducted by Renee Edwards and her colleagues indicate that people who feel lonely think comments directed at them meant rejection, even when the comments were positive in nature. As authors of the research quoted indicate, the feeling of loneliness leads to difficulties in communication[17], avoiding social relations and, in consequence, ever more loneliness.

One can thus claim that negative emotions and feelings lead to communication disorders, while these in turn interfere with the social and emotional functioning of the individual even more. We can therefore see a specific mechanism of a vicious circle of emotional and communication disorders whose basis can be formed by a selection of different factors.

Anxiety disorders as emotional disorders

A wider category of emotional disorders includes a separate category of anxiety disorders. As is underlined, these are the most often encountered mental disorders among children (this disorder applies to between 2% and 10% of the youngest population). "Although not all anxiety disorders appear equally frequently in various age groups".[18] When classifying anxiety disorders characteristic of the middle and late childhood, one can distinguish the following types:

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[14] J. Izdebska, *Dziecko osamotnione w rodzinie*, Białystok 2004, p. 28.

[15] Ibidem, p. 31.

[16] R.B. Adler, L.B. Rosenfeld, R.F. Proctor II, *Relacje interpersonalne. Proces porozumiewania się*, Poznań 2007, p. 218.

[17] Ibidem, p. 218.

[18] A. Bryńska, *Zaburzenia lękowe i zaburzenia obsesyjno-kompulsyjne*, [in:] *Zaburzenia emocjonalne i behawioralne u dzieci*, ed. T. Wolańczyk, J. Komender, Warszawa 2005, p. 148.

– generalised anxiety disorders – manifesting themselves through worrying about actual and unreal problems,
– phobias whose basis is the avoidance of situations of objects that cause anxiety,
– social disorders that result from the fear of strangers and apply in case of about 15% of the population. "Children with such disorders have good relations with their family members and the closest environment, yet they avoid people outside their family".[19]

The latest tendencies in classifications on disorders offer a notion of anxiety disorder; in earlier theoretical definitions for this group of disorders called "neurosis". At the same time it is underlined that "people with anxiety disorders experience fear that disproportional as compared to the actual danger".[20] Recognizing anxiety disorders requires confirming certain intensified symptoms and indications of anxiety that include:

1. Somatic symptoms (e.g. circulatory, respiratory, skin, muscular, gastric and intestinal, other somatic, e.g. headaches, vertigo).
2. Emotional symptoms (e.g. tension, inability to wind down, anxiety, terror, loss etc.).
3. Social and behavioural symptoms (e.g. social withdrawal, decreased activity, avoiding getting involved, feeling of inferiority in relations with other people, avoiding verbal contact with other people etc.).

Among anxiety disorders, social anxiety is exposed as a specific disorder that determined the quality of social relations; in literature it is often called apprehensiveness, shyness or social withdrawal. Table 1 contains the notions that describe the social anxiety disorder types and sample definitions.

Basic symptoms of social anxiety include:
– Avoiding contacts with others,
– Excessive focus on oneself,
– Excessive focus on the correctness of one's behavior,
– Feeling of embarrassment in social situations,
– Crying,
– Withdrawal,
– Generalised anxiety or other anxiety disorders,
– Mood disorders,
– Lack of spontaneous utterances,
– Logophobia.

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[19] J. Gładyszewska-Cylulko, *Wspomaganie rozwoju dzieci nieśmiałych poprzez wizualizację i inne techniki arteterapii*, Kraków 2007, p. 24.

[20] J.D. Stirling, J.P.E. Hellwell, *Psychopatologia*, Gdańsk 2005, p. 91.

Table 1. Synonymous notions and definitions on the social anxiety disorder (own selection)

Notion	Definition	Author
social anxiety	– "real or imaginary anxiety for entering interactions in situations of interpersonal contact. Fear is a result of noticing a threat" – equivalent of social phobia of adults or its predecessor – it is a consequence of the man's dependence on social environment – "has an interdisciplinary character, often defined as a fear of other people" – "caused by a fear that one is constantly observed and assessed by other people"	– Morreale S. P., Spitzberg B. H., Barge J. K. 2008, p. 300[21] – Bryńska A. 2005, p. 157[22] – Kępiński A. 1986, p. 112[23] – Grzeszkiewicz B. 2010, p. 243[24] – Puszczłowska-Lizis E., Biała E. A., 2013, p. 103[25]
social apprehensiveness	– "it is a variety of anxiety that updates itself in situations of social interactions" – a specific type of experience and disorder of a normal behaviour of an individual in situations of social interactions"	– Krauze-Sikorska H. 2006, p. 192[26] – Tyszkowa M. 1993, p. 457[27]
interactional anxiety	social apprehensiveness	Krauze-Sikorska H. 2006, p. 192[28]
interpersonal anxiety	„makes it difficult to make social contacts and function in a group, often identified as shyness"	Siuta J. 2005, p. 137[29]
shyness	– "emotional attitude or trait of personality visible in limited action in front of other people, linked to inadequate anticipation of a social assessment that causes anxiety and unjustified feeling of embarrassment" – "it is a result of anxiety experienced in many different situations"	– Siuta J. 2005, p. 166 – Morreale S. P., Spitzberg B. H., Barge J. K. 2008, p. 302[30]

[21] P.P. Morreale, B.H. Spitzberg, J.K. Barge, *Komunikacja między ludźmi*, Warszawa 2008.

[22] A. Bryńska, op. cit.

[23] A. Kępiński, *Psychopatologia nerwic*, Warszawa 1986.

[24] B. Grzeszkiewicz, *Obraz dziecka nieśmiałego*, [in:] *Dziecko w kontekstach edukacyjnych*, ed. eadem, Szczecin 2010.

[25] E. Puszczałowska-Lizis, E.A. Biała, *Terapia osób o specjalnych potrzebach edukacyjnych*, Warszawa 2013.

[26] H. Krauze-Sikorska, *Dziecko z cechami lękliwości społecznej w szkole*, "Studia Edukacyjne", 2004, no. 6.

[27] M. Tyszkowa, op. cit.

[28] H. Krauze-Sikorska, op. cit.

[29] J. Siuta, *Słownik psychologii*, Kraków 2005.

cont. tab. 1

Notion	Definition	Author
	– "a common phenomenon that is widespread and universal (...) it is more common among children at school age than among adults"	– Zimbardo P., G. 2000, p. 22-24[31]
	– "mental paralysis", "type of attitude that consists of a set of unpleasant emotions, incapacitating thoughts about oneself and readiness to withdraw from difficult situations	– Hamer H. 2000, p. 26[32]
	– "a complex syndrome of symptoms present in the experiences and behaviours of some people whose basis are characteristic disturbances in perceiving social situations, occurring in the context of specifically shaped cognitive structures of personality"	– Tyszkowa M. 1993, p. 457[33]
social inhibition	„style of reaction characteristic of a child that reacts with shyness and withdrawal to unknown events and people"	Vasta R., Haith M. M., Miller S. A. 2004, p. 467[34]

As one of the important symptoms of anxiety disorder, logophobia is used interchangeably with other terms, such as logoneurosis or speech neurosis. The definitions available also point to many perspectives, vagueness and ambiguity of the notion. In order to picture this ambiguity, the notion of logophobia was combined with its synonyms and its definitions are listed below as proposed by selected authors.

Table 2. The notion of "logophobia" and related notions (own selection)

Notion	Definition	Author
logophobia	– "short inhibition of the process of speaking related to a special situation or subject of the conversation. The feeling of anxiety dominates"	– Zaleski T. 1992, p. 292[35]

[30] P.P. Morreale, B.H. Spitzberg, J.K. Barge, op. cit.

[31] P.G. Zimbardo, *Nieśmiałość*, Warszawa 2007.

[32] After: J. Gładyszewska-Cylulko, op. cit.

[33] M. Tyszkowa, op. cit.

[34] R. Vasta, M.M. Haith, P.A. Miller, *Psychologia dziecka*, Warszawa 2004.

[35] T. Zaleski, *Autyzm, mutyzm, logofobia*, [in:] *Foniatria kliniczna*, ed. A. Pruszewicz, Warszawa 1992.

cont. table 2

Notion	Definition	Author
	– "anxiety about speaking" – "psychogenic speech disorder consisting in a short inhibition of the process of speaking related to a special situation or subject of the conversation where the feeling of anxiety dominates"	– Sobocińska R. 2012, p. 219[36] – Skorek E. M. 2002, p. 92[37]
speech neurosis = logoneurosis	– "speech disorder of those who suffer from neurosis" – "mutism, some forms of aphonia, stuttering; they are of a functional character" – "reaction acquired or a disorder of an organic basis, one of the most difficult logopedic problems"	– Skorek E. M. 2002, p. 107[38] – Błachnio K. 2001, p. 223[39] – Dołęga Z. 2003, p. 202[40]
logoneurosis	fear of speaking, logophobia	Siuta J. 2005, p. 118[41]
logoneurosis	„speech neurosis, e.g. mutism, some forms of aphonia, stuttering; are of a functional character and can be treated through logotherapy"	Błachnio K. 1992, p. 105[42]

Selective mutism as a symptom of an anxiety disorder (form of social anxiety)

Selective mutism is one of the forms of functional mutism. This disorder is characterized as:

1. "Psychogenic blocking of functions of a language system"[43] – lack of speech as a symptom of psychogenic disorders.

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[36] R. Sobocińska, *Dobór metody w terapii osób jąkających się*, [in:] *Logopedia. Wybrane aspekty historii, teorii i praktyki*, ed. S. Milewski, K. Kaczorowska-Bray, Gdańsk 2012.

[37] E.M. Skorek, *Z logopedią na ty*, Kraków 2002.

[38] Ibidem.

[39] K. Błachnio, *Vademecum logopedyczne*, Poznań 2001.

[40] Z. Dołęga, *Promowanie rozwoju mowy w okresie dzieciństwa – prawidłowości rozwoju, diagnozowanie i profilaktyka*, Katowice 2003.

[41] J. Siuta, op. cit.

[42] K. Błachnio, op. cit.

[43] H. Mierzejewska, M. Przybysz-Piwkowa, *Rozważania na temat terminologii logopedycznej*, [in:] *Rozwój poznawczy i rozwój językowy dzieci z trudnościami w komunikacji werbalnej. Diagnozowanie i postępowanie usprawniające*, ed. these, Warszawa 1997.

2. "Aphonia caused by vocal cords palsy of neurosis origin", a disorder counted in the group if disorders of the language distortion type[44] – lack of speech as a symptom of neurosis.
3. "Total inability of using speech (with understanding speech unaffected) for psychological reasons. Found in people who were previously able to speak and whose speech organs are fit, and whose speech centres are undamaged"[45] – lack of speech as a symptom of psychological disorders.
4. "Disorder of verbal contract, persistent silence in front of certain people or in certain situations"[46] – lack of speech in particular social situations.

Table 3. Social anxiety and selective mutism (own list)

Social anxiety	Selective mutism
Fear of speaking especially in public or new situations	*Fear of talking to a particular person / in certain situations*
Accompanied by weepiness, withdrawal, passiveness, tendency to submissiveness	*Resistance, hostility or tendency to submissiveness, passiveness, inhibition of the child's needs (e.g. related to eating, drinking, defecating)*
The characteristic feature is that the symptoms are obligatory	*The characteristic feature is that the symptoms are obligatory*
Limited non-verbal communication – motor inhibitions, inability to write in the presence of other people	*Alternative forms of communication (non-verbal, written) are possible*
First symptoms at early school age (yet it can be diagnosed before the age of 6)	*First symptoms between the age of 2 and 6, it is diagnosed when it lass for more than a month*
Present among 15% of the population (data on social phobia indicate: 11.1% of boys, 15.5% of girls)	*Concerns 0.3% – 0.8% of the population*
Equally among boys and girls	*More frequent among girls than boys*
Difficulties noticed by parents and teachers	*Difficulties noticed by teachers; at Home the child usually experiences no difficulties*
Discrepancies between the communicative behaviour of the child at home and away from home, especially towards strangers (people who are not the closest family) and in large groups	*Discrepancies between the communicative behaviour of the child at home and away from home or towards people who are not the closest family (the child talks to their parents but does not communicate with their grandparents)*
Low self-esteem of the child	*Low self-esteem of the child*
The disorder determines social relations of the child in their class (group)	*The disorder determines social relations of the child in their class (group)*
The disorder determines the educational achievements of the child	*The disorder determines the educational achievements of the child*

[44] M. Bogdanowicz, *Psychologia kliniczna dziecka w wieku przedszkolnym*, Warszawa 1991, p. 136.
[45] E.M. Skorek, op. cit., p. 103.
[46] K. Błachnio, op. cit., p. 106.

The perspectives presented above show that selective mutism originates from the fear of speaking in front of other people, thus some symptoms of social anxiety and logophobia are exposed. This coincidence of symptoms allows us to think about the similarities and differences between these two disorders. Table 3 includes a comparison of social anxiety and selective mutism.

Also the characteristics made by adults who work with children that have the above-mentioned symptoms make it possible to see similarities in the social perception of children with social anxiety and selective mutism, which is clearly indicated by the statements listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Characteristics of children with features of social anxiety and selective mutism[47]

Social anxiety	**Selective mutism**
„Ola has difficulties getting in contact with her peers, but she is a very good pupil (…) She has not difficulties learning, but sharing her knowledge with others in the class. The girl has rather little contact with the group of children, yet she talks to classmate Zosia that sits by the same desk (…) Ola expresses herself correctly, but she speak very quietly, which sometimes makes her difficult to understand."	*„Asia is a quiet and self-contained child. When she walks or sits, she usually has her head down. She seems frightened. She is shy. She does not take part in lessons, she is also inactive in her contacts with peers. She only talks to one classmate that sits by the same desk."*
„Patrycja has problems getting in and maintaining contact with her peers. She is very shy, does not talk about her needs and expectations, she wants to go unnoticed, as if she wanted to hide from the world (…) Patrycja would like to be noticed by her parents, and appreciated, praised and supported by her mother."	*„Since the beginning of her stay at the kindergarten, Zuzia was a passive, withdrawn child, she did not make contacts with her peers and tutor. (…) She would not speak, most often she would sit by the table or on the carpet, and did not play with other children."*
„The level of Asia's verbal activity is low. She always gives kind replies to questions, but it seems she does it as quickly as possible in order to be "left alone" (…) She has a group of friends that she meets also outside school."	*„When questions are addressed at him, he reacts with a nod of his head or he does not react at all. On the other hand, during any play he plays on his own or watched other children play; when songs are sung or poems recited, he whispers the words."*
There are common characteristics of children from both groups: withdrawal, decreased activity, limited verbal contact, non-verbal behaviour that indicates the child feels uneasy in certain communication situations.	

[47] Description of a case of a child with selective mutism can be found in the following article: K. Kuszak, *Zaburzenia mowy w okresie średniego i późnego dzieciństwa, ich przyczyny i przejawy*, [in:] H. Krauze-Sikorska, K. Kuszak, *Wybrane problemy psychospołecznego funkcjonowania dzieci i młodzieży z utrudnieniami w rozwoju. Nowe perspektywy – nowe wyzwania*, Poznań 2011.

When noticing the symptoms that make it difficult for children from both groups function in social relations, these children should be considered to have special educational needs. In his typology of special educational needs, P. Wiliński[48] distinguishes:

1. Area of physical needs.
2. Area of didactic needs.
3. Area of needs related to the child's behaviour in the classroom
4. Area of social needs – "it is distinguished due to the child's problems related to a weaker ability of making and maintaining significant relations with peers or adults at school".[49]

Children with social anxiety and selective mutism are pupils with special needs related to their functioning in the classroom and in broader social relations at school. It has to be noticed, however, that the sphere of didactic needs may require additional support in this group of pupils. These children may experience difficulties related not to acquiring the knowledge and developing skills, but to presenting the acquired material in front of the teacher and other children. Research results clearly show that people with social anxiety are perceived by teachers as less skilled, because they are assessed from the angle of the lack or less than expected verbal activity in class. What is more, as J. Gładyszewska-Cylulko underlines, children from both groups cannot defend their rights and express their personal opinions, which causes the people who surround them not to appreciate their merits.[50] Contrary to active pupils, children from this group are less frequently encouraged by teachers to be active.[51] As they are pigeonholed as weaker pupils, "they are seated further to the back, receive less attention, have less time to give their answers, receive more negative reactions to inappropriate actions, and are less reinforced".[52] From this perspective, it is necessary to underline the key role in creating and organising the conditions related to satisfying the special needs of these students; a role that should be played by their teachers. It depends on the teachers whether the child will be appropriately reinforced or whether they will be "pushed off" to the class life margin. As sample statements from teachers below indicate, teachers present different approaches to children and their problems, unfortunately not always positive.

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[48] P. Wiliński, *Wiek szkolny. Jak rozpoznać ryzyko i jak pomagać?*, [in:] *Psychologiczne portrety człowieka*, ed. A. Brzezińska, Gdańsk 2005, p. 341.

[49] Ibidem, p. 341.

[50] J. Gładyszewska-Cylulko, op. cit., p. 26.

[51] Z. Zaborowski, *Psychospołeczne problemy pracy nauczyciela*, Warszawa 1986, p. 46.

[52] K. Kuszak, *Dziecko samodzielne w szkole. Empiryczne studium szkolnych losów dzieci o różnym poziomie samodzielności*, Poznań 2008, p. 85.

Attitude one: Helplessness in the face of the problem

„I feel sorry when I see him standing alone during the break and talk to nobody. At home, he does talk to his parents and brothers and sisters, also with his classmates, yet he gets blocked as soon as he enters the school building. It seems to me that the pupil got to the clinic a bit too late. The problem appeared already in the first grade, but the integrated education teacher took no steps to help the child. Personally, as his class tutor, I strongly believe that I will hear my pupil's voice one day. I would like to add that the pupil is talented. He has no problems with learning". (www.45minutpl./forum accessed on: 24.03.2014)

Attitude two: Lack of understanding and exaggerated requirements with regard to children

„*My son used to be naturally very energetic boy, always smiling, with no communication problems. Initially, nothing would point to his having any problems to settle in in his group. However, as days passed, the smile from my son's face began to disappear; as soon as we set foot in the kindergarten, our son would turn silent, as if absent... He stopped talking to his tutors and classmates; eating problems began (he would hardly eat anything); he ceased to communicate his physiological needs. He isolated himself from the group, and the tutor did nothing to find a remedy for this, quite the contrary, she tried to convince him to say something, to eat meals, he often criticised him in front of the group, which led the children to laugh at him. Any chats with this tutor and my requests to be understanding were fruitless ... Finally, the kindergarten manager showed good will and intervened personally. I didn't recognise my child then, I didn't know how I could help him; I tried to reach him but it was very difficult because my son became very withdrawn. I took the child to the Psychological and Pedagogical Advisory Clinic. Tests indicated a high level of intelligence; the psychologist defined the problems with verbal communication as transitory, on the emotional level, related to the child's adaptation to new kindergarten conditions"* (www.mutyzm.pl. forum/mutyzm accessed on: 24.03.2014).

Attitude three: Seeking solutions

„*I am interested in experiences in therapeutic work and practical guidelines to work with a child with selective mutism at school. I am looking for help for a pupil that I work with. I count on the experiences of other teachers who work with pupils with mutism"* (www.profesor.pl accessed on: 24.03.2014).

„I have been assigned one hor of revalidation classes with a girl with selective mutism from primary school grade two. Has anyone got experience with such a case or worked with such a child? I am looking forward to replies, advice, guide-

lines. I have read the theory, but maybe someone can share their experience" (www.45minut.pl/forum accessed on 24.03.2014).

When considering the above-mentioned teachers' attitudes, one has to notice the fact that there is a group of pedagogues who seek for solutions, motivated to create favourable conditions for their pupils' individual development. However, attitudes of passiveness and helplessness should be worrying and, above all, those of the lack of understanding for the pupil's problem that can be encountered among some of those working with children. Teachers that adopt the attitude of lack of understanding build their relations with pupils based on the stereotypical image of a child with difficulties in communication. This stereotype has its source in a simplified and highly unfair perception of an individual that B. Sawa defines in the following way: "difficulties with communication = weak student = little intelligence".[53] Creating such a simplified image of the pupil without a more thorough analysis of their situation, resources and difficulties leads to incorrect building of educational and social relations of the teacher-pupil and pupil-other pupils type. In this situation, mechanism of evaluating the school and particular teachers' activities and launch activities to monitor, verify and eliminate situations when the teacher does not understand and does not try to understand their pupils' difficulties.

Conclusion: social anxiety – mutism – common denominators

To sum up the topics touched upon in this article, I would like to underline the following issues that I have attempted to develop and justify in my paper:

- Disorders of the social anxiety and selective mutism types can be perceived as communication disorders.
- Selective mutism is a form of disorders that fit a wider spectre of social anxiety.
- Avoiding social relations and logophobia can be perceived as symptoms common to both types of disorders.
- The image of symptoms of disorders among children that exists in social awareness (in the awareness of teachers) is almost identical.
- The attitude of some teachers towards children with symptoms of communicative disorders that manifests itself as the lack of understanding for the pupils' difficulties requires creating solutions that aim at monitoring the relations of the teacher-pupil type, and evaluating or self-evaluating these relations with a supervisor, for example.

[53] B. Sawa, op. cit., p. 103.

Questions in the process of constructing pupils' knowledge

Jolanta Bonar

A dynamically changing reality forces contemporary schooling to free and develop the features of an innovative man.[1] A multidimensional man with a complex inner life, a creatively-oriented, transgressive attitude, one who possesses the skills necessary to solve new and difficult problems. A man of heuristic and emancipationist competences in creative cognition and transformation of the world, who is capable of asking questions, thinking independently, revealing ambiguity, and making choices. The ability to ask questions is becoming one of the most vital competences of the modern man. According to Postman[2], the whole knowledge we possess has been accumulated in the process of asking questions, while the ability to raise them is one of human's most pivotal intellectual tools[3]. This ability is related by Szmidt to the category of interrogative thinking, in which he locates: the ability to recognise issues and problematic situations, the ability to formulate problematic questions, and the ability to redefine issues[4].

The interrogative ability is particularly essential in childhood, when a child is developing and constructing his own intellectual potential and cognitive abil-

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[1] J. Kozielecki, *Społeczeństwo transgresyjne. Szansa i ryzyko*, Warszawa 2004.

[2] Neil Postman combines asking questions with the ability to think critically. He perceived the appreciation of this ability as one of the three most significant gifts of the Enlightenment (besides the conviction that education must be based on understanding of the nature of childhood, and the idea that a well-educated society is one of the elements of national wealth). It was when the assumption was made that an educated brain is skilled in using the mind and intellect, which inevitably leads to a sceptical or even scientific world outlook, and that 'appropriate education' should aim at, among other things, the shaping of a reason-based and sceptical view on the world. Today 'the sceptical base' is more and more often substituted with 'critical thinking'.

[3] N. Postman, *W stronę XVIII stulecia*, Warszawa 2001, p. 173.

[4] K.J. Szmidt, *Dylematy edukacji artystycznej. Edukacja artystyczna a potencjał twórczy człowieka*, Kraków 2006, p. 28.

ities. This is the period of constant examination and exploration of the world, and numerous doubts related with the process, as well as – in consequence – the period of forming questions that stem from these doubts. It is also a time for the recognition of the heritage of questions and answers functioning in culture, which motivates the youth to attempt to assume an individual attitude towards them, and, as a result, to develop self-awareness and the awareness of reality.[5]

Unfortunately, the process of education – even in its earliest stage – does not include the teaching of this most crucial intellectual skill available to humans. Perhaps this results from the overwhelming position of behavioural discourse in Polish schools, which focuses on bequeathing knowledge, and – in accordance with Sternberg's terminology – is dominated by the didactic strategy of lecture.[6] Whereas, in the education of an innovative man, it is the constructionist discourse with the question-based dominating dialogue strategy which promotes thinking, reading signs, and the comprehension and cognition of the world.

Cognitively stimulated pupils are first to raise questions, while the teacher assumes the role of a guide and assistant. The dialogue strategy is appreciated by Bruner, who names it a 'soft technology' of effective tutoring, which is of invaluable functionality in the classroom; the technology that attaches great importance to scientific problem solving, and not to ready-made science and 'answers'. He also places 'the art of raising bold questions' there together with 'the art of cultivating good questions and keeping them alive'. Good questions are defined as queries that create problems, question the obvious or canon truths, and draw our attention to inconsistencies and discrepancies.[7] This strategy is beneficial to pupils regardless of what type of intelligence they represent, and allows for analytic-critical, creative-synthetic, and practical thinking.[8]

In the dialogue strategy questions are asked by teachers and pupils.

Teacher's questions build a bridge between tutoring and learning. Piaget defines them as the stimulator of intellect, since they stimulate cognitive dissonance, which enables a child to move to a higher development stage. It is imperative for them to be challenging, surprising and to raise positive emotions. Such questions agitate the mind and cause trouble, and, according to Bruner, become the scaffolding for the learning process. Their glow is just like 'candle-

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[5] M. Szczepska-Pustkowska, *Dociekania filozoficzne z dziećmi*, [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnoszkolna – dyskursy, problemy, rozwiązania*, ed. D. Klus-Stańska, M. Szczepska-Pustkowska, Warszawa 2009, p. 555–556.

[6] R. Sternberg, L. Spear-Swerling, *Jak nauczyć dzieci myślenia*, Gdańsk 2003, p. 38.

[7] J. Bruner, *Kultura edukacji*, Kraków 2006, p. 176.

[8] R. Sternberg, L. Spear-Swerling, op. cit., p. 38–39.

light in darkness' that casts light upon the truth and mystery. Not all questions, however, facilitate the learning process, or motivate pupils to listen and to think.[9]

Teachers' questions also play a diagnostics role, as they allow them to determine the level of pupils' previous knowledge, their manner of thinking, the meanings they give to reality and the mechanisms which control the creation of such meanings.

They also enable them to understand mental models constructed by pupils in the process of learning about the world and gaining personal knowledge, to receive feedback from children, to estimate their level of competence, adjust the procedures to their current state of knowledge, and, accordingly, to organise learning processes more effectively.

Efficient questions, which make pupils actually learn something in class, must be of a specified type, and pose a challenge adequate to the pupils' skills and abilities. Some queries, e.g. 'What do you call it?', asked in reference to everyday objects constitute relatively low-difficulty challenges and allow for a limited number of answers. Others, e.g. 'Why is it so?', may require longer time to think and to find an explanation. Some others, e.g. 'What do you think about …?' will never lead to a single correct answer, but, for a change, will provoke analytical thinking and require the ability to give critical opinions. Such questions are open, and their meaning for the learning process is appreciated by numerous researchers.[10]

Nuthall and Church believe that the pupils who are asked open questions can speculate, hypothesize and debate.[11] Similarly, Bloom opines that open questions facilitate creative discussion, during which participants form individual opinions, convictions and hypotheses, and develop reflexive and critical attitudes towards clichéd patterns. Such questions also provoke higher cognitive processes of an analytical, synthetic and evaluative kind.[12] Sigel claims that these questions also facilitate the development of child's learnability, since they motivate children to distance themselves from the direct, short-term consequences of the experiences they encounter. Thus, the child gains the ability to decentre, think and reflect upon his own actions, and, consequently, becomes more analytically oriented and less impulsive, gaining effective control over his own learning process[13]. Open questions allow us to break the dictate or, as

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[9] R. Fisher, *Uczymy jak się uczyć*, Warszawa 1999, p. 29–30.

[10] D. Wood, *Jak dzieci uczą się i myślą. Społeczne konteksty rozwoju społecznego*, Kraków 2006, p. 159.

[11] Ibidem, p. 159.

[12] K.J. Szmidt, *Pedagogika twórczości*, Gdańsk 2007, p. 209.

[13] D. Wood, op. cit., p. 160.

Szmidt describes it, the tyranny of the single correct answer, and to abolish the unrealistic vision that it is possible to find one answer to every question.[14]

Fisher appeals to teachers to remember about several simple and yet important techniques while asking questions.

First of all, he suggests asking questions in the order resulting from the increasing complexity of thinking required to answer them, i.e. from simple memory questions, to queries that demand understanding, explanation, and then knowledge, to tasks that require analysis, synthesis and evaluation.[15]

He also recommends giving pupils more time to work out the answer, since the compulsion to give a prompt reply leaves children with very little time to prepare a detailed statement or think out loud. Potentially, this is the reason behind the inability of some children to learn the methods of effective formulation and verbalization of their thoughts, and to demonstrate their knowledge. When prolonged, the time allocated for the preparation of the answer results in better quality responses, which are more substantial and well thought-out. Thus, it is worth waiting for a good reply.

It is also advisable to remember to use incentives and hints, and to motivate pupils to scrutinize the discussed issue more deeply. This can be done with such questions as: 'Why do you think so?' or 'What do you mean by that?', or with non-verbal emphasis: eye contact, mimic signs and signals such as smiling, gesturing, etc.[16]

Questions asked by pupils constitute one of the most important strategies in the development of their personal knowledge, are an expression of their curiosity, indicate their difficulties in understanding the surroundings, and aim at revealing the meanings and senses of reality. They are the verbalization of what pupils know about a given topic, and what else they would like to learn about it. Pupils ask questions when they consider the tasks they are given to be meaningful and personally significant.[17]

Millar distinguishes questions for collecting information (factual, referring to basic features of the problematic situation, e.g. 'who?', 'what?', 'where?', and procedural, which regard the way things happen, e.g. 'how?', 'in what way?'), questions for organising information, i.e. asking for purpose (objective questions thanks to which a child wants to understand a specific case or a cause behind an event, e.g. 'how did it happen that …?', assumptive questions, which

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[14] K.J. Szmidt, *Pedagogika twórczości*, ed. cit., p. 208.

[15] R. Fisher, op. cit., p. 31–32.

[16] Ibidem, p. 36.

[17] B.D. Gołębniak, *Nauczanie i uczenie się w klasie*, [in:] *Pedagogika 2. Podręcznik akademicki*, ed. Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, Warszawa 2010, p. 158–203.

express inquiry and suppositions, e.g. 'why not …?', and questions for expanding and creating information (hypothetical questions about what happens next, i.e. questions that reach beyond the discussed problem and data, and speculative questions, which expand the already known information, including intellectual risk and attempting to generate new knowledge, e.g. 'what would happen if …?').[18] He finds the second and third-stage questions more valuable in the construction of pupils' knowledge, similar to the earlier opinion by Piaget, who considered the 'why' questions of upmost importance and divided them into three major categories: the questions referring to causal explanation, the ones referring to motivation, and those referring to justification. The researcher argues that the occurrence of such questions co-exists with some fundamental changes in the cognitive process.[19]

At the same time, the research observations performed among years 1-3 of primary school in Łódź point to the domination of the first-stage questions, which are used to collect information and refer to the most fundamental features of the problem, e.g. 'How many trains are there in Poland?', 'How much does the Earth weigh?', 'Did our world come to exit like it is shown in *Ice Age*?', 'Where do the Eskimos pee?', 'What kind of sentence is it?', 'What food do the Chinese eat?', 'Where do raisins grow?', 'What is glass made of?', 'Do storms only happen in summer?', 'Are all people with grey hair going to die soon?', 'Do bacteria have eyes?', 'Will our fish go to Heaven?', 'Can a dinosaur be red?', 'Do you like children, Miss?' – factual questions; 'How do nails grow?', 'How to write a set of rules and regulations?', 'Where do the bubbles in thermal spas come from?', 'How was Uniejów founded?', 'Where do small salt crystals come from?', 'Where does thermal water come from?' – procedural questions.

The number of questions for organising information (classifying) is substantially smaller, e.g. 'Why did the Lord create mosquitoes?', 'Why is this man in a wheelchair?', 'Why does this sheep have horns and that one doesn't?', 'Why is it spelt this way?', 'How come the compass shows north?', 'Why do I have to eat fruit and veggies, while Eskimos don't and still have healthy teeth?', 'Why do trees lose leaves?'.

The smallest number, however, is of the questions that expand and create information – hypothetical queries – referring to issues beyond the given data, e.g. 'How long would it take us to leave this place if there was no lift here?'.

Whether children ask questions or not, and also what kind of questions they ask, is mostly determined by the manner in which their parents and teachers react to their questions. These are the people who help children to understand their environment, providing hints on how to interpret it. According to Piaget,

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[18] K.J. Szmidt, *Dylematy edukacji artystycznej…*, ed. cit., p. 28.

[19] J. Piaget, *Mowa i myślenie dziecka*, Warszawa 2010, p. 153.

such mediation helps children to adjust new experiences to already existing patterns and match newer experiences through the development of new patterns. When asking questions, children look for such mediation, while adults respond in a quite typical manner, which, as Sternberg states, may be divided into seven different levels, where the higher the level, the greater the stage of mediation. This, in turn, translates into better opportunities for children to develop the ability of higher-order thinking. In other words, mediators who respond to questions at a higher level have a more beneficial influence on the intellectual development of children.[20] As an example, let us ponder over a classic question asked by very many children: 'Why do flowers smell?'.

LEVEL 1. Rejection. When mediators react by rejecting questions, the most basic message children receive is for them to be silent. Questions are perceived as something inappropriate or irritating. If children are consistently punished for asking questions, they learn not to ask them, which means they learn not to learn.

LEVEL 2. Rephrasing questions into answers. At this level mediators merely answer questions, but with empty words. Answers are nothing else but rephrased questions, stating that 'flowers smell because they are flowers', or 'because it is springtime'. The mediators are utterly unaware of the fact that they do rephrase questions, because they opt for pseudoscientific and completely meaningless terms, trying to conceal lack of knowledge.

LEVEL 3. At this level the answer may or may not be accompanied by positive reinforcement, i.e. the praise for asking a question itself. An answer without reinforcement is a declaration that the mediator is not familiar with the answer or it is a direct answer based on the mediator's knowledge. This allows children to understand that their adult mediators are not omniscient or they learn something new. Such answers may be a reasonable choice in some circumstances, but they are not the best form of assistance for children. There is only one difference between an unreinforced and a reinforced answer – the latter is preceded by the statement: 'It's a good question' or 'I am glad you asked about it'. Such a reply contains an award for asking, positively influences the recurrence of questions, and, therefore, increases children's chances for success in the learning process.

LEVEL 4. Encouragement to seek expert opinion. At this level answers may be divided into two categories, depending on whether the mediator takes responsibility for the search of expert opinion in appropriate resources, or encourages children to perform the task on their own. This way children learn that information can be searched for and found.

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[20] R. Sternberg, L. Spear-Swerling, op. cit., p. 51–55.

If the mediator takes the responsibility for finding the answers, children learn that there is a possibility to search for information, but it should be done by someone else. In consequence, they learn to gain knowledge in a passive way. However, if children are offered the opportunity to look for information by themselves, they become responsible for their own education, and, as a result, they will know how to learn actively.

LEVEL 5. Considering various solutions. The mediator demonstrates uncertainty, but – at the same time – suggests several possible solutions and encourages children to decide which one seems to be the correct one. For instance, an adult may suggest that flowers smell because they contain pollen and essential oils, or because they have nectar with which they want to attract insects that pollinate them and enable them to produce fruit, or because they want to help bees to make people's life easier and better. As a result, children become aware of the fact that a seemingly simple question may lead to various hypotheses. An adult mediator may also encourage children to offer alternative answers on their own, which stimulates a more active learning process.

LEVEL 6. Considering solutions, combined with different methods of their evaluation. At this level pupils are encouraged not only to offer alternative solutions, but also to make comparisons between them. For example, if we assume that flowers smell to lure insects, how could we verify this theory? Mediators' hints give children a chance to learn how hypotheses are made and evaluated.

LEVEL 7. Considering solutions, combined with different evaluation methods which are later verified. The mediator encourages children to perform experiments, which helps them differentiate between various, alternative explanations. Not only do children learn to think, but they also get to know how to act following their own reasoning. And even though the verification of every single explanation may be virtually impossible, it is often feasible to evaluate at least some of the offered solutions. For instance, children may observe insects on the meadow to determine whether they sit on flowers more often than on any other parts of the plant.

These levels present very different attitudes, from rejection, through encouragement, up to independent formulation and verification of various hypotheses, from the stage of non-learning, through passive memory training, to analytical, creative and practical thinking. Teachers should be aware that the higher-order strategies presented above may be applied in any class.[21]

The problem of asking questions and its role in the educational process is one of the most controversial issues and the subject of heated discussions and disputes. Tuition defined as bequeathing knowledge within culture requires

[21] Ibidem, p. 52–55.

teachers to interact with children, and to guide them in order to ensure that they help pupils understand the task they are supposed to do and to get 'the right answers'. On the other hand, however, learning and teaching should not be limited merely to the reproduction of culture-based content. It is equally important for pupils to develop self-confidence and trust their own problem-solving skills[22], to improve critical thinking, to develop the ability to ask questions, and to seek comprehension and understanding. Pupils only gain the knowledge they actively seek. Such knowledge is characterized by constant movement of thoughts and the permanent process of development, since it is born out of dialogue, whose origins can be traced in different opinions and their variety, and out of the specific tension between pupils' questions and the answers they receive.[23] Therefore, creating opportunities for pupils to seek answers to their own questions is as important as the teacher's input.[24]

However, it seems quite likely that Postman is right in his suspicion that teachers and school authorities realize the dangers of the serious approach to the art of asking questions, and, therefore, they have been trying to avoid it at any price. They want pupils to know the answers right away and not to ask questions, they wish children to be convinced, not sceptical, they are interested in measuring the number of answers, and not the quality of questions. Those who think that an active, bold and skilful ability to ask questions is 'the right type of education' may enjoy and be inspired by the works of Wolter, Hume, Franklin, Priestley and Jefferson. Undoubtedly, these authors would praise the attempt.[25]

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[22] D. Wood, op. cit., p. 162.

[23] M. Szczepska-Pustkowska, op. cit., p. 563.

[24] D. Wood, op. cit., p. 162.

[25] N. Postman, op. cit.

The explanation of emotional phenomena among pre-school age children

Barbara Górecka-Mostowicz

Throughout our lives we aspire to build very close relationships with people. We often wonder about our emotional functioning due to the strength with which experiences influence our lives. They give shape to events that we come across daily. And the question that arises is: how to develop emotional intelligence in a child's mind?

On the one hand, the literature on the subject of emotional development stresses the importance of a strive for learning to control one's emotions; on the other hand, it appreciates the value of experiencing authentic emotions reflecting one's own needs and aspirations. It also brings into question the notion of the ability to manage emotions in difficult situations and realising their significance for the sake of one's self-development and quality of life. Scientifically and colloquially, feelings need to be distinguished from emotions. Psychology sees feelings as subjective, conscious components of emotions – a combination of both emotive and representational elements. It is often highlighted that feelings build a complex emotional state and mean readiness to react in a certain way to different kinds of objects. One's attitude about reality is reflected in feelings and can be expressed as in the following sample statements: *I like/dislike something/someone, I am keen on something, I am afraid of something, I like/dislike doing something.* Feelings turn our actions into something meaningful, prepare us to make sacrifices and be heroic. According to Izard, emotional experience *is a certain type of a conscious sense or affective tone... whereas emotional development is based on creating a relation between an emotion and cognition and shaping internally cohesive cognitive, emotional, and activity patterns.*[1]

[1] C.E. Izard, *Związki międzysystemowe*, [in:] *Natura emocji, podstawowe zagadnienia*, ed. P. Ekman, R.J. Davidson, Gdańsk 1998, p. 301, 303.

Language and emotional development

Judy Dunn[2] draws attention to the fact that the appearance of more and more complex forms of emotional behaviour in the process of ontogenesis depends on the cognitive development of a child. It is the growth of cognitive maturity that helps alter the ways in which a child perceives things, and evaluates and expresses emotions. Not only does the mimicry change; so do the conditions under which emotions are sparkled and the way in which a child experiences them. Developmental cognitive changes result in changes in understanding social situations – a two-year-old child would be afraid of some atmospheric phenomena whereas in the age of six they would rather raise concerns about the peer acceptance. Dunn[3] mentions that at the age of two a child would experience a range of new emotions: *pride, embarrassment, guilt, jealousy, confusion.* Not only do new emotions emerge but they are also combined into a complex of reactions with the situational context, e.g. joy precedes excitement and amazement when a child receives an unexpected gift. At 18 months, thanks to the development of the symbolic function, a child starts to react emotionally to symbolic substitutes of objects and phenomena while the speech development offers them a chance to participate in conversations about emotions. During this time a child begins to react to verbal interpretations of emotions as expressed by their parents in different situations. *Parents would often use the following expressions: oh, how sad you are today, or why are you so angry with your brother? The recipients of these comments would assign the words they hear to mimicry, gestures, and situational context they remembered*.[4] Children learn to identify and name emotional phenomena thanks to their daily interactive experiences. In the early ontogenesis they eagerly inform their surrounding about what they like or dislike, in their earliest utterances they, first and foremost, express their needs and desires. The use of language substantially enhances emotional development of a child *as on the one hand, it helps children understand an emotional experience and distance themselves from it, thanks to conversations and reflections shared with others; on the other hand, it allows them to share their private experiences with the world.*[5]

Schaffer claims that children link the very first names of emotions *to pleasant or unpleasant emotional states.* He writes: *The words to describe child's inner experience are used for the first time in the second half of the second year of age.*

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[2] J. Dunn, *Doświadczanie i rozumienie emocji, relacji społecznych oraz przynależności kulturowej*, [in:] *Natura emocji. Podstawowe zagadnienia*, ed. cit., p. 295–298.

[3] Ibidem, p. 295–298.

[4] B. Górecka-Mostowicz, *Co dzieci wiedzą o emocjach*, Kraków 2005, p. 21.

[5] J. Dunn, op. cit., p. 297.

These are words like happy, sad, angry, scared. The conversations are usually carried out to comment on how a child feels („I am scared"; "I am happy").[6] Parents would usually amplify the first such utterances with their comments; *(„Don't be scared, it's nothing", "You are feeling unwell because...").*[7]

Hurlock [8] distinguishes between two methods of associating meanings with words: direct method, when an adult names or describes an object, or indirect, when a child recalls the actual object through individual experience. The difficulty in connoting emotions lies in the impossibility to unambiguously name what we subjectively, internally experience and want to externally observe. We need to use the language in order to describe emotions which we experience. Maruszewski[9] notices that a flair for naming emotions depends on their intensity as well as the phase of one's emotional development. Other researchers, e.g. Bartmiński[10], highlight the dependence between how frequently a child uses a certain name for an emotion and their early experiences related to their interests and needs. Verbal utterances allow to describe the very first emotions which a child perceives and experiences. At 18 months children begin to verbalise their feelings better and better, which is an inevitable result of the symbolic function development. Naming emotional experiences and using words to describe the accompanying phenomena enhances emotional development. Talking about emotions conduce to establishing and sustaining social contacts, it creates a friendly platform for exchanging questions about emotions. A child would usually describe the situational context surrounding the birth of an emotion and focus on the external expression of this emotion. *In the period between the second and fourth year of age a child becomes skilled in comforting others, teasing, joking etc. The importance of such behaviours lies in both the pleasure in sharing positive emotions with others and in the capability of understanding other people's emotions and influencing them.*[11]

Above all, experiencing emotions can be described as making the record of perceived visceral indicators (from inside of a human organism) or expressive indicators (from outside of one's organism) and giving them interpretative meaning. We can't, at first, influence the way in which we experience emotions and we react intuitively to a variety of situations (on the primary affect level this is how newborns and small children react – these are, for instance, inborn reactions of fear towards sudden sounds), later we learn to consciously interpret them in the process of socialization and assign them meaning in the pro-

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[6] H.R. Schaffer, *Psychologia dziecka*, Warszawa 2006, p. 156.

[7] Ibidem, p. 156.

[8] E.B. Hurlock, *Rozwój dziecka*, Warszawa 1985.

[9] T. Maruszewski, *Psychologia poznania*, Warszawa 1996.

[10] J. Bartmiński, *Językowy obraz świata*, Lublin 1990.

[11] J. Dunn, op. cit., p. 297.

cess of evaluation. In the course of emotional development and socialization the shades of emotional reactions differentiate and are being adjusted to the intensity of the stimulant (in late childhood). The increasing ability to talk about emotions allows a child to share them with the interlocutors and to specify the source of an emotion, e.g.: *Mum, I am sad because my doll is missing*; and to use them to influence others*: I won't love you unless you get me a new toy*. Quoting Lewis: *an emotional experience is an individual interpretation and evaluation of one's own emotional state and expression. It requires an entity to focus their attention on emotional states (understood as changes in neurophysiologic behaviour) as well as situations that trigger changes, on other people's behaviours and last but not least their own expressions.*[12] Emotional states can be experienced differently by the same individuals depending on the time in their lives. We may trace this process using the example of fear. In the early ontogenesis a child reacts with fear to strangers, unfamiliar animals, darkness, lack of contact with relatives. At 6 months a child begins to distinguish between familiar faces and strangers and reacts with fear to an unfamiliar person. In middle childhood a child may fear that *nobody would want to play with them in the kindergarten*, *that a favourite teacher would be replaced with one they do not know* (based on author's own research).

In the early school age a child begins to show signs of anxiety of social nature. They fear of exclusion from the group they do not know that well yet. In the course of a child's development the intensity of emotions experienced changes, too. A five-year-old would no longer be afraid of what made him feel scared when he was 1.5 years old. New emotions, namely pride, dissatisfaction, humiliation may emerge at this age as a result of comparison to other children.

To recapitulate, language is the carrier of information which reflects emotional experiences of a child acquired in different surroundings (mainly at home or school). The skill at naming emotions is dependent on how well cognitive processes of a child's mind are developed and on the variety of children's interpersonal experiences. Thanks to conversations with adults in many contexts a child binds emotional states with certain occurrences. With the help of specified terms a child evaluates feelings and can tell how important they are for a person with whom they interact. It has been established that cognitive changes being the base for understanding emotions help develop the way in which emotions are valued. One of the most commonly accepted division of values is a division into declared values, recognised values and experienced values.[13]

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[12] *Psychologia emocji*, ed. M. Lewis and others, Gdańsk 2005, p. 351.

[13] J. Puzynina, *Język wartości*, Warszawa 1992; R. Jedliński, *Językowy obraz świata wartości w wypowiedziach uczniów kończących szkołę podstawową*, Kraków 2000.

Expressing emotional experiences in language

According to Rosch[14], the cognitive character of language is revealed *in extenso* in the vocabulary which categorises the world accurately. Vygotsky[15] would also assume that language modifies the way in which we see the world, whereas G. C. Wells[16] thinks that a child, when attempting to define, not only learns new words but, above all else, builds meanings. J. Piaget[17] would also point out that a child acquires knowledge in the process of naming phenomena and that language is a means for demonstrating this knowledge.

Thinking based on representations is developed in the early ontogenesis and it requires managing data gathered in the process of perception (representational thinking). Representations, or mental pictures, are of reproductive nature (a child imagines things and states they already know, they have already seen) or of anticipative nature (a child imagines unfamiliar objects and states, which they have not yet seen). It is also worth mentioning that predicting future events can trigger both positive and negative emotions as early as in the pre-school age; when a child, for instance, is excited about a forthcoming award or sad due to punishment which they can see coming. When a child brings back a memory about a past event, they simultaneously recall emotional climate of the given situation. A child can then name an emotion and save it in their memory database as an emotional experience (episodic memory). They say: *I was really scared when I first went to the kindergarten, I wanted to come back home as quickly as possible* (based on author's own research). A child is perfectly aware of the fear they feel and links this emotion with the circumstances. For this reason, the memory of experience is both subjective and partial, and reveals the tendency in children's actions (the entire event was named, associated with the context, saved, and it eventually generated the will to come back home).

Representations and imagination have an amazing power to make a child drift away from reality. They spark off a child's substitution actions and allow them to play different roles in games. Imagination is the very first step on the road to making all dreams and desires come true. It gets a child in a mood, helps develop attitude about life and formulate first goals and ambitions. In order to teach a child to imagine positive emotional behaviours, one needs to start teaching to visualise emotional states at the early stage. A two-year old child is perfectly capable of organising their emotional experiences and present them as a sequence of events.

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[14] E. Rosch, *Classification d'objets du monde réel: origine et représentations dans la cognition*, "Bulletin de Psychologie", 1976, no. spécial.

[15] L. Wygotski, *Myślenie i mowa*, Warszawa 1989.

[16] G.C. Wells, *Language development In the pre-school years*, Cambridge 1985.

[17] J. Piaget, *Studia z psychologii dziecka*, Warszawa 1966.

This is what Nelson[18] called creating a script. At this stage a child creates scripts by describing their actions as a sequence of emotiongenic events.

In a theory that he proposed, Richard Lazarus[19] assumes that emotions emerge when influenced by perception and attention as well as cognitive evaluation, *knowledge is what we believe in as far as the world's functioning is concerned, whereas cognitive evaluation is a result of comparing this knowledge with how the consequences of current events would affect our own wellbeing*.[20] In the course of a child's development cognitive evaluation skills grow and sparkle off relevant emotions. Lazarus suggests that there exist a variety of patters for assessing emotions. These patterns modify the way in which sign and the intensity of emotions are assigned. For example, the responsibility for how a child experiences guilt is a very important factor releasing anger. It is why the knowledge on what a child knows about emotion-related aspects of life and how they formulate cognitive evaluations based on what they know should be extracted from conversations between children and their parents. Therefore, cognitive evaluation of emotions is shaped by how a child perceives their inner emotional experience and how others react to a child's behaviour. The extent to which an emotion is released is dependent on the cognitive development of an individual – their perception, imagination, attention, memory of events, the level of thinking including the aspect of reasoning and predicting.

Phases of understanding emotions and creating theories which explain them

In order to understand emotions we may either participate in the process of recognising the information about them based on external signs or use intuition. *To understand emotions we need to be able to distinguish between their internal and external causes and recognise behaviours representative for the emotions which we experience.*[21] Mita Banerjee[22] described the phase of basic understanding of emotions, and this phase includes:

– Differentiating emotion-related expressions.
– Using emotion names.
– Understanding which situations sparkle off which emotions.

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[18] K. Nelson, *Event knowledge*: *Structure and functions in development*, Hillsdale 1986.

[19] R. Lazarus, *Znaczenie a rozwój emocjonalny*, [in:] *Natura emocji, podstawowe zagadnienia*, ed. cit.

[20] Ibidem, p. 306.

[21] M. Białecka-Pikul, M. Stępień-Nycz, *Dynamika rozwoju emocjonalnego: doświadczanie, rozumienie i regulacja emocji*, [in:] *Dynamika emocji. Teoria i praktyka*, ed. D. Doliński, W. Błaszczak, Warszawa 2011, p. 218.

[22] Ibidem, p. 220.

The phase of mentalistic understanding of emotions:
– Between 3 and 5 years of age, when the theory of mind develops.
– Between 6 and 12 years of age, when a child begins to understand that the same object may trigger contrasting emotions.

The phase of understanding emotions in practice:
– The knowledge on how to handle emotions well, on how to show and mask them.[23]

Researchers[24] highlight that the above-mentioned phases remain in accordance with the results of research by Pons and his associates, who used the Test of Emotion Understanding. They described three aspects of understanding emotions: external, mental and reflective, which strictly corresponds to the above division. In their conception Lane and Schwartz[25] indicate that, *the emotional awareness is born as a result of the cognitive processing of emotional stimulation and undergoes five stages of structural transformations – which in case of adults reflects in the structure of language used to describe states of adult experience.*[26] The authors singled out four stages of emotional consciousness: *the awareness of tendency to act, the awareness of single emotions, the awareness of a few different feelings, the awareness of a combination of many different feelings*[27]*.* These stages strictly correspond with the phases of a child's intellectual development by Piaget. Another researchers specialising in the development of understanding of emotions: Maruszewski and Ścigała[28] propose three different codes in the development of emotion representation: graphic, verbal and abstract. These codes emerge in a specific sequence: first comes the graphic code – it enhances recognising and differentiating external signs of emotions – then the verbal code responsible for labelling acquired information about emotions, and the abstract code – responsible for the conceptual representation of knowledge about emotions.

The development of emotional competence of children – research review

The literature on the subject mentions that recognising familiar faces is typical for the early ontogenesis *(at the age of 3 months an infant recognises their*

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[23] Ibidem, p. 220.

[24] Ibidem.

[25] D. Szczygieł, A. Kolańczyk, *Skala poziomów świadomości emocji. Adaptacja skali, Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale Lane'a i Schwartza*, "Roczniki Psychologiczne", 2000, vol. 3, p. 155–179.

[26] Ibidem, p. 158.

[27] Ibidem.

[28] T. Maruszewski, E. Ścigała, *Emocje – Aleksytymia – Poznanie*, Poznań 1998.

mother's face, masked and unmasked, while at the age of 4 months a baby reacts differently to a familiar face and to a face of a stranger[29]*),* later a child would learn to distinguish between typical emotional behaviours, and to indicate their source and consequences. A good exemplary test would be to ask a pre-school age child to put pictures in certain order so that they create a story. Verbalisation is a result of generalisation and adaptation of emotions, e.g. *I am sad because what has happened to me makes me perceive it as an unpleasant experience.*[30]

According to Greenspan and Benderly a child distinguishes between situational contexts neither through conscious learning or unconscious rules nor through example but by transferring their own set of emotional signals from one situation to another. These authors *claim that feelings which we transfer from one situation to another tell us what to think, say and do. They place the given event in the general context of life. That's how we comprehend (make sure which situation we are in – a friendly, formal or hostile one?) and differentiate (we can evaluate and say which action is proper).*[31]

Presently, many works have been written on children's emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1997, Elias, Tobias, Friedlander 1998, Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2002). Mayer, Salovey and Caruse came up with the notion of emotional intelligence model comprising of four elements – four groups of abilities:

1. *Ability to perceive emotions.*
2. *Ability to use emotions to power the process of thinking.*
3. *Ability to understand emotions.*
4. *Ability to manage emotions.*[32]

By James A. Russel and Ghyslaine Lemay: As early as at a very young age children develop their own ways of interpreting what happens to them or what they witness. Very small children distinguish between a variety of emotions but not based on adult categories (describes as fear, anger etc.) which develop later when confronted with emotional phenomena and culture but on the assessment of pleasure and activation.[33]

Children's theories are nothing else but conceptions which children create about the world and themselves based on their everyday experiences. Children

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[29] M. Przetacznik-Gierowska, G. Makiełło-Jarża, *Psychologia rozwojowa i wychowawcza wieku dziecięcego*, Warszawa 1992, p. 98.

[30] B. Górecka-Mostowicz, *Reprezentacja zjawisk emocjonalnych w języku dzieci przedszkolnych i szkolnych*, "Rocznik Komisji Pedagogicznych", 2006–2007, vol. LIX, p. 58.

[31] S.I. Greenspan, B.L. Benderly, *Rozwój umysłu. Emocjonalne podstawy inteligencji*, Poznań 2000.

[32] M. Śmieja, J. Orzechowski, *Inteligencja emocjonalna. Fakty, mity, kontrowersje*, Warszawa 2008, p. 114–115.

[33] J.A. Russell, G. Lemay, *Pojęcia dotyczące emocji*, [in:] *Psychologia emocji*, ed. cit., p. 627.

use these conceptions to build a base used to explain the emotions they perceive, receive and experience. Children create their own theories of emotions and wonder about why they were released in the first place. At the age of three and earlier children describe emotions using external indicators: mimicry, tone of voice rather than refer to the desires and beliefs of others. Older children, starting from the age of four can refer to someone's beliefs when interpreting emotions even if they do not conform to objective reality.[34]

Research on understanding emotional phenomena in an imaginary situation presented verbally

The aim of this research is to find out which stage of individual development has been reached by the examined children in comparison with the adopted model of intellectual functioning.

The course and organisation of research

The subject of the research was children's ability to understand emotional phenomena shown by others. Children were asked to answer to a set of true-or-false questions. The same set of questions was given to two age groups: a younger group (3 girls of an average age of 3.4 years and 3 boys of an average age of 3.9 years) and an older group (3 girls of an average age of 5.9 years and 3 boys of an average age of 6.1 years). Each child was interviewed individually and each conversation commenced with the following instruction: *I will ask you a couple of questions and you need to tell me if the statements that you hear are true or false.*

A cheerful girl stood in the corner of a room with a sad look on her face – is this true or false?

Why do you think so?

She felt sad because she has just got a toy she had dreamt of – is this true or false?

Why do you think so?

She cried loudly because of how happy she felt – is this true or false?

How did she feel?

Tell me: how should she feel in a situation like this?

When do we feel sad? – what happens when we do?

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[34] H.R. Schaffer, op. cit., p. 289.

When do we feel happy? – what happens when we do?
Can you draw what you feel when you are happy?
The answers received allowed to address the following questions:
Can a child see the depicted situation as true or false?
Can they explain and notice contradictions?
Can they create the history of emotional experiences and explain why the girl showed contradictory emotions?

Research results – quality analysis

Thanks to the construction of the research situation the children could perform the interpretative evaluation of the statements and try to decide whether they were true or false. All children representing the younger group could not recognise the falseness of the sentences – they would reply that the sentences were true although they could not explain why. They would tautologically interpret it and say that sentences are true because the truth is the truth. Moreover, they could not say when sadness or happiness is usually felt. Only one girl (4.2 years old) mentioned that she felt happy every time she received a toy. Their drawings regarding the feeling of happiness were unstructured and depicted a tangle of lines. One girl draw a smiling figure to show how joy can be experienced.

The interpretations made by the children representing the older group were significantly different. All boys and girls would assertively say that the sentences were false. Three of the children interviewed would even point out that a situation in which a girl was happy but cried was false although in some circumstances it may be true. The children would support their opinions by referring to their own experiences. One 6 year-old girl said: *It may not be false, a girl could cry of happiness, I once cried of happiness when I got a toy I wanted*; a boy (6.9 years old): *we should not cry when we're happy, but it can happen, I saw it in a cartoon*; a boy (6.1 years old): *It's false because she cried although she was happy but we can cry when we're happy.* The above feedback clearly proves that children can discover the contradiction that lies between experiencing emotions (*she cried loudly*) and expressing them (*because she was very happy*) but at the same time they can conclude that crying of happiness is not impossible. The children seem to understand that some behaviours they observe result from an individual life story, which is how early the theory of mind manifest itself.

How older children interpreted sentence 1 – sample utterances:

Because she is smiling, and now she's sad; because nobody should be sad, because for example people should be happy; because the girl is polite, because this isn't

right, because she's nice; because when someone is happy they can't be sad, because she was happy and sad; if she was sad she could not be happy.

Children's replies to questions: When do we feel sad? When do we feel happy?

Give evidence that children tend to refer to their own experiences – sample utterances:

When someone shouts at us, a friend or our mum, when they forbid everything that is electrical, it's when we feel sad; there is joy when our mum buys cookies or a Kinder surprise egg (a girl, 6.0 years old).

Below are examples of children's drawings showing how they perceive experiencing joy.

Drawing 1 (a boy, 5.3 years old)

Drawing 2 (a girl 6.3 years old)

Research interpretations and conclusions

To sum up my own research results, I came to a conclusion that very young children showed the lack of basic understanding of emotions and could not detect the falseness of the statements they heard (Mita Banerjee). They seem to have been aware of single emotions, which corresponds with the third level of emotional awareness according to Lene and Schwartz.[35] These younger children could not come up with stories to explain the emotions shown by the imaginary girl.

Older children however, clearly presented the mentalistic understanding of emotions as they could justify why they thought the statements were true or false. They showed awareness of several different feelings, which corresponds to the fourth level of emotional awareness by Lene and Schwartz.[36] The older children were capable of creating a story to set forth why the imaginary girl showed the emotions described. The exemplary utterances: *when you receive your favourite toy, you are very happy* (a girl, 6.3 years old); *because she should be happy and not sad when she received her dream toy* (a boy, 6.9 years old). The children representing this group could characterise the feeling of joy and sadness by referring to the question of personal gain – receiving a gift or being given a chance to play with a friend.

The conclusions drawn from this research may benefit the educational practice. I strongly believe that children should be offered a chance to freely interpret the situations which trigger someone else's emotions and to be able to confront their interpretations with the database storing their own experiences. Teachers should not only create conditions under which children's utterances would be stimulated but they should also actively listen.

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[35] D. Szczygieł, A. Kolańczyk, op. cit.

[36] Ibidem.

Diagnostic values of selected sheets for assessing school readiness (in preparation to take up learning to read and write)

Barbara Kurowska

From the point of view of the organization of the teaching process, it is very important to determine the point at which the child is adequately prepared to start school, and also to begin learning to read and write.[1] *School maturity, school readiness* – these terms are used interchangeably; *the basis for their differentiation can be both understanding the nature and mechanisms of the aging process, as well as the role of learning in the development process*.[2] Initially, while differentiating these two concepts, attention in case of the first one was paid to the fact that developmental changes taking place in the child are spontaneous and are associated with maturation, whereas in case of the other one, it was assumed that there is a possibility of shaping certain characteristics of the child, thereby creating a chance for it to reach the readiness to learn. Today, school maturity is treated as dependent not only on the internal processes of maturation, but also on supporting or inhibiting influences of the environment, including the impact of teaching.[3] It can be formulated statically as *a moment of balance between the requirements of the school and the child's developmental capabilities*[4] or dynamically as a long-term process of psycho-physical transformations, leading to a child's adaptation to the school educational system.[5] It is, therefore, a consequence of the interaction of two developmental processes: maturation and learning. *It is not a biologically conditioned stage of spontaneous development, but the result of the child's experience in the motor, mental, emo-*

[1] B. Kurowska, *Dziecko ryzyka dysleksji w przedszkolu*, Kraków 2011.

[2] B. Wilgocka-Okoń, *Gotowość szkolna dzieci sześcioletnich*, Warszawa 2003, p. 10.

[3] E. Jarosz, E. Wysocka, *Diagnoza psychopedagogiczna. Podstawowe problemy i rozwiązania*, Warszawa 2006, p. 183.

[4] M. Przetacznikowa, *Wiek przedszkolny. Dojrzałość szkolna*, [in:] *Psychologia rozwojowa dzieci i młodzieży*, ed. M. Żebrowska, Warszawa 1980, p. 512.

[5] B. Kurowska, op. cit.

tional, and social sphere.[6] It is the result of the interaction of the child's characteristics and the educational offer of the school.[7]

One of the aspects of the child's school readiness is its preparation to take up learning to read and write. By analysing the views of the authors dealing with the above issues, it can be concluded that it is determined by many factors, among which it is considered that the most important are: the normal development of speech and mental maturity, depending on the intellectual development, attention focus abilities and the level of perception[8]; the correct level of visual and auditory perception, the ability for holistic word recognition[9]; an appropriate level of psychomotor developmental (visual and auditory perception, articulation, manual dexterity), cognitive (thinking), and emotional-motivational (determining a positive attitude to learning) processes.[10]

According to Krasowicz-Kupis, an important role in preparing to take up learning to read is played by both intellectual development, in particular thinking and the ability to carry out various operations in the field of graphic and sound symbols, as well as the development of perceptual-motor functions and their integration. The author also underlines to the need to assimilate the language system: phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, and semantic skills[11], to the appropriate level of ability to understand spoken utterances and construct them, giving them the correct linguistic form, and controlling their content.[12] She also recognizes the positive attitude and motivation of the child to learn as non-specific components in the preparation for reading and writing.

Attention should also be paid to the importance of shaping lateral dominance for the acquisition of reading and writing skills – *the way of the cerebral representation of language affects the course and effects of the acquisition of skills in written language.*[13]

At the beginning of the year preceding the start of the child's studying in the first grade of primary school, a kindergarten teacher is obliged to carry out an analysis of the child's readiness to undertake this study. One of its aspects is the analysis of the readiness to take up learning to read and write. When performing it (currently still five- and six-year-old children are subjected to it), it should

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[6] M. Przetacznikowa, op. cit., p. 512.

[7] K. Wiejak, *Prawidłowości rozwojowe w wieku przedszkolnym i wczesnoszkolnym*, [in:] *Psychopedagogiczne aspekty rozwoju i edukacji małego dziecka*, ed. T. Parczewska, Lublin 2010, p. 20.

[8] J. Malendowicz, *O trudnej sztuce czytania i pisania*, Warszawa 1978.

[9] I. Dudzińska, *Dziecko sześcioletnie uczy się czytać*, Warszawa 1986.

[10] *Czytanie i pisanie – nowy język dziecka*, ed. A. Brzezińska, Warszawa 1987.

[11] G. Krasowicz-Kupis, *Rozwój świadomości językowej dziecka. Teoria i praktyka*, Lublin 2004.

[12] K. Wiejak, op. cit., p. 21–22.

[13] B. Kurowska, op. cit., p. 43.

include the evaluation of skills conditioned by appropriate level of gross motor skills development, manual dexterity, agility of the organs of articulation (oral praxis), visual and auditory perception, language subsystems, and the development of lateral dominance. In order to ensure that the assessment is credible, the teacher must have the knowledge about the development of children in the following areas:

Gross motor skills:

Five- and six-year-old children show considerable gross motor activity, acquire many new skills (i.e. dancing, swimming, cycling, skiing), largely due to their increased coordination of movements and strength. They acquire the ability to repeat sequences of movements, the occurrence of which determines the development of sound and visual sequences. Many activities, such as stair climbing involving alternating left-right leg movements, running up the stairs, maintaining balance while standing on one leg (with closed eyes), jumping on one leg, jump over obstacles, do not cause them any problems.[14]

Fine motor skills:

Five- and six-year-old children improve not only the skills of self-care activities (dressing themselves, fastening buttons, personal hygiene, eating), but also hand movements during reading and writing. While drawing and writing, they hold a writing tool properly, *making mostly hand movements, using primarily the wrist.*[15] They maintain the correct direction of drawing, from the left side of a sheet to the right and from top to bottom; they do not rotate the sheet during this activity. They have correct muscle tension in the hand used for writing.

Oral praxis:

The articulation movements in five- and six-year-old children are already very efficient; even alternating movements. As a result, they utter all the sequences of sounds, characteristic of the spoken Polish language[16], correctly.

Visual perception:

Five- and six-year-old children have such an analytical and synthetic perception that they can distinguish the shapes of printed letters and geometrical figures. They build simple sets according to a pattern, make representations of a square with the drawn diagonals. They perceive from 5 to 8 differences between the pictures.[17] The level of analysis and visual synthesis which they represent will be a determinant of the pace of their learning to read and write.

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[14] J. Cieszyńska, M. Korendo, *Wczesna interwencja terapeutyczna. Stymulacja rozwoju dziecka. Od noworodka do 6 roku życia*, Kraków 2007, p. 60–61.

[15] Ibidem, p. 62.

[16] Ibidem, p. 64.

[17] E. Marek, *Diagnozowanie gotowości dzieci do podjęcia nauki w programach edukacji przedszkolnej*, [in:] *Psychopedagogiczne aspekty rozwoju i edukacji małego dziecka*, ed. cit., p. 171.

Auditory perception:

Five- and six-year-old children can already differentiate opposite sounds in words, can *speak about the language, form words in non-existent languages by analogy with the mother tongue.*[18] They willingly play language games, notice rhymes, form them, and develop metalinguistic awareness.

Lateral dominance:

The process of determining the hemispheric dominance should already be completed in five- and six-year-old children. *The lack of lateral dominance causes difficulties in determining the lateralization of cognitive functions.*[19]

The development of language:

Five- and six-year-old children perform most of the sounds of the Polish language, including nasal vowels and the *r* sound. They improve their narrative skills, note the relationship between phenomena and events, and have the ability to express them using language. Not only do they use sentences naming individual facts, but they also organize them in sequences, and combine them from several sentences into coherent structures. This period is the beginning of the creative use of language and the development of the metalinguistic knowledge – children make up rhymes, understand the ambiguity of words, words with metaphorical sense, rhetorical devices such as comparisons and definitions appear in their utterances. Their communicative competence increases. Six-year-old children already use all the parts of speech and grammatical categories.[20]

Every preschool education programme published since 2009 includes proposals for diagnosing children's school readiness. As part of the explorations I carried out, I performed an analysis of selected tools in consideration of the proposals contained therein checking children's readiness for taking up learning to read and write (in terms of psychomotor functions). I was particularly interested in the type of tasks proposed to children and the criteria for their evaluation. I also checked whether all the perceptual and motor functions, whose correct level of development determines the process of acquiring reading and writing skills, are included in the assessment. I was also interested in the extent to which the assessment of a child's language development is taken into account in the diagnosis of its preparation to undertake studying.

For the preschool diagnosis in the programme called *Before I Become a Pupil* by Tokarska and Kopała materials entitled *The Preschool Diagnosis of a Child In the Last Year of Preschool Education*. *Materials For the Child* were prepared.

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[18] J. Cieszyńska, M. Korendo, op. cit., p. 152.

[19] J. Cieszyńska-Rożek, *Metoda Krakowska wobec zaburzeń rozwoju dzieci. Z perspektywy fenomenologii, neurobiologii i językoznawstwa*, Kraków 2013, p. 89.

[20] J. Cieszyńska, M. Korendo, op. cit., p. 188–189.

Of the issues I am interested in, the following have been taken into account: physical and motor development, manual dexterity, speech, visual perception and auditory perception. In principle, the prepared tasks make it possible to obtain information about the child on the basis of observing it in different situations, conversations with him, its performance of specific activities in the classroom and with the help of the tasks contained in the above-mentioned publication. Skills presented by children are assessed using points (1-3 points).

Physical and motor development is assessed on the basis of observing the child during movement games, and in movement improvisations that are accompanied by music or teacher's stories. The efficiency of the movements and activities performed is noted, as well as agility and the ability to maintain balance.

In terms of manual dexterity it is checked which hand the child uses (this is just one of the elements enabling to identify lateral dominance – it would be also important to check the dominance of the leg and the ear, but especially the eye), whether it holds a writing tool correctly, what pressure it puts onto a sheet of paper (which indicates muscle tension in the hand used for writing), how it draws repeating patterns, whether it fits into the contours while colouring, whether it efficiently uses the scissors, and whether it takes up artistic and construction work on its own initiative.

In assessing the level of the child's speech development, attention is drawn to its correctness in terms of articulation and grammar. The child's ability to describe the content of the pictures is checked, as well as how it asks questions to obtain information, how it expresses opinions on specific topics, makes logical utterances, adapts them to the interlocutor and the situation and the ability to understand commands.

The normal level of development of visual perception is proved by: the ability to put a picture from parts into a whole, identifying similarities and differences between two pictures, recognizing colours and shapes, indicating 6 details distinguishing two pictures, and drawing a picture on graph paper according to the pattern shown.

Auditory perception is assessed on the basis of tasks such as: recognising sounds from the environment, repeating rhythms, repeating poems and rhymes, distinguishing words in sentences, dividing words into syllables, separating sounds in initial and final positions of words, forming rhymes.[21]

The school readiness test sheet by the MAC Education Publishing House[22] includes tasks that give the opportunity to determine the child's development

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[21] E. Tokarska, J. Kopała, *Diagnoza przedszkolna dziecka w ostatnim roku wychowania przedszkolnego*, Warszawa 2013.

[22] W. Żaba-Żabińska, M. Kwaśniewska, *Arkusz badania gotowości szkolnej*, [in:] these, *Nasze przedszkole. Program edukacji przedszkolnej wspomagający rozwój aktywności dzieci*, Kielce 2009.

in three areas: physical, mental, and social. From the issues I am interested in, the following were distinguished in the sphere of physical fitness: assessment of mobility, evaluation of manual dexterity, and examination of lateralization. In the sphere of mental development diagnosis the following were considered: visual perception, eye-motion coordination, auditory perception, vocabulary, and linguistic correctness. Skills presented by children are assessed using points (0-2 points).

Child's physical development (mobility) is assessed on the basis of the following tasks: bouncing on one and two legs, walking foot by foot along a skipping rope, performing knee bends, standing on one leg, running to the finish line (overcoming a distance of approximately 20 meters), skipping, throwing and grabbing a ball. While performing these tasks, the teacher has to note which leg the child prefers to use.

Manual dexterity is assessed on the basis of the ability to build a tower of blocks, draw a favourite toy with crayons, model Plasticine animals, paint one's portrait, make a paper flower, and cut out figures with scissors. At the same time the teacher is to pay attention to which hand the child uses.

The next tasks are to check the lateralization of the child – the sheet offers three trials determining the dominance of the eye and the hand.

Visual perception is assessed on the basis of the ability to do thematic puzzles and draw patterns. On the other hand, visual-motor coordination is assessed on the basis of drawing repeating patterns, drawing fruit by tracing lines (connecting dots), and mapping geometric figures; it is indicated that these tasks will assess the readiness to take up learning to write.

Auditory perception is assessed on the basis of the ability to distinguish sentences in a story, words in sentences, to divide words into syllables and sounds.

The richness of vocabulary and linguistic correctness is shown by the ability to explain the meaning of words (bed, tulip, mirror, moon, museum, pear, weighing, measuring, making phone calls) and to make a story based on a pictures.

A preschool diagnosis with the use of the task sheets by the WSiP Publishing House and Educational Diagnostic Centre includes 51 skills, grouped into five areas (communication skills, social skills, interaction in a group; understanding and respecting nature, mathematical education, intellectual activities; education through art). Twenty-three of them are evaluated on the basis of the tasks contained in the publication, the other ones on the basis of observations.[23] Tasks were prepared for the diagnosis to be carried out at the beginning of the year and another one to be conducted before April of the year preceding the

[23] J. Dziejowska, *Diagnoza przedszkolna. Karty pracy*, Warszawa 2011.

child going to school. Skills presented by children are assessed using points (0-2 points). Getting two points means that the child performs a given activity (depending on the task) always/unassisted/willingly; 1 point – sometimes/with a little help of a teacher/after encouraging it; 0 points – never/only with the help of a teacher/reluctantly.

The first area, communicating, includes tasks that check the skills confirming the readiness for reading (listening to stories, constructing sentences on a specific topic, dividing sentences into words, words into syllables, distinguishing sounds in words of simple phonetic construction, understanding the meaning of the information given in the form of simplified drawings) and readiness for learning to write (the ability to look and remember what is in the pictures, determining the directions and places on a sheet of paper, applying hand dexterity and hand-eye coordination).

During the analysis of the above described tools for assessing the child's school readiness, the following observations came to my mind:

1. It is important that the teacher is aware of the importance of the proper development of motor skills, remembers about the trends in human development – caphalocaudal and proximodistal, in connection with which any disorder of the large motor skills may condition the occurrence of disorders in the development of functions emerging later.
2. It is important to clarify (in the assessment of the tasks diagnosing manual dexterity), that i.e. during drawing repeating patterns a child should follow the right direction from left to right and from top to bottom; that it should not turn the sheet of paper during tasks consisting in connecting the dots; it should connect them with a continuous, and not dotted, line. Close attention should be paid to the muscle tension in the hand used for writing, as well as to the occurrence of synkinesis.
3. It should be considered whether the use of the scissors is a good diagnostic test. Based on my observations, it turns out that there is a large group of children who start preschool education at the age of 5 years and have not had, for a variety of reasons, the possibility to learn cutting by using scissors (e.g. because of their parents' fear that children may hurt themselves). The lack of ability to cut does not have to, in this case, indicate a decrease in manual dexterity, but a consequence of the lack of exercise.
4. In assessing the lateralization, the tests on the dominance of a hand, leg, eye, and ear should be performed. In particular, attention should be paid to the dominant hand and eye.
5. It should be realized that before learning to read and write the development of the phonetic and phonological subsystem should be completed; the child should properly, without exception, utter all sounds. It is worth remembering that the articulation difficulties observed in children above

5 years of age do not only prove the lack of their readiness to take up learning to read and write, but they can indicate the occurrence of some developmental disorders and have a major impact on the learning process at school.[24]

6. In addition to assessing the correctness of articulation and grammar, one should check the ability to create emotionally coloured speech, to use rich vocabulary, to construct complex subordinate sentences, to use rhetorical devices and expressions with metaphorical meaning. Teachers should be made aware that *there is a close relationship between the level of language development and the quality and pace of mastering reading skills.*[25]
7. A diagnosis should be supplemented with tasks that will check children's ability to perform visual analysis and synthesis on the non-thematic (abstract) material, because such material are later letters. Efficiently conducted visual analysis and synthesis on the non-thematic material gives the child a basis, inter alia, for the proper differentiation of the shapes of letters, for memorizing them and mapping.
8. Even for six-year-old children, it is a difficult task to distinguish sounds in words. Research results showed that they are not able to perform the analysis and synthesis of phonemes.[26] This ability develops as a result of learning to read. In all the analysed tools there were tasks which, in the light of the above, do not quite seem to be justified.
9. In assessing the tasks carried out by the child and granting points for the tasks, the teacher should refer to the knowledge of the symptoms indicating a decrease in the level of development of perceptive and motor functions, e.g. if he gives the child 2 points for drawing patterns correctly, he needs to know that the correct formulation states that the child perceives the pattern as a whole, takes into account all the elements and angles, evenly distributes patterns on the sheet of paper. When drawing, it maintains the right direction – from left to right and from top to bottom, does not change the arrangement of the sheet of paper in the course of performing the task, properly holds a pencil. There are no signs of abnormal muscle tension. There are no synkineses.

The diagnostic value of the sheets discussed, like all others, will be significant only if the teacher performing the diagnosis refers to his knowledge in the field of developmental psychology of the child, will know what skills are expected from a five- and six-year-old child in its proper development, but also what symptoms may indicate an inharmonious course of the child psychomotor

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[24] J. Cieszyńska, *Nauka czytania krok po kroku. Jak przeciwdziałać dysleksji*, Kraków 2001.

[25] J. Cieszyńska-Rożek, *Metoda Krakowska*..., ed. cit., p. 363.

[26] Ibidem, p. 364.

development. The value of such a diagnosis would be optimal, if on its basis the teacher is able to draw valid conclusions about the development of his pupil and, if necessary, determine actions to support this development, adequate to the needs and abilities of the child. The earlier a child is the subject of a deliberate, systematic, and conscious educational actions, tailored to its abilities, the greater the chance of the child achieving school readiness at the right time.

A children's book as a source of social world cognition

Dorota Radzikowska

Children's literature is becoming the subject of interest not only for literature specialists, librarians or teachers but also for representatives of other scientific fields such as linguistics, cultural studies or sociology. It creates an opportunity to look at the youngest readers' literature from different angles, taking into account various points of view.

Increased interest in children's literature is the answer to the commonly acknowledged symptoms of a reading crisis among the youngest readers. Effective measures must be taken to find ways to foster reading activity among children. Such steps are especially important in the first stage of education. The early education period is the time when a child *acquires first reading habits and only starts learning "to think" about literature.*[1] It is a specific stage, as far as school literature teaching is concerned, because exactly at this level – introductory one – it is often determined whether the student will like reading and want to become an active, reflective reader or not.

Unfortunately, the commonly observed reduction of the reading list to an old reading canon (not compulsory any more) and schematic work with a literature text, do not lead to children's reading activity and do not stimulate their emotions so children feel dissatisfied with their encounters with literature. Then, they start considering books as dull and uninteresting.

However, we know that for a child a book can be a rich source of knowledge about the surrounding world as it shows a variety of characters' behaviour in certain situations, it makes the reader solve their own dilemmas and look for answers to questions bothering them. Literature both complements and interprets a child's everyday reality.[2] That is why teachers can use literature in the

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[1] Ł. Dawid, *Od intuicji do intelektu (o wnikliwej lekturze tekstów literackich w klasach młodszych)*, [in:] *W pobliżu literatury dziecięcej*, ed. A. Ungeheurer-Gołąb, Rzeszów 2008, p. 187.

[2] M. Taraszkiewicz, *Książki warte czytania... dzieciom*, Warszawa 1995, p. 9.

school didactic-educational process not only to develop children's cognitive and emotional aspects but also to shape their social competence. Literature for young readers emphasizes various values such as friendship, honesty and respect, building a child's moral structure and making them reflective.

However, it must be remembered that children's contact with literature does not result from their natural inner needs. That is why it is essential for the teacher to provide them with certain models fostering the development of their reading interests. An early education teacher, who usually becomes the first one to initiate children's contact with literature, must be aware of the function a literature text plays and skilfully control the choice of reading texts so that they can fulfil various needs of the youngest readers.

Contemporary children, living in the world of fast development of communication and information means, have become totally different children and students and they certainly need completely different ways to spark their reading needs. An adult, who wants to introduce children to the world of books, should make the effort to meet their students and recognise their needs and interests as well as their abilities. Reading motivation will appear only when the reading text will be well-suited to the intellectual and emotional level of the target reader. Szyszkowski emphasises that *a book works only when it becomes an experience, when it draws a child's attention and answers their psychological needs. Nothing should be imposed, as the results achieved are contrary to the expected ones (...).*[3]

The choice of a reading text should be closely connected with the child's age. The younger the child, the more careful we should be. If we want the child to become an independent and aware reader, they must perpetually enrich their contact with a book which will enable them to reflect upon not only a single text but also will give them a chance to notice different connections between various books.[4] As Kruszyńska emphasises, teachers should give children an opportunity to experience reading satisfaction, meet different literary aesthetics, familiarize themselves with different conventions, genres and styles. *Only through such attempts can young people be given an opportunity to face reading difficulties, overcome them and learn to read a literary work.*[5] Treating "classics" (a reading list existing for years) as a basis does not help to change the situation. It is essential to show children diversified and varied literary texts which can satisfy the needs of a varied and diversified young audience. Such an ap-

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[3] Following: M. Szczepańska, *Edukacja kulturalna dziecka w wieku wczesnoszkolnym*, Kraków 2000, p. 23–24.

[4] E. Szefler, *Książka literacka dla dziecka w edukacji wczesnoszkolnej: próba oceny i propozycje wykorzystania*, Bydgoszcz 1998, p. 12.

[5] E. Kruszyńska, *O kryzysie czytania i książce ikonolingwistycznej*, [in:] *Dziecko i literatura we współczesnym świecie*, ed. B. Moraczewska, E. Oberlan, Włocławek 2012, p. 52.

proach was supported by the Minister of Education Joanna Kluzik-Rostkowska in December of 2013 during a seminary co-organized with "Gazeta Wyborcza" – the Youth Engagement Summit. The Minister emphasized that a young person should be showed that a book is not a constraint but pleasure. She reminded: *Flexibility in the reading list canon is crucial to make pupils interested in books.*[6]

Suchecka, the author of an article titled "Spór o szkolne lektury. Czy Ludzik Lego wygryzie Plastusia i Dzieci z Bullerbyn", draws our attention to the years when books commonly popular in early education classes were written. "Winnie-the-Pooh" – 1926, "Anaruk, chłopiec z Grenlandii" – 1937, "Awantura o Basię" – 1937 in comparison to which "Karolcia" – 1959 and "Children of Bullerbyn" – 1947 seem to be novelties.[7] Although some of the above mentioned texts seem to be evergreen and are still enjoyed by children, the contact with literature cannot be limited only to presenting stories from the "museum of culture"[8] and making pupils acquainted with cultural "fossils"[9]. A beginner in reading must have the opportunity to find in a story some reference points to their problems and the world in which they exist. As Szymańska points out that *contemporary young readers desire modern literature, with dynamic action but they also need valuable literature with clear axiology.*[10]

Finding texts which will really match young readers' interests and will become their guidebook around the complicated modern world should not be too difficult for the adult intermediaries. Nowadays it is fairly easy to find information about books for children in bookshops, at newsagent's, supermarkets, fairs or promotional meetings. According to Zając, the dynamic development of the Polish children's book market observed in recent years signals *the growth of social interest in children's literature (also seen in media), opening new publishing houses oriented on producing elite editions characterised by high literary and artistic levels (so called Lilliputian publishers – "Ezop", "Wytwórnia"), publishers existing back in the 20*th *century becoming keener on innovative publishing products that are more interesting than before (e.g. "Nasza Księgarnia", "Znak"), the activity growth of social organisations promoting children's books (first of all the IBBY Polish Section, ABC XXI Foundation).*[11] As a result of the changes, nu-

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[6] J. Suchecka, *Spór o szkolne lektury. Czy Ludzik Lego wygryzie Plastusia i "Dzieci z Bullerbyn"?*, "Gazeta Wyborcza", 15.03.2014, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75478,15627175,Spor_o_szkolne_lektury__Czy_Ludzik_Lego_wygryzie_Plastusia.html#TRrelSST [access: 19.03.2015].

[7] Ibidem.

[8] Name used by Z.A. Kłakówna in a book: *Przymus i wolność. Projektowanie procesu kształcenia kulturowej kompetencji*, Kraków 2003, p. 115.

[9] Ibidem, p. 115

[10] M. Szczepańska, op. cit., p. 29.

[11] M. Zając, *Książka czasu przemian*, [in:] *Po potopie: dziecko, książka i biblioteka w XXI wieku*, ed. D. Świerczyńska-Jelonek, G. Leszczyński, M. Zając, Warszawa 2008, p. 195–196.

merous interesting books for children and teenagers by Polish and foreign authors appeared on the market.

Certainly, as a factor propitious for reading initiation one can consider the changes which have recently taken place in the Polish children's literature under the influence of the fast and constantly changing reality. Thanks to placing children's literature in the context of modern culture and its changes, a young reader just starting their journey in the world of literature has a chance to find their own "stories" in the texts, consider them to be familiar and helpful in exploring the social world they live in.

Zabawa points out several important novelty indications in the field of children's books. According to the author they include:

- Clear male perspective appearing in so called "fatherly" literature which presents mainly the father's point of view (e.g. Kasdepke "Kacperiada. Opowiadania dla łobuzów i nie tylko", Wydawnictwo Literatura),
- Children's non-fiction literature presenting historical topics, mainly from the World War II period (e.g. D. Combrzyńska-Nogala "Bezsenność Jutki", Wydawnictwo Literatura 2012),
- Specific "kind" of fairy tale genre, where authors pick up well-known fairy tale plots and, taking into account modern cultural context and modern sensitivity, they interpret them or create opposing forms, so-called anti-fairy tales (e.g. Simon "Don't cook Cinderella", Wydawnictwo Znak 2008).[12]

Nevertheless, the characteristic feature of children's literature of, in my opinion, extraordinary importance in the context of an opportunity to meet the social world, is the introduction of new issues, often very difficult and sensitive as: illness, old age, disability, death, social impairment, poverty, violence. Frycie notices that in this kind of writing authors avoided such painful matters till the end of the 20th century *as connected with life pathos and social pathology among teenagers, in other words phenomena, which the youth should be protected from to be brought up in a stress-free way.*[13] In accordance with former points of view, literature addressed to young readers should not present "dark" sides of the human existence. It was supposed to create ideal visions of homes, families, and schools seen from the perspective of careless childhood.

Contemporary literature for children *broke many taboo themes, it makes its characters and young readers face anxiety and existential fears, it confronts the readers with body and gender matters, in addition it accepts suffering but also*

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[12] K. Zabawa, *Rozpoczęta opowieść. Polska literatura dziecięca po 1989 roku wobec kultury współczesnej*, Kraków 2013.

[13] S. Frycie, *Rodzina jako środowisko wychowawcze dziecka w najnowszej prozie społeczno-obyczajowej dla dzieci i młodzieży*, [in:] *"Stare" i "nowe" w literaturze dla dzieci i młodzieży*, ed. B. Olszewska, E. Łucka-Zając, Opole 2010, p. 21–22.

happiness accompanying the child-adult relationship.[14] It also presents contents characteristic for the contemporary student's life together with its uncertainty, ambiguity, conflicts, moral and cognitive pluralism.

Metamorphosis, which influenced the character and shape of modern children's literature, must be related to the changes young readers have undergone. One of the most important transformations is the shift of the children's cultural experience border. Konopnicka points out that *our children under the guidance of teachers, parents, through media and nowadays more frequently by themselves much earlier extend the area of their home, school and local environment. They develop their own experience range, changing their mentality, simply learning the life.*[15] It must be also emphasized that the common rule of mass culture leads to the phenomenon that a young reader really early comes across not only the children's culture code but also the universal one which is not divided into contents children are allowed or forbidden to read. Finally the idea of a *well-known stereotype of an early education child as a student having limited knowledge of the surrounding world, not interested in serious matters, reading only fairy tales, fables or reader "hack twitter"*[16] *has been questioned.* Being a child does not mean being mentally retarded. Children carefully observe what is happening around them. It is not from books that they learn that parents are getting divorced, that there are single mothers, that there are illnesses and death. By giving them only cheerful texts, we actually cheat them.

Introducing new plots into literature leads to the reduction of discrepancies between the real world, in which a child exists, and the world presented in the text. Thereby, it enables the reader to confront his personal knowledge, it becomes the source of questions and problems, and finally it develops the child's active attitude to literature. Books for young readers of the 21st century *are not supposed to be nice and rich in illustrations, they are not supposed to teach, they do not need to convey any positive standards. Even more, they do not need to teach children what is good and what is wrong. According to the postmodern art canon they should rather interest, intrigue, shock, surprise, make readers think (i.e. criticise the existing world). A children's book cannot be infantile, it should talk about real world problems, unmask adults' manipulation.*[17] The texts are supposed to teach criticism, make children immune to manipulation and teach them to think independently.

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[14] M. Chrobak, *"Niebezpieczne książki". Echa antypedagogiki we współczesnej literaturze dla dzieci i nastolatków*, [in:] *W pobliżu literatury dziecięcej*, ed. cit., p. 82.

[15] I. Konopnicka, *Znaczenie słuchania w edukacji czytelniczej dzieci w młodszym wieku szkolnym*, [in:] *Edukacja małego dziecka. Wybrane obszary aktywności*, ed. E. Ogrodzka-Mazur, U. Szuścik, A. Wąsiński, Kraków 2013, vol. 6, p. 65.

[16] Ł. Dawid, op. cit., p. 187.

[17] J. Truskolaska, *Wychować miłośnika książki. Czyli czytelnictwo i okolice*, Tychy 2007, p. 47.

Opening onto a new subject area, which has been a taboo field for many years in children's literature, is becoming a more and more common phenomenon. Such a tendency was confirmed by the fact that the "Book of the Year 2013"[18] competition organizers also emphasized that in many finalists' books topics not necessarily connected with children's literature appeared, such as old age problems and intergenerational contacts or becoming familiar with the otherness.

Below I would like to present several selected titles for children, thanks to which the little readers familiarize themselves with the contemporary world of social matters together with its many problems – wars, illnesses, evanescence, death, poverty, difficult relationships in a family and other.

- *Czy wojna jest dla dziewczyn?* Beręsewicz, Wydawnictwo Literatura, Łódź 2010.
  A story about little Elka whose life changes when World War II breaks out. Her childhood is ruined, sand balls change into dangerous bombs, Daddy was summoned by "some important matters" and does not come home; her Mum who is a doctor spends all days at the hospital. Elka learns to be careful with words, to manage and not to cry. And even to dress wounds! She also must learn how to keep serious secrets, although she would prefer the small, colourful, childish ones.
- *Bezsenność Jutki* Combrzyńska-Nogala, Wydawnictwo Literatura, Łódź 2012.
  Non-fiction literature from the "Adults' Wars- Children's Stories" series. A story about difficult children's life in the Lodz Ghetto, in Poland occupied by German forces during World War II. Jutka, a Polonized Jew, staying with her aunt and grandfather in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, is trying to be brave. Despite the absence of her parents and terror of the surrounding reality, she is doing her best to look on the bright side of life. She lives hand to mouth, finding comfort in playing games with other children and a tamed rook, her grandfather's stories and friendship with a Polish girl living on the side of the wall bordering the ghetto.
- *Dziewczynka i drzewo kawek* Jalonen, Wydawnictwo Tatarak, Warszawa 2008.
  Story of a mourning told by a child; story of sorrow and longing and acceptance. But above all – about love, which lets us live on and brings about hope.
- *Dziewczynka z parku* B. Kosmowska, Wydawnictwo W.A.B., Warszawa 2012.
  For Andzia this winter is totally different from the previous ones. Half a year ago something terrible happened – her father died. The girls misses

[18] A literary and graphics competition of IBBY Polish Section whose aim is to promote the most interesting, valuable books for children by Polish authors, illustrators and translators.

everything that used to make the family life. But above all she misses her expeditions with Dad to the park, where her father – a keen ornithologist – taught her to notice the beauty of the nature. It is not easy to deal with suffering but a secret told her by her father helps her overcome it. She can also count on her friend, Jeremiasz, who helps her smile again.

- *Czy umiesz gwizdać, Joanno?* U. Stark, Wydawnictwo Zakamarki, Poznań 2008.
  Bertil and Ulf are friends. Bertil envies Ulf his grandfather, fortunately Ulf knows where one can find a grandpa. He takes Bertil to a nursing home. There, one of elderly men – Nils – understands and starts playing the game. He treats Bertil as his grandson and agrees to behave like a real granddad taking example from Ulf's grandfather. He builds a kite for the boys using his late wife's scarf and his own tie. He teaches Bertil to whistle. The elderly man finally feels loved and appreciated...
- *Włosy mamy* Dahle, Wydawnictwo EneDueRabe, Gdańsk 2010.
  Emma's mother is the best and most beloved mother in the world. A mother who has beautiful long hair. However, her mother is lying on the sofa more and more frequently and she is terribly sad. Emma wonders why her mum does not answer her, her requests, does not prepare her meals when Emma is hungry. The girl does not understand what is happening. She is becoming more and more scared and lost. Finally, she concludes that her mum's hair which became heavy and tangled must be the reason of the situation. *Włosy mamy* is an unusual story of a parent's illness (depression).
- *Dwa serca anioła. Baśń współczesna z epilogiem w dwudziestu rozdziałach* W. Widłak, Wydawnictwo Media Rodzina, Poznań 2011.
  When Romek was six years old, he went to hospital, where he was told that he has a hole in his interventricular septum. It is a serious heart defect. Now, Romek is several years older. He cannot get tired so he cannot play football or run. Other boys call him Dracula because he is pale and has dark circles under his eyes. But one day...
- *Jabłko Apolejki* B. Wróblewska, Wydawnictwo Stentor, Warszawa 2007.
  Kasia, her six-year-old sister and their family – left by their father without any means of support and troubled by creditors – decide to leave home and move to a small town. Girls struggle for acceptance and understanding in the new environment. The book questions the value of sacrifice for others and ability to break barriers separating people.
- *Najwyższa góra świata* Onichimowska, Wydawnictwo Literatura, Łódź 2009.
  A set of short stories for the young and a bit older readers who are sometimes sad and their lives are not as easy as they would like them to be.

- *Wilhelmina i aksamitny nosek* Appelgren, Wydawnictwo Kojro, Warszawa 2008.
  A story of a little girl whose parents decide to buy a dog. Unfortunately, it turns out that the father is allergic to Achoo's fur. Wilhelmina suggests giving away her Dad instead of the dog.
- *Horror! Czyli skąd się biorą dzieci* Kasdepke, Wydawnictwo Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa 2010.
  The book describes the subject of childbirth in a simple, objective and easy to understand way, without giving too much information or causing shyness. Charming, warm and nice. The so-called horror takes place in children's imagination, being based on fragmental information, instead of reliable knowledge.[19]

Being aware that the most appropriate way to popularise reading nowadays is to accept readers' varied choices and different ways of reception, let us use the wealth and diversity of the developed publishing market of children's books and friendly atmosphere for children's reading. Let us not worry when the child chooses a book we would never suggest.

In his an article titled "Zatrzymać pochód głupoty" Olech agitates: *Whatever your child reads – let them read! (...) Once infected with reading, the child will never give it up.*[20] And Papuzińska adds: *Because as long as a child reads we still have the chance to suggest more complicated and ambitious books to them – so that they could develop through contact with them.*[21]

Such an open approach can pay off with careful reading, genuine children's inquisitiveness and as a result independent reading choices. It is extremely important as the ability to find suitable reading and make use of it is an important indicator of a society's intellectual potential.

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[19] All reviews taken from www.lubimyczytac.pl.

[20] J. Olech, *Zatrzymać pochód głupoty*, "Gazeta Wyborcza", 13.06.2001, http://www.archiwum.wyborcza.pl/Archiwum/1,0,1477691,20010712RP-DGW_D,Zatrzymac_pochod_glupoty,.html [access: 19.03.2015].

[21] *Dziecko jest tajemnicą*. Prof. J. Papuzińska talks to Z. Beszczyńska and I. Bolek, "Nowe Książki", 1996, no. 6, p. 11.

Basal readers as a tool in fostering early school children's cultural identity

Ewa Żmijewska

A system of education must help those growing up in a culture find an identity within that culture. Without it, they stumble in their effort after meaning. It is only in the narrative mode that one can construct an identity and find a place in Without it, they stumble in their effort after meaning.
Schools must cultivate it, nurture it, cease taking it for granted.[1]

One cannot function without an identity, without integrated attitudes and values that constitute a more or less coherent composition of values and attitudes that help one to identify with a culture, or two or more cultures simultaneously. The form and content of an identity is dependent on the configuration of cultures in a direct and indirect context in which an individual functions. An identity undergoes universalising processes along with a culture, or follows the changes affecting a culture, depending on how the latter is changing under the influence of other cultures. Increasingly, it is not the adherence to a homogeneous and uniform culture, but what can be found between one's culture and other cultures within one's individual reach, that is vital to one's identity, argues Paleczny[2], and since I deeply believe that cultural identity is built upon the foundation of knowledge and that language determines identity, I have selected two language textbooks that are used by two ethnic minorities in Poland to show the role these languages play in the process of fostering a sense of cultural identity in their users, namely early school children in Silesia and Kashubia. Both textbooks contain the Polish word *elementarz* in their titles, and I elaborate on its etymology (Lat-

[1] J.S. Bruner, *The Culture of Education*, London 1996, p. 42.

[2] T. Paleczny, *Rodzaje tożsamości kulturowej w procesach globalizacji*, [w:] *Kim jestem? Kim jesteśmy? Antropologiczne i socjologiczne konteksty współczesnej tożsamości*, ed. D. Czakon, M. Boruta, R. Hołda, R. Kantor, Kraków 2012, p. 36.

in *elementarius*, which means elementary or primary, hence a primer, or a basal reader, i.e. a book that introduces elementary concepts or elementary knowledge in a given area) to provide an analysis concerning the context in which basal readers help to introduce their users into the fundamental concepts inherent in Silesian and Kashubian identities.

Photograph 1 Analysed textbooks
Source: author's own photograph

When evaluating a textbook, one may draw upon various typologies and typology criteria, including those provided by Lech, Okoń, Kupisiewicz, Maternicki. Considering the subject at hand, I have nonetheless decided to draw upon the ideas offered by Zenon Uryga.[3]

I have selected those of Uryga's recommendations that a basal reader is likely or required to fulfil. This has given me a basis for selecting the following passage categories in the analysed textbooks:

Content-related criteria:

- simple and factual information: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* [Silesian alphabet book; translated by the author] 11 narratives, *Kaszëbszczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* [Kashubian alphabet: your first elementary textbook; translated by the author] 15 narratives, e.g.

Nasz Gōrny Ślōnsk

Kaj leży Gōrny Ślōnsk? – spytali sie nŏs rechtōrka. – We połedniowyj czyńści Polski – ôdpedziała Lizka. – Jyno we Polsce? – Niy – padŏ na to Maryjka. – Gōrny

[3] Z. Uryga, *Kryteria oceny podręczników szkolnych do literatury i historii*, "Prace Komisji PAU do Oceny Podręczników Szkolnych", Kraków 2002, vol. 1, p. 13–21.

Ślōnsk leży tyż po czyńści w Czechach. – I to je akuratnŏ ôdpowiydź, bo Gōrny Ślōnsk leży po ôbuch stronach polsko – czeskij granice. A jake sōm podug wŏs najważniyjsze gōrnoślōnske miasta? Sam wierzã kożdy mioł coś do pedzyniŏ: – Katowice! – Cieszyn! – Ôpole! – Nysa! – Ôstrawa! – Przi Ôstrawie trza dopedzieć, co te miasto dzieli sie na dwie czyńści: ślōnskō i morawskō. Te dwie czyńści sōm ôddzielōne ôd siebie bez rzykã Ôstrawicã – pedzieli rechtōrka. – A jak już gŏdōmy ô rzykach, to powiydzcie mi, jako je najważniyszŏ ślōnskŏ rzyka? – Ôdra! – wrzaskli wszyjscy. – Ja – padajōm rechtōrka. – Ôdra mŏ swoje zdrzōdło w Gōrach Ôdrzańskich, a płynie bez… – Racibōrz! – Koźle! – Ôpole! – Brzyg! – Wrŏcłŏw! – Dobrze – pedzieli rechtōrka. – A kaj to ta Ôdra na ôstatku wlatuje? – Do morza! – wrzaskli wszyjscy (p. 66).[4]

(Our Upper Silesia. Upper Silesia is a region located in southern Poland and in the Czech Republic. The most prominent cities in the region include: Katowice, Cieszyn, Opole, Nysa and Ostrava; the Oder is its largest river).

Wdzydzczi skansen

– Wejle! Jak wiele tuwò stôrëch chëczi! – dzëwùje sã Sławina. – To, że dzysô mòżemë òbzerac taki snôżi skansen, zawdzãczómë Izydorowi Gùlgòwsczémù, wdzydzczémù szkólnémù, cztëren mieszkôł tuwò i robił – gôdô Remùsk. – Razã ze swòją białką, Téòdorą, ùrządzył przed stalat w stôri chëczi mùzeùm. Dzysô no bùtnowe mùzeùm mô wiele czekawëch stôrëch bùdinków, kòscółk, młin, a nawetka stôrą szkòłã. Gùlgòwscë mają wiôldżé zasłëdżi dlô rozwicô kaszëbsczégò nôrodnégò kùńsztu. Téòdora wiele zrobia dlô òdrodë kaszëbsczégò wësziwkù, chtëren we Wdzydzach mô swòjã apartnosc. – Le skądka sã wzãłë te stôré bùdinczi we Wdzydzach? – pitô Barnim. – Òne są pòzwiozłé wnetka z calëchnëch Kaszëbów – òdpòwiôdô Remùsk (p. 11).[5]

(The Open Air Museum in Wdzydze. The museum was established by Teodora and Izydor Gulgowski, who deserve great credit for fostering the tradition of Kashubian embroidery).

- revealing the world of values inherent in the Mediterranean and Jewish Christian civilisations: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 7 narratives, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 11 narratives, e.g.

U Piekarskij Paniynki

Ôd dŏwna pobożne Ślōnzoki pōntujōm na Piekarskō Kalwaryjō. Najwiyncyj ludzi w Piekarach idzie trefić w ôstatniō niedzielã mŏja, kej przichodzōm chopy,

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[4] Each citation is provided with the relevant page number in *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz*, written by: R. Adamus, M. Dylus, B. Grządziel, B. Kallus, J. Kulisz, M. Nowak, A. Solawa, M. Syniawa, G. Wieczorek, based on the spelling rules developed by a team under J. Tambor's direction, illustrations: M. Poraj, W. Klama, Chorzów 2010.

[5] Each citation is provided with the relevant page number in *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz*, written by: W. Bòbrowszczi, K. Kwiatkòwskô, illustrations: J.F. Mąkosa, J.M. Kołyszko, Gdańsk 2007.

i w piyrszō niedzielã po 15 siyrpnia, kej do Piekŏr idōm kobiyty. (…) – Tato, a wiela lŏt wy już łazicie do Piekŏr? – spytoł sie Zefek. – A bydzie w tym roku już trzidziesty rŏz, jak idã na tã pōńć – pedzieli ôjciec. – Nojprzōd szoł żech z mojim ôjcym i starzikym, potym, jak ôni już pomarli, z bratym, twojim ujkym, a terŏzki z tobōm. (…) – Tato, a ô co bydymy latoś rzykać? – spytoł sie Zefek. – Zefek, pamiyntej, co nojważniyjsze je zdrowiy. Jak mŏsz zdrowiy, to mŏsz wszyjsko. Bydymy rzykać ô zdrowiy dlŏ cołkij familije – pedzieli ôjciec. (p. 88-89)

(Our Lady of Piekary. For a long time, Silesians have been making pilgrimages to Piekary Śląskie. A male pilgrimage that starts on the last Sunday of May and a female pilgrimage that starts on the first Sunday after 15 August are considered the two most important ones).

Majewé

W Swiónowie òdezwôł sã stôri zwón. W malëchnym kòscółkù, jakno na całëch Kaszëbach òb môj, wieczora, je majewé. Lëdze schôdają sã, żebë uczczëc Bòżą Matkã. – Na nym môlu, dze dzysô stoji kòscółk, wedle stôri òpòwiescy, nalezlë czedës w parpacë figùrã Bòżi Matczi – rzecze Remùsk. – A czej bëła zaniosłô do mirochòwsczégò kòscoła, wrócëła nazôd do Swiónowa. Czej pòwtórzëło sã to drëdżi rôz, tej lëdze wëstawilë dlô ni malëchną kaplëczkã westrzód nëch parpacy. – Më czãsto biwómë w Swiónowie na òdpùstach – chwali sã Barnim (p. 133).

(May Mass. The Sianów Sanctuary was established on the site where a statue of the Virgin Mary was discovered among the ferns. A historic bell summons the faithful to a mass).

- materials that organise students' own problem analysis or arriving at conclusions: teaching aids with relevant instructions: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 20 tasks, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 13 tasks, e.g.

Jake znŏsz: inksze strōmy, krōm tych wymianowanych w rozprŏwce; inksze, krōm utopcōw, stworŏki z dŏwnych wierzyń; inksze, krom lōniŏ wosku, andrzyjkowe wróżby; ptŏki, co ôstŏwajom u nŏs bez zimã; inksze miasta, krōm wymianowanych w rozprŏwce, kere majom w herbie ôrła; inksze tradycyje wielkanocne, krōm śmiyrgustu; inksze gry, do kerych potrzebny je bal (p. 17, 31, 33, 39, 69, 73, 81).

(Which mythological pagan creatures other than *utopce* (Slavic spirits of water) do you know? Which St Andrew's Eve fortune-telling rituals other than dropping hot wax in water do you know? Which other cities with an eagle in their coat of arms do you know?).

Wëjasni: jak rozmiejesz zdanié: *Dzãka nima mómë dzysô bezpiek;* co òznôczają rzeczeniô: *miec często zabëté, sedzec na łokcach, kłasc szëplą do głowë* (p. 23, 61).

(Explain the following sentence: *dzięki nim jesteśmy teraz bezpieczni* (this may be roughly translated as: we are now safe with them), what the following phrases mean: e.g. *siedzieć na łokciach* (literally: to sit on one's elbows, which means: to squat) or *kłaść łopatą do głowy* (literally: to shovel something into someone's brain, which means: to try to get something across to somebody).

- proposals for practical activities, motivated by the necessity to familiarise students with the subject (e.g. in the case of region- or ethnic-oriented language textbooks: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 52 instructions, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 45 instructions, e.g.

Na mapie pokŏzane sŏm herby roztōmajtych ślōnskich miast. Poradzisz pedzieć, co to za miasta? Jaki je herb miyjscowości, we keryj miyszkŏsz? Poradziōłbyś go narysować? Jakŏ inkszŏ srogŏ rzyka krom Ôdry płynie bez Gōrny Ślōnsk? (p. 67).

(Provide the names of the cities with the following coats of arms; what is the coat of arms of your town or city and can you draw it?).

Zrobi malënk: tegò, ò czim béł téater; z bôtã, kùtrã, òkratã abò wòdolotã; swiãtną kôrtã; dlô swòjëch starków; herb twòjégò môlu, gardu abo wsë; twòji ùlubioni zôbôwczi; òkrãta i wëmëszlë jegò miono; ò waszi szkòłowi òlimpiadze (p. 35, 57, 67, 79, 89, 99, 105, 151).

(Draw a theatrical performance you have attended, a plane or a hydroplane, the coat of arms of your town or city; a Christmas postcard to your grandparents).

- presentation of phenomena and documents from the past (historical, cultural, artistic): *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 6 naratives, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 9 narratives, e.g.

Piynta Achillesowa

Kożdy mŏ jakōś "piyntã Achillesowã". Ta pogŏdka wziyna sie ze greckij mitologije. Bōł kejsi taki Achilles, kerego mamulka ôkōmpała we cudownym zdrzōdle. I niy szło go zabić żŏdnym mieczym ani dzidōm. Dyć coby go we tym zdrzōdle zatōnkać, musiała go mamulka dzierżeć za piyntã, bez co ta jedna piynta to bōł tyn ôd niego słaby pōnkt. Jak by go fto w tã piyntã raniōł, to by go tyż i zabiōł (p. 54).

(Achilles' heel. Each and every one of us has their own Achilles' heel. The saying has its roots in Greek mythology).

W Mirochòwsczim Lese

(…) – Le cëż to je? – To je wdôrzeniowô tôfla – pòwiôdô Remùsk. – W straszny czas wòjnë hewò mielë swój bùnker partizanë *Grifa Pòmòrsczégò*. Jich komendanta béł Józef Dambek. Na calëchnëch Kaszëbach są grobë tëch, co za Kaszëbską żëcé delë (…) (p. 23).

(The Mirachowski Forest. During World War II, there was a bunker manned by the Gryf Pomorski resistance fighters under Józef Dąbek's command).

- region-oriented conception of introducing students into their local traditions and then broadening their cognitive horizons: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 13 narratives, *Kaszëbszczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 17 narratives, e.g.

Zapamiyntej!

W urzyndowych papiŏrach wszyjscy w familiji majom te same nazwisko i jak ojciec mianuje sie Kowŏlik, to matka i dziycia tyż sie mianujōm Kowŏlik. Po ślōnsku jak nazwisko ôd ôjca kōńczy sie na spōłgłoskã, to nazwisko ôd matki nojczyńścij kōńczy sie na –ka (Kowŏlik – Kowŏliczka, Chrobŏk – Chrobŏczka, Porwoł – Porwołka). Jak nazwisko ôd ôjca kōńczy sie na na –a abo –ek, to nazwisko ôd matki nojczyńścij kōńczy sie na –inŏ abo –ynŏ (Breguła – Bregulinŏ, Klyta – Klycinŏ, Wojtaszek – Wojtaszczynŏ, Bŏchynek – Bŏchynczynŏ). Na cerã nojczyńścij padŏ sie Kowŏlikowa, Bregułowa, Wojtaszkowa (abo ôd Kowŏlika, ôd Breguły, ôd Wojtaszka), a na synka – Kowŏlikōw, Bregułōw, Wojtaszkōw (abo ôd Kowŏlika, ôd Breguły, ôd Wojtaszka). Nazwiska ôd dziouchy i synka ôdmiyniŏ sie jak przimiotniki: idã do Stanika Kowŏlikowego, do Cilki Chrobŏkowyj. Zdrobniałe miana tworzi sie po ślōnsku czynsto ôd ôstatniyj czyńści miana: Tōnik ôd Antōn, Zeflik ôd Jōzef, Bercik ôd Robert, Achim ôd Joachim, Nysia ôd Agnyszka, Lynka ôd Helyna, Wisia ôd Jadwiga, Lina ôd Karŏla, Trudka ôd Gertruda, Stazyjka ôd Anastazyjŏ (p. 9).

(Remember! Each and every member of a given family has the same surname in all their documents. In the Silesian language, there are rules whereby women's surnames are derivative of their husband's surnames and whereby children's surnames inflect as adjectives).

Kòscérzna

Më jesmë dostelë rôczbã do Kaszëbszégò Ùniwersytetu Lëdowégò na warkòwné zajimniãca ò jastrowëch kaszëbszczich zwëkach – prawi cotka Truda. – Mdzemë sã tam ùczëlë robic klaprë, palmë i zajcowé gniôzdka… – Më mùszimë tam jachac! Tej pòjmë chùtuszkò na aùtobùsowi ban! – wòłô Barnim. – Le co to są klaprë? – Kò, mómë jesz gòdzënã czasu. Nôprzódka òbezdrzimë so nen apartny skansen ze stôrima lokòmòtiwama – radzy cotka Truda – a w stôrim rôtëszu mòżemë òbaczëc wëstôwk ò cządnikù “Grif”, jaczi hewò Majkòwsczi za prësczich czasów wëdôwôł (p. 111).

(Kościerzyna. The Kaszubski Uniwersytet Ludowy (People's University of Kashubia) in Kościerzyna organises classes to promote Kashubian Easter rituals. Participants are offered the opportunity to make an Easter palm, a rattle or a hare's nest on their own).

- making a connection between the phenomena discussed in class and their equivalent phenomena in the European culture or worldwide: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 8 narratives, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 3 narratives, e.g.

Tyn kampf z tym drachym ôd Szillera zmyślōny
A teraz młodziyniec, ôn padoł: "Suchejcie,
A choć na chwileczkã mi pozōr dŏwejcie!
Jak jŏ to usłyszoł, że ta kanalijŏ
Tyż ludzi zeżyrŏ, a że procesyjŏ,
Co dziś szła na ôdpust, tyż pokōj niy miała,
Bo zajś ta mamōna trzi baby zdusiyła,
Te moje sumiynie, te tak mie mierziało,
Że jŏdło mi cołkym smakować niy chciało,
I wziōnech se siwka z masztalnie i dalij
Rajtujã do lasa, bo wieczōr sie wali.
Jak se tak rajtujã i szablã mōm w rynce,
Toch narŏz przijechoł ku tyj Bożyj mynce.
Tu pod jednym dymbym, farōna, ô je je,
Ôgrōmnie ôgōnym coś gmyrŏ i chwieje.
A richtig, tam już ta gadzina leżała,
A juzajś na ludzi – borŏkōw – czekała.
Te ślypska to sie już blyszczyły z daleka,
A już to roździyrŏ sie na mnie paszczeka.
Jak jŏ to bōł widzioł, z siwka zeskakujã
I na tego gizda tyż zarŏz drabujã". (A. Nachbar, p. 57)

(The fight with the dragon, according to Schiller's ballad "The Fight with the Dragon").

Cëchô noc, swiątëchnô noc.
Wszëtcë spią, dwòje żdżą.
Józef z Nôswiãtszą Mariją zdrzą,
Jezëska òczka w kùmkù jak spią.
Spijże w ùbëtkù spij,
Spijże w ùbëtkù spij.
Cëchô noc, swiątëchnô noc.
Bòżi Syn smieje sã.
Mili gòwôr z gãbczi je czëc,
Ters ju lepi nóm bãdze żëc.
Jezus sã naj ùrodzył,
Jezus sã naj ùrodzył.
Cëchô noc, swiątëchnô noc.

W chtërny swiat dostôł lëk.
Ze złocëstëch niebiesczich gór,
Dóbr skòpicą nóm zesłôł Bóg.
Łasczi sëpôł jak sniég,
Łasczi sëpôł jak sniég. (tołmaczënk (translated by): A. Nôdżel, p. 66)
(Silent night, Holy night).

Pedagogical criteria:

- fostering the development of students' personalities, their intellectual, emotional and moral maturity: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 6 narratives and 92 adages and proverbs, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 6 narratives and 156 adages and proverbs, e.g.

adages and proverbs on every page of *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz:* 36 concerning specific dates in the calendar and their patrons, 56 remaining include adages and proverbs concerning different values, e.g.

Fto niy szanuje cudzego, niy mŏ ani swojego (p. 19).
Prŏca mŏ ciyrpki korzyń, ale słodki ôwoc (p. 25).
Niy znōmy, co mōmy, aże postradōmy (p. 39).
Kaj sie czowiek ulōngnie, tam go dycki ciōngnie (p. 59).
(If you do not respect somebody else's property, you do not deserve to have your own. Work is a bitter plant, but bears sweet fruit. You don't know what you have until it's gone. You always return to where you're born).

adages and proverbs on every page of *Kaszëbsczé abecadło:* 97 concerning specific dates in the calendar and their patrons, 59 remaining include adages and proverbs concerning different values, e.g.

Jaczi szkòlny – taczé dzecë (p. 7).
Nigdë do zgùbë nie przińdą Kaszubë (p. 46).
Ni ma Kaszub bez Pòlonii, a bez Kaszub Pòlsczi (p. 47).
(Like teacher, like student. Kashubians will never perish. There is no Kashubia without Poland, and likewise there is no Poland without Kashubia. alt. Poland and Kashubia cannot exist without each other).

- fostering attitude formation (society-oriented, civic, patriotic, a sense of belonging to family, local, regional, national, European and global communities, tolerance towards other views, social norms and cultures): *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 5 narratives, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 7 narratives, e.g.

Jake te Ślōnzŏki sōm?
Na zadaniy dōmowe mieli my napisać, po czym idzie poznać prawego Ślōnzŏka. Im dużyj żech nad tym myśloł, tym mynij żech wiedzioł, co mōm na-

pisać. Tymu poszołech do ôjcōw, kerzi prawie siedzieli se ze starzykami i rozprawiali: – Mamo, tato, możecie mi pedzieć, po czym idzie poznać prawego Ślōnzŏka? – Jŏ miyniã, co dlŏ Ślōnzŏkōw najważniyjszŏ je familijŏ – pedzieli mi mama. – I to, że majom w zŏcy starszych. – No i Ślōnzŏk, kaj by niy bōł, zawdy pamiyntŏ, co je stōnd – dopedzieli tata. – Pamiyntŏ ô swojyj ziymi i przaje tyj ziymi, jak żŏdnyj inkszyj. – Fto je stōnd – przydali mama, – tyn wiy, iże trza mieć robotã w żŏcy. Niy na darmo gŏdŏ sie u nŏs: bez prŏce niy bydōm kołŏcze! A bezto, że Ślōnzŏki sōm robotne, sōm tyż uparte i majom hart ducha. – Ślōnzŏk pamiyntŏ ô uczciwości, skrōmności i umiarkowaniu. Robi swoje i znŏ, wiela je we wercie, dyć niy robi skirz tego srogigo larma – pedzieli starzik. – I dycki, jak co robi, to myśli, jeźli by sie to podobało Pōnbōczkowi, bo wiy, co Pōnbōczek dziwo sie na niego z wiyrchu – odezwali sie starka. – I wszyjskimu przaje: Pōnbōczkowi, familiji, robocie, przirodzie, ludziōm – gŏdajōm na to mama. – I to niy jyno swojim ludziōm, ale i cudzym – dodali jeszcze starzik. – Zawdy na Ślōnsk przijyżdżali ludzie z roztomajtych stron i poradziyli sam, miyndzy nami, znojś se kont do życiŏ. – A nojwiyncyj idzie poznać Ślōnzŏkōw po tym, iże radzi gŏdajōm po swojymu – pedzieli jeszcze tata. – Prawego Ślōnzŏka niy ma gańba gŏdać (p. 58-59).

(What are Silesians like? The family always comes first in Silesia, people in Silesia know the value of work and the place of their origin; they remember to foster integrity and modesty; they love God, nature and other people, not only those from Silesia. True Silesians are never ashamed of the way they speak).

Kaszëba béł mój tatk
Kaszëba béł mój òjc i stark
I jô jem téż Kaszëba,
Wiém, co to mòrze, wiatrë sztorm…
I jak sã jim nie pòddac.
Tak jak Kaszëbą béł mój tatk,
Chcã nim bëc pò òstatk!
Kò chto to sprawił, jak nié më,
Cwiardi jak dąb Kaszëbi,
Że mòrze Pòlsce òd stalat
Przëgriwô, spiéwô szëmi,
I grało mdze pò swiata kùńc.
Òd Szczëcëna za Gduńsk!
Kaszëba, co bë zapiarł sã
Kaszëbsczégò jimienia,
Nie béłbë gòdny, żebë gò
Kaszëbskô niosła zemia.
Ten jak na wietew ùschnie wnet,
Bò z niegò wińdze krew! (priest Bernard Sëchta; p. 29).

(My father was Kashubian. My father and grandfather were Kashubian, and I am Kashubian, too. If I denied this, I would not deserve to walk the Kashubian earth).

- creating situations to encourage students to exchange opinions and stimulate their need to communicate: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 54 tasks, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 50 tasks, e.g.

Every passage in these books contains relevant instructions: Wypisz z rozprŏwki (wiersza, śpiywki, pieśni) słowa, kerych niy znŏsz. Spytej sie ôjcōw abo rechtōrki, co ône znaczōm (p. 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 86, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97).

(Read the passage, poem or lyrics provided and make a list of the words you do not know. Ask your parents or a teacher about their meaning).

Môsz të bëté: czedës na jaczims balu, co to bëła za leżnota; w jaczi hôwindze, jaczé tam bëłë bôtë; na balù maszkarów, za co të bëła/bół przeòblokłi, czë të môsz swój òbleczënk na bal maszkarów; w zoo, cëż të tam widzôł; na jaczim òdpùsce; na letkòatletnëch jigrach, ricersczëch jigrach; na jaczi sobòtce (p. 57, 79, 83, 91, 145, 151, 159).

(Have you ever been to a fancy dress ball? What have you dressed up as? Have you ever been to a zoo? Which animals have you seen? Have you ever been to a knight's tournament?)

- making connections to what students already know, their experiences, notions and ideas acquired at the earlier stages of their formal education as well as their informal contact with the media, various cultural institutions and the environment: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 22 instructions, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 43 instructions, e.g.

Znŏsz jakō powiarkã ô tym, skōnd sie wziyno miano miyjscowości, we keryj miyszkŏsz? (p. 23) Jak wyglōndŏ tradycyjne ôbleczyniy w twojich strōnach (p. 60)?

(Are you familiar with any legend that explains the name of your town or village? What does the traditional Silesian costume in your region look like?)

Znôsz të: jaką pòwiôstkã ò Pùrtkù; słowò *huzara*, co òno òznôczô; jaczich kaszëbsczich runitów; jaczé przësłowia sparłãczoné z wiôdrã; jaką jiną bôjkã ò Gduńskù; piesne spiéwóné na majewim; jaką żeglarską spiéwã, jaczé wòdné szpòrtë; bôjkã ò kwiace parpacë, òpòwiédz jã nama (p. 21, 39, 51, 53, 103, 133, 155, 157).

(Do you know any of the stories on Purtek (Kashubian spirit of water)? Any Kashubian writers? Any sea shanties?)

- creating situations in which students may solve problems and seek solutions, take a stance on something and evaluate: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 12 tasks, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 23 tasks, e.g.

Co jednoczy wszyjskich, kerzi miyszkajōm w Gōrnym Ślōnsku? (p. 69)
(What do all people from Upper Silesia have in common?)
Jak rozmiejesz: trzecą sztrofkã wiérztë; słowa piesni "Zemia rodnô"; wiérzta "Do Floriana Cenôwë"; zakùńczenié wiérztë (p. 29, 47, 51, 131).
(How do you understand the third stanza of the poem? The lyrics of the song "Rodzinna ziemia" (Homeland; translated by the author))

- monitoring questions to consolidate, organise and integrate students' knowledge: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 46 questions, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 115 questions, e.g.

Jak akuratnie po ślōnsku trza pedzieć twoje miano i nazwisko? Jak akuratnie po ślōnsku gŏdŏ sie nazwiska ôd dziouchy i ôd synka? (p. 9).
(What is the correct Silesian pronunciation of your name and surname? What are the correct Silesian inflections of children's surnames?)
Ca sã wëdarzëło w Pùckù 10 gromicznika 1920 rokù? Dlôcze lëdze nazëwalë dżenerôla Hallera *Mòdrim Dżenerôlą*? Jakno jinaczi nazëwô sã Wiôldżé Mòrze (p. 87)?
(What happened in Puck on February 10, 1920? Why was General Haller called the Blue General? How else can we call the *Wielkie Morze* (Great Sea; translated by the author)?)

- introducing relevant literature suited to motivational aims and students' cognitive abilities: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 9 narratives, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 10 narratives, e.g.

Ślabikŏrz contains (apart from translations from Polish and other languages as well as rhymes and songs) 26 verses by Silesian poets, including Silesian classics, such as Steuer and Kubisz; Silesian social activists that promoted the Silesian tongue, including Młynek, Syniawa and Kulisz, and authors driven by the heartfelt need to write in Silesian (Solawa).
Kaszëbsczé abecadło contains 7 folk song lyrics (from various areas in Kashubia) and 66 verses by Kashubian poets. The works have been selected to suit the topics presented in individual passages (broadly speaking, to suit the topic of the day and the overall topic in a given period). They include: 9 poems by Jan Trepczyk (csb Jan Trepczik)[6], 6 poems by Alojzy Nagel (csb Alojzy

[6] The Kashubian transcription of the names is provided in the parentheses. The csb acronym stands for the Kashubian language, in compliance with ISO 639-2.

Nôdżel), 5 poems by Jan Piepka (csb Jan Piepka), including one written under his pen name Staszków Jan (csb Staszków Jan), 4 poems by Stanisław Janke (csb Stanisłôw Janke), 4 poems by Klara Meller (csb Klara Meller), 3 poems by Aleksander Labuda (csb Aleksãder Labùda), 3 poems by Leon Roppel (csb Leôn Roppel), 3 poems by Henryk Hewelt (csb Henrik Héwelt), 3 poems by Leon Heyke (csb Leôn Heyke), 3 long poem excerpts by Hieronim Derdowski (csb Hierónim Derdowsczi), including two excerpts from one of the most eminent works of Kashubian literature *Ò panu Czôrlińsczim co do Pùcka pò sécë jachôł* and one excerpt from the long poem *Kaszëbi pòd Widnã,* 2 poems by Józef Ceynowa (csb Józef Ceynowa), 2 poems by Jan Karnowski (csb Jan Karnowsczi), 2 Christmas carols by Antoni Pepliński (csb Antòn Peplińsczi), 2 poems by Aleksander Tomaczkowski (csb Aleksãder Tomaczkòwsczi), 2 poems by Bogusława Labudda (csb Bògùsława Labùdda) and a number of single poems by: Jaromir Labudda (csb Jaromira Labùdda), Bernard Sychta (csb Bernard Sëchta), Jerzy Stachurski (csb Jerzi Stachùrsczi), Aleksander Majkowski (csb Aleksander Majkòwsczi), Stanisław Senger (csb Stanisłôw Senger), Krystyna Muza (csb Kristina Mùza), Jan Zbrzyca (csb Jan Zbrzëca), Eugeniusz Pryczkowski (csb Eùgeniusz Prëczkòwsczi), Marian Selin (csb Marian Selin), Benedykt Karczewski (csb Benedikt Karczewsczi) and Agnieszka Browarczyk (csb Agnes Browarczik).

- connecting teaching content to the issues such as contemporary styles of participation in culture and social life: *Gōrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 13 narratives, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 18 narratives, e.g.

Mōj blank nowy kōmputer
Blank nowy kōmputer ôjce dali mi
Ze plaskatym mōnitorym LCD.
Przipnōńć k niymu idzie, co sie jyno chce,
Bo mŏ aże ôziym gniŏzdek USB.
Mŏ tyż – niy bydã wōm ani gŏdoł czamu –
Sztyry ze kawołkym gigabajtōw RAM-u.
Bez Skype'a se mogã rozprawiać z przŏcielym,
Bo sie z Internetym łōnczã DSL-ym.
Dane na dysk twardy mogã zapisować,
Jyno muszã pozōr na wirusy dŏwać,
Bo to żŏdne z tymi bestyjami graczki –
Nazgōbiōm i bydōm lamynty i płaczki,
A jak z kōmputerym bydzie już blank źle,
Ôstanie mi jyno "format HDD" (p. 65).

(My brand new computer. My father gave me a new flat screen computer, you can connect it to as many devices as you need).

Wëmëslënk
Czej ju króm
Môsz całi zeszli,
Czej twój wózyk je ju fùl,
Nie brëkùjesz
W swòjim miészkù
Za dëtkama szëkac, bò
Môsz kòl se
Na dorãdzym
Ten malinczi wëmëslënk.
Taczi môłi,
Plastikòwi,
Farwny na nim je malënk,
Taczi môłi,
Niewidzałi,
Jak wizytny biliet le…
Nim zapłacisz
W kòżdi kase
– To kreditnô kôrta je (p. 19).

(Discovery. This small colourful plastic device will help you make a payment at every check-out and in every shop. It is a credit card).

- direct instructions to inspire students to explore on their own the issues they are particularly interested in, e.g. region-related issues: *Gòrnoślōnski ślabikŏrz* 1 narrative, *Kaszëbsczé abecadło – twój pierszi elemeńtôrz* 6 narratives and instructions, e.g.

Poczkej, poczkej – padajōm mi rechtōrka. – Jak nōm sam bydziesz ô wszyjskich rozprawioł, to lekcyje nie styknie. Bezto na nastympnō lekcyjō kożdy narysuje gynealogiczny strōm ôd swojyj familije (p. 11).

(the teacher told us to prepare a family tree for our next class).

Przëszëkùj 3 knąpczi, szpilczi, sznurk i bùlwã i zrobi z tegò swòjégò Bùlwòwégò Króla. Czë rozmiejesz zrobic z bùlwë sztãpel (p. 17)?

(Prepare 3 buttons and 3 pins, a piece of string and a potato. Use them to make your own Potato King. Can you make a potato stamp?)

The analysis carried out according to the premises presented in the article reveals that both textbooks may serve as tools in fostering students' acquired identity, even though the whole process is based on students' attributed (inherited) identity and should create a lasting foundation for their conscious (felt) identity. In making this statement, I am referring to Nikitorowicz's concept of three-form identity: an attributed, or inherited, identity, which is closely related to an individual's family and milieu, an acquired identity (changeable

and dynamic), which forms through the process of socialisation and participating in specific groups; and a conscious, or felt, identity, which emerges through mediation between the natural inheritance of a culture and its social acquisition[7].

It is also possible to establish that the basal readers presented in the article are not conducive to identifying oneself with a dominant national culture, and thereby adopting assimilatory attitudes. The textbooks contain, in varying degrees, elements conducive to identifying with either one's own ethnic group (separation) or two (or more) cultures (people at the frontiers of a culture); the former attitude is that of an exclusive particularist, who lays emphasis on difference and ethnicity and focuses on preserving the cultural resources of their own ethnic group; the latter attitude is that of an inclusive pluralist, or a cultural hybrid that combines diverse ethnic components. Nikitorowicz, whom I have already referred to, defines *cultural identity as a non-partisan consciousness, the identification with the common cultural good of a specific social community with which we are associated through history, experiences, a shared fate, common language, religion, social norms, specific tradition, life styles, behaviours, etc. [translated by the author].* There are several types of cultural identity:

- *Identification with two or more cultures (biculturalism, people at the frontiers of a culture).*
- *Identification with a dominant culture (assimilation, an identity either indifferent or hostile to native socialisation, going against the grain of the basic values and legacy of one's ancestors).*
- *Identification with one's own ethnic minority (separation, ethnocentrism, discovering and understanding oneself and one's culture, which nonetheless should not be linked to nationalism, which instead of integrating ethnic groups, destroys them).*
- *Lack of identification with any of the groups representing a given culture (marginalised, people on the fringes of a culture) [translated by the author].*[8]

Nikitorowicz's classification corresponds to the ideas propounded by Cezary Obracht-Prondzyński, who nonetheless focuses on the problem of the Pomeranian identity (Pomerania: the Polish shore of the Baltic Sea, including Kashubia), but his reflections can be applied in a wider context to better understand and interpret the process of regional identity formation, which in turn can be divided into the following models:

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[7] J. Nikitorowicz, *Dylematy kreowania tożsamości w wymiarze kulturowym*, [in:] *Socjalizacja i kształtowanie się tożsamości – problemy i sugestie rozwiązań*, ed. T. Lewowicki, B. Grabowska, A. Różańska, Toruń 2008, p. 16–17.

[8] Ibidem, p. 24–25.

- An assimilative model whereby deliberate attempts are made to obliterate differences (local, ethnic, regional, national) in the name of a stereotypical single-nation society.
- A separative model whereby each of the groups that enjoy the revival of their identity will strive to form boundaries between them for fear of obliterating, blurring and losing their own identity through assimilation.
- A multicultural model[9] whereby a diverse and multi-ethnic society is seen as a positive factor, as local assets or resources that help develop, promote and integrate a given area, the factor that allows for various types of cultural identities to thrive and develop without any political, legal, social or economic constraints.

The models of regional identity formation processes presented above in turn result in the three respective models of personality:

- A monocultural uniformist, for whom the national identity will remain a prevailing one; selective in their approach to regional differences, they will treat them as mere ornaments, trinkets or folk attractions.
- An exclusive particularist, who lays emphasis on difference and ethnicity and focuses on preserving the cultural resources of their own ethnic group (language, religion, social norms, etc.); they use institutions to separate themselves from other communities.
- An integrated pluralist, who may be defined as a cultural hybrid combining diverse cultural components (genealogical, historic, social, religious, ethnic, etc.); this helps them not only to preserve their legacy, but also appreciate its value and recognise it as something interesting and attractive, or as their additional social assets (in the job market or in personal relationships).[10]

By way of summary, I would also like to consider the socialising role of textbooks for early school children, since, as Zalewska explains: *the process of socialising younger generations takes place in the space saturated with diverse meanings, attitudes, symbols and values. Contemporary children, since they use computers and watch television, have almost unlimited access to information, and thus have their own ideas about the world when they enter formal education. They use these ideas to assess and interpret the content of their textbooks, and they reject or accept the values and attitudes presented in the passages they read. Thus textbook passages should promote axiological and cognitive diversity, while*

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[9] Obracht-Prondzyński calls the latter model "Pomeranian", but as I have already suggested, it can also be used to describe other ethnic groups, which is why I have omitted the adjective.

[10] C. Obracht-Prondzyński, *Pomorze w poszukiwaniu tożsamości – pytania o model wielokulturowości*, [in:] *Wielkie Pomorze. Tożsamość i wielokulturowość*, ed. A. Kuik-Kalinowska, D. Kalinowski, Gdańsk – Słupsk 2011, p. 38–39.

instructions and tasks should stimulate students to think critically and on their own, and most importantly, they should also connect to children's personal experiences.[11]

My interpretation makes an attempt to connect the reflection on pedagogy with the methods of practising pedagogy according to Giroux, who said the following already twenty years ago: *... critical educators also need to develop a conception of pedagogical voice whose aim is not merely to uncover identities of otherness, as if they were self-contained, packaged, and ready to be unwrapped and named; on the contrary; a critical pedagogy demands naming and asserting differences that matter within rather than outside relations of power. Differences in this instance can be analyzed through the complex traces of identity that mark dominant and subordinate groups by providing students with the opportunities to examine critically how the relationship between the self and Other is written and reworked within the shifting narratives of the past, present, and future. By making difference and identity central to the spirit and experience of democratic learning, critical educators could take the offensive in the current debates on multicultural education by pointing to intolerance and bigotry, not cultural differences, as the enemy of democracy.*[12]

As regards the central theme of our considerations, namely the triangle Child –Language – Communication, I would like to argue that children's primary language (dialects, regional languages), when used for a variety of communicative purposes, is an inherent component of children's identity. I also hope that the analysis provided allows one to claim that the presented textbooks may serve as an important and valuable tool in fostering identity formation processes.

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[11] E. Zalewska, *Programy kształcenia i podręczniki szkolne w edukacji początkowej jako "wybór z kultury"*, [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnoszkolna – dyskursy, problemy, rozwiązania*, ed. D. Klus-Stańska, M. Szczepska-Pustkowska, Warszawa 2009, p. 523.

[12] H.A. Giroux, *Disturbing Pleasures: Learning Popular Culture*, New York – London 1994, p. 65.

Best-selling children's books as (re)constructions of a social world

Eva Zamojska

In the social constructivism approach, a book is an artefact, a cultural construct. In their form and content, books reflect the spiritual trends and ideological conflicts characteristic for a given period, and retro-act on the social reality. The specific feature of children's literature (books for children) is that it functions as one of the socialization agendas, and therefore attracts the attention of researchers.

No medium has been more extensively studied than children's literature. This is no doubt due, in part, to the cultural importance of children's books as a powerful means through which children learn their cultural heritage (Bettelheim 1977). Children's books provide messages about right and wrong, the beautiful and the hideous, what is attainable and what is out of bounds – in sum, a society's ideals and directions. Simply put, children's books are a celebration, reaffirmation, and dominant blueprint of shared cultural values, meanings, and expectations.[1]

In the most general sense, children's books demonstrate what the social world is like (how it functions), or rather how adults want to present that world to children. What is more, the image of the world as presented to children is constructed through discourse. First of all it is the product of educational discourses, i.e. pedagogical and psychological concepts prevailing at a certain point in time, particularly the notions related to the child, its role in society, developmental needs, the nature of the child-adult relation and the model of desirable educational influences. And, as the educational discourse itself is not autonomous, children's books bear the traits of all that characterizes the general social discourse – differences in perceiving the social world.

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[1] J. McCabe, E. Fairchild, L. Grauerholz, B.A. Pescosolido, D. Tope, *Gender in Twentieth Century Children's Book: Patterns of Disparity in Titles and Central Characters*, "Gender & Society", 2011, vol. 25, no. 2, p. 199.

Research approach

I analyse children's books as elements of the social discourse (predominantly the educational and gender discourse). I use the term "children's book" instead of "literature for children" to underline the intention of going beyond the frames of purely literary (aesthetic) or psychological analyses.

At this point I agree with Małgorzata Cackowska, who stresses that the term "children's book" places the object of analysis in a different field than the term "literature for children". That field is politically and discoursively defined, not only through aesthetic categories.

> "A book for children is not just an 'innocent', colourful and enjoyable toy but a political cultural medium that depends on various actors and entities".[2]

Thus, a book for children is always a discoursive construct but it is not always literature – if we reduce the latter only to aesthetic effects.

Best-selling children's books as a social fact

The current offer of children's books in Poland can be divided into two groups: profit-oriented commercialized mass production and the output of small, "niche-type" publishing houses which, meeting the high aesthetic criteria, often go beyond the range of subjects customarily or traditionally reserved for children's books.[3] As compared to other countries, the proportions are considerably in favour of mass production – "fast food" books, banal and kitschy in form and content.[4] The reasons behind such a state of affairs are the low level of

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[2] A. Sikorska-Celejewska, *Po co nam wiedza o książce dla dzieci – rozmowa z dr Małgorzatą Cackowską*, http://www.qlturka.pl/czytelnia,literatura,po_co_nam_wiedza_o_ksiazce_dla_dzieci_%E2%80%93_rozmowa_z_dr_malgorzata_cackowska,6005.html [access: 4.03.2014].

[3] In Poland, this segment of the offer is created by such publishing houses as Adpublik, Dwie Siostry, Muchomor, Tatarak, Wytwórnia. Those are often family-run businesses or publishing houses established by authors themselves. From their publishing output I choose some examples: M. Villanueva Perarnau, *Mam dwie matki* about a single-sex family; J. Olech, E. Bąk, *Kto ty jesteś?* about modern patriotism, N. Davies, *Kupa. Przyrodnicza wycieczka na stronę*, A. & D. Mizielińscy, *S.Z.T.U.K.A. – o sztuce współczesnej.*

[4] "The children's book market, whose value reached 161 million PLN last year, is divided into two segments. The larger share is taken by big publishing houses with their «book fast food» bestsellers, i.e. books banal both in form and content, sold in supermarkets, and also all types of licensed products, often adapted for the screen. [...] On the opposite pole we have ambitious literature for children published by small and mid-sized publishing houses, with print runs rarely higher than several thousand copies", M. Rachid-Chehab, *Książki dla dzieci nie muszą być jak fast food*, 2013, http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,14018993,Ksiazki_dla_dzieci_nie_musza_byc_jak_fast_food.html?as=2 [access: 14.03.2014].

readership, lack of widespread aesthetic/artistic education, marketing strategies of big publishers and mostly "conservative" attitudes of parents and their dismissive approach to the influence of books on children.

One can expect, therefore, that only books published in mass print runs and promoted in costly campaigns stand a chance of becoming best-sellers. Yet, the situation is dynamic and ever-changing. International prestige connected with the IBBY[5] awards or awards granted at international book fairs such as e.g. Bologna Ragazzi or high print runs on the international market (mainly English-language one) make large Polish publishing houses more eager to reach for valuable and ambitious titles.[6]

Best-sellers have impact on a relatively large number of children. For that reason it seems important to know what social world they present to their readers.

In my analysis of best-selling children's books my interest is focused on:

a) the social perception of the child (boy and girl), as well as the resulting characteristics, positions and roles ascribed to children. I am interested to find out to what degree girls and boys are associated with such features as agency and autonomy,
b) how the social space intended for children is built – whether it is problem-oriented or problem-free, varied or uniform, a space of social exclusion or inclusion,
c) in what way certain elements are added which come from outside the natural and primary world of the child's interactions (family, peers). I am interested to see how the society in a wider sense of the term (e.g. social class structure) and the global society beyond the national or ethnic boundaries are depicted.

The social world in best-sellers

On the basis of various best-seller lists summarizing the year 2013[7] I have chosen three books written by contemporary authors in the Polish language, in-

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[5] IBBY – International Board on Books for Youngsters.

[6] "Small and mid-sized publishing houses and specialist bookshops with highbrow literature for children have a strong sense of mission. As the strategy pays off, larger publishing houses also join in. They have noticed the hitherto largely unknown Chmielewska who attracts big crowds of readers during her «meet the author» sessions in Seoul. Media Rodzina publishing house published her *Pamiętnik Blumki* about Korczak's orphans. Also, the Znak publishing house published *Domowe duchy* by Dubravka Ugrešić)", M. Rachid-Chehab, op. cit.

[7] Confer: J. Kurkiewicz, *Sado-maso, Pan Bóg i pan Pierdziołka. Lista bestsellerów "Wyborczej". Podsumowanie roku 2013*, 2014, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,15476854,Lista_bestsellerow_2013_

tended for children aged 6 to 11 years and occupying top positions on the best-sellers' lists. These are:

- *„Zezia, Giler i Oczak" ["Zezia, Giler and Oczak"]* by Agnieszka Chylińska,
- *„Magiczne drzewo. Czerwone krzesło"*[8] *["The Magic Tree. The Red Chair"]* by Andrzej Maleszka and,
- *„Dzieciaki świata"*[9] *["Kids of the World"]* by Martyna Wojciechowska.

From among those three authors only Andrzej Maleszka has been professionally involved in children's literature, working for many years as a screenwriter and film director.[10] Agnieszka Chylińska is a rock and pop singer who at the beginning of her career in the late 1990-ies posed herself as a rebel and criticized traditional social institutions such as family or school. Martyna Wojciechowska is an author of TV travel programmes. Both Chylińska and Wojciechowska may be viewed as belonging to the category of *celebrities*, as their functioning in the media by far exceeds their initial professional achievements. In both cases writing children's books is a by-product of their presence in the media and is probably connected with the fact that both female authors are mothers of small children. The books written by them are commercial products incidental to their professional activities, yet those are the books that hit the best-seller lists. Chylińska' book has achieved unbelievable success at the shallow Polish book market.[11]

A boring life of a middle-class girl

„Zezia, Giler i Oczak" is a continuation of the literary debut of Agnieszka Chylińska, a book entitled *Zezia i Giler*. The main protagonist of both books is the

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roku_sado_maso_Pan_Bog_i.html?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=SM&utm_campaign=FB_Duzy_Format [access: 2.03.2014]; file:///C:/Users/TOSHIBA/Desktop/Poczytaj%20mi,%20mamo/Bestsellery%202013%20-%20Dla%20dzieci%20%20ksi%C4%85%C5%BCki%20i%20multime dia %20-%20matras.pl.htm [access: 2.03.2014], The Matras Bookstore; http://www.empik.com/bestsellery-empiku-2013-rozdane-aktualnosci-empikultura,91580,a [access: 2.03.2014].

[8] The 2013 bestsellers' list has the fourth book from the series, *Magiczne drzewo. Gra*, yet I decided to analyse the introductory volume of the entire cycle: *Magiczne drzewo. Czerwone krzesło*, which was published in 2009.

[9] The bibiographical description of selected books can be found in the References section.

[10] Maleszka's movies for children have received many awards in Poland and abroad. The seven-episode TV series *The Magic Tree* won the Emmy award in 2007. Confer: http://www.press.pl/newsy/telewizja/pokaz/12829,Emmy-Award-dla-Magicznego-drzewa-Andrzeja-Maleszki [access: 10.03.2014]. The novel *Magiczne drzewo. Czerwone krzesło* won the IBBY Book of the Year award in 2009.

[11] The edition of 100 thousand copies and "as the published assures us, almost sold out", J. Kurkiewicz, op. cit.

second grader Zuzia Zezik ("Zezia"), and the remaining two nicknames in the title are her two younger brothers, Czarek and Franciszek. The plot of the story follows Zezia's family life and is based on events that affect Zezia but are mainly initiated by adults: moving house from the city to the country, a new baby (Oczak) in the family and Zezia's First Communion.

We see the world with Zezia's eyes, although the story is told by a third-person omniscent narrator describing the events, the heroine's inner world, as well as reactions and thoughts of other characters:

Zezia once heard… Zezia' Mum felt immense relief (pages 48, 49)*, ... the girl was a bit ashamed by the fact that she was eavesdropping…* (p. 48).[12]

Such a stylistic device limits the dynamics of the story, its action quality, and makes the narration flat and dull. The indirect account of events also considerably weakens the self-agency of the main heroine, her subjectivity. The only language devices used to liven up the narrative are word formations used for names (e.g. nicknames in the title or the cat's name Idźstąd ["*Goaway*"]) and attempts to use modern youth idiolect, particularly the omnipresent "super" (written in an over-expressive manner: *suuuper)* and abuse of conventional adjectives: *great, special, wonderful.* The Polish transcription of the word "weekend", i.e. "*łikend*", used by the author is difficult to understand and conveys the sense of incorrectness. The language of narration lacks poetic qualities, metaphors, magic.

Zezia's life is dominated by the affairs of her parents and other adults. Debt, house loan, Mum's fear of losing her job because of pregnancy, the birth of the youngest brother – these are the things that Zezia is concerned about. Zezia worries about the things that her parents worry about, but at the same time she knows (is made to know) that she has no control over anything. Her parents do not consult her (e.g. about moving house), just communicate their decisions. There are other members of the family – grandmas, granpas and an aunt ingeniously called Zagranica ["*Abroad*"] – living somewhere far away, at a geographical distance. Those family members also cause problems to Zezia's parents, but Zezia is unaware of the exact nature of those problems, as: *she was often told that Parents would find difficult stories easier to explain to her when she grows up (p. 53).* Zezia eavesdrops on the adults, though she knows she is misbehaving. Yet, neither her nor the readers will ever find any explanations of those family affairs.

Another thing that Zezia's parents fail to explain to her is the nature of her younger brother Giler being "different" from other children. Giler attends a different school, must have his own room, has fits of anxiety. Zezia has no

[12] For analysed books I use the simplified bibliographic notation, i.e. page numbers in brackets right after the quotation.

relations with Giler, as he stays "in his own world". His strangeness is not named in the book, and therefore it cannot be tamed by the child protagonist or by children readers. The unnamed, untamed presence of Giler somewhere in the background or in the "unpleasant talks" of the parents on several pages of the book suggests shameful helplessness rather than openness and care. Zezia's youngest brother Oczak is also practically absent, as he is presented solely as an object of baby-care routines.

A similar lack of initiative is diplayed by Zezia in her contacts with peers who are, comparing to adults, fairly pale book characters. All Zezia's friends are alike – friendly and kind. However, they do not undertake any joint activities other than talking. *Zezia could not believe that she had all those new friends, girls, and boys. She liked going to school more and more each day. After classes she would came back home to leave her school bag, ask Mum about Oczak and hurry to the yard or the park to meet her new buddies (p. 73*). It is only Zezia's go-getting friend Angelica that brings some adventure into the book – it is she who paints her mouth black with a marker, pretends to be a foreigner and cuts Zezia's hair. It is a pity that Angelica is not the main protagonist – this would make the book far more interesting indeed.

At school everything goes smoothly. Male and female teachers are *suuuper* and the coolest teacher is Reverend Leon, a religious instruction teacher who *grew very fond of Zezia, especially once he learned that Zezia intended to go to heaven and wanted to take care of animals (p. 46).*

Church and religion play an enormously important role in Zezia's life. However, church is not the place of spiritual experience. Instead, going to church is an occasion to initiate and strengthen social and family ties. Religious education at school is simply a subject to learn.

Angelica got a C for the Seven Deadly Sins and was devastated. Zezia had passed everything with straight A's so far. The only thing left for her to pass was the Apostles' Creed… (p. 102).

Religiousness is presented as something obvious, non-problematic, as a social norm for everybody. Still, it is presented as an absolutely separate sphere of life. It boils down to participation in various church festivals and rituals and has no connection with everyday life, not to mention any questions or moral choices.

Zezia is constructed as a good girl, a loving daughter always loyal to her parents, concealing her (few) doubts or dissatisfactions. She has no prominent features of character and is presented in stereotypical female roles of an obedient and affectionate daughter, a nice and somewhat timid schoolgirl, a popular friend. She has no special interests; we do not know what books she reads, what movies or plays she likes, whether she uses the computer. She neither creates nor undergoes anything beyond the everyday routine. The most exciting event of her life is her First Communion (always described by the adjective

"Holy"), presented in a typical manner by her dress (*modest but elegant, p. 105*), gifts and a family gathering. The only transgression of a norm (ban, order – parental at least – or convention) is a fit of uncontrollable laughter during the vigil at the Holy Sepulchre at Easter.

Applying the tools of gender analysis, one may observe that social roles and psychological features of male and female characters in the book are presented in stereotypical dichotomies. The mysterious aunt Abroad, disliked by Zezia's parents (for no apparent reason) and consequently also by Zezia herself, fails to fit in that structure and is scornfully called a "spinster" by Zezia's father. Thus, a vision of family life transmitted indirectly to Zezia is the apotheosis of marriage and a large family.

The heroine's living space is a middle class world, closed in a cocoon of wealthy suburbs. The city is opposed to the countryside, but the valuation is different: life outside the city is better than life in Warsaw.

When they got to Malinówka at last and were driving through it, Zezia was really dumbstruck. The streets were narrow, but very pretty and well-kept. Small shops with colourful signs invited customers with their widely opened doors (s. 17).

That dichotomy also has its social dimension: the country (or a small town) is a homogenous social environment reserved for those who earn good money or are creditworthy (have got permanent jobs). The city is a place that is socially more varied; there are also homeless people there, whom Zezia visits. That scene – a kind little girl making contact with a homeless woman („*The Lady in a Red Hat was sitting on her usual bench and feeding the pigeons" – p. 23)* is meant to confirm the kindness of little Zezia to the readers, not problematize the shape of the social world. The problem of homelessness, just like disability, has a fatalistic quality – it exists, but is not problematized, does not provoke any questions or protests. The social space in which the characters function is the one of conflict-free, smoothly going life in quite conservative normative frames typical for modern Polish middle-class lifestyle.

The story written by Chylińska is consumed as a typical fast-food – quickly, easily, and without consequences. It is a story that avoids any collisions or conflicts, preserves the social status quo and fails to provide readers with the opportunity to think or feel.

Can-do children

The book by Andrzej Maleszka *The Magic Tree. The Red Chair* is an absolute antithesis of Chylińska's work described above.

From a literary point of view, Maleszka wrote a book of adventure, based on dialogues and direct speech. Although the plot is set in contemporary Poland,

the story is not realistic, as it uses the fairy-tale formula. This is done in two ways:

- through the use of a magical element – the red chair that makes one wish of every person sitting on it come true,
- through structural solutions, i.e. the fairy-tale structure – the heroes, equipped with extraordinary powers, fight against adversity and win. That pattern, adored by children, has a therapeutic effect as it enables psychological surpassing of limitations and dependencies of childhood and achieving autonomy and self-agency, at least in readers' imagination.[13]

The book's main characters are siblings – 12-year-old Filip, 11-year-old Tosia and the youngest Kuki – children of the pair of symphony orchestra musicians. By sheer chance the children come into the possession of knowledge about the magical chair. The plot axis is the children's fight for regaining their parents' love and presence at home. The parents have lost their jobs in the symphony orchestra and cannot make ends meet. Also, by the operation of an accidental magic trick they have become insensitive to their children's needs and leave them for a year to work on a luxury holiday cruiser. The children are taken care of by their disagreeable, conventional but affluent aunt, a private company owner. After many funny and frightening adventures the children win their parents back. Willy-nilly, their unpopular aunt, previously turned in an act of revenge into a seven-year-old ("younger than the rest") accompanies them in their adventures. Gradually, the aunt undergoes spiritual transformation and changes to such a degree that once all the adventures are over she does not want to come back to her older self and insists on remaining "the fourth child" of her own sister.

In the foreground of that book there are children – the main actors. United and co-operative, they form a tight bunch. The childhood is not presented as a period of dependence and subordination, but as a time of autonomous actions undertaken by conscious and rationally thinking subjects. Paradoxically, those actions are not presented in the book as a rebellion against adults. On the contrary, they are undertaken because the children are striving to fulfil the most basic need of childhood – the need of emotional security in the family. The author understands well the fear that is in a sense the most fundamental fear of childhood – i.e. the fear of loss, even temporary, of one's parents – and he sympathizes with the children. He seems to be saying: there is no graver crime than to separate children from their parents. Yet, he also says something more: the child is not and should not be a passive victim of adults' decisions.

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[13] *Confer: B. Bettelheim,* The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*, New York 2010.*

Constructing childhood as a better and morally superior state of being is also manifested in filling the book's pages with nasty adult characters: the aunt who, before her transformation, is a businessperson deprived of any understanding or empathy; also Max, the children's oppressor, who wants to take the red chair from the children to maximize his profits.

The aunt's story metaphorically illustrates the way to tame fears inspired in children by mighty adults. The imperious and dictatorial woman changed into a little girl is able, for the first time in her life, to experience support from a group of friends and get to know the taste of egalitarian co-operation in a peer group. Her decision to remain a girl is actually the act of appreciating friendship and the value of living among one's equals and rejecting the hierarchy of power.

In Maleszka's book the construction of childhood is a refreshing and liberating subversion.[14]

The social world presented by Andrzej Maleszka is the world of class divisions and serious social problems, such as unemployment which affects the parents and, consequently, also their children. On many levels we have the criticism of injustice of modern capitalism shown as a clash of two incompatible worlds: the world of art (classical music), underfunded and pauperized, and the world of the market and big money, financial corporations, banks. The latter is presented as a strong temptation and as a factor with demoralizing influence on family relations. Money has the power to separate children from adults. The story of the protagonists of Maleszka's book is an obvious reference to the phenomenon of euro-orphans, so characteristic for modern-day Poland, and emigration necessitated by unemployment.

The author also points out at the unfair distribution of goods in a society in which skills connected with spiritual values (classical music), i.e with Plato's beauty, goodness and truth, are underestimated by the society.

Andrzej Maleszka's book has a universal dimension. It deconstructs the existential situation of childhood, i.e. the inherent dependence on adults and the image of the child as an object of care. It depicts childhood as a period of sensitivity to various forms of injustice, including the social injustice typical for the mechanisms of capitalism. It does not tell its child readers "the world is ideal, you need to adjust to it" but instead it tells them: "the world is not an ideal place, but you have the power to change it". By doing so it strengthens the child's subjectivity equipping the child with characteristics, such as rational thinking, courage in the face of adversity and ability to achieve goals, that prove his or her self-agency.

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[14] Subversion – in gender and queer studies: a behaviour or attitude that contradicts normative views on gender, gender roles and sexuality. See: http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subwersja_(gender). I use the term here in relation to the construct of childhood – i.e. as types of behaviour or attitudes contradictory to the normative image of childhood.

Children as a pretext

Martyna Wojciechowska's book entitled "Dzieciaki świata" ("*Kids of the World*") may be treated as a by-product of her professional activity. Wojciechowska is first of all a traveller and also a producer of travel movies, a type of person for whom the term "travelebrity" has been coined by cultural anthropologists.[15] "A travelebrity is a person who /.../ plays a dominating role in a travel movie. The whole narration is subordinated to the experiences and emotions of such a person. Neither the places she visits not the people she meets are central in that type of narration; the only thing that counts is what emotions the travelebrity can communicate and what personal mark she leaves on the countries she visits".[16] Wojciechowska's book for children also follows the same pattern. Both on the linguistic and the visual level the author is in the foreground as an observer, educator and temporary participant of events.

The book mainly consists of photographs illustrating the allegedly personal narrations of five children, three girls and two boys, from Namibia, Vietnam, Nepal, Ethiopia and Thailand. There are also some supplementary drawings documenting the fauna, flora and interesting geographical facts connected with those countries. The foreword, written by M. Wojciechowska, begins in a patronizing manner: *Hi kids! Do you sometimes wonder how children from other parts of the world live? They live very differently… (…they sleep on the floor, have no dolls or model cars), ... But they are happy! (p. 5).*

There is also an instruction for parents, written by the "child psychologist" Dominika Słomińska, explaining how to use the book for educational purposes:

The stories contained in this book present people for different parts of the world and the truth is that children from all around the globe are the same – they feel, laugh and cry the same way. However, their way of life and the understanding of reality is different than in the European culture. All this creates a space to explain to our Children many complicated matters that are hard to discuss without an example. How to explain why we should save water and celebrate little things in life? How to learn to name emotions? Are good looks the most important thing in life? Is it worthwhile to discuss everything with your parents?... At the end of each story there are topics for a conversation and my suggestions for the explanation of problems in a manner that is suitable for Children.

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[15] The term was coined from the words *traveller* and *celebrity* . "*Travelebrity* is a person who turned travelling into a profession and a source of income and who, by presenting his or her stories and experiences in mass media, has become a celebrity known and admired for his or her travels" (B. Koturbasz, *Multimedialne podróżopisarstwo czyli narodziny travelebrity*, "Panoptikum", 2009, no. 8(15), p. 121).

[16] M.F. Gawrycki, *Podglądając Innego. Polscy trawelebryci w Ameryce Łacińskiej*, Warszawa 2011, p. 27.

Apparently, the book was written with only noble causes in mind: presenting travel as an attractive way of living, providing children with information on far-away countries with different cultures, shaping the attitude of tolerance for otherness. Have those assumptions been fulfilled?

In the post-colonial discourse the European attitude towards other cultures is sometimes characterized as eurocentric and Orientalizing.[17] One may observe that both those elements are present in Martyna Wojciechowska's book.

The book is addressed to children living in Poland. Although the author declares in a priseworthy intention that all children are the same and advocates tolerance *(By respecting people, no matter what they look like, we may learn tolerance. Tolerance is a difficult word and it means that we do not wonder at the fact that someone is different but accept it, p. 153),* we may still see the line separating "us" from "them". It is we who are watching and comparing – together with the author, we are the active reading subject and they are the object. The children who are readers are not included in the "kids of the world" set. The author tries to eliminate that division by constructing the stories of the "kids of the world" as their own authentic narratives. They are written as first-person accounts of the heroes and heroines, yet they do not differ from one another in style or structure, so it is hard to believe in their authenticity. Another congnitive dissonance is Wojciechowska'a appearance in each story in her flagship colonial discourse role – as a representative of a higher civilisation offering gifts to poor children from Africa and Asia.

For instance an Ethiopian boy in the story entitled "*Mebratu, the Merry Shoeshiner from Ethiopia"* closes his story with the following passage: "*Last Saturday I even got a red ballpen from one traveller from Poland! Her name is Martyna and she is a journalist writing a book about my country, Ethiopia. And Martyna took a photo of me! I saw it only on the screen of her digital camera, but she promised to send it to me by post and when I get it I will hang it on the wall of my room. Oh, and I am really pleased with the gift she gave me. So far I haven't got a ballpen and now I will be able to write even better at my calligraphy classes. Now only me and one other boy from my grade have ballpens! (p. 117).*

Matching the stories of children from different parts of the world, akwardly subjectivised, with didactic texts written from the "expert" point of view and directed to Polish readers stresses even more the exoticism of the "kids of the world" (the very essence of orientalization) and the we-they dichotomy. The narration instrumentalizes non-European children. Their lives, their stories are not important in themselves but only as a pretext to educate "our children". Paradoxically, "our children" do not get serious treatment either; they are not

[17] Confer: e.g. L. Gandhi, *Teoria postkolonialna. Wprowadzenie krytyczne*, Poznań 2008; A. Loomba, *Kolonializm/Postkolonializm*, Poznań 2011.

viewed as partners but "educated" in the manner of the 19th century patronizing persuasion through moralizing instructions. *It is often the case that you have done something wrong and are afraid to admit it. But it is better to tell straight away /.../ for instance, when you get a bad mark at school, come home and have courage to tell your parents about it, the parents will help you learn and you will quickly improve (s. 71).*

Among those numerous topics for discussion the fundamental one is absent: why do children from non-European countries live in poverty?

Contrary to what it declares, Wojciechowska's book fails to treat all children equally. The text unskillfully masks the condescending approach to the Others, and the division into children from Poland and children from other parts of the world is written into the very structure of the book. Cultural differences are presented as curiosities and social differentiation – the deep split between the rich North and the poor South – is totally outside the author's scope of interest. All children are happy because they like to play and laugh – this is an empty declaration, not only in relation to the "kids of the world" but also in relation to Polish children who are only addressees of didactic efforts.

It seems that children and childhood are just another pretext for Martyna Wojciechowska to sell her celebrity status.

The evolution of foreign language didactics in the context of children's developmental dynamics

Małgorzata Moszyk

Pedagogical experience shows that the educational process concerning children being at preschool and elementary level needs to be adjusted not only to students cognitive abilities but also to their preferences, interests as well as psychological and sociological conditions. Effective learning not necessarily requires increased commitment and total awareness. Learning the ability to communicate in the native language is not a complex, educational procedure, but one of the most natural, biologically conditioned steps. Moreover, a more adequate definition of this process is not teaching or learning of speech but its acquisition. Acquisition occurs involuntarily and hence it is often more effective.[1] Teaching as an external environmental influences is being an intentional process. This phenomenon is characterized by interference in a natural and spontaneous process of maturation and development.[2] Taking this into account educators should be aware of the role of natural and unforced acquisition of skills and theoretical assumptions. That perspective should become an integrated factor while designing the process of foreign language didactics.

Language is an abstract, socially prescribed sound system of signs and rules of using them.[3] Its social usability determines that the human being and society are related to each other through linguistic context. What is more, the ability to exist within not only one language system seems to be the educational challenge of a modern language teacher. Therefore the assumptions of foreign language didactics and its role in preschool and primary curriculum is the field of pedagogical reflections and innovations.

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[1] I. Kurcz, [in:] *Psychologia ogólna vol. 2*, ed. J. Strelau, Gdańsk 2006. *Acquisition* a term used in psycholinguistics, occurs naturally, with no greater effort, does not require activation of motivational process.

[2] A. Brzezińska, M. Burtowy, *Psychopedagogiczne problemy edukacji przedszkolnej*, Gdańsk 1985.

[3] I. Kurcz, *Psychologia języka i komunikacji*, Warszawa 2005.

Teaching foreign language at the preschool and elementary level is connected with mastering these for language competences: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The aim of early language teaching is to mainly develop children's ability to hear and therefore understand the foreign language concerning its accent and melody. Through many activities foreign language may not only be acquire but the positive attitude towards it resolving in future eagerness and willingness to learn more will appear.[4] What should be pointed out at this stage is that the didactic process is the fact that language may be acquired by children and assimilated in a way that recalls native language learning.[5]

Before the didactic aspect of foreign language teaching in preschool and elementary level may be discussed, I would like to answer one basic question. What does it mean to know foreign language? What describes a native speaker is mainly the language competence. By the language competence (a term introduced by Noam Chomsky in *Language and Mind*, 1968) we are able to characterize every efficient language user. Yet it has been clear that in order to understand the mechanisms that rule the act of language acquisition and production it is necessary to mention the system of knowledge and beliefs which is developed in the stage of early childhood. That system combined with other factors determines the use of language.[6] Language competence is therefore a significant component accompanying mastering any language (both mother tongue and a foreign language).[7] Since the language competence is a factor that we are not able to measure and asses, there is a need of using language production that refers to a statements that have been formulated. Language production in contrary to language competence has a less perfect character. The natural and comfortable way of formulating statements is not free form errors. Language competence and language production are not all the aspects to be discussed while describing the competent use of language. What seems to be significant especially in terms of the practical aspect of language is the communication skills-skills to communicate effectively.[8] Dell Hymes who has been inspired by Chomsky's language study, has proposed a coherent theory. Within the social functioning of the child, during which the grammatical aspect of certain language is acquired, a system of practical use of the rules in the communication process are also absorbed. Therefore the communicative competence is referring to

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[4] J. Sokołowska, *Język angielski w przedszkolu – specyfika pracy*, "Wychowanie w Przedszkolu", 2008, vol. 3.

[5] S. Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*, California 2006.

[6] N. Chomsky, *Language and Mind*, Cambridge – New York 2006.

[7] J. Strelau, D. Doliński, *Psychologia*, Gdańsk 2006.

[8] M. Pamuła, *Metodyka nauczania języków obcych w kształceniu zintegrowanym*, Warszawa 2004.

assimilating the appropriate use of linguistic resources, taking into account the situational context and intentional factor. Proficient users of the language use the communicative competence, not only to convey the message accurately, but also to the appropriate message embedded in the socio-cultural context. This ability requires not only knowledge but also the linguistic code of consciousness, principles, beliefs, norms, values respected in the area of social life. Communicative competence is associated primarily with communication which is closely linked with the interactive nature of the language.[9]

The elements submitted above indicate that to know the foreign language is to have the language competence and communicative competence which are used within effective communication in the course of interacting with other people implementing the four basic language skills.[10]

Teaching foreign languages based on the traditional approach assumed primarily the understanding of written language and then practicing the aspect of oral production. Some theories assumed that the student should first understand the morphology of words and syntax rules to be able to produce grammatical sentences correctly. Grammar books and dictionaries were used to highlight the importance of translation when teaching a foreign language. Only after accurately mastering the rules of grammar students had the opportunity to come into contact with the living, spoken language. The development of not only the methodology, but also the psychological and pedagogical theories of Dewey, Piaget and Wygotsky[11] allowed to approach foreign language teaching from the perspective of actively developing the mind of the young student. Grammar translation's significance gave way to an alternative approach, which largely emphasizes the understanding of the psychological processes that occur during learning. Due to the specifics of cognitive abilities of preschool and primary school children, not all methods classified as traditional were possible to apply among young learners.[12] A short description of those methods will serve as a model of language didactics approach evolution.

Grammar-translation method was a response to the need to study modern languages, but most of its methodological assumptions derived directly from the ways of teaching Latin and Greek.[13] *The idea of learning was to master grammatical rules and it has been done by studying foreign literature. The ability to gain fluency in the use of language in the act of verbal communication was not defined*

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[9] B. Johnstone, W.M. Marcellino, *Dell Hymes and the Ethnography of Communication*, Pittsburgh 2010.

[10] M. Pamuła, op. cit.

[11] G. Mietzel, *Psychologia kształcenia*, Gdańsk 2003.

[12] M. Pamuła, *Wczesne nauczanie języków obcych. Integracja języka obcego z przedmiotami artystycznymi w młodszych klasach szkoły podstawowej*, Kraków 2002.

[13] W. Pfeiffer, *Nauka języków obcych. Od praktyki do praktyki*, Poznań 2001, p. 79.

as the main goal of learning certain foreign language.[14] *That kind of work with linguistic material had to provide the ability to study individually. Evaluation of the efficacy of the method was followed by checking the level of understanding the texts in foreign language and the correctness of the application of grammatical rules.*[15] *Nowadays, that type of learning is suitable mainly for adults whose verbal, practical, mathematical and logical intelligence is highly developed.*[16]

The Audiolingual method was mainly based on the linguistic habit formation. It was an answer to the need of fast and efficient language learning by the soldiers, within the U.S. army during World War II. Although it is considered to be the traditional method, some of the assumptions are used in modern didactics.[17] It derives directly from the behaviorist approach to learning. Its emphasis on oral production and mastering grammar rules in the course of using a foreign language without a translation. Introduction to the study of writing elements happened quite late, and therefore proved that this method can be used in the early stages of education. Language skills should to be mastered with a certain pattern: first listening – speaking, then reading – writing.[18] In practice, the teaching process took place in the so-called language laboratories and consisted mainly of intense repetition and immediate correction of errors. The primary goal of learning language was to interiorize basic structures and then be able to use them efficiently. Behavioral theory of stimulus and response became a model for student's activity.[19] The material for study, and thus mastering language patterns, were the dialogues of everyday situations.[20] Moreover the practiced language material had to be authentic in terms of cultural aspect.[21] A large number of repetitions, short reaction time to linguistic stimulus proved to be effective as a part of mastering a foreign language phonetics. While children, due to their hearing abilities, were able to correctly reproduce the sounds of foreign language, the way of learning resulted in rapid discouragement and lowering motivation. In addition language patterns that were interiorized by the automatic repetition of language structures primarily created the language habit, which cannot be equated with language fluency.[22] The Au-

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[14] A. Szyszkowa-Butryn, *Jak szybko opanować język obcy? Wybierz metodę najlepszą dla siebie*, Warszawa 2011, p. 219.

[15] H. Komorowska, *Metodyka nauczania języków obcych*, Warszawa 2005, p. 26.

[16] A. Szyszkowa-Butryn, op. cit., p. 219–220.

[17] H. Komorowska, op. cit., p. 40.

[18] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 73.

[19] M. Pamuła, *Metodyka nauczania…*, ed. cit., p. 23.

[20] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 73.

[21] M. Stawna, *Podejście komunikacyjne do nauczania języków obcych. Od teorii do praktyki*, Warszawa 1991, p. 71.

[22] Ibidem, p. 71.

diolingual method, although not fully adapted for young students, introduced some significant changes to the foreign languages didactics. What became important was to master the phonological system while omitting grammar explanation. Phonetic mastery of the language through the repetition of sounds, words and structures is similar to the natural method of language acquisition. In the same way a small children learn to pronounce new words and sounds in their native language.[23] What is more that method was the first one to emphasize the need of using teaching aids such as: tape recorder projector and similar supplies.[24]

The Audiovisual method was a response of French educators to the Audiolingual method which was widespread in America. It's psychological background also had its origin in behavioristic theory of leaning. The main assumption was the connection the of linguistic and visual material. Words and meaning groups were connected together with images, situations and contexts, and within the one piece were served to the students by the following formula: presentation – explanation – exercise.[25] The practical application of that method brought a major disappointment. According to the assumptions, structured teaching could give students a sense of security, but the constant mechanical exercises based mostly on repetition caused a similar effect as in the case of the Audiolingual method – a decrease in motivation. The child's needs related to intellectual, emotional and motoric activity, made the audiovisual method as useless as its predecessor.[26]

Both approaches (Audiolingual and Audiovisual) based on the behavioral model of learning had many imperfections. The proposed style of mastering foreign language was in opposition with children's needs of multisensory activeness in the learning process. Unnaturalness in the pragmatic aspect of language use, as well as an attempt to eliminate errors caused lack of students language creativity, and thus denied the creative nature of language. Nevertheless, a departure from the grammatical translation, delaying the introduction of writing and an emphasis on spoken language gave rise to the revolutionary changes that took place in foreign language didactics devoted young learners. Innovation launched by these two methods, without which it is difficult to imagine a modern foreign language teaching at preschool and elementary level, was the introduction of media to support the learning process.

The cognitive approach was the reaction for the behavioristic monotony of language learning process proposed by previous methods. It also became an

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[23] M. Pamuła, *Wczesne nauczanie języków obcych…*, ed. cit., p. 75.

[24] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 74.

[25] Ibidem, p. 75.

[26] M. Pamuła, *Wczesne nauczanie języków obcych…*, ed. cit.; eadem, *Metodyka nauczania…*, ed. cit.

answer to the need of mastering the communicational aspect of foreign languages. The teaching process may only occur when students show engagement and interest. The aim of studying became primarily a development of linguistic competence, which allows using an infinite number of grammatical rules and thus independently create and understand a great number of correct sentences in a foreign language. The way to achieve such competence is through contact with the language by reading, listening and explaining grammar rules. Moreover the student had the right to make mistakes which are inevitable in the process of learning. This approach took into account the limited cognitive abilities of students during the assimilation of information. What happened to be important was the statement that the young student needed time and patience to be able to fully assimilate the new material. Due to the conscious involvement of students in the learning process, the cognitive method intentionally allowed the use of mother tongue. This treatment resulted from the need to refer to the students' current knowledge that was expressed in their native language.[27]

The following attempts in redefining the goal of foreign language teaching has led to Communicative Approach. Yet, the ability to communicate in foreign language has become the main target of learning. Use of language connected with authentic context and the communication aspect happened while using the four linguistic elements: listening, speaking, reading and writing.[28] The way to achieve language efficiency is participation in great amounts of situations reflecting the real language communication. According to communicative approach, while learning foreign language, it is essential to possess the ability to communicate and receive information. An important factor was the ability to transfer information through language and to respond adequately in the act of communication. Grammatical accuracy was no longer the main objective.[29] The revolution caused by communicative approach changed the perspective of what should be the actual reason for the use of foreign language. Communicational activities have been defining lesson plans and therefore became the mean to achieve language competence. The student finally became a partner in the learning process. Language material was coherent with the present language reality. The teacher instead of evaluating the lessons and enforcing the knowledge was there to support the learning process, respecting the needs and capabilities of students. Errors that previously were trying to be eliminated began to be regarded as inevitable, natural, and creative elements of learning.[30]

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[27] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 80–82.

[28] Ibidem, p. 77–78.

[29] A. Szyszkowa-Butryn, op. cit., p. 220–221.

[30] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 77–78.

The need and the interest in foreign language didactics at the level of preschool and primary education, resulted in significant development of alternative methodological concepts. New assumptions were mainly connected with the children's cognitive abilities and developmental characteristics. Therefore the emotional, social, psychological factors were taken into account. The necessity of active and multisensory learning became significant. Thus learning a foreign language was no longer only an obligation, but above all, an attractive environment to master language skills.

One of the alternative methods of foreign language teaching called The Silent Way was initially designed to support learning math's and reading in native language. However gradually it began to be useful while teaching foreign languages. This method avoids the superficial activity, mobility and noise that many times is the classroom's accompaniment. It is based mainly on silent action and meditative concentration. This approach assumes that students' concentration is increasing by bringing all teaching situations to those presented by the teacher who operates a set of colored rods of varying length (Cuisenaire Rods). Language material is selected to simple words and sentences (eg, shorter, longer, put next to, take, etc.). Storing and assimilation of the material takes place in complete silence that falls after hearing new words and phrases. The role of the teacher who demonstrates the new material is gradually taken over by students who firstly imitate the language statements and then independently try to create new ones. Acquisition of language material is not supported by a course book. Elements of this method are especially useful while learning a foreign language at primary level, when after intensive physical activities the aim is to achieve quiet and calm.[31] The effectiveness of this type of mastering language material is believed to be mainly devoted for people who develop practical and spatial intelligence, as well as those shy students who do not like noise during learning and suffer, from fear of speaking.[32]

Counseling Language Learning (CLL) is based on the assumption that all acts of use of language and learning it are closely related to the interaction and communication. In addition, the topics of communication are important and significant to the group members. Therefore, communication in foreign language in this method, is carried out in a similar manner as it occurs in counseling groups.[33] Learners decide themselves what they will say and if they will speak. The main condition is the absolute lack of restraint when speaking out.[34] At the beginning of the act of communication participants can formulate their

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[31] H. Komorowska, op. cit., p. 30.

[32] A. Szyszkowa-Butryn, op. cit., p. 222.

[33] H. Komorowska, op. cit., p. 31.

[34] A. Szyszkowa-Butryn, op. cit., p. 223.

first expression by the use of native language, which is translated by the teacher. Then, the participants have the opportunity to repeat their speech in a foreign language. Based on that translation a unique guide book is created. Although this method is not necessarily useful for children, it has brought to the foreign languages didactics a belief that the process of learning can largely depend on the learner. Therefore the role of the teacher became to provide the information to students, to create appropriate conditions and to take into consideration the psychological and linguistic support.[35]

The guidelines to liken the process of foreign language learning and the acquisition of mother tongue happened to be the main objective of the natural approach. What is decisive for mastering any language is an intensive contact with that language (exposure to the language). It requires the formulation of many messages in a foreign language whose meaning is understandable for the listener. The process of understanding is achieved through the use of: the situational context, simple and natural way of speaking, facial expressions, gestures, repetition and positive response to every attempt of non-verbal and verbal communication taken by students. The key to this approach is the elimination of stress, which acts as an affective filter causing fear, shame and anxiety about making mistakes. The presence of positive emotions in the process of exposure to the language causes subconscious and spontaneous learning. The visible similarity to mastering the act of speech by small children directs foreign language learning towards the term acquisition. When the aim becomes to acquire the foreign language, the teacher needs to provide the maximum number of clear, meaningful and yet interesting statements to create a stress-free atmosphere, full of safety and acceptance. The role of the teacher is not to provoke students to speak and constantly correct their errors.[36]

The natural approach lead to the conclusion that in the process of foreign language acquisition teachers must take into account the environmental factors. The objective became the ability to understand the spoken language to therefore become an efficient oral language user. This form of teaching was one of the first to be useful for preschool and primary school students. Yet it became clear that the exclusion of mother tongue during language lessons is in fact possible and desirable.

The Total Physical Response (TPR) is considered as one of the most effective and appropriate method of foreign language acquisition at the age of preschool and primary education. Memorizing new language material takes place in two types of students' behavior: silent listening and physical movement as

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[35] H. Komorowska, op. cit., p. 31.

[36] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 88–89.

a response to language statement.[37] Similarly, as in the case of a natural approach, before the ability to express foreign language through oral production, students need to be able to understand messages in that language. Movement combined with linguistic interaction is a typical process accompanying the act of native language acquisition.[38] Expressing the comprehension by a certain act of body response gives the teacher an opportunity to determine whether the student understood the message. Moreover the student has a sense of ability to function in the new linguistic space, not related to the mother tongue.[39] While the student uses the whole body, both hemispheres are activated: the left – responsible for language and speech and the right – responsible for the implementation of physical movement. The method does not require any course books, but only the items from the nearest environment to make the educational process as similar to the reality as possible. The curriculum is centered on grammatical structures characteristic for commands and simple yet natural phrases. TPR is not only a successful didactical offer for a structured language course. Its guidelines may be used in short classroom activities while the level of students' attention decreases and there is a need for both movement and relaxation.[40] As in the case of a natural approach students' activity is organized around the understanding of linguistic communication, without forcing the language production. This method, for the first time, highlighted children's need of psycho – motor activity. Its priorities are current for the foreign language didactics that concerns young learners.

The evolution of modern didactics shows that nowadays we depart from the traditional approach to language learning centered around grammatical rules translations, explanation of these rules, aiming for accuracy by eliminating language errors. Modern approach, in response to changing expectations and social needs of the integrated European countries has made the new goal of foreign language teaching – achieving communicative competence. The essence is therefore to master linguistic skills through taking part in numerous situations that reflect authentic communication. This makes the acquired language a tool not only to communicate and transfer information but also to acquire knowledge about the world. The aim of any didactical action becomes an extensive use of language. Moreover, the new way of teaching places young learners in the center of the educational interests, with their individual cognitive activity.

Foreign language didactics, which is the subject of unconventional teaching methods, respects the key principles of a psychological concept called construc-

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[37] H. Komorowska, op. cit., p. 29–30.

[38] J. Arabski, *O przyswajaniu języka drugiego (obcego)*, Warszawa 1985, p. 115.

[39] W. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 87.

[40] H. Komorowska, op. cit., p. 29–30.

tivism.[41] Content, learning objectives and the silhouette of a teacher became as important as the teaching process itself. It became less important what you acquire, but most of all, how is it done. It was noted that the learning process is not only communication, but also areas associated with body language, and emotions. Purely methodical knowledge gave way to the concepts that form the field of education and psychology.

'*Language teachers who walk into classrooms full of young learners quickly understand that the challenge they have come to face exceeds by far the wisdom of many ELT*[42] *methodology books combined. For one, they soon come to realize that language instruction cannot be the sole purpose of their presence in the classroom. Even if they have, by pure chance, chosen that very option they are soon overwhelmed by the multitude of children ready to jump at any opportunity to move or to wander off in their thoughts into more imaginative and playful world. Very soon it becomes apparent that to teach children a second language, or any other subject for that matter, means to involve them to the full potential of their age, to enrich their world with creative thinking, and to provide the scope for their future growth and development'*.[43]

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[41] According to the assumptions of constructivism, the teacher supports the student in the educational process and suggests new directions of inquiry, thus not indicating ready solutions. The classroom becomes a field for cooperation, but each student is in their own autonomous entity conducting individual investigations. In the context of the constructivism, learning means communicating with the world and demonstrating the understanding of this world. The child itself constructs its own way of understanding which happens in an active way. The main objective of learning is to construct individual meanings (*Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, ed. T. Pilch, Warszawa 2003, p. 770–771).

[42] ELT – English Language Teaching.

[43] A. Lesińska-Gazicka, [in:] *Teachers on Language Teaching*, ed. B. Lewandowska-Tomaszyk, A. Berestowska, R. Rasiński, Łódź 2003, p. 101–102.

Philosophizing as a means of gaining communication competences by pupils of early education

Anna Buła

A man is a part of a social system. He establishes certain relations, interacts with its other members and in the same time he acquires and improves social skills. School and class or kindergarten group along with a teacher constitute a particular social system with a duty to develop social competences, among which communication skills are the most important. *A competence, enabling an individual to interact and communicate, is a prerequisite for his ability to meet the requirements of daily existence in the course of a lifelong process.*[1] According to Dudzikowa a competence *is the ability to do something, depending on both the awareness of the abilities, skills that are part of it, and the belief in the possibility of using this ability.*[2] This means that competences can only be acquired in the course of an experiment, training, practice, for example in the course of education. Gaining competence is a challenge that unites the educational Europe.

In various education systems, in which key competences were included in the curriculum, also in the Polish system, a smaller or larger number of competences, that constitute specific educational objectives, is listed. There are three competences that are special, because they are included in all systems, as states the report of Erudyta about key competences. These include: **communication, teamwork and problem solving**. *Communication refers to the ability to use language in speech and writing, as well as the ability to express their own thoughts and to understand other people.*[3] Nęcki claims that communication is

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[1] After: R. Wawrzyniak-Beszterda, *Doświadczenia komunikacyjne uczniów w czasie lekcji*, Kraków 2002, p. 46.

[2] M. Dudzikowa, *Kompetencje autokreacyjne – czy i jak są możliwe do nabycia w toku studiów pedagogicznych*, [in:] *Ewolucja tożsamości pedagogiki*, ed. H. Kwiatkowska, Warszawa 1994, p. 205.

[3] *Kompetencje kluczowe. Realizacja koncepcji na poziomie szkolnictwa obowiązkowego*, ed. A. Smoczyńska, Warszawa 2005, p. 36.

(...) *an exchange of verbal, vocal and non-verbal signals, undertaken in a particular context, in order to achieve a higher level of collaboration.*[4] *Teamwork applies not only to the ability to cooperate with others, but also to how to organize our own activities in a way that facilitates interpersonal relations. Problem solving refers to the ability to analyze problems, plan the action, make decisions and evaluate the results.*[5] Also, in the light of the above report, all systems of compulsory education emphasize and recommend the methods of teaching *that release the active and creative attitude of pupils, develop critical thinking skills, encourage learning by doing and promote teacher-student cooperation*[6] and, to a large extent, give the teachers great freedom in the selection of the means of gaining the educational objectives.

Therefore, teachers should be constantly seeking, open-minded and ready for creating or applying new offers of education coherent with the unlimited educational needs of a small child. They should be open to new ways of engaging and activating them in the process of learning and gaining these competences.

Nowadays, it is expected that the education, being the evidence of pedagogical achievements, will play a specific role, allowing an individual to find their place in society according to the potential of their capabilities. However, in the light of Klus-Stańska's analysis, we should worry about the course of this practice, about how remote it is from scientific arrangements. From a psychological point of view, a small child, *regarding the cognitive development, is characterized by an intense curiosity and openness to solving specified problems, (...) in terms of speech development, he begins to be able to start a discussion based on cooperation (...) with regards to the development of moral reasoning* a child moves on to a higher stage, independent from the authority, which requires conditions *to realize the conventionality of moral standards, their social indetermination and debatability, (...) in terms of the development of the identity (...)* a child is ready to be initiative, successful, independent and ready for *a real sense of his own competence*.[7] Meanwhile, the scientist, examining the educational practice in the first stage of schooling, recognises that cognitive behaviour of children is primarily oriented towards reception and absorption; speaking is formalized and of a reporting nature of statements initiated by the teacher who remains in communication with the pupil, who usually works alone. In the classroom, children's needs for stimuli are rather not addressed,

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[4] *Komunikacja międzyludzka*, ed. Z. Nęcki, Kraków 1996, p. 37.

[5] *Kompetencje kluczowe. Realizacja koncepcji na poziomie szkolnictwa obowiązkowego*, ed. cit., p. 36.

[6] Ibidem, p. 38.

[7] D. Klus-Stańska, *Mitologia transmisji wiedzy, czyli o konieczności szukania alternatyw dla szkoły, która amputuje rozum*, "Problemy Wczesnej Edukacji", 2008, no. 2, p. 38.

restraint and composure are preferred, and in terms of the wakening identity, a child is obedient to their social role and constantly under teacher's supervision.[8] Furthermore, in the light of the analysis, the early education school appears as a place to acquire competences of dubious value and where *other important skills are ignored or existing competences are being impeded and blanked*.[9] The author calls these competences undeveloped and, sharply, amputated. Among the undeveloped ones she lists, among others: critical reading, tolerating differences, searching for information, understanding of social problems, affirming dialogue with others. Among the amputated skills she mentions: discovering rules, having a casual conversation, experiencing curiosity, formulating problems and hypotheses, experimenting, understanding their own problems, understanding their own uniqueness.[10] This strong definition should give us some food for thought. Something that is amputated never grows back (in humans). Although its role can be compensated by other skills, but it's still just a compensation. It is impossible to indicate such squandered competences, but those listed above are connected with those discussed in this article.

Therefore, it should be our concern to aim to change schooling, because it should not remain as it is. It is too inadequate for a democratic society and individuals forming this society. It needs new ideas, *professional alternatives, thought through and non-populistic, which are based on research and experience of other countries*.[11]

One of these ideas that is likely to change the image of educational practice, more and more appreciated in the theory and worldwide schooling practice, is **philosophizing**, which creates the best opportunity to develop cognitive autonomy but also child's social and communication competences.

Nevertheless, we need to realize that the philosophical training was, and still is, exposed to an extremely arduous process of making its way through the Polish education system. In the European culture, philosophy is the queen of all sciences, but in the schooling culture it is the margin of sciences. *The hitherto absence of philosophical education in Polish public school causes a serious gap in the education of young Poles. Their vision of the world is consequently deprived of certain (...) perspective. (...) They are missing, above all, this special consideration of reality that goes beyond the superficial meanings of events, therefore also the consciousness of the status, range and importance of the information obtained from various sources.*[12]

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[8] Ibidem, p. 39.

[9] Ibidem, p. 41.

[10] Ibidem, p. 42.

[11] Ibidem, p. 44.

[12] A. Pobojewska, *Po co, kogo i jak uczyć dzisiaj filozofii?*, "Zeszyty Szkolne. Edukacja Filozoficzna", 2007, no. 3, p. 14.

This situation and the fate of philosophy in school have their justifications and excuses, but they cannot be accepted in a democratic country. There is no reason not to fight for philosophy and not to convince others about its qualities and benefits that pay off especially among the youngest. In recent years of reforming the Polish education system, there have therefore been attempts to fight for the right place of the philosophy at school. These attempts should certainly include the voice initiating the debate over a possible model of philosophical education in the Polish school system raised by Pobojewska, who notices *that the matter of institutionalizing philosophical education in school is as follows. Ministerial foundations of its implementation are created. They are long discussed, repeatedly reviewed, enter into force and after half a year other projects are created and it seems as if everything was starting from the beginning – specifying goals, tasks, selection of learning content, etc. Each time a program is changed, the entire procedure is repeated as if there was no previous findings and lessons learnt.*[13]

The author recognises the specificity of the discipline and understands that its inclusion into schools is not a simple matter, but she does not understand how the potential of many experiences and reflections of theorists, academics and teachers practitioners as well as the potential of needs of the recipients of such education – pupils, can be wasted. See also sees other dilemmas related to the dissemination of philosophical education in schools. *We should also consider the preparation of philosophical education from the methodical side. A separate issue would be a reflection on the strategy of implementation of the philosophy in the education system, a specification of institutional and social terms that would foster the success of this project.*[14]

Thus, the fate of philosophy and, in particular, of building a healthy tradition of teaching philosophy in our country is still in its infancy and for the time being we have to rely on the achievements of practitioners-enthusiasts who, in their own unique way, build their experience of working in this field with children and youth. Literature on philosophical education shows a variety of little initiatives. Using western standards, where philosophy is "domesticated" and goes beyond the education based on transmission of knowledge, it turns out to be particularly helpful. In different conceptions of teaching philosophy three groups of objectives can be distinguished. The first one is associated with the knowledge that the student should possess. *And he should know what philosophy is, what are its basic issues, views and directions, which terms are used, what is its role in social life, how it differs from ideology and science. The second group of objectives refers to* ***the ability to rationally lead a discussion****. The pupil should be able to notice philosophical problems, formulate them in a clear and*

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[13] Eadem, *Model edukacji filozoficznej. List inicjujący*, "Analiza i Egzystencja", 2009, no. 10, p. 201.

[14] Ibidem, p. 203.

understandable way, think logically, convincingly justify his own views, report and assess other people's views and argumentation, reveal one's hidden assumptions, start discussions in order to seek the truth together, calmly accept criticism of his views and respond to it in a definite way. The third group applies to developing certain predispositions or even desirable personality traits. These include ***shaping the reflective attitude towards the world, appreciating the value of this reflection****, awakening of the interest in philosophy, as well as in the opinion of other people, respect for the differently thinking people, willingness to search for mutual understanding, developing criticism towards obviousness, awakening of sensitivity to ethical, aesthetic and cognitive values, tendency to explore, build and develop his own identity and his own beliefs, consciousness of responsibility for yourself and your actions.*[15]

Philosophizing, as an **activity** that children can do and as a **special method of educating,** is completely absent in kindergarten and early school methodology. *Łagodzka, one of the first popularizers of philosophical inquiries in Poland, (...) highlights the fact that they enable children to reflect on their own thinking processes and to improve them: – in our education system, children's mental abilities are not appreciated; a child is treated to a too little extent as a thinking individual, who is capable of pondering on various subjects, sometimes difficult, for example justice.*[16]

At present, I find multiple publications which include a variety of offers and ideas that encourage teachers to philosophize. One of the earliest in the Polish education is the philosophy for children by Matthew Lipmann – an American educator and philosopher who died in 2010 in New Jersey, and who is considered to be the precursor of the philosophy for children. Lipmann inspired philosophers, pedagogues and teachers from all over the world; plenty of initiatives, associations, organizations and education programmes, which use philosophizing, were created. Even in Poland a movement in favour of philosophizing with children is being developed. As a result of this movement, a Polish version of this programme, based on the objectives, the methodology and the organizational assumptions of Lipmann's concept, have been elaborated and approved by the Polish Ministry of National Education.[17]

According to Pobojewska, *philosophizing supports the completion of the tasks considered as overriding in education, such as developing the ability to think in an independent, reliable and critical manner, as well as cultivating the capabil-*

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[15] A. Jedynak, *O nauczaniu filozofii w szkole*, "Analiza i Egzystencja", 2009, no. 10, p. 205.

[16] A. Kucińska, *"Nie wiem czy świat ma koniec?" – Edukacja globalna i dociekania filozoficzne*, "*Głos Nauczycielski", 2013, no. 51–52.*

[17] B. Elwich, A. Łagodzka, R. Piłat, *Filozofia dla dzieci. Informacja o programie*, Warszawa 1996.

ity of participating in a dialogue in a spirit of tolerance, cooperation and the art of precisely formulating one's judgments. (...) Generally speaking, properly conducted philosophical education promotes the development of intellectual independence.[18]

One of the main objectives of this programme **is the cultivation of independent thinking skills** through a philosophical dialogue. The participants of such programme develop some specific skills and learn how to verbalize problems and turn them into questions, notice contradictions and ambiguities, argue, draw conclusions, justify their own beliefs and demand justifications from others, confront different ways of thinking, etc.[19]

The maintenance of a child's natural cognitive curiosity based on the need to understand the world is the second basic objective. M. Lipmann argued that children do not only ask the inquiry questions, but also look for answers to them. Therefore, it is necessary to provide them with a support for such research so that children could discover the world on their own. A cognitive curiosity, so characteristic for children, manifested in the curious questions of early childhood, often disappears with age.[20] This phenomenon is believed to be the effect of education, which participates in a behaviourist discourse,[21] and which is implemented by institutions with a privileged role of the teacher, who leads the process of the transmission and acquisition of knowledge.

The next group of objectives is constituted by **social skills development**. A person socially able to act is not the one who, like Robinson Crusoe, plans and fulfils his own actions in a monologue, but the one who is able to harmonize them with other people's actions via communication processes.[22] Practicing philosophizing with children at school **is based on the concept of common learning**. That means that the communicative and cognitive interactions appear between the teacher and children and also between the children themselves. Such education requires leaving some space for child's exploration to let the children speak during classes, stimulate situations that release cognitive curiosity, allow to perceive that curiosity, even ask very strange questions. It requires leaving some time for children for their own activities with peers, discussion, exchange of opinions, arguing and for explanation, possessing, formulating and sometimes even changing their own beliefs under the influence of strong arguments. A fundamental change occurs in communication that uses dialogue and discussion, applied during classes. In the light of the programme

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[18] A. Pobojewska, op. cit., p. 14.

[19] Confer: B. Elwich, A. Łagodzka, R. Piłat, op. cit., p. 7.

[20] M. Lipman, A.M. Sharp, F.S. Oscanian, *Filozofia w szkole*, Warszawa 1996.

[21] *Pedagogika wczesnoszkolna – dyskursy, problemy, rozwiązania*, ed. D. Klus-Stańska, M. Szczepska-Pustkowska, Warszawa 2011.

[22] After: R. Wawrzyniak-Beszterda, op. cit., p. 16.

described above, children acquire *communication skills, understood as the ability to speak clearly, listen to other people, respond to their statements, learn to work in a group, dialogue, be tolerant and open.*[23]

Observing children as they dialogue in the classroom is an unforgettable experience. It allows to gather information worth presenting and draw a conclusion that philosophizing has a significant impact on children's communication skills.

In what follows, I will present some examples from my own practice of philosophizing with children, which, I believe, can prove that school's mission of transmission can be replaced with emancipation and liberation, independent thinking, cognitive activity and responsibility for one's own work. The culmination of the course is to hold a debate on the subject that children themselves came up with. Anyone who wants to participate in a debate is obliged to refer to the statement of the previous speaker and to start by saying: *I agree* or *I disagree*.

That shows how important it is to listen carefully, focus on understanding of what has been said, provoke questions about incomprehensible matters, confront one's own thoughts against others' opinions. This exercise prepares to understand a situation when someone has a different point of view properly.

Example 1. One time an inspiration for a topic for our discussion came from a child's reflection in the mirror. Together (with first-grade elementary school children) we were contemplating the following question posed by children: ***Is the reflection in the mirror alive?*** The question was formulated among many others while viewing our images in the mirror. Children were repeatedly approaching and moving away from the mirror. They were making faces, strange poses, they were looking deeply into their mouths as if they wanted to ascertain the inside of those reflections. The discussion started spontaneously and two extreme points of view also emerged quite spontaneously. Children took a stand in the debate by their sex. Girls were convinced that the reflection has to be alive and boys that the reflection is not alive. It is not enough to have an opinion during philosophizing classes. You have to find strong arguments to support your beliefs. The table below allows to order the arguments given by children.

Participating in classes where children have a voice in a debate allows to observe a qualitative change in communication. They can argue with different opinions, persuade each others, justify, find examples and counter-examples and all this emerges from mutual listening. During such classes children prove that they can verbalize problems, ask questions about issues that are truly interesting for them. Here we have some examples of the questions which were raised by seven-year-old children during the confrontation with a mirror and the discussion.

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[23] Confer: B. Elwich, A. Łagodzka, R. Piłat, op. cit., p. 7.

Table 1. The arguments given by 1st grade children during the discussion

Reflection in the mirror is alive	Reflection in the mirror is not alive
If I (who am alive) drink, a reflection also drinks, so the reflection is also alive.	Even if we see that the reflection eats or drinks, it remains unknown whether the eaten things are digested, because we do not even know if the reflection possesses anything to digest them. If it is empty on the inside – it is not alive.
If I move, a reflection moves like me – it means that the reflection is alive.	The reflection moves like you want, not like it wants itself. It can't be alive if it can't do what it wants.
If I breathe, a reflection also breathes. It needs the air – it means it is alive.	We don't know whether it needs to eat or breathe or it only reflects us eating or breathing.

- What does "life" mean?
- Does a reflection know anything?
- Are there the same things inside a reflection and a child?
- Is it possible to hear the same things in the mirror (inside, where the reflection is) as in the classroom?
- If I have a brother, does my reflection also have a brother in its own world?

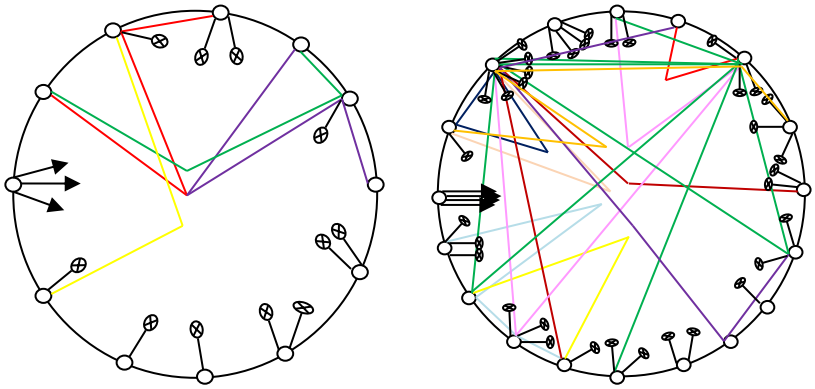
The classes carried out using this method are changing not only the quality of the statements, but also their number. I have observed that the discussion led by children activates them all without any urging by the teacher. The cause for the involvement of so many children may be that the discussed problem is attractive, understandable, and above all, important for children.

Example 2 is possible to quote thanks to students' research conducted during master seminar at the University of Lodz under my direction. During the seminar we posed a research question about how communication skills are changing in children who have a chance to discuss, or philosophize in accordance with Lipman's methodical conception. Students organized a cycle of 11 classes for second-grade children and they were observing quantitative indicators of children statements, which could be illustrated on circular diagrams that indicate the place where children were sitting during the discussion in the circle. The colours and shapes symbolize each child's statement.

1. A segment ended with a crossed circlet illustrates a child's statement which was not continued by anyone.
2. A segment illustrates a statement which was continued.
3. A line made of segments illustrates the thematic continuation of a statement.
4. Different colours are used to illustrate the diversity of topics.

The diagrams below show the quantitative changes in the field of children's communication, which have occurred in the course of one semester with the use of philosophizing.

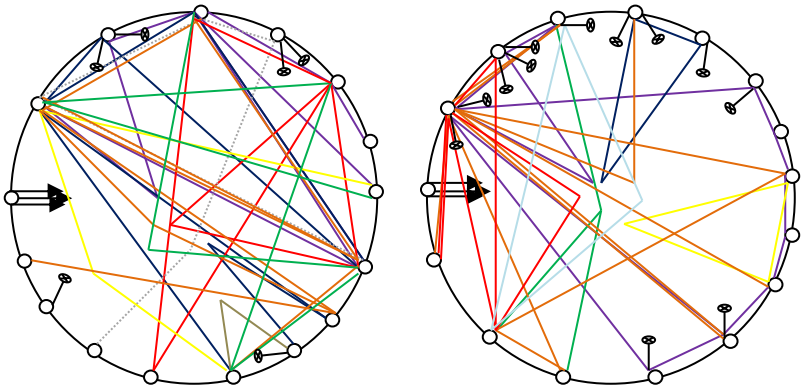
Diagram 1. The outline of communicating observed between second-grade children on the first and third session of philosophizing. Topics: *Truth; War*[24]



Diagrams show high verbal activity of the pupils. Almost every child took part in the discussion, but the majority of the statements were detached single opinions, which other participants did not refer to. In very few cases children continued with one subject for a short time. Most of the sentences were directed to the teacher, and other children spoke only after being encouraged by him.

The following diagrams illustrate the final phase of the classes cycle and here the communication process looks completely different.

Diagram 2. The outline of communicating observed between second-grade children on philosophizing classes. Topics: *Possible, impossible; Grudges*



[24] J. Kamińska, *Zmiany w kompetencjach komunikacyjnych u uczniów klasy II podczas zajęć filozofowania*, Łódź 2009; the diagrams used come form an unpublished MA paper written under the supervision of dr A. Buła in the Faculty of Kindergarten and Early School Pedagogy at UŁ.

The increase in the communication activity is clearly noticeable. Also, the number of opinions expressed during the discussion augmented. There is no child that would be inactive. The subjects raised are continued for a long time (even 11 exchanges between pupils). Children formulate their statements directly to each other, not to the teacher, they use expressions like: *I agree / I disagree with you*. We can tell that they become members of teams, communities dedicated to deal with an issue that is fascinating for all the participants.

I consider philosophizing with children a very effective way in the process of acquiring communication skills, or at least their aspects described above. Still, the following question remains: why is there still so little space for such activities in our schools? When will a contemporary teacher trust the abilities of their little pupils?

Common core standards: A new beginning for education in the United States

Melinda R. Pierson

The United States began requiring assessments for all students regarding their achievement in the early 1990s. This education reform movement focused on common knowledge of core subjects across grade levels. However, states held different standards which could be problematic if a student needed to move from state to state. In addition, educators realized that employers and colleges were beginning to demand higher level skills of high school graduates. Thus, the need to develop one set of national standards became a prominent need.

The Common Core Standards began to be written in 2009 with a release date of June 2, 2010. The majority of states reviewed the new standards in the areas of English language arts and mathematics and adopted them within a few months. The areas of social studies and science have recently been adopted as well and will be presented to the states by the end of 2014. A total of 46 states and three territories are currently implementing the new standards, but in many different ways. The federal government offered incentive programs with a focus on education reform grants called Race to the Top. This provided a major push for the Common Core Standards to be adopted by the states as they would not be eligible for additional reform money without the adoption.

The previous state standards were extremely different from state to state. Many focused on isolated skills, knowledge, and ideas that could be taught and measured in relative isolation.[1] The new state standards are an interconnection of skills and require students to have a deeper level of understanding of complex relationships among several ideas and concepts within the four key subject areas that are addressed. Thus, students in kindergarten-12th grades will be better prepared for college and career readiness for life in the 21st century.

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[1] J.K. March, K.H. Peters, *The Common Core, an uncommon opportunity: Redesigning classroom instruction*, Thousand Oaks 2014.

Mission statement for the common core standards[2]

The Common Core Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

Pedagogical shifts to the common core standards

There are six major shifts in each subject area that require curricular materials and classroom instruction to be aligned with the new standards.

English language arts/literacy[3]

Balancing informational and literary text	Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts.
Knowledge in the disciplines	Students build knowledge about the world (domains/content areas) through TEXT rather than the teacher or activities.
Staircase of complexity	Students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers are patient, create more time, space, and support in the curriculum for close reading.
Text-based answers	Students engage in rich and rigorous evidence based on conversations about text.
Writing from sources	Writing emphasizes use of evidence from sources to inform or make an argument.
Academic vocabulary	Students constantly build the transferable vocabulary they need to access grade level complex texts. This can be done effectively by spiraling like content in increasingly complex tasks.

[2] http://www.corestandards.org [access: 7.03.2013].

[3] http://www.engageny.org/common-core-curriulum [access: 7.10.2013].

Mathematics

Focus	Teachers significantly narrow and deepen the scope of how time and energy is spent in the math classroom. They do so in order to focus deeply on only the concepts that are prioritized in the standards.
Coherence	Principals and teachers carefully connect the learning within and across grades so that students can build new understanding onto foundations built in previous years.
Fluency	Students are expected to have speed and accuracy with simple calculations; teachers structure class time and/or homework time for students to memorize, through repetition, core functions.
Deep understanding	Students deeply understand and can operate easily within a math concept before moving on. They learn more than the trick to get the answer right. They learn the math.
Application	Students are expected to use math and choose the appropriate concept for application even when they are not prompted to do so.
Dual intensity	Students are practicing and understanding. There is more than a balance between these two things in the classroom – both are occurring with intensity.

Practical application of the common core standards

In schools around the nation, teachers are scrambling to meet the new requirements of the Common Core Standards. Many are implementing them throughout their lesson plans while others are eagerly awaiting training on how best to add the components of communication, collaboration and critical thinking to their daily lesson plans. Most districts have provided professional development training and several have hired teams of teachers to write common lesson plans for each grade level which implement the Common Core Standards throughout each subject. These teams of teachers then train teachers at their grade level at each school in the district.

Within the state of California, several districts are adopting the materials for the Common Core Standards for mathematics only for the 2013-2014 schoolyear. The language arts standards will be implemented in the fall of 2014. Teachers are struggling to gather the necessary materials to teach with manipulatives and hands-on activities while budgets across the state remain tight.

Thus, many teachers are apprehensive about how this new implementation of the math standards will work, yet they are excited about the new possibilities for teaching more creatively. In several districts, all of the previously used mathematics textbooks have been collected and the new Common Core Standards mathematics textbooks have been given to each teacher. Teachers are required to teach using these new materials beginning this fall.

In Washington, D.C., 8th grade language arts teachers are leading the way to model the implementation of the Common Core Standards so that students will become stronger readers and writers.[4] They focus on teaching the students how to combine the text with their own knowledge so that inferences can shed light on the main idea in their reading selection. They then model it for them in front of the class and then after this guided practice, require the students to do it on their own while the teachers visit individual students at their desks. Students are gaining achievement points and teachers are observing stronger literacy skills overall. Yet, the teachers admit that this type of teaching demands much more effort than past requirements to teach to the former state standards.

Teachers are also modeling that as long as students can provide evidence to support their claims in writing, there is no right and wrong. Students are learning to trust their own interpretations of text and to back those interpretations with evidence. Overall, the Common Core Standards provide opportunities that students experience the text and then be able to ask questions. Although schools report that many students need additional time to learn this new way of thinking and writing, students are reporting higher proficiency levels overall in writing.[5]

The impact of 21st century skills

Students must now master the new Common Core Standards to be best prepared for 21st Century learning and skills. Specific workplace and communication competencies that enable students to successfully apply their academic knowledge and skills to function as successful global citizens in their communities[6] have been fully integrated within the CCSS. This will enable students to apply their academic knowledge and skills to function as productive adults in society.

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[4] C. Gewertz, *One class takes on the standards*, "Education Week", 2013, no. 32(33), p. 1–21.

[5] Ibidem, p. 1–21.

[6] J.K. March, K.H. Peters, op. cit.

The following categories of 21st Century skills have been embedded throughout the CCSS:

- General references in the new standards to 21st Century Skills.
- Global awareness.
- The literacies including financial and economic, civic, and health and environmental).
- Thinking and reasoning for effective decision making.
- Communication and collaboration.
- Information technology and media lliteracy.
- Initiative, flexibility, and collaborative skills.[7]

Building instructional programs around the CCSS frame

How the CCSS will be implemented is one of the largest concerns for educators in the United States.[8] Districts must make a commitment to a plan and then begin to organize that plan so that CCSS are integrated into the district curriculum as soon as possible. A team of teacher leaders should begin to devise curriculum maps (or pacing guides) for each grade and/or subject area which all of the teachers in the district can use immediately. These components should be a part of every curriculum map: time frames, unit titles, standards assigned to each unit, literacy standards, labs or inquiry projects, cross-curricular connections, high-stakes tests or benchmark assessments, and 21st Century skills. Teachers can then begin to plan units for each area of learning.

Throughout this planning, teachers must keep the following best practices in mind for all lessons:

- Multiple levels of thinking:
  - To be successfully introduced to it and to learn about it, students must process at the knowledge and comprehension levels.
  - To solve problems without cues or prompts and to determine how the individual components of the concept interact to comprise the whole, students must think at the application and analysis levels.
  - To create something new and to determine the worth or validity of a concept, students must think at the synthesis and evaluation levels.

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[7] Ibidem.

[8] J. Burke, *The Common Core companion: The standards decoded – What they say, what They mean, how to teach them*, Thousand Oaks 2013.

- Goal setting:
  - Students apply themselves best when they make an investment in their learning and feel individual connections to the goals of each unit by setting their own academic content and personal goals. They attain higher levels of achievement than those who do not. Teachers can support each student in selecting personal as well as academic goals to increase learning.
- Organizational patterns:
  - Organizational patterns impact how students process information as well as how authors present it. Teachers must use organizational patterns in how they provide the information to their students. Teachers may address the chronological sequence, cause-effect, compare-contrast, persuasion, problem-solution, and processing information such as summarizing, note taking and graphic organizers (visual representations or nonlinguistic representations).
- Questioning and cueing:
  - 80% of the exchanges between teachers and students are related to questioning and, in a perfect world, the majority of these questions would focus on academic content. Teachers must focus on making sure that the majority of the time, effort, and resources expended on questioning are focused on students' mastery of content versus the clarifying of logistics.
- Similarities and differences including categorization, comparison, critical attributes, metaphors, and analogies:
  - This best practice is based on a student's ability to compare and contrast which would then sort items into categories or classes based on features or attributes that distinguish them from others.

Overall, the new CCSS demand research-based best practices to increase the 21st Century skills to prepare students for college and careers in their societies. Teams of educators must make sure that the skills presented above are addressed in every teaching unit.

Websites to support strong lessons

A new website supported by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation called LearnZillion[9] helps teachers learn the new Common Core standards through the expertise of experienced teachers.[10] This website began with 400

[9] https://learnzillion.com/ [access: 7.03.2013]

[10] J. Harris, *Building better lessons*, "Journal of Staff Development", 2013, no. 34(1), p. 32–35.

video lessons which support the teacher in building strong lessons that address the Common Core Standards in an in-depth way. Teachers are able to process the way they think about how they teach and look for ways to support students with deeper understanding and broader horizons in language arts and math.

Additional websites that support the Common Core Standards include:

- BetterLesson.com – educators can connect, create, organize and share curricula with other educators around the United States and internationally.
- Khanacademy.org – this site showcases over 3,600 videos for educators on K-12 science and math topics as well as some on finance and history.
- Groupgenius.org/mathematics – this is the mathematics design collaborative which is built around templates that assign tasks based on Common Core Mathematics Standards.
- Prometheanplanet.com/en-us – this website provides lesson planning tips, strategies, content and resources for multiple subjects for teachers who teach at all grade levels and allows teachers to also share their lessons.

Common challenges with the implementation of CCCSS

There has been much controversy in the United States surrounding Common Core. Not all districts feel the urgency to shift to the new set of standards based on a lack of funding to purchase new materials. Many principals wonder how they will successfully train the teachers to teach using Common Core strategies in such a short amount of time. Districts feel unprepared overall for this sudden shift of teaching practices. Thus, it is imperative that school and district leaders build local consensus to establish a sense of urgency about this new adoption. All grade level and subject area teachers must be included in any trainings so that the curriculum can be implemented in collaboration across the skill areas.[11]

Professional learning must also be broken down into manageable chunks so that teachers do not feel overwhelmed and unable to address the new standards. CCSS are complex and intimidating to many educators and much of the learning expectations may seem impossible for certain grade levels. Therefore, many educators may be unwilling to expend energy on a task that feels daunting. Luckily, many useful resources have been created to assist teachers with the application and implementation of CCSS to local districts and schools for students in K-12th grades.[12]

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[11] J. Crawford, *Aligning your curriculum to the Common Core State Standards*, Thousand Oaks 2012.

[12] Ibidem; L. Ainsworth, *Rigorous curriculum design: How to create units of study that align standards, instruction, and assessment*, Englewood 2010; M.G. Dove, A. Honigsfeld, *Common Core*

Conclusion

Common Core Standards have been adopted by the majority of the states in the United States. The goal is to improve critical thinking, collaboration and communication skills among all students so that they are more prepared for the workforce and for college. While the data on these massive educational reform standards will not be available for many years, educators who have not yet implemented the Common Core Standards are hoping to observe immediate differences in the way children and adolescents think, write, speak and learn. Those teachers who have just begun to teach in this innovative way are already reporting gains in the achievement test scores of their students. Overall, it will take time to determine if the United States will document strong benefits from this new educational reform, but the majority of educators agree that the preliminary results are promising.

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for the not-so-common learner: English Language Arts strategies grades K-5, Thousand Oaks 2013; J.K. March, K.H. Peters, op. cit.; C. Gewertz, op. cit., p. 1–21.

The educator and teacher's role in supporting a student experiencing a hardship

Justyna Deręgowska

Along with the globalization process so characteristic of the contemporary times (especially at the crossroads of homogenization and universalization with the phenomena of individualization and diversification), the dynamic development of information technology and secularization and homogenization of cultures, the intense changes and new social qualities began to appear. The changes resulting from the diversity of values and interests between people have become clear and, along with a gradual loss of importance of the basic institutions of socializing and bringing up the younger generation, the mass media and the mass culture took on a leading role in the social life. It is these phenomena that have begun to influence the contemporary man.

Avant-garde living strategies are becoming more and more characteristic of the modern times. They are largely based on appearances, objects and consumer goods, thus subjectivity is being slowly eliminated, whereas direct interpersonal relations have been distorted by the so-called simulation as well as the widespread substitution of culture with "hyper-reality" which involves mainly staging and fantasy. Stanislaw Ossowski, a Polish sociologist, an intellectual authority and a representative of the humanistic orientation in the post-World War II period, interprets the above trends as "impersonal, cold corporate world of money and big politics, in which individuals experience a Lilliputian complex, a sense of powerlessness against the abstract forces that decide about their the fate".[1] Many other scientists, including Zygmunt Bauman, a philosopher and sociologist[2], Piotr Sztompka[3], an expert in classical and contemporary sociological theory, or Jean Baudrillard[4], a French intellectual point to the uncertainty

[1] P. Sztompka, *Sociology*, Kraków 2007, p. 221.

[2] Z. Bauman, *Death and immortality*, Warszawa 1998; idem, *Liquid Fear*, Kraków 2008.

[3] P. Sztompka, op. cit.

[4] J. Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, Warszawa 2007.

and obscurity of social situations, and the great importance of new forms of trust, which is generally granted to depersonalized complexes. All this forms a kind of an ambiguous portrait of contemporary reality, consistently setting new perspectives to the life of an individual and society. The reality, which on the one hand can be analyzed as a space of exciting dynamics, on the other hand, as a very difficult, complicated and demanding context of human life. The contemporaneity whose intellectual climate, often offering ready, multi-ideological positions, is not an easy time for either a mature person, or a child or a youth just stepping into adulthood, who is just internalizing their understanding of the world, who creates their own image and who is seeking their own place in the world whilst attempting to shape their own outlook on the existential phenomena.[5]

The characteristics of modern times and new social trends which are actively creating these characteristics bring up the need to implement innovative solutions in various areas of social life. Innovativeness has recently become an essential element of any progress and development, and therefore its role and importance have also grown well in the area of education. A modern school teacher and educator is generally expected to present innovative creativity, i.e. implement educational innovation understood as the targeted qualitative changes that Okoń defined as "structural changes of the educational system – all of it or its parts – implemented in order to introduce measurable improvements".[6]

„Innovation" has become a leading slogan, as each teacher needs to implement it. The teacher of today has to be an innovative, autonomous and independent person. They need to be free from external opinions and pressure, and thus they must be capable of freely pursuing their innovative projects. Unfortunately, by speaking of innovativeness, it is understood that it pertains the area of teaching, searching for innovative curricula, methodological and organizational solutions. Regretfully, the role of a teacher and educator is limited to teaching the curricular material whereas their role in supporting the students tends to be neglected. Support should be offered to students experiencing hardships related to adolescence and social adaptation in the general sense of the word, not limited to the adaptation to the school environment and their peers. Youngsters need assistance in crisis situations; they also need to be prepared for the challenges of the forthcoming adult life. Based on the author's own research, this proves to be especially difficult in the case of children and young

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[5] I. Mańk-Kowalska, *Hierarchy philosophical questions and the recognition by young people of different philosophical positions*, [in:] *Perception phenomena in the social world of children, adolescents and young adults*, ed. L. Wojciechowska, Warszawa 2003.

[6] W. Okoń, *Research methods in education sciences*, Warszawa 1985.

people experiencing difficult or critical situations or seeking answers to existential questions about the meaning of life, or even the sense of death. This is the part of human existence that – irrespective of the characteristics of modern times – constitutes an element embedded in the human condition.

However, it must be emphasized that the role and responsibilities of a teacher in this area are not easy not only because of the fact that they have to touch upon extremely difficult, and sometimes too painful situations, but also because the task requires the educator's careful reflection on the current social needs and expectations. The student's individual needs and requirements must be considered and analyzed. The teacher's role calls for extraordinary responsibility and maturity as well as a deeply humanistic attitude. As research indicates, these qualities go far beyond the reach of a competent educator, and what is more, according to many educators, they remain far beyond their responsibilities with respect to their students.

The teacher's and students' existential quest; educators and their role in the life of a child experiencing a crisis situation – reflections on the results of the author's own studies

Given the characteristics of the modern world, the dynamic changes in society as well as the requirements which the modern man faces, it is advisable to define how big a role should social support play in the life of an individual. This also includes the support offered to a young person or a child by their educator. It needs to be stressed that despite the fact that the support should be offered whether a difficulty occurs or not, the demand for such support increases significantly when a child faces a difficult situation. The support enhances active coping with the hardship and boosts up self-esteem, it improves the adaptation to stressful events and increases confidence which renders it possible for an individual to make changes in themselves and in the environment. For that reason, it is seen as one of the resources of coping with hardships.[7]

To emphasize the importance of the topic and, above all the importance of support offered to a child experiencing a difficult situation, one needs to refer to the studies whose common denominator, for the purpose of this study, was the educator's attitude to the student's needs. Firstly, to the study focused on a child struggling with cancer. Secondly, reference should be made to the re-

[7] B. Dobrzańska-Socha, *Psychological assistance in the event of loss*, [in:] *Struggling with cancer*, ed. D. Kubacka-Jasiecka, W. Łosiak, Kraków 1999; J. Pommersbach, *Social support and disease*, "Psychological Review", 1988, no. 31.

search showing a modern teacher's attitude towards discussing existential themes that mainly focus on the passing of human life and death.

In view of the fact that in the above cases the issues discussed in the research went far beyond the measurable or objective as it was linked to the values, experiences and subjective opinions of individuals, the selected research approach matched the perspective of qualitative research. The narration interview was assumed as the technique of clinical diagnostics. This in turn enabled the provision of this text with excerpts from interviews with individuals taking part in research which, due to the limited size of this paper, were short yet very telling. It needs to be added that due to the relatively narrow scope of research trials, the conclusions drawn thereof cannot be generalized, however they may be treated as a cognitively valuable illustration which presents patterns and regularities that need some critical attention.

The first research was carried out with twenty adolescents who were admitted to paediatric oncology, haematology and transplant wards as well as with their parents. The research was oriented around the issues of a family crisis caused by the child's cancer as well as social support offered to such families. The research gave an insight into the subjective world of the difficult experience of a child and their family coping with the crisis. It also made it possible to illustrate many contexts of the life that such a child and its family must cope with. It also highlighted the processes and social phenomena which influence their life, including those concerning the role of a teacher and the school in supporting the child. The conclusions of the research are relevant when determining the needs of the patient, the individual members of their family and the family considered as a system. This, in the contexts of professional help and wider social support, should be treated as an important illustration of the research that helps to explain the demands and indications concerning the activities targeted at helping a chronically ill child and their family. The above also pertains to the activities of the child's school and the educators themselves, the essential support offered to the patient who needs to resume their school activities after a lengthy hospitalization. It is believed that a good relationship with teachers and peers is an essential element of multifaceted support which is of key revalidating and therapeutic significance.

Analyzing the conclusions of the research outlined above in view of the role that school teachers should play for a young patient, it must be noted that firstly, the contact between the regular school and the hospital school is still inadequate. What's more, in spite of the fact that it could facilitate the return of the students to their regular school and their schoolmates, the initiative of regular teachers leaves much to be desired with respect to their contact with the hospital school. Moreover, the patient's teachers forget about the educational interactions that shape the desired social attitudes towards the sick child which is

conducive to the child's good relationships within the peer group. As the research shows, this aspect is absolutely neglected by the child's regular teachers. The sick, hospitalized child is quickly forgotten; the contact with their school, teachers and schoolmates is soon broken up. This causes extreme anxiety in a patient who fears any contact with their peers and, generally, the return to their regular school.

In addition, the school environment (especially in rural areas), the peers and especially the teachers are prepared neither for children returning after a long hospitalization nor for their serious disease (cancer) itself. When the patient returns to school, they are faced with numerous misunderstandings, inappropriate reactions, inquisitive questions and looks and the lack of understanding. Children returning home after arduous hospital treatment are frequently faced with unsuitable reactions of their social environment, and above all, of their peer environment. The reactions are oftentimes aggressive; children are ridiculed and offended. The mildest reactions involve indifference and reluctance. There are also depreciating reactions, such as staring, intimidating and pseudo-positive reactions, i.e. showing excessive sympathy or pity. All this, in turn, promotes the formation of a sense of insecurity and a conviction that the sick child is permanently under a threat of personal harm. They become isolated and therefore experience unpleasant emotions that turn into deep distress. They perceive illness as a stigma and extend the fact that their disease has made them different as a whole person which they start to perceive as bizarre. This lowers their self-esteem as well as the level of their self-acceptance. They create a negative opinion of themselves; they start to believe that they cannot meet the needs for specific social roles, which leads to their complete self-isolation.[8] Let us have a look at several excerpts from the interviews which illustrate the above aspects.

My son was in the house... on leave, and it was shortly before the third relapse. At that time he was even able to walk. It was Child's Day and the municipality organized a bonfire for the kids. My son wanted to be with other children, so my daughter took him there. It turned out that there were no sausages left for them. Children from the village began to shout at my son calling him names, 'hey fatso, chrome dome... baldhead!' "My son had already been limping heavily, but somehow he ran home in tears and all... My daughter followed him crying bitterly. I couldn't make her stop. She even tried to defend him there. How we all cried ... Even I could not help myself ... I went to see the Principal to do something about that but he did nothing. He did nothing at all.

When my younger daughter was visited by her school friends, they started laughing their heads off, so funny she seemed to them. I was devastated and she

[8] B. Dobrzańska-Socha, op. cit.; J. Pommersbach, op. cit.

burst into tears. I know that they are children but they were mocking her that she was fat, bald-headed... That was so cruel. I told them to leave... So little do people in this country know about cancer.

Teachers do not do anything or do very little to work out good patterns of communication of their healthy students with chronically ill children, especially those suffering from cancer. These patterns could prevent problems with peer relations. The reactions of teachers who tend to isolate the sick child from their peers require much critical attention. They need to understand that this is not the way to avoid problems at school and it cannot possibly be justified by avoiding emotional trauma for themselves or for the other students. It is very disturbing since the attitudes of teachers towards the chronically ill, provided that they are correct, could play a supportive role in the process of treatment and rehabilitation of the patient. Even more so, a proper approach could activate the child and distract them from some of the hardships that are related to the disease. Importantly, there is lack of personal contact of the sick child with their teacher. Such a relation could support the students in gaining self-acceptance, self-esteem; it could help them get into interpersonal relations with their healthy peers as well as facilitate determining real-life goals, having faith in their own abilities, knowledge, skills and social competences which are so essential in their adult life, let alone their life with a chronic disease (including cancer). It is also important since individualized work with a child is always valuable, especially that an educator is sometimes the only person with whom the child feels free to discuss any concerns that they may have. Below, excerpts from interviews are presented to illustrate the discussed issue.

Before the disease, he attended kindergarten. His former teacher sometimes calls us, asks about his health, sometimes she sends a teddy to my boy. But just imagine that now, once his peers went to school, it seems that now these children, well his classmates, went to primary school, it seems as if he had never been one of them ... Not a single phone call... He came up with an idea and drew a picture for each of his former school friends. You know how much of an effort it was... Twenty-some drawings and not just little pictures. Each one was different. He posted them to the children. Not a single reply, not even one. Nobody sent him anything. He was crying and crying. He could not understand why. He thought that maybe the post did not deliver the replies. He liked his friends but none of them answered. I think it was the teacher's fault. Anyway, later he was transferred to another class. Nobody knows why.

Another area of support, which teachers tend to neglect, that could be offered to a chronically ill child is the support of their peer group and the whole school environment. Young people should be given information about chronic

diseases; their views should be shaped to evoke positive attitudes towards their sick schoolmates; they should be taught acceptance, develop empathy and pro-social behaviour which is conducive to good relations. They should learn that support and help are closely related to such notions as tolerance or equality which are commonly believed to be the fundamental objectives of contemporary education.

She refuses to go to school altogether; she does not want to meet her friends, either. What can I say? She has already experienced so much hostility; talking behind her back, mocking, making fun of the fact that she had no hair. She's not going back to that school, I have to organize private tutors for her all the time. She said she would go to school, but to a new one; she doesn't want to hear about her previous school. I cannot force her to do anything, but if she stops seeing kids altogether, what will happen to her... She would rather lock herself up at home. What am I to do?

(...) In our village nobody wants to have contact with us. People are so dumb... They think that they can catch the disease from us. They treat cancer as a curse. After these seven years, it is all the same to me, but just think about all that ignorance; it is so hard to understand. (...) Village mentality is cruel ... I do not know how to live there, and after all, we still have that bit of land there. (...) never a genuine, warm and heartfelt help from anyone, especially from anyone in our village. Neither the school nor the school principal, or parents of children from school, or a priest – nobody... Our family is as if we were lepers.

The subsequent references will be made to other, earlier studies carried out with 35 teachers of primary and junior high schools. The research was to illustrate contemporary social attitudes towards the phenomenon of death and how, in view of current trends shaping the social life, educators address the issue of supporting children and young people in dealing with the awareness of the existential truth which death is. How do they assist their students in situations when they are forced to experience an ordeal?

In the context of this study, it seems important that not all teachers invited to participate in the survey accepted the invitation and explained that the subject of research was too difficult for them, unclear, absurd and some of them defined it as 'stupid'. Interestingly however, for all those who took part in the study the issue proved to be difficult. The teachers often had difficulties to express clearly and precisely what they generally think about existential matters.

Analyzing the results of the above studies, it should be emphasized that 70% of the surveyed teachers, despite the fact that they considered death a subject that was worthy of being discussed with their students, did not eventually take it up and were not really going to discuss it in the future. And alt-

hough these teachers admitted that there were situations when students inspired them to consider the subject of death and passing away, for instance when a teacher, a student or somebody's relative dies, the teachers did not feel that they were prepared for such discussions. They would rather not initiate the discussion on death and dying, their argument primarily being that the subject of dying was not in the curriculum, and they are neither prepared, nor in any way obliged to discuss the topic of passing away with their students.

Besides, most teachers from the above group (about 60%) believed that they could not have any discussions like that because their students' parents categorically oppose to discussing such topics at school. About 40% of teachers also said that there was no time to talk to students about the life and death, because there were always more important things to do, and the material to be covered was too vast. Even if they wanted to do so, time was too scarce. About 50% teachers also said that a topic such as "dying and death" was too difficult for them because of their individual experiences, their inability to reflect upon the subject; they admitted deliberately avoiding it when working with children and teenagers. Below, there are selected excerpts from the interviews with teachers.

Death? And what kind of topic is this supposed to be? When? With who? And the parents? Where are the parents? And the church? My dear, I do not have time for this... Please, have a look at the material to be covered with them...

My students' parents are not pleased when teachers take up the subject of death. They believe that it makes children stressed up and causes tension...

Among the teachers surveyed only 30% strongly expressed the need to discuss existential topics, including those regarding the death of children and young people, yet, they hardly ever initiated that in their work. Only one of the teachers surveyed admitted that he had discussed the subject of dying with one of his students but it was only because his family member passed away. The teacher stressed that every time the discussions were held with the parents' consent.

I am a high school teacher. I admit that I have never discussed death with my students. There has never been any need to do so. My students have never signalled interest in the subject. I currently have a student in the class suffering from muscular dystrophy, a disease that inexorably leads to death. I'll be forced to prepare the students for this... Discussions on this topic are very difficult for me... It is like... wandering in the dark. I believe this is a matter of intuition rather than knowledge.

According to the survey, many teachers do not see the need or admit that they cannot support the student experiencing hardships and existential crises;

they are unable to help students who need to search for answers to important existential questions. In the eyes of many teachers, the difficult existential problems of children and youth do not need to be discussed, they are unnecessary, too difficult and less and less popular.

I think that many young people do not think about death. They live for the moment, not thinking about passing away, what counts is what there is here and now ... Thinking about school, one should mention the role of the teacher, which should involve talking to children and young people about such a difficult situation like death, but here the role of the teacher is difficult ... Do teachers take up this subject at all? Few do ... Yes, I think that probably very few ...

In my classes, the notion of death appears very rarely. Usually in the context of a Stoic saying "when I am, he is not there, when he is there, I am no longer here". I want my students to get rid of the fear of dying. My pupils (junior high school kids) because of their age, and the lack of an occasion to experience the death of their close ones, are unable to fully understand and internalize the thought of death. For them, it is a rather distant prospect, which is good. There is a time of living and happiness, and the time of passing away. (...) Death should be discussed in the family circle, with grandparents, when they chat with the younger generation.

Many teachers do not feel competent to do this type of work, they feel at a loss and, to some extent, unable to offer support. They are unable to take the burden of discussions which could be so important to a developing adolescent's personality. Sometimes one may get an impression that when teachers face situations that are difficult for the student, it triggers certain desensitization to the needs of young people. This in turn leads to certain passivity in building valuable, humanely oriented teacher's behaviour. In this aspect, it seems, teachers are missing out a certain charisma that allows them to listen to the individual needs of their students (including those which are not fully verbalized by them); they lack sensitivity and openness to the difficult matters of another person – the student.

In view of the above, it needs to be stressed that nowadays the topics of support and aid are very often said to be key to any social system. It also has to be noted that everyone is convinced that if necessary, they will be offered support which, in a way, makes all of us feel socially secure. The reality, however, turns out to be surprisingly different. When faced with a hardship, many people discover that they are living in the so-called social emptiness and cannot count on any assistance at all. This situation becomes even more worrying when it relates to a child or young person.

Closing remarks

The above considerations lead not only to conclusions but also to requests directed to the contemporary teachers who should reflect on their students' situations and develop more sensitivity and openness in offering assistance whilst solving existential problems their students may be faced with. It is advisable that in their work with students, teachers should be driven primarily by humanism. In every instance, humanism should be regarded as an essential element in the teacher's work. After all, they fulfil a social role which they have decided to take. What's more, when the teacher follows humanistic thought and sensitivity, they might perceive it as an inspiration to broaden their knowledge, acquire new abilities and improve their personal and social skills. They might want to creatively verify their own outlooks and take up self-analysis in the area of values that they consider as priorities. Many professionals emphasize that the implementation of creative ideas of humanism based on individualism in educational work and, furthermore, a sincere and thoughtful support of the student's self-development constitutes the responsibility of every teacher and educator. Furthermore, it must be stressed that this is not a newly introduced responsibility. As early as in the Official Journal of the Ministry of Education of 9 December 1975, it was emphasized that the task of an educator involved such educational prophylaxis as to recognize the living conditions of their students. This should be done by means of a diagnosis which is a starting point for implementing prophylactic, compensational tasks and enveloping students with personalized care by means of discussions with their form teacher, student themselves and parents, as well as carrying out in-class and out of the classroom observation of the student.[9]

Therefore, given the social role of the teacher and their awareness of their importance, it seems more than advisable to emphasize the involvement of the teacher in the student's affairs. This should pertain to emotional support offered to a student faced with existential difficulties. Needless to say, the role of the teacher is precisely defined in this area. Existential phenomena and crises have always remained within the realm of the social reality; they have always been important to children's life as well as the life of any individual. And although it is assumed that these phenomena may constitute a special kind of existential values, still when considering the definition of value which says that "it involves everything that is not neutral, indifferent but valuable, important and momentous and thus constitutes the aim of human aspiration"[10], a clear

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[9] E. Kantowicz, *Social support in the work of the school counselor*, [in:] *Social support systems in a variety of human life*, ed. eadem, Olsztyn 1997; J. Pommersbach, op. cit.

[10] M. Gałaś, *Values of culture in the modern era*, Toruń 2000.

antinomy can be noticed in this area. From the subjective point of view, existential crises remain important yet difficult elements in the life of an individual. Despite the fact that they are so strenuous, they must be included in the set of values understood in a very strict meaning of this word. This is particularly the case when the existential phenomena or questions pertain to a very young person or child.

Therefore, it seems that the need to involve teachers in the process of helping students should be seen not solely from the perspective of their ethical and professional obligations, but also from a broader perspective of system solutions, related primarily to the education and development of their skills and competence. As it is emphasized by Kantowicz, "the need for the evolution of the range of roles and tasks in the Polish school (...) is also a challenge to improve not only the teacher's ability, but professional ethics as well (...). A person wishing to engage in education must disclose the need to offer to sacrifice themselves to another person. This need also determines the quality of social support in the daily work of the teacher in our schools".[11]

Taking into account the results of the aforementioned studies, it seems significant that educational programmes dealing with offering support to students in existentially difficult situations should be directed to various groups of recipients, school teachers, school psychologists at every educational level starting from primary schools. Any activities of the type must be aware, comprehensive, systematic. Teachers and educators should themselves be the natural allies who implement these activities.

What's more, the importance of launching such education programmes for teachers should be also seen in the context of praxis. Pointing at the directions of the educational and didactic work pertaining to various existential phenomena in order to prepare students to participate in valuable reflections on moral and existential connotations should constitute an important element of such programmes. Thus students could be prepared to cope with current or future critical and borderline situations. It is this aspect that must be considered as very important, since many social support specialists emphasize that its main function in solving problems depends primarily on whether it is appropriate. It needs to be assumed however, that the basic condition of efficacy is its adequacy to the recipients' needs and their satisfaction with the assistance as far as its quality and quantity is concerned.

The studies and research on the need to support students in the context of a modern teacher and educator are important not only from the point of view of the individual but also in social terms. They touch upon current yet relative ideological issues which allows them to be understood as a kind of study of the

[11] E. Kantowicz, op. cit., p. 101–102.

man, as empirical studies on the perception and understanding of human existence, both in relation to the unique life of an individual as well as to the contemporary social life. Notably, the issues raised in this paper are vital also from the point of view of pedagogical sciences, as the cognitive representation of the world, comprehension and understanding of life are developed with a child along with its cognitive and emotional development via the information and external stimuli that the child receives. This in turn inspires us not only to consider the students' need to obtain support, but also to analyze the importance of this process in terms of their future life. It should be remembered that even the mere awareness that you can count on someone's help and support influences our sense of security, confidence and self-awareness. Moreover, to a child experiencing support might mean that life is as great a value in itself as another person is.

Finally, a thought and hope appears that perhaps it is not reluctance on the part of teachers, but a mere lack of knowledge on numerous existential problems and issues that puts these questions in the realm of symbols. Additionally, the dominating tendencies of contemporary social life that leave existential questions unanswered.

Perhaps while speaking about the need to innovate in the field of education, the mere work and person of the teacher and educator deserves a closer look. Dealing solely with innovative programme solutions including methodological, organizational and educational solutions might lead to disregarding the students themselves with their unique individuality and sensitivity. It must be remembered that it is the student who is the most important subject of the educational system and who should constitute the greatest value for every teacher.

Teacher's education, adventure and creativity

Małgorzata Kabat

Education, profession choice and creativity accompany teachers in all areas of their functioning. They are a condition for transformations appearing not only in the external environment, but also in the very process of gaining various pedagogical skills to properly show the world to a child as well as the mysteries of acquiring knowledge necessary in the modern civilisation. All sorts of an educator's predispositions and their educational preparation guarantees, then, an ability to cope with the tasks of the present and the future. Taking them up is not easy since social expectations and the dynamically changing reality cause various obstacles. Being able to deal with numerous problems reveals a teacher's talents, capacities, possibilities, optimism and wisdom, which are all effective elements of the profession. The enlisted values and striving for perfection by each teacher affect a child and his/her personalised development, conditioned by many external and internal factors, in a beneficial way.

The emerging polymorphism of the issues reveals the complicated nature of the profession of a teacher and the people being taught. They require education based on multi-faceted dialogue, personality formation, an actively realised didactic process, pursuit of knowledge, long-range and creative thinking. These features allow teachers to act satisfactorily and professionally towards a child, which may form his/her unstable physical and mental constitution in the right way and, at the same time, be an unforgettable experience of teaching others. The diverse activity of a teacher starts to bring success when the teaching and learning are adjusted to each individual's development. The quality of the developmental path, as emphasised by Brzezinska, is connected with a pupil's nature, the environment in which s/he functions[1], learns about the world,

[1] *Psychologiczne portrety człowieka. Praktyczna psychologia rozwojowa*, ed. A. Brzezińska, Gdańsk 2005, p. 5–19.

broadens horizons, and experiences a decreased rather than increased dose of stress and frustration. These things together start to create a positive atmosphere in which, among others, the minds and spirits of the partners in education complement each other, which brings about a sense of fulfilment in the profession of a teacher and for the pupil, thus becoming a wise adventure that lasts many years.

As Tischner wrote, *wisdom does not consist in cleverness, but in an ability to insist on self-evident truth. Those who choose showing self-evident truths will survive, and those who choose momentary illusion will fade with it.*[2] The author's words metaphorically show the sense of education participants' functioning, who meet in one educational environment regardless of the adopted strategy and style of acting and thinking. In this environment, as Feldman wrote, a concept of wise teaching should function, including a concept of: practical wisdom, which is developed in the course of classes, deliberation wisdom, which is an essential element of learning, i.e. discovering, searching, linking information, and wisdom in practice, which shall be related to oneself and others in the educational situation. The presented "constituents of wise teaching combine theory with practice together with interactions with others during the education process".[3] The demonstrated combination of multiple wisdoms, personalities and situations causes teaching and learning of individuals from the generation weaned on books, the one weaned on television and the one weaned on modern technologies. In this situation the following question arises: in what way does a teacher need to prepare for the profession and for showing a child the land of science so that it becomes open, simple, creative and interesting like an icon found in computer programs?

The answer to the above question is an important problem for the educator as well as the education process. Ancient thinkers already considered this issue. According to Plato, three constituents, i.e. wisdom given by the mind, courage coming from the sphere where human passions are born and self-control which holds power over desire, should be kept in harmony during the education process.[4] It is extremely difficult to develop the enlisted qualities in a graduate because education is based on solutions adopted at a given time and conditions. Presenting a lot of options within this text is impossible. That is why it has been limited to some selected issues.

An analysis of literature shows mutual penetration of various education conceptions, which, to a certain degree, draw attention to judicious, far-reaching

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[2] J. Tischner, aphorisms, sentences, quotations, info, www.cytaty.info/autorjozeftischner [access: 10.12.2013].

[3] U. Opocka, *Na drodze do profesjonalizmu*, Wrocław 2011, p. 19.

[4] P. Vardy, P. Grosch, *Etyka. Poglądy i problemy*, Poznań 1995, p. 27.

and creative effects on a teacher. Shaping the enumerated assets of an educator together with his/her creative qualities and activity is not unimportant for a young human being. A developing child needs a balanced influence, attention, knowledge and wisdom from a teacher. Therefore, they should be characterised by numerous features. The most important ones include the following:

- Openness and ability to communicate with young people, empathy.
- Technical and methodological competences.
- Respect for human dignity, subjectivity.
- A sense of justice and objectivity in assessing pupils.
- Being able to undertake dialogue and negotiate, a democratic style of leadership.
- Discipline and ability to demand, consistent behaviour, ability to support others in trouble.
- Tolerance, general and pedagogical manner.
- Ability to plan and organise one's own and team work.
- Motivation and ability to self-educate and improve one's craft (professional development).
- Sense of humour.

The characteristic features given above have an effect on shaping the desired assets not only in a teacher but also in pupils. They create a ground for cooperation, openness, positive interpersonal relations, in which discussions on different topics can be held in an interesting way, leading to creative activity.[5] Intelligent and anticipating behaviour is connected with providing a child with appropriate information, which should include the following:

- Improving psychological resistance.
- A sense of security in a small group.
- Support and motivation in a stressful situation.
- Harmony and techniques for movement coordination.
- Finding out about learning techniques and mnemonic devices.
- Improving creative thinking.
- Improving perceptive and motor functions needed for more efficient and faster learning, more careful listening and focusing attention".[6]

The guidelines proposed by Skibniewska-Kwiatkowska were derived from Dennison's method[7], which uses pupils' natural possibilities. A teacher must

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[5] M. Kabat, *Kreatywność w edukacji nauczyciela*, Poznań 2013, p. 94.

[6] A. Skibniewska-Kwiatkowska, *Prawa półkula i jej zasoby*, [in:] *III Forum wymiany doświadczeń nauczycieli twórczych i poszukujących*, ed. H. Stefańska, G. Zajdel-Padzik, J. Gajda, Mińsk Mazowiecki 2004, p. 18.

[7] C. Hannaford, *Zmyślne ruchy, które doskonalą umysł. Podstawy kinezjologii edukacyjnej*, Warszawa 1998; or: E. Dzionek, M. Gmosińska, A. Kościelniak, M. Szwajkajzer, *Kinezjologia edukacyjna*, Kraków 2010, p. 12–17.

find a way to obey them on his/her own. Their implementation shall be based on supporting a child in realising his/her ideas while carrying out tasks designed by the teacher, which appear in diverse methods of didactic work. The proposed approach evokes students' motivation and a positive attitude towards learning information from various subjects. Varied teaching forms used affect a child's receptors and abilities, which the teacher should recognise, selecting content including mental, literary, plastic arts, musical or kinaesthetic entertainment.[8] The presented way of teaching requires a lot of time and creativity, but, at the same time, constitutes a wise adventure revealing the teacher's creative abilities and satisfaction with the right choice of the educational trail.

Present-day offers of educating teachers search for concrete solutions. The implemented educational visions, as Denek writes, should be looked at broadly, deeply, in a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted way. This makes us start to "think about what should be improved in the Polish educational system, what should be developed and what should be resigned from".[9]

In this field discussions are going on to answer the question about what a good preparation of a teacher for the profession is. The reply to this question lies in gaining appropriate qualifications by the educator, which is conditioned not only by a specific education conception, frequently adjusted to external expectations, but also by his/her possibilities and talents. Many authors in our country and the world invoked and are still invoking them. They have shown a marriage of factors which is also created by the educational reality affecting a teacher's education to a greater or smaller extent. Education should give such qualifications to all graduates, including teachers, so that they can cope with a changeable environment. The ambiguity of the situation reveals a need to equip every individual with a given information system dependent not only on the educational system, but also on the aforementioned individual predispositions, flexibility and openness. They will be particularly useful when the so-called staff room wisdom myth appears. "It says that there is a huge gap, impossible to reduce, between educational theory and practice. Real knowledge about education is not contained in scientific theories or textbooks. It is created by practitioners and can be learnt only by practice. Pedagogical theories are not a useful tool to undertake reflection on one's own practice".[10] The myth blocks teachers' chances for development, being at the same time a simplified mythical way of thinking "impeding the search for essential relations in the pedagogical

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[8] H. Krauze-Sikorska, *Edukacja przez sztukę. O edukacyjnych wartościach artystycznej twórczości dziecka*, Poznań 2006.

[9] K. Denek, *15 lat obecności "Edukacji Jutra" u stóp Giewontu*, "Życie Akademickie", 2009, no. 12, p. 2.

[10] H. Kędzierska, *Mity pedagogiczne nauczycieli*, [in:] *Społeczno-kulturowe konteksty edukacji nauczycieli i pedagogów*, ed. H. Kwiatkowska, T. Lewowicki, Warszawa 2008, p. 116–212.

reality".[11] It inhibits the use of the acquired knowledge and teaching wisdom connected with motivating participants to learn the content of subjects.

An ability to distinguish between myths, events, facts and processes together with appropriate decisions made by the teacher can and does result from specific personal qualities, which start developing in early childhood. It is expressed in lowering the age of school initiation and mass development of institutional forms of adult education.[12]

Developing specific dispositions and pedagogical skills in a teacher results from taking into consideration a concrete education option and the society's demand for highly qualified specialists. Therefore, the problem of each human being's – a young or an adult one – education plays a fundamental role. This becomes a reason for formulating different conceptions of a teacher's education. The following ones are enlisted among the most important: 1. "a general conception (during studies a future educator should gain a lot of general knowledge); 2. a personality-related conception (in which shaping personality, individuality, attitudes and abilities desired in the profession is striven for); 3. a pragmatic conception (in which gaining diverse skills and competences useful in every-day work is emphasised); 4. a specialist conception (embracing education of a specialist teacher with narrow general education); 5. a progressive conception (aiming at preparing to solve complex, sometimes unusual and new educational problems); 6. a many-sided conception".[13]

In the conceptions presented, "on the one hand, a teacher's higher education was seen as a constant desire to raise qualifications, and on the other hand, it was connected with a need to expect changes in the approach to it, in the institutional and organisational structures of a university, which must adjust to the global indications of a given region or country".[14] The dilemmas emerging in this area influence education whose task was and is to make the best possible *product*. The *product* in an information society, according to Cellary, should "teach in the educational system not only to use knowledge, but also to create knowledge [...], because unconventional knowledge will be a condition for being competitive on the job market".[15] A child can already fathom all kinds of knowledge, which is passed on by a well-prepared and wise teacher, as

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[11] S. Dylak, *Nauczycielskie ideologie pedagogiczne a kształcenie nauczycieli*, [in:] *Pedagogika w pokoju nauczycielskim*, ed. K. Kruszewski, Warszawa 2000, p. 178.

[12] *Podstawy edukacji dorosłych. Zarys problematyki*, ed. D. Jankowski, K. Przyszczypkowski, J. Skrzypczak, Poznań 2003, p. 35–52.

[13] J. Szempruch, *Nauczyciel w zmieniającej się szkole: funkcjonowanie i rozwój zawodowy*, Rzeszów 2001, p. 131.

[14] F. Mayor, *The universal university*, "Higher Education Policy", 1998, no. 11, p. 249.

[15] W. Cellary, *Obywatele tworzący*, [in:] *Polska w drodze do globalnego społeczeństwa informacyjnego: raport o rozwoju społecznym*, ed. idem, Warszawa 2002, p. 130.

R. Sternberg or H. Gardner, among others, write.[16] These authors emphasise that the education of a small as well as adult human being takes place on multiple planes of humanistic, logical, social, psychological, physical and spiritual functioning, exposing their ability to deal with simple and complex situations and tasks. They can and are duplicated in the didactic and educational process. At the same time, alternative situations that require application of different conditions and ways of thinking in order to find a solution do happen. Their final effect is gathering information about introducing improvements in the methodological activity of a teacher, or about new proposals appearing in rigid institutional structures.

Accepting modifications in the profession of a teacher or selecting specific educational trends in the system provides a foundation to give up traditional thinking and prepare oneself to overcome the past teacher mentality and start heading towards, for example, transformative learning and creative competences development.[17] As Oplocka writes, transformative learning takes place when there is a conflict between the current state of knowledge and a sense of it not befitting our experience.[18] Children notice it very quickly, so the teacher should correct it so that no effects of internal cognitive structure alteration occur. They happen in a specific time perspective and are sometimes a painful experience of knowledge dysfunction, thus affecting the formation of inappropriate attitudes or beliefs in a young person. Hence, critical abilities, appearing also in the creative competence, are such important elements developing in a young human being.[19] The development of critical thinking in a child is an extremely important component of his/her functioning, since it ensures information recognition and fact analysis.

Any kind of abilities make it possible to equip pupils with a system of information that is used in an *intelligent* way in the external environment. This trend will be strengthened by awareness of one's own dispositions and an ability to switch between opposing emotional states in order to function effectively and maturely.[20] Efficient activity of a teacher and pupil will be expressed in a better ability to cope with failures, thus increasing the joy from the realised

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[16] R.J. Sternberg, E.L. Grigorenko, *Teaching for Successful Intelligence*, Thousand Oaks 2007, p. 35–38; H. Gardner, *Inteligencje wielorakie. Nowe horyzonty w teorii i praktyce*, Warszawa 2009, p. 61–79.

[17] See: K.T. Piotrowski, W. Ligęza, *Twórczość jako cel dydaktyczny w kontekście rozwijania kompetencji kreatywnej u uczniów*, [in:] *Twórczość dzieci i młodzieży. Stymulowanie, badanie, wsparcie*, ed. K.J. Szmidt, W. Ligęza, Kraków 2009.

[18] U. Opocka, op. cit., p. 34.

[19] *Kompetencje kreatywne nauczyciela wczesnej edukacji dziecka*, ed. I. Adamek, J. Bałachowicz, Kraków 2013, p. 129–154.

[20] K. Wojdyło, *Umiejętność przełączania się między przeciwstawnymi emocjami – czyli jak działać efektywnie i dojrzale*, "Nowiny Psychologiczne", 2008, no. 2, p. 17–30.

mission. Controlling one's emotions and experiences is extremely difficult, but significantly improves mutual relations, communication and the use of the acquired information not only by the teacher, but also by pupils, especially those talented ones that can be called *wise heads.*[21] A tough fight for them is ongoing, in order to win them and thus accelerate the development of the society, to become competitive for others.[22] Similar situations can be noticed in education, which tries to win talented[23] and, additionally, creative teachers who will fulfil the profession with commitment[24] and treat it as an adventure.

The considerations presented above aim at showing important points of the ongoing discourse on accepting and realising a specific educational model, in which the questions of forming a teacher's profile remain central. What is striven for is educating competent graduates, who will "have a rich inner being (...), will be able to make the right choices, will remain mentally immune, who love, have fun and work with passion for their whole life".[25]

The characteristics of a graduate distinguished by Tucholska and Gulla revealed the appearance of a different trend called new professionalism. It was presented by Golebniak and Teusz[26], who drew attention to the developmental and reflective conception of education embracing re- and deconstructionistic views. They were created, according to B. Golebniak, by shifting the category from individual or group teaching and learning to discursive knowledge originating from pedagogical practices which may be fathomed out in various places and spaces.[27] The shift coming into being is described as a transition from personal behaviour to social practice. Although the presented concept has been criticised for the fact that all actions depend on the teacher who is an expert in all areas, it is connected with the present-day individualism and the new strat-

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[21] *Zdolni w szkole czyli o zagrożeniach i możliwościach rozwojowych uczniów zdolnych. Poradnik dla nauczycieli i wychowawców*, ed. W. Limont, J. Cieślikowska, D. Jastrzębska, Warszawa 2012, p. 12–38.

[22] *Strategia rozwoju Polski do roku 2020*. *Tom II. Studia eksperckie na temat 20-lecia 2001–2020*, Warszawa 2001, p. 116.

[23] B.J. Lockman, *Theory and Development of Creativity for The Gifted*, Florida 2007, p. 8–10.

[24] Ch. Day, *Nauczyciel z pasją. Jak zachować entuzjazm i zaangażowanie*, Gdańsk 2008.

[25] K. Tucholska, B. Gulla, *Psychologia pozytywna – krytyczna analiza koncepcji*, "Studia z Psychologii w KUL", 2007, vol. 14, p. 115.

[26] B.D. Gołębniak, G. Teusz, *Studiowanie praktyki. Całościowa edukacja nauczycieli w uniwersytecie europejskim*, [in:] *Kształcenie nauczycieli w kontekście integracji europejskiej*, ed. W. Ochmański, Lublin 1997, p. 23–24.

[27] See: P.C. Calvo-Sotelo, J.R. Jimenez, *The architecture of higher education. University spatial models at the start of the twenty first century*, "Higher Education Policy", 2001, no. 14; or: D. Winnicka-Jasłowska, *Jakość przestrzeni publicznej w budynkach wyższych uczelni. Praktyczne zastosowanie metody POE w badaniach jakościowych w architekturze*, "Czasopismo Techniczne. Architektura", 2011, no. 2A/1, p. 252.

egy of higher education at the same time. It is based on Fuller's research[28], who noticed that *young teachers* achieve subsequent stages of professional development thanks to progressive activity. It stands in opposition to the concept of a teacher's developmental education where subsequent stages of professionalism are acquired by teaching the strategy of transition from *a novice* to an expert. Fuller maintains that education cannot be based on self-reflection or accepted standards; instead, there should be place for asking questions and a critical view on a given situation of a teacher.[29] Therefore, the above-mentioned *expertness* of a teacher is described as an ability to give sense to the debates which s/he participates in. S/He gains competences to *practise*, experiencing them personally.

Despite the promising prospects of the new professionalism, according to Hejnicka-Bezwinska, two characteristic lines of the present educational model are rather experienced. They are:

- Separating pedagogical education of teachers from pedagogical education of pedagogues.
- Resigning from widely-profiled education (philosophical and humanistic) and promoting narrowly-specialised professional education at universities.[30]

The nature of the enlisted routes of getting the teacher profession is somewhat deferred and according to the above-mentioned author, they are connected with the perennial dispute about how to teach as well as with the fact that teachers themselves are not listened to, which would allow to capture their mental changes. In order to educationally prepare a teacher it is not enough to increase the number of hours of psychology- and pedagogy-related subjects and pedagogical training; yet, the need to become a teacher occurs from the very beginning of the studies, during which the following crystallise: skills, personality, strategy, creative and pedagogical abilities, which many scientists in the world pay attention to.

The reminiscences from the above models of education have been used in the educational modules and the new strategy of university functioning in the Polish system. They refer to the idea of a university from late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Four principles were then realised: education of narrow specialisations, existence of an interdisciplinary facet, selection of two or more

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[28] R.I. Arends, *Uczymy się nauczać*, Warszawa 1998 (where M. Fuller's conception concerning a teacher's development can be found).

[29] Ibidem, p. 25 and next ones; B.D. Gołębniak, *Ku pedeutologii refleksyjnej – od "agresywnej" pewności do "łagodnej" perswazji*, "Teraźniejszość – Człowiek – Edukacja", 2001, no. 3, p. 204.

[30] T. Hejnicka-Bezwińska, *Kształcenie (i wykształcenie) pedagogiczne w warunkach promowania nieautorytarnych pedagogii*, [in:] *Źródła inspiracji współczesnej edukacji nauczycielskiej*, ed. H. Kwiatkowska, T. Lewowicki, Warszawa 1997, p. 31.

subjects and individualisation. The specified principles resulted in positive effects on education, which are nowadays connected with restructuring the university in the organisational layer, facilitating co-operation between various units and educational institutions. The restructuring should be treated accurately, as in the second decade of the 21st century resignation from the obligatory double specialisation is being proposed in favour of modular education, i.e. education consisting of diverse elements experienced at different time and theoretical education built on the basis of pedagogical practice.[31]

"Modularisation of education allows to more effectively apply subject knowledge (theory) to school, and then professional, practice, [...] where one of the effects is granting a teacher quite a lot of methodological autonomy, which means that they can decide about the choice of methods, forms and ways of working, being their authors".[32] Experience gained this way is "a valuable source allowing to modify the thematic and problem range of individual modules. Certain danger that may then appear is connected with teacher (in)competence in enforcing and evaluating the knowledge and skills which a pupil gets in an informal way. Another problem may also be teachers' insufficient ability to build modular curricula in such a way that they are compatible and fully integrated".[33]

In spite of the proposed modular education, a varied attitude towards it is observed. This is connected with the transformations on lower levels, being at the same time a medium of higher education, offering prospects for achieving qualifications and development for the person – teacher, who undertakes creative activity. Therefore, a teacher uses skills connected with a transformation of academic knowledge into instrumental one, conducive to adaptation to the environment, through individual activity as well as team functioning in changeable conditions, in which diverse problems are solved in a creative way.[34]

Preparing candidates for such diversification of activity and work as an adventure results from an appropriate organisational structure of a university, in which a specific teaching process developing intellectual assets, creative abilities and other features of a given person is carried out. The formation of specif-

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[31] L. Jastrzębska, *Wieczny spór, czyli o kształceniu nauczycieli*, https://sites.google.com/site/ksztalcenienauczycieli/home#_ftnref32 [access: 19.03.2015], p. 39.

[32] See: *Journal of Law* 2009 no. 89 item 730.

[33] G. Rura, *Kształcenie modułowe* (an expert opinion within the project: *Model innowacyjnych metod dydaktycznych w szkolnictwie zawodowym skutecznym elementem procesu dydaktycznego*), project IX, cofinanced by the European Union as part of the European Social Fund, Poznań 2012, p. 6.

[34] M. Kabat, op. cit., p. 48–49.

ic characteristics of education partners takes places, as P. M. Senge noticed[35], through "learning organisation, understood as a project, a construction of a constantly widening structure of elements, with a constantly occurring creative process with a future tone and meaning"[36] in the external reality. These issues have been emphasised in the development strategy for our higher education institutions, where among the most important problems those concerning the following have been singled out:

- A system of thinking understood as the whole of data and justified parts, to which an external understanding of the development of an individual knowledge organisation of an institution is added.
- Individual mastering of knowledge, facilitated by abilities
- The mind model set in an individual constitution of the unit.
- A specific vision concerning collective teaching, which properly influences the beliefs and functioning of people.
- The range of education connected with cooperation in the process of teaching, working, group co-operation, where education affects everyone, making it possible to find out about one's own structure, organisation, providing valuable tools of theoretical, practical or research application of education".[37]

The implementation of the above conditions fits into a concrete strategy for institution functioning and teacher education. It constitutes a source of motivation and formation of attitudes, bias, abilities, creativity, opinions, activity and realisation with the child an adventure with education during the didactic and educational process. An adventure as a word with multiple meanings is an interesting event, story, a wonderful experience[38] that can be found in didactic classes. The explanation of the term in the final phase of this text results from a deliberate procedure embracing finding out the characteristic properties of an adventure and the didactic process that may be a significant element of a teacher's profession. It should allow for information not only about the way of preparing a teacher for the profession, but also about him/her becoming a professional, who will be ready to accelerate the civilisation changes and thinking in future categories. It will cause a state of being open for alternative and creative solutions accepted in a specific educational system.

Summing up the whole of the considerations, it has been stated that the proposed and described selected solutions in the form of a specific educational

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[35] P.M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The art. and Practice of the Learning Organization*, New York 1990.

[36] Ibidem, p. 171.

[37] Ibidem, p. 172.

[38] *Słownik współczesnego języka polskiego*, ed. B. Dunaj, Warszawa 1998, vol. 2, p. 198.

model are not easy to fathom for the participants of the educational process. It is difficult to free oneself from the realities of the present time and live, as Toffler writes, with the rhythm of tomorrow.[39] People are quite unwilling to look ahead what they are currently experiencing. However, a teacher and his/her educational process should not only allow for historicity, the option of education realisation adjusted to the conditions, but also for the qualitatively new situation of the world, which enforces a search for the category of creative people able to cope with the new reality.[40] A teacher can be and, in fact, already is such a creative person, at the same time constituting a key to the realisation of transformations. It is him/her and his/her education that may contribute to becoming an important person for his/her pupils paying attention to the characteristic features facilitating activity and work that attract others.

Following others, also teachers, as Matczak notices, is connected with staying with a child longer, by virtue of one's function, power and being an object of strong emotions.[41] These three features, according to the author, make it possible to organise conditions for activity, being at the same time a source of behavioural patterns to be imitated due to the frequency of strengthening and activation of identification mechanisms. This becomes a reason for the existence of influence, which should be contained in a wise approach. It will be supported with the knowledge of positive psychology, which is oriented towards information about the joy of life, being fulfilled in it and achieving permanent satisfaction, which is obtained through the educational process and then established through one's profession, which may become the dream adventure with education and pupils. To make it last, according to J. Goethe's proposal, "a teacher must be able to inspire higher feelings for at least one good deed, because s/he achieves more than the one who fills our memory with infinite rows of natural subjects, classified according to their name and form".[42]

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[39] A. Toffler, *Powershift*, New York 1990, p. 208.

[40] H. Kwiatkowska, *Edukacja nauczycieli. Konteksty – Kategorie – Praktyki*, Warszawa 1997, p. 124.

[41] A. Matczak, *Rozwój ontogenetyczny człowieka*, [in:] Z. Włodarski, A. Matczak, *Wprowadzenie do psychologii*, Warszawa 1996, p. 198–223.

[42] www.czlowiek.wiersze.złotemysli.pl [access: 16.12.2011].

The gap between the student's assessment and the teacher's assessment of the student's work

Orli Noriany

One clear day two brothers went on a walk in the Antarctic. During the walk one the children stepped on thin ice. A crack appeared in the ice, and one brother fell into the icy water… his brother did not hesitate, did not waste time, but jumped into the freezing water and helped his brother get out. After a few minutes the children's parents arrived. The shocked and emotional parents found it difficult to believe the tale their children told them. How could a small child do such a thing without drowning? Suddenly an old man who had seen the incident approached them and told them: "I know how this child succeeded in saving his brother!" The father looked at him wonderingly and asked: "How?" The old man approached him and answered: "There was nobody there to tell him that he could not do it…"

I believe that it is necessary to tell students all the time that they can. I believe that it is necessary to encourage the students so that they will believe in their ability and will dare, will perform and will succeed. However, concurrently, it is necessary to instruct the students and to develop in them a realistic assessment. This article addresses the topic of realistic assessment – is this a learned skill?

Concepts[1]

Assessment is term that includes the full range of methods and means for obtaining information about the student's learning and value-oriented judgment

[1] The concepts were processed from: M. Birenboim, *Alternatives in Assessment of Achievements*, Tel Aviv 1997; D. Nevo, *Assessment as an Instrument for the Teacher: Benefit, Neglect, and Abuses*, [in:] *Assessment as an Instrument for the Teacher's Planning of the Studies*, ed. M. Zilberstein, Jerusalem 1989.

regarding the student's progress in the studies. Assessment addresses the quality of the performance. The types of assessment are formative and summative. The goal of formative assessment is to identify the scholastic needs, so that they can be filled in the continuation of the teaching. The goal is to improve the teaching and the learning. The goal of summative assessment is to obtain a general assessment of the student's level of achievements at the end of the unit of learning or at the end of a period of learning, for the purpose of giving grades. In this work we used summative assessment as formative assessment; in other words, we asked the student to assess his achievements in parallel to the teacher's assessment. We examined the gap between the assessments, and we used this gap to learn to assess the achievements in a realistic manner. We performed assessment for learning. According to Birenboim[2], the quality of the school professional community has a direct and indirect impact on the quality of the assessment for learning. In the process evidence on the learning is collected and interpreted. This interpretation is used to conclude where the learner is found in terms of the achievement of the teaching objectives. The most appropriate steps are undertaken for the learner to advance to the achievement of these objectives. This is assessment performed in stages.

The work in the school

This year we have returned to work according to a method in which we examine the students' knowledge after a mathematical topic is learned. The students perform a work in a topic we have finished learning and receive feedback. The work can be a computerized assignment or alternatively a written work, namely, a test. In the future, we return to the topic and we learn it in greater depth. The idea behind this method of work is to identify the student's strengths and weaknesses immediately after the topic is learned. In other words, the goal is to identify the students who understand the material, who know to implement it, and who know to use it for other purposes and in parallel to identify the students who have difficulties with the topic, who did not understand the topic in-depth, and who are not successful in it. We provide an appropriate pedagogical solution for each one of the groups and enable the students to undergo experiences of success. These works constitute a part of the grade that the students receive at the end of the half-year. The great advantage is that we do not leave any student to fail. We identify the difficulties and provide an appropriate response immediately. This rapid response does not allow the student to remain

[2] M. Birenboim, *Assessment for Learning*, "Hed HaChinuch" ("Echo of Education"*)*, 2007, no. 81 (7), p. 40–46.

in a state of lack of success over time. The moment that the difficulty is identified, a solution is provided, and then the student gets to experience success. The pedagogical response includes conversations with the teacher a number of times during the year. These conversations are very important. On the one hand, in these conversations the primary goal is achieved and the issue of the desired situation versus the extant situation is conveyed to the students. Namely, the student is informed of the objective to which he should aspire in comparison to his current reality, where he is found, and what he must do to achieve the desired objective. On the other hand, a personal relationship develops between the student and the teacher, a relationship that in many cases causes the students to want to invest, to learn, and to succeed in the profession ("self-fulfilling prophecy"). In this article we do not address the relation between the teacher-student communication and the empowerment of the achievements; the students' achievements rose but this is a topic for another article.

Twice a year we give tests that examine the accumulation of knowledge. These tests check all the topics of learning and all the levels of thinking. Throughout the year and especially before the tests that are held twice a year, we concentrate the efforts and perform assignments of implementation and comprehension in the class in diverse topics. In these assignments the students are required to identify the knowledge they have and to use it. Regardless of these tests on the accumulation of knowledge, we begin a lesson at least twice a week with assignments of application and comprehension, to maintain the ongoing and diverse activity over the course of the year.

The year is divided into two halves. In each half the student receives a grade. The grade is composed of the grades of the projects in the topic tests, the grades of the tests on the accumulation of knowledge that are held twice a year, and student conduct, namely, the student's cooperation during the lesson, preparation of homework, and participation. We are interested in allowing every student to succeed and thus we investigate different possibilities, and not just the tests on the accumulation of knowledge, which are not simple at all.

Assumption

As a sixth grade[3] homeroom teacher and mathematics teacher, I decided to examine whether the students know and succeed in realistically assessing their knowledge on the learned topic. My argument was that realistic assessment of knowledge is an acquired skill. I believe that the students will not succeed in

[3] In the Israeli educational system, the elementary school runs from first grade to sixth grade. Sixth grade is thus the last year of elementary school.

doing this without suitable experiences and learning. There is no doubt that this realistic assessment is an important, necessary, and required assessment.

The scholastic assessment we use is divided into six levels. In every level there is a numerical score, a verbal score, and a verbal assessment. In the school where I work, the numerical score is suited to the students of the fifth and sixth grades, the verbal score is suited to the students of the fourth grade, and the verbal assessment is suited for first to third grades. The verbal score and the assessment are also given to the higher grades, when the reverse is not possible. The topic of the tests was addressed in the previous year. A General Educational Circular on the topic was written, noting that in the State of Israel it was decided that the young students were not to be tested and therefore should not be give a score on a test or on an assignment. However, it is possible to give them work and in parallel to assess them on it, and this is what we do. In general, the entire topic of assessment and tests was organized in terms of the type, scope, and amount of assessment. For example, in the sixth grade it is possible to hold only one test a week. In the fifth grade it is possible to hold only one test every two weeks, while in the fourth grade it is possible to hold one test every three weeks. The adherence to the guidelines in this aspect enables students to focus and teachers to plan their annual assessment. Of course, every program is a basis for changes and flashes of inspiration, and this is what happens in actuality, but I will write about this activity at another time.

Example of assessment: Feedback for a test / assignment

Excellent	95 – 100	You display very great proficiency in the learned contents. Your test result is noteworthy.
Very good	90 – 94	You display very great proficiency in the learned contents.
Almost very good	85 – 89	You display great proficiency in the learned contents
Good	75 – 84	You display proficiency in the learned contents
Almost good	65 – 74	You display partial proficiency in the learned contents.
Adequate	55 – 64	You must improve your proficiency in the learned contents.
Inadequate	54	Did not meet the test requirements

At the beginning of the year we held the first summative work in writing on the topic of numbers and operations. The students received the assignment in which they were asked to respond to tasks of graduated difficulty on the topic.

At the start of the assignment, the first page was a page for assessment and feedback. The page was divided into two parts. In the first part the students had to assess their knowledge and their work on the topic. The students had to complete this assessment only after they finished their work on the summative assignment, saw the topics and the requirements appearing in the assignment, and realized that they have mastered – or have not mastered – the required skills and insights. The students had to fill out the feedback only after they did the work. In the second part there was an identical assessment form, which was supposed to be filled out by the teacher after she finished checking the assignment. Beyond the feedback filled out by the teacher, which addresses the success in tasks that appeared in the assignment, the teacher was supposed to address the work performed by the students through verbal assessment. In addition, it was important to address the students' assessment of themselves. The teachers collected the data and addressed the students' assessment with verbal assessment. Did the students assess their knowledge correctly? Or did the students assess their knowledge mistakenly? Did the students assess themselves higher than their work merited? Or did they underestimate their work? What is the cause of the mistaken assessment? Did the students think that different assignments would be given? Have the students mastered only some of the topics? Emphasis is placed on the writing of the teacher's feedback for the student's feedback, including clear reference to the student's assessment and a conversation that clarifies the origin of the difference and lack of match or alternatively encourages the successful assessment performed.

Feedback received by the sixth grade students

Operations with large numbers – subject test – sixth grade
What I know on the subject – Indicate the correct statement in the table

Excellent	I display very great proficiency in the learned contents. My test result is noteworthy.	
Very good	I display very great proficiency in the learned contents.	
Almost very good	I display great proficiency in the learned contents	
Good	I display proficiency in the learned contents	
Almost good	I display partial proficiency in the learned contents.	
Adequate	I must improve your proficiency in the learned contents.	
Inadequate	I have a problem!	

Now the teacher, after checking the test:

Excellent	You display very great proficiency in the learned contents. Your test result is noteworthy.	
Very good	You display very great proficiency in the learned contents.	
Almost very good	You display great proficiency in the learned contents	
Good	You display proficiency in the learned contents	
Almost good	You display partial proficiency in the learned contents.	
Adequate	You must improve your proficiency in the learned contents.	
Inadequate	You did not meet the test requirements.	

Comments:

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I see this feedback to be a breakthrough. We began a new pilot, when the chosen grade was the sixth grade, with the hope to continue similar work in the lower grades. The ability to take one step back and look at the activity, at the knowledge, at our understanding, is a non-simple ability that indicates maturity and overall perspective. We ask the students, sixth grade students, to stop for a moment and attempt to position their knowledge on the continuum. It is most important to talk with students about this activity, about the required maturity and about their choice as a pilot. It is important to convey the message that it is necessary to position the knowledge after the completion of the test questionnaire and not before it (I am not always aware of the requirements and the test focuses this.) The teacher will check the test and note where the student is found in terms of the continuum of the grades. It is important to examine the following questions. Is there correspondence between the results? Is there a gap between the student's positioning of his knowledge and the true results? Is this gap positive or negative? When reviewing the tests, it is necessary to talk with the student, to reflect the situation, and to examine the source of the gap, if it exists.

Results

In the first assignment we saw that the class was divided into three groups. The first group consisted of students who succeeded in correctly assessing the results of their knowledge and the results of their work. The second group con-

sisted of students who assessed the results of their work as higher than in reality, while the third group consisted of students who assessed the results of their work as lower than in reality. It was possible to see in two of the three groups of students the gap in the group. Some of the students erred by one rank, some by two, some by three, and a minority by four.

These summative assignments were returned to students. A class discussion and a personal discussion on the topic were held. The levels of thinking, both existing and required, in this type of work were explained to all the students. Every student received personal feedback that includes relevant reference to his work and personal reference to feedback he gave to himself. Personal conversations were held that focused the activity and strengthened the feedback that was written.

The following assignment given to the students was on the topic of fractions. The reference was identical. Before giving this assignment, we talked in class about the sub-topics that would appear in the work and the required levels of thinking. In this assignment, too, we saw the class divided into three groups. However, the number of students in each group was completely different. More students were correct in their assessment of their knowledge, while fewer students erred in this assessment. Of the students who erred in assessment, it was apparent that the mistake was closer to reality than in the first assignment. If in the first assignment we encountered a disparity of one, two, three, and even four levels, in this work more students assessed their knowledge differently by only one level. The gap became more realistic.

The third assignment was given on a subject from geometry – geometric shapes. In this assignment, too, the change continued in the same format. Is realistic assessment of knowledge an acquired skill? It is apparent that this is indeed the case.

The reinforcement we received when we attempted to see whether computerized work held in pairs using independent sources of information would influence the realistic assessment of the knowledge. We did indeed find a change. The feeling was that we went backwards and again encountered gaps in the assessment. It was clear that the preparation of the work together with the partner and the independent and free use of information sources confused and momentarily distorted the results. It was clear that here too work is required and that through the reflection of the required sub-topics, levels of thinking, and requirement in this type of assignment we can achieve greater fit between the teachers' realistic assessment and the differing students' assessment.

Data of the first sixth grade class

Data of the first sixth grade	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Computerized work in pairs
Student	**Start of year**	**Shapes**	**Fractions**	**Computerized work**
1	2+	0	0	2+
2	2+	0	0	2+
3	3-	0	0	2–
4	0	0	0	0
5	2–	0	0	2–
6	3+	2+	0	2+
7	1+	0	0	1+
8	1–	0	0	1–
9	1-	0	0	0
10	2+	1–	0	2+
11	2+	2+	1+	2+
12	2+	0	0	2+
13	0	0	0	0
14	2+	1–	0	2+
15	2+	0	0	2+
16	4+	2+	1+	2+
17	1-	1-	0	1–
18	1+	3–	1–	1+
19	1+	1+	1+	1+
20	0	0	0	0
21	2+	1+	0	2+
22	1+	3-	1-	1+
23	1+	0	0	1+
24	1–	0	0	1–
25	2-	1-	0	2–
26	2+	1+	0	2+
27	1+	0	0	1+
28	0	3–	1-	0
29	1+	0	0	0
30	0	1–	0	0
31	1-	0	0	1–
32	1+	4–	1–	0
33	2–	1–	0	2–
34	3+	1–	0	2+

Data of the first sixth grade	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Computerized work in pairs
Student	**Start of year**	**Shapes**	**Fractions**	**Computerized work**
Total	23+	11–	1–	18+
Number positive	20 positive	6 positive	3 positive	18 positive
Percentage positive	58.82%	17.65%	8.82%	52.94%
Number zero	5 zero	17 zero	27 zero	8 zero
Percentage zero	14.71%	50%	79.42%	23.53%
Number negative	9 negative	11 negative	4 negative	8 negative
Percentage negative	26.47%	32.35%	11.76%	23.53%

Data of the second sixth grade class

Data of the first sixth grade	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Computerized work in pairs
Student	**Start of year**	**Shapes**	**Fractions**	**Computerized work**
35	1–	3 +	1+	1–
36	2–	1 +	0	3–
3	2–	1 +	0	2–
38	2–	1 +	0	1-
39	2–	0	0	2-
40	3-	1–	0	3–
41	1-	0	1+	1–
42	1–	0	1+	1–
43	2–	3 +	1+	1–
44	4–	1 +	0	4–
45	0	2 -	0	0
46	2–	1–	0	2–
47	0	0	0	0
48	4–	1–	0	3–
49	1+	1 +	1+	1+
50	1–	0	0	1–
51	5–	1–	0	3–
52	1–	1 +	0	1–
53	0	1 +	0	0

Data of the first sixth grade	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Computerized work in pairs
Student	**Start of year**	**Shapes**	**Fractions**	**Computerized work**
54	3–	1 +	0	3–
55	3–	1 +	0	3–
56	1–	1 +	0	1–
57	2+	1 +	1+	2+
58	2–	0	0	1–
59	0	0	0	0
60	0	2 +	1+	0
61	4–	1 +	1+	3–
62	3–	1 +	0	4–
63	0	0	0	0
64	1–	0	0	1–
65	0	1 +	0	0
66	2–	0	0	2–
67	0	0	0	0
68	2–	0	0	2–
69	1–	0	0	1–
Total	51–	16+	8+	47–
Number positive	2 positive	17 positive	8 positive	2 positive
Percentage positive	5.71%	48.57%	22.86%	5.71%
Number zero	0 zero	13 zero	27 zero	8 zero
Percentage zero	22.86%	37.14%	77.14%	22.86%
Number negative	25 negative	5 negative	0 negative	2 negative
Percentage negative	71.43%	14.29%	0%	71.43%

Summary and conclusions

The students' assessment in the two sixth grades in comparison to the teacher's assessment, in the class tests, and in the computerized work was examined. In the first class in the first test a great gap was observed; the students' assess-

ment was not realistic. Five students from the first class, constituting 14.71%, succeeded in correctly assessing their achievement. In the calculation of the summary of the deviation the result was +23, namely, that many students think that their score will be higher than the score they obtained in reality. In the second test, the gap is lower, 50% of the students succeeded in correctly evaluating and the sum of the deviations was –11, while in the third test, 79.42% of the students correctly assessed and the sum of the deviations was –1. We see, on the one hand, how the percentage of students who correctly assess the score increased and on the other hand, how the disparity between the deviations lessened. Namely, we see that we are going in the right direction and that the students learned to assess themselves realistically. Reinforcement of this situation was obtained when we gave the computerized work in pairs, where the opening data were different and apparently this is the reason for the decline, only 23.53% of the students succeeded in assessing correctly the score while the disparity was +18. In other words, many students assessed the score as higher than in the reality.

In the second class, in the first test a large gap was observed. The students' assessment was not realistic. Eight of the students from the second class, constituting 22.86%, succeeded in correctly assessing their achievements (a larger number than in the first class). In the calculation of the sum of the deviation the result was –51, namely, many students think that their score will be lower than the score they obtained in reality (a larger number than in the first class). In the second test, the gap declined: 37.14% of the students succeeded in correctly assessing their results and the sum of the deviation was +16 (a very great change and in the opposite direction), while in the third test 74.14% of the students correctly assessed their results and the sum of the deviations was only +8. In this class, too, the trend of change is apparent. We see, on the one hand, the percentage of students who correctly assessed their results rose and, on the other hand, the gap between the deviations lessened; namely, we see that we are moving in the right direction and that the students in this class learned to assess themselves realistically. We obtained reinforcement of this situation when we gave the computerized work to pairs, where the opening data were different and apparently this is the reason for the decline: only 22.86% of the students succeeded in correctly assessing their score while the gap of the deviation was –47. In other words, many students assessed their grade as lower than in reality.

A look at the two classes together shows:

Total	**28–**	**+5**	**+7**	**29–**
Number of positives	22 positive	23 positive	11 positive	20 positive
Percentage of positives	31.88%	33.33%	15.94%	29.0%
Number of zero	13 zero	30 zero	54 zero	16 zero
Percentage of zero	18.84%	43.48%	78.26%	23.19%
Number of negatives	34 negative	16 negative	4 negative	33 negative
Percentage of negatives	49.28%	23.19%	5.80%	47.81%

A look at the two classes together, at the 69 students, shows that the teachers worked correctly and the gap between the assessments lessened. The percentage of students who succeed in assessing themselves correctly and realistically grew. The sum of the deviations between the results reduced when working in the process in the subject tests. When we changed the situation, namely, the assignment was computerized work in pairs, the results returned to the original state. Now if we want a change, then it is necessary to work. I believe that when we examine the students' assessment in tests of accumulated knowledge, we will again start from the beginning and to see results we will need to go through the process. Since, as aforementioned, to create a fit between the teacher's assessment and the student's assessment, it is necessary to use summative assessment as formative assessment, it is necessary to examine the gap between the assessments, to talk with the students, and to examine the meaning of the gap to eliminate it.

A two-year-old child as a participant of nursery school life

Anna Mikler-Chwastek

Debates and doubts over six-year-olds going to schools have not yet ceased when new questions are beginning to arise in the minds of parents, teachers, psychologists, and educationalists. This time, however, they concern a different age group and come down to the following: *Can two-year-olds attend nursery schools?* Although according to the law[1] places in such institutions are reserved for children at the age of three (and above), the media more and more often report that changes are being planned. If the changes are introduced, is nursery school really going to be an appropriate place for a two-year old? Are the fears of some parents and teachers legitimate? Wherever a human being is at issue, the answer is neither simple nor unambiguous. This is because there are many factors that determine whether such a young child is able to cope in a new and previously unfamiliar setting or fails even to go through the very process of adaptation. Some of them can be classified as biological factors, connected with maturity, but other large groups are social factors – those connected with the influence of adults – and technical ones, related to the institution's organisational forms.

Biological, social, and technical factors conducive to the adaptation and functioning of two-year-olds in nursery schools

There will always be a group of children who are simply not yet mature enough to cope with the duties of a nursery school pupil. They will be up against adaptation difficulties and the emotional costs they bear will exceed the possible

[1] *The Education System Act*, 1991, as amended.

benefits from taking up pre-school education. These children should not struggle with such serious difficulties and it will be better for them to remain in a stable domestic environment somewhat longer (for a few more months at least). After that period, they will most probably succeed in taking up the role of nursery school pupils and adaptation difficulties will no longer be so dramatic.

Since two-year-olds functioned quite well in crèches (though such institutions were not numerous and thus not available for everyone interested in their services), they may also find their place in nursery school reality. However, that reality itself needs proper preparation. Therefore, instead of asking if two-year-olds can attend nursery schools, we should ask the following question: *Are nursery schools ready to look after such young children?*

At this point, the problem of adjusting child care institutions to the needs and capabilities of young children (post-infants) appears. It turns out that two-year-olds have needs and requirements that are somewhat different than their slightly older friends' (three-year-olds'). First of all, they need virtually constant contact with an adult. Because of their developmental needs, they want to imitate and observe the adult, and, above all, they want to feel her or his presence, which gives them a high sense of security. For this reason, *crèche groups* should be small (up to ten children), and they should have two teachers and additional assistance staff permanently working with them. This is also important for reasons of safety and the organisation of teachers' work. The younger the children who struggle with self-reliance deficiencies, the more helping hands are needed.

Two-year-olds also require a somewhat different daily schedule. Due to their high fatigability and shorter concentration spans, they need activities with changing dynamics and shorter duration than three-year-olds do. Moreover, two-year-olds need special time for sleeping. More and more institutions abandon nap time (even in younger groups) in favour of a short rest (relaxation). But in the group of two-year-olds nap time is extremely important and must not be dismissed. The after-lunch sleep of two-year-olds may last up to two or even two and a half hours, which means nap time cannot be reduced to merely laying children on mattresses or on the floor. Babies as young as this will require folding beds, bedclothes, and pyjamas; their sleeping time must not be shortened in favour of educational or extra activities.

We can certainly say that nursery school is the teachers. The better they are and the more they focus on the children, the better. They must not only show special interest in children and their needs but also be well-familiar with the specifics of working with post-infants. This is because children have different needs at different ages. They differ in terms of both skills and knowledge acquired. At each developmental level they display different capabilities. It is therefore vital to be aware of the specifics of the psychomotor development of

the youngest nursery school pupils. The indispensable knowledge concerns not only problems characteristic of each sphere of psychomotor development but also the ways of taking care of such children as well as protecting and feeding them. Even though two-year-olds are already capable of eating solids, many of them still have problems with biting and swallowing solid food. As a result of numerous mistakes made by adults, some two-year olds are still at the stage of mixing food, which will make it much more difficult for them to function in nursery school. Teachers of crèche groups have to be ready to confront problems of this kind.

Another problem is the proper preparation of the young child for the role of a nursery school pupil. Responsibility for this will certainly rest with the parents and other closest people taking care of the child. It is also on their approach that the success of the adaptation process depends.

The process of the child's adaptation to nursery school

It is adults taking care of the child who play the key role in the adaptation process. Naturally, the teachers' attitude and the two-year-old's maturity sufficient to begin nursery school education are not without significance, either.

In every group of young “recruits” it is possible to distinguish three subgroups according to the level of and aptitude for adaptation to the new conditions:

- Children who display no adaptation difficulties,
- Children with typical temporary adaptation difficulties, lasting as long as 6 weeks (after a short time the child adapts to the new conditions and functions well in nursery school),
- Children who exhibit excessive (specific) difficulties, whose adaptation will be unsuccessful or will take a very long time, incurring considerable losses of emotional and social nature.

The cause of many problems with adaptation to nursery school can be the wrong attitude and behaviour of parents who:

– “Frighten” children with nursery school by saying: *You will see, at the nursery school things are not going to be the way they are at home*,
– Neglect to prepare children to enter the new world: the young person is simply brought to a new and unfamiliar place one day, without any prior warning,
– Have a store of unpleasant childhood experiences (because, for example, they had a bad teacher) and are now anxious about their child; the prob-

lem is that the anxiety gets quickly transmitted to the child, who is afraid of nursery school before even knowing what it is all about,
- Neglect to introduce nursery school rules at home (for instance, a regular and organised rhythm of the day),
- Overprotect the child, who is not allowed to decide on basic issues, has not learnt to establish the simplest social relations, is unable to make a simplest decision and passively relies on adults to decide (e.g. when it comes to the choice of activity or toy),
- Do not pay attention to the child's self-reliance, particularly as regards self-service. Basic skills give the child a certain degree of independence and strongly influence self-esteem. The more self-reliant a child is, the more quickly it will adapt to the new conditions. For this reason, parents should pay special attention to the the skills of eating unassisted (with a spoon and a fork), drinking from traditional mugs, dressing and undressing (at least partially), signalling physiological needs, and communicating with adults. Without these skills, the child will be helpless and forced to wait for constant help from teachers and minders, which is not an easy thing in a group of several children.

Excessive difficulties in adaptation may also be caused by teachers who:
- Work without so-called *vocation* (ones who display a disapproving attitude towards the young child and their parents);
- Begin activities without respecting the adaptation period (which may last even up to a few weeks),
- Do not pay attention to the needs and capabilities of the child,
- Show no interest in the information concerning the child (its ways of communicating, food preferences, etc.) provided by their parents.

The adaptation process usually takes a few weeks (4-6); it takes that long because the young child:
- Is changing the environment completely and getting to know a setting they have never dealt with before,
- Encounters a different educational system,
- Still has low social competence,
- Does not trust the staff, whom they do not know yet,
- Is not familiar with the space they have been placed in,
- Does not understand the daily routine, which makes them feel confused and insecure.[2]

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[2] What is important is that there is no clear connection between the child's age and their adaptation to nursery school (the experience of teachers even shows that two-year olds adapt better than older children); girls adapt to nursery school better than boys; there is a connection between a child's adaptation and its earlier development (normal development = better adapta-

Ways of minimizing adaptation difficulties

- It is advisable to know the nursery school that child is going to attend (e.g. check the opinions of friends or Internet users).
- It is worth taking part in the so-called "nursery school open days" when it is possible to meet the staff and get acquainted with the offer concerning education and child care.
- One may also take the child for a stroll near the nursery school so that he or she can observe its pupils at play.
- It is advisable to praise the institution as early as a few months before the child is to go there.
- When parting with the child, parents should be calm and smile.
- One must not give up during the first weeks, when partings are difficult (children usually stop crying when they remain with peers).
- It is advisable to collect the child earlier during the first weeks.
- If the mother cries together with the child at the nursery school, the father should take over her duties.
- After coming back from nursery school it is worth talking in a joyful atmosphere about what happened.
- It is a good idea to take the child shopping: let them choose the school bag, shoes, and toiletries.

Who will find it easier to adapt to nursery school conditions?

It might seem that two-year-olds do not have particularly high self-service skills. This, regrettably, is usually the fault of adults taking care of the child, as they make little of the process of acquiring skills connected with the simplest everyday activities. Two-year-olds turn out to be capable of doing quite a good deal if only parents and minders make every effort to ensure that the child learns these things. Practice and experience shows that two-year-olds should be able to[3]:

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tion); the standard of living, social status, or the formal structure of the family do not determine nursery school adaptation; the educational system, the environment preceding nursery school (family, crèche, babysitter) as well as the acquisition of positive and negative experiences affect adaptation; the nursery school environment (the educational system of the nursery school, the number of children, material conditions) also has an influence. Confer: G. Sochaczewska, *Środowiskowo-wychowawcze uwarunkowania procesu adaptacji dzieci 3–4 letnich do przedszkola*, [in:] *Materiały do nauczania psychologii*, ed. L. Wołoszynowa, series II, Warszawa 1982, vol. 9.

[3] A. Mikler-Chwastek, *Co dzień bardziej samodzielne. Program wspomagania rozwoju małych*

- Eat some dishes on their own, such as sliced sandwiches or fruit,
- Eat with a spoon,
- Spear food with a fork and carry it to the mouth,
- Drink from a mug on their own,
- Put on shoes (even if they do it incorrectly sometimes),
- Cooperate when dressing and undressing themselves,
- Put on and take off trousers, socks, pants, an undone jacket or blouse, or a cap,
- Wash and wipe their hands,
- Communicate physiological needs,
- Start using a potty and a toilet.

A child who has acquired basic self-service skills will certainly find it easier to adapt to nursery school conditions. As far as requirements are concerned, a nursery school pupil is expected to:

– Wash hands,
– Use the toilet,
– Communicate his or her needs,
– Eat with a spoon and fork and drink from regular mugs,
– Move up and down the stairs unaided,
– Be able to ask for help,
– Be able to undress and dress themselves (at least partly).

Nursery school conditions will be easier to adapt to for those children who have spent time before with familiar people (a babysitter, neighbours) or have attended another educational institution (a crèche, a children's club, or the like).

What is extremely important for the adaptation process and for subsequent functioning at the nursery school is the adequate level of verbal and non-verbal communication. Parents often happen to understand their child perfectly even if the child does not communicate efficiently. They recognise gestures and facial expressions and are able to identify different syllable clusters as specific utterances. A teacher at the child care institution is in a completely different situation. He or she does not know the child and does not understand their non-typical communication. Therefore, the best situation is one in which the child simply speaks, especially as two-year olds are already at the lingual level and:

– Are starting to speak in sentences,

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dzieci w zakresie samoobsługi dla terapeutów, nauczycieli i rodziców, Gdańsk 2013, p. 43–44; eadem, *Wychowanie i wspieranie rozwoju małych dzieci. Dwulatki – program dla przedszkolnych grup żłobkowych, żłobków, klubów dziecięcych i domów*, Warszawa 2013, p. 23–24. For more information on the development level of children in post-infancy see: M. Przetacznikowa, H. Spionek, *Wiek poniemowlęcy*, [in:] *Psychologia rozwojowa dzieci i młodzieży*, ed. M. Żebrowska, Warszawa 1982, p. 343–413; M. Przetacznik-Gierowska, G. Makiełło-Jarża, *Psychologia rozwojowa i wychowawcza wieku dziecięcego*, Warszawa 1985.

– Have a vocabulary of 100-500 words (although there are two-year-olds with a very rich active and passive vocabulary, who are talkative and at the same time able to speak efficiently in sentences),
– Listen when they are spoken to,
– Know basic gestures of non-verbal communication (negating and nodding),
– Turn to adults for help or convey requests using gestures (by pulling someone's arm).[4]

They do not, of course, have to use the language fluently but should at least be able to communicate their needs. However, there are also nursery school pupils who have problems with this – for example, due to their individual developmental profile (they are still not mature enough) or due to developmental delay in the sphere of speech and communication. What is the cause of such significant differences in the communication level between young children? What factors influence speech development? There are numerous factors that determine correct speech development, but the following three are the most important:

– **biological factors**: the maturity of the central nervous system and nervous structures, connected with communication; the course of the prenatal and perinatal periods; diseases, e.g. of the ears,
– **psychological factors**: a sense of emotional bond with a close adult; motivation to communicate; the need for social contact; emotional readiness to communicate; the ability to control the process of speaking,
– **external factors**: the influence of the environment; the number of stimuli; the ways of taking care of the child; the frequency of speaking to the child.[5]

Therefore, if the child has problems with communication, parents should help the teacher by creating a glossary of the words or gestures the child uses. It will probably be useful only for a short period of time, but it will certainly be an invaluable aid for the teacher during the child's first days at the institution.

What is also important for the adaptation process is parental attitudes. Adaptation will be much easier for those children whose parents are reasonable and avoid extreme attitudes (overprotectiveness or rigorism). Parents who accept the child, cooperate with them, are involved in their life, give them reasonable freedom as well as recognise and respect their rights will raise a person open to new challenges and not troubled by fears. Such a situation fosters the process of adaptation not only to the nursery school but also to other new situations in life. Children whose parents reject them, avoid contact, and protect them excessively or demand too much will find it considerably more difficult to adapt to new settings and conditions.

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[4] A. Mikler-Chwastek, *Wychowanie i wspieranie rozwoju…*, ed. cit.

[5] Z. Dołęga, *Promowanie rozwoju mowy w okresie dzieciństwa – prawidłowości rozwoju, diagnozowanie i profilaktyka*, Katowice 2003, p. 29.

Cooperation with parents as a factor conducive to two-year-olds' nursery school adaptation

Since many critical opinions (not always expressed by competent people) appear in the media concerning two-year-olds in nursery schools, numerous parents have mixed feelings and are not sure whether or not the decision to send their two-year-old to such an institution is the right one. Some wonder if they will not harm their child and whether nursery school is an appropriate place for such a young child. There are also parents who change their minds and want to take the nursery school pupil back home, although the child has adapted quite well to the new conditions. For all parents, without exception, the decision to send their offspring to nursery school is certainly important and stressful. Therefore, institutions that have decided to take responsibility for two-year-olds should extend their care to their parents as well. The most effective way to do this will be to organise a meeting or a series of information and education meetings. A well-organised meeting with crèche group teachers will allow parents to overcome their fears and anxiety. Guardians will be given an opportunity to become acquainted with the specificity of the institution, with its offer concerning education and child care, as well as with the teacher. An interesting way (for both children and parents) to overcome the barriers and adapt more easily will be to organise adaptation meetings, lasting a few days[6]. They are an excellent opportunity for both parents and children to observe the functioning of the nursery in a safe way.

Conclusion

Can two-year-olds benefit from pre-school education and upbringing? There certainly is a group of children who exhibit developmental maturity and will have no problems in coping with the change of environment. There will also always be children for whom it is still too early and in whose case this decision needs to be postponed. What remains the most important issue is the proper preparation of teachers and institutions themselves for the admission of two-year-olds. The education of parents and support for small children – potential nursery school pupils – is also of importance.

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[6] More information can be found in: A. Mikler-Chwastek, *Dwulatki w przedszkolu. Szanse i zagrożenia*, [in:] *Wyzwania współczesnej edukacji przedszkolnej*, ed. M. Kotarba-Kańczugowska, Warszawa 2012, p. 149–167.

Learning by children in the embodied-embedded mind concept

Renata Michalak

The main thought in this paper is to treat the body as a factor that plays the major role in the process of learning, as well as to underline the role of the culture in it. Human cognition is significantly shaped by corporal experience. Perception, notions, conceptions, memory, understanding, cognitive development, language, emotions, awareness are considerably grounded in the body. "Knowledge depends on being in a world that is inseparable from our bodies, our language, and our social history – in short, from our embodiment".[1] "The body is a vehicle of being in the world, and having a body is, for a living creature, to be intervolved in a definite environment, to identify oneself with certain projects and be continually committed to them".[2] Everyone's body is always engaged among things so much that it is them that express the character of its existence. It is a hidden horizon of experience that is always present before conscious reflection.[3] Thanks to the body, the learner takes a stance towards to the world, the corporality becomes its main condition for gaining experience. Thus, the corporality indicates the ubiquity of corporeal mechanisms of learning. What is more, the body plays a special role in it, because it becomes a certain border or space for meeting the subjective world with the external world that is objective. It enters an active and dynamic relation with the world and forms it, but at the same time it is formed by the world. Overcoming one's limitations, possibilities and developing one's personal competences is reflected not so much in the abstract attitude of an individual, but in its incessant engagement in the world. Furthermore, the body sets a certain central perspective

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[1] F.J. Varela, E. Thompson, E. Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, Cambridge 1991, p. 149.

[2] M. Merleau-Ponty, *Fenomenologia percepcji*, Warszawa 2001, p. 100.

[3] A. Kapusta, *Cielesność i zaangażowanie w perspektywie epistemologicznej*, "Zagadnienia Naukoznawstwa", 2009, vol. 1 (179), p. 69–106.

of cognition and its scope, and it is a special instrument for action. The body is also not only a home for the mind. "The body and mind are various aspects of current interactive process linked to the broadly understood experience. To say that one has a body is like claiming that one has an organism capable of complex interactions and sharing meanings, as well as getting involved in various ways of studying and reasoning, and coordinating these activities with other individuals through common symbols".[4]

Conceptualisation of learning. From behaviourism to connectivism

The complexity of the process of learning and its determinants makes it hardy possible to describe it fully and clarify on the basis of one theoretical system. The defining of learning will always depend on the theoretical perspective adopted. For a behaviourist, it will be a process leading to noticeable changes in the conduct of an individual influenced by the manipulation of external conditions in which it happens and operation of a suitable system of enhancements. A cognitivist will describe learning as a process of acquiring knowledge in the form of a mental representation of the world. A supporter of computationism will narrow its essence to carrying out objective, algorhytmical transformations of symbols that represent features of reality, whereas a connectivist will focus on its dispersed network processing. Still a constructivist will define learning as a process of building individual understanding of the world influenced by experiences gathered in active interaction with the world of people and objects. In the broadest sense, learning is a process of an individual's adaptation to the conditions and requirements of the environment and begins at the moment of birth, or even conception, and ends at the moment of death.

For these reasons, it is possible to distinguish in its course various stages of each individual's learning, and specific mechanisms and methods related to it. Especially referring to the results of neuroscientific research, it is assumed that childhood is the most sensitive period in terms of any forms of learning.[5]

Views on learning by children evolved dynamically over the last couple of decades. Till 1960s, the approach to the nature of children's thinking and learning was determined by behavioural psychology. The explanations on the phenomenon of cognition in behaviourism were simplified by its creator, John Watson, who brought them down to observable reactions and conduct as a re-

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[4] Ibidem, p. 105.

[5] A. Gopnik, A. Meltzoff, P. Kuhl, *Naukowiec w kołysce. Czego o umyśle uczą nas małe dzieci*, Poznań 2004.

sponse to stimuli from the environment. His analysis omitted mind or awareness completely. Behaviourists would convince that it is possible to reasonably study and explain human behaviour without referring to those metaphysical concepts. What was the essence of behaviourism was a subject of criticism, and together with the criticism an interdisciplinary field of science known as cognitive science, began to emerge. Theories of learning based on the behaviourist paradigm, in short called "S-R", already deeply rooted in thinking and educational practice, had to yield to concepts that placed an active child and their internal world in the centre. This is when the innovative approach was expressed in describing taking action and solving problems as the main mechanism of learning. Irrespective of discrepancies, the creators of these concepts, such as J. Piaget, J. Bruner and L. Vygotsky, pointed their attention to the child's readiness to learn, critical periods and internal motivation. However, they would attach different value to the role of social and cultural factors in their cognitive development. J. Piaget acknowledged social experiences and interpersonal behaviours are a component of the child's growth, however they play a secondary role with regard to their nature. When taking action, the child builds their own understanding of the world and gradually gains skills to rule over it. However, J. Bruner and L. Vygotsky put much more stress in this process on the role of other social factors, culture, as well as symbolic systems that were created within it (language, books, diagrams, pictures etc.). According to psychologists, these systems influence the child's learning and growth in a dynamic and constructive way. Both J. Bruner and L. Vygotsky thought social relations the child enters an incredibly significant mechanism of its cognitive development, which is confirmed by notions such as zone of proximal development in the Russian scholar's concept or scaffolding in Bruner's theory. These differences made J. Piaget's theories be called a constructivist approach, whereas J. Bruner and L. Vygotsky's were tagged as social constructivism. Although the approach to the way, method or strategy of a child's learning is different among psychologists, they are quite similar in their understanding of knowledge as an effect of the process of learning and the essence of this process itself. They identify learning with the process of incessant restructuring of knowledge. On the other hand, they define knowledge as a structure of human mind, as a representation of the world where the man lives and acts. This representation is built by the man gradually, just like their experience develops, and in the direction of increasing abstractness and arbitrarity in the symbolic content of thinking.[6] It is only necessary to add at this point that according to the Swiss scholar the levels of child's thinking are precisely defined and it is

[6] D.Wood, *Jak dzieci uczą się i myślą. Społeczne konteksty rozwoju poznawczego*, Kraków 2006, p. 210.

them that absolutely determine their behaviour, whereas both J. Bruner and L. Vygotsky claimed that with suitable support (instruction) it is possible for a child to achieve a given level much earlier.

The views of leading representatives of the theories of learning dominating in the second half of the 20th century greatly contributed to the understanding of the process of cognitive development of children. Assuming that children learn and develop in a different way than adults, and thus need other support, lay foundations of creating more and more effective educational systems. Simultaneously, directing the attention to mental processes that on the one hand condition the effectiveness of learning and on the other hand their modification is its result became a predictor for changes in how human nature is presented and studied. The Discovery that learning is of mental character and not purely behavioural was thus incredibly important for the practice of learning and for the social practice. This infiltration in the mental world of an individual gradually became more and more possible thanks to technological development. Inventing new means of transmitting information, such as radio, television or computer has greatly influenced the perception of man and then the shaping of the theory of learning. The growth and improvement of systems of electronic communication was possible not only due to inventing new devices, but also thanks to the creation of communication theories. Delighted with the theoretical progress in the field of electronics, scientists created fruitful analogies expressing their ways of construction and perception of human skills. The concept of "a man as an imperfect/limited system of processing information" developed incredibly fast as early as during World War II. In 1960s there were even attempts at creating a unified theory of abilities on the pattern of mathematical models. The comparison of man to the computer became one of the most common and popular metaphors present both in psychology and philosophy. An approach based on the idea of processing information provided a tool for describing the construction of models of particular areas of human activity, and the computational presentation of the human mind is one of the pillars of current cognitive science.[7] Despite the attempts at replying to the question of the nature of mind, this model, similarly to behaviourism, omitted the issues of awareness and subjectivity of cognition. In 1980s, along with the development of artificial neural networks, a new approach, called connectivism, appeared in cognitive science. For the supporters of this approach the fundamental model of cognition is the network model where cognitive processes are carried out in neural networks that change dynamically. These simple neural connections generate complex cognitive processes. Critics of both approaches underline that connectivism is simply a new form of computationism, with the

[7] Ibidem, p. 10–11.

only difference being the fact that it replaced the centralized model of computation with a dispersed model. Both computationism and connectivism present the mind as a system of processing data and marks boundaries for the cognitive system that are too narrow.[8] On the other hand, S. Pinker notices that connectivism is not an alternative for the computational theory of mind, but its variety, and its essence is in claiming that the main type of information processing taking place in the mind is a function of many variables. What is more, connectivist networks are not particularly realistic models of the brain, despite their optimistic etiquette of "neural networks".[9]

Connectivism found its practical application in the theory of learning which became a showpiece of the digital era. Analysing the limitations of other concepts of learning, such as behaviourism or constructivism, G. Siemens and P. Downes created a new one based on the network metaphor with its far-reaching nodes and connections. The process of learning consists in building networks and connections between various nodes that are understood as information, data, resources, feelings, pictures and other. In his publication "Connectivism: A Learning Theory for the Digital Age" from 2005, G. Siemens wrote that the process of learning is not fully controlled by either the pupil or the teacher, and knowledge is not just a intrapsychic category, but can be found in external resources. The process of learning happens while creating connections with these external bases. The activity of connecting itself is much more valuable educationally than the current state of knowledge. The knowledge of "what" and the knowledge of "how" are replaced by the knowledge of "where" in the author's concept. What is more, both learning and knowledge are based on a variety of opinions; reaching them, noticing their interconnections and analysing them critically are basic skills of every learner. At the same time the author points our attention to the great variety and changeability of data that have an elementary and determining meaning for the process of adequate decision taking and problem solving. Connectivism also has a common feature with the theory of augmented mind that is developed within current cognitive science. In both concepts, tools that augment the abilities of mind are of great importance. Using devices that enable storing and organising knowledge resources replaces the work done in mind. It is also worth noticing the connection between connectivism and the concept of J. Gibson's ecological psychology. Both theories stress the shaping of cognition by the structure of surroundings. It is especially important in the functioning of individuals under conditions of information overload.

As P. Downes, the co-author of connectivism, claims: "to teach is to model and demonstrate, to learn is to practice and reflect". The task related to practice

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[8] M. Pokropski, *Cielesna geneza czasu i przestrzeni*, Warszawa 2013, p. 38.

[9] S. Pinker, *Jak działa umysł?*, Warszawa 2002.

and reflexion refers to the connectivist demand that claims that learning does not only consist in consuming the existing knowledge, but also in creating it. Each individual that wants to learn something can do it by joining an existing knowledge network. Its task is to participate in the transmission of knowledge and its creation. "Connectivism presents a model of learning that acknowledges the tectonic shifts in society where learning is no longer an internal, individualistic activity. How people work and function is altered when new tools are utilized. The field of education has been slow to recognize both the impact of new learning tools and the environmental changes in what it means to learn. Connectivism provides insight into learning skills and tasks needed for learners to flourish in a digital era".[10]

To sum up this part of considerations, one can claim that all the theories of learning mentioned above support the view that knowledge is an objective (or state) which is achievable (if not innate) either by thinking or experience. Behaviourism, cognitive science and constructivism try to explain how it is possible that we learn. Behaviourism claims that learning is to a large extent beyond cognition, which means that probably it is impossible to understand what happens inside a person (the "black box" theory) and is based on three assumptions:

1. Visible behaviour is more important than understanding internal activities.
2. Behaviour should be focused on simple elements: particular stimuli and reactions.
3. Learning is about changing behavior.

By applying the model of computer processing of information, cognitive science assumes that learning is a process of processing, storing and classifying well-structured data, and constructivism suggests that learners build knowledge in the process of assigning meanings to personal experiences. Behaviourism and cognitive science perceive knowledge as external to the learner, and the process of learning as an act of internalizing knowledge. Constructivism, on the other hand, assumes that pupils build their own knowledge and are active in this process, presenting an inquisitive and creative attitude.

Learning in the embodied-embedded mind paradigm

Considerations on the subject of learning are naturally linked to the issues related to the mind and the concept of describing it.

[10] http://www.elearnspace.org/Articles/connectivism.htm [access: 10.01.2014].

As J. Bruner writes, the conceptualisation of the nature of human mind stems from two clearly diverse concepts of its functioning. One of them characterized so far, called computationism, treats the mind as a device/machine to carry out the operation. Its supporters work on answering the question of how "the final coded information about the world is saved, classified, stored, merged, retrieved and generally managed by this internal operational mechanism". The other, called ***culturalism*** by J. Bruner, assumes that the mind is constructed by culture, and also fulfils itself by using it, whereas the culture itself provides it with elementary cognitive tools. These two fundamentally separate approaches to the functioning of human mind have even grown to be called paradigms of cognitive science.[11]

Together with the wave of criticism towards computationism and connectivism that occurred especially in the 1990s, the view that is increasingly dominating is one that claims that learning is not only a function of the brain but in this process the interactions that happen between the body and the surroundings are also important. What is more, learning is embedded in culture, language and social practice. As M. Hohol notices, from the evolutionary point of view, the main function of the brain is to generate optimum behaviours as responses to the stimuli that come from the environment, which is why when considering the embodied mind one has to take these stimuli into account. As a result, the mind is not only embodied, but also embedded in the environment. In a radical approach of the paradigm that is discussed, a body that is active in the external environment is not only a cognitive tool, but also a main factor that shapes the mind.[12]

The concepts of an embodied mind are not unified and underline the role of embodiment in the process of cognition to various extents. The more radical supporters describe the body not only as a tool for cognition, but also as a structure that is necessary and determines the whole cognitive system of an individual.

P. Gallagher made an attempt at ordering numerous stands and differentiated five major approaches, where his criterion was the extent to which the representatives define the participation of the body in cognitive processes:

1. Minimum embodiment is visible in the views of those researchers who claim that the body is important in the process of cognition, but they perceive it in isolation from the environment and in relation with other organisms.
2. Biological embodiment is characteristic of supporters of embodied cognition who underline the meaning of how the organism is built and its motor possibilities for the process of cognition, mainly perception.

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[11] J. Bruner, *Kultura edukacji*, Warszawa 2006, p. 13–14.

[12] M. Hohol, *Matematyczność ucieleśniona*, [in:] *Oblicza racjonalności. Wokół myśli Michała Hellera*, ed. B. Brożek, J. Mączka, W.P. Grygiel, M. Hohol, Kraków 2011, p. 153.

3. Embodied semantics focuses those researchers who study the influence of bodily experience on the shaping of semantic structures and the possibility of conceptualization of the world in a language. They assume a metaphor is a mechanism through which bodily experience shapes a language (Lakoff, Johnson).
4. Supporters of embodied functionalism underline that the body is an element of a wider cognitive system that is spread between the brain, body and world (Clark, Chalmers).
5. Enactivism, a radical embodiment (Gallagher, Noe, Varela and others).[13]

However, all the theories of the embodied-embedded mind present the relations from the body to the mind. They show the organism as the so-called active explanator who register changes and transforms them into information while being in an active relation to any stimuli coming from the environment to its body. It is characterised with an attitude of an explorer who continuously discovers new areas of knowledge, makes the most not only of the external world but also of its resources, e.g. imagination, memory or mental mechanisms (logical reasoning).

Although the concept of embodied-embedded mind is relatively new, first consideration on the topic of "embodiment" were present as early as in the research of 19th century psychologists. W. James, one of the creators of pragmatism, as well as the Swiss developmental psychologist J. Piaget were thought to be the first scientists whose concepts clearly touched upon the issues that have been discussed ever since, such as the role of the body and the environment, the meaning of motricity, and the issue of the relation between the body and perception.

The issues related to the role of development, perception and environment can be also found in L. Vygotsky's work, for whom the zone of proximal development was the elementary notion in his concept, a place for the functioning and acting of a growing human being. His views were further developed by E. Thelen and L. Smith, among others, who were supporters of the theory of dynamic systems. According to this theory, cognitive processes have a dynamic character and occur in mutual relations among the environment, body and brain. The dynamic interaction that happens among these systems is a source of cognition. A slight change in one element in the system causes changes not only inside the system, but also in the entire mechanism.

An important inspiration for the concept of bodily cognition was also J. Gibson's ecological psychology where the author describes the role of the body and bodily motricity in the process of cognition. J. Gibson also defined the notion of perception as a potential and multiple interaction with the environment.

[13] M. Pokropski, op. cit., p. 51–54.

According to him, seeing was not something that occurred in the head, but it is entirely embodied and depends on the actions that are taken in the environment. The brain is not a centre for processing and integrating information, as computationist would claim, but it is a necessary although insufficient element of the process of tuning the whole organism to the environment in order to gather the necessary information. J. Gibson's theory of affordances is also important for embodied cognition. The environment and objects that occur in it carry some materialized information for an individual (of features such as, for example, shape, size, colour, texture). Depending on the physical organization of the individual's body (e.g. the length of their limbs, motor abilities, perceptual abilities etc.) and what they are actually doing at the moment, and what their intentions are, they perceive affordances (understood as potential offers for action, operation, noticed before the individual will distinguish particular features of the object) in a given way. What is more, the theory of affordances shows that each individual (but also each animal) depending on their embodiment that determines their sensomotor capabilities perceives and understands the world around them in a different way.[14]

From the historical point of view, the development of the embodied mind paradigm covers four main stages:

1. Phenomenological stage (started in 1940s) related mostly to the views on "corporeality" by M. Merlau-Ponty, the author of the embodied mind notion.
2. Linguistic stage (started in 1980s) where G. Lakoff's (and others') theory of conceptual metaphors gains importance.
3. Neurocognitive stage (since late 1980s till now) mainly supported by the discoveries of mirror neuron mechanisms, theory of stimulation and G. Rizolatti, V. Gallese and M. Iacoboni's mind-reading, as well as A. Damasio's theory of somatic markers.
4. Evolutionary stage (since late 1990s till now) related mostly to M. Tomasello's theory of cultural imitation (embodied-embedded mind) and M. Donald's evolutionary theory of language genesis.[15]

Phenomenological stage: The representatives of embodied cognition, such as P. Gallagher, A. Noë and F. Varela, refer themselves directly to M. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of corporeality.[16] By describing the essence of the relation between the body and the environment, the author points to its reciprocality and incredible complexity. An individual's behaviour is of intentional and directed character, and is not a simple reaction to an occurrence in the envi-

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[14] Ibidem, p. 46–47.

[15] M. Hohol, *Wyjaśnić umysł. Struktura teorii neurokognitywnych*, Kraków 2013.

[16] M. Pokropski, op. cit., p. 42–44.

ronment. The individual chooses a given response from the entire repertoire of possible behaviours in an intentional and conscious way. The essence of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body consists in the non-reducible connection of the active body and the environment, as well as the unity that the body seems to co-create with the tools it uses. What is more, for the French philosopher motricity is a primordial, prereflexionary intentionality directed at particular objects with the aim of completing a current or planned task.

„Taken in its pure state, motricity already possesses the elementary power of sense-giving (sinngebung). Even if, in what follows, thoughts and the perception of space are liberated from motricity and from being in space, in order for us to be able to imagine space, it must first be introduced into it through our body, which must have given us the first model of transpositions, equivalences, and identifications that turns space into an objective system and allows our experience to be an experience of objects and to open onto an "in-self". Motricity is the primary sphere in which the sense of all significations is first given in the domain of represented space (...)".[17]

Linguistic stage: As was already mentioned, the field of embodied cognition was also touched upon by linguists within the frame of the cognitive linguistics paradigm. In this approach, meanings are derived from natural experiences and interactions of the organism with the environment. The mind uses primordial meaning structures related to, among others, the natural orientation of the body in the world (top – bottom, front – back, central – peripheral), and then by using them creates more complex language meanings. To a large extent, these processes occur unconsciously, and an insight is possible through metaphors.

Cognitive linguistics and the paradigm of embodied mind break with the classic thinking about language that used to dominate from the times of Aristotle to N. Chomsky's generativism. "The most important breakthrough that happened based on the second generation of cognitive science is the naturalisation of the meaning of notions, which means the division into syntax and semantics is no longer as significant. It is possible thanks to linking meaning with the functioning of the embodied mind".[18] Such an approach to language is presented by, among others, G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, who negate the computational approach to cognition and human nature, and underline the metaphorical character of the nature of notions. They claim that the mind is not a machine that produces notions by processing data that do not have meaning. People have embodied minds, and their conceptual systems are created thanks to their live body, are shaped by it and thanks to it are meaningful.[19] Simultaneously, the

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[17] M. Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., p. 162.

[18] M. Hohol, *Matematyczność ucieleśniona*, ed. cit., p. 152.

[19] G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Co kognitywizm wniosi do filozofii*, "Znak", 1999, vol. 11, p. 245–263.

authors analyse metaphors in the context of the assumption that language is tightly linked to mental processes that refer to perceiving the world. The metaphor is presented as an abstract notion describing some corporal/physical characteristics acquired through the interaction of an individual with the environment (e.g. *happy means up, sad means down; time is money*; providing arguments is a war*: he refuted his opponents arguments; life is a journey;* aims are places of destination e.g. *I will not leave you till death do us part;* actions are movements e.g. *we walk together through life etc.)*. What is more, they reject the classical approach and define the metaphor as a neural mechanism that allows the use of a reasoning structure from one conceptual domain in another. According to linguists, metaphors are not only ways of poetical expression but also tools for thinking, perception and acting, thanks to which it is possible to conceptualise abstract objects, for example. What is more, a significant part of the human conceptual system is treated as metaphorical.[20]

According to G. Lakoff and M. Johnson,[21] thanks to metaphors, *understanding* (semantics) boils down to:

(1) Our bodies (cognitive apparatus).
(2) Our interactions with the physical experience (manipulating objects, moving).
(3) Our interactions with other people (within a cultural community).

In cognitive linguistics, meaning has an interactional character (thanks to metaphors we transfer interactions from the physical world into abstract existence).

„The mind is based on the body. In other words, the kind of body humans have influences the kind of mind they have. As a result, thought is taken to be embodied. As an example, take the conceptual category of tree. How can the body play any role in our understanding what a tree is? For one thing, we understand a tree as being upright. This comes from how we experience our own bodies (...). For another, we see a tree as tall. The aspect of tallness only makes sense with respect to our standard evaluation of the body's relative height. A tree is tall relative to our average human size. In this way, categories of mind are defined by the body's interaction with the environment".[22]

Neurocognitive stage: Incredibly interesting concepts on the embodied mind were created on the basis of the results of experimental research by a group of Italian researchers (G. Rizzolatti, L. Fogassi, V. Gallese). At the end of 1980s, beginning of 1990s, they discovered mirror neurons in macaques. This discovery involved a group of motor neurons. The researchers observed that

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[20] These, *Metafory w naszym życiu*, Warszawa 2010.

[21] Ibidem.

[22] Z. Kövecses, *Język, umysł, kultura. Praktyczne wprowadzenie*, Kraków 2011, p. 28.

when a given monkey carries out a given quite complex and intentional activity, in its brain a certain group of nervous cells is activated; this group also reacts when the monkey simply observes the same movement carried out by another monkey or man. Observing what others do causes simulation of carrying out an identical activity. Groups of neurons that function similarly were also discovered among people. According to some researchers this means that the interpretation of the behaviour observed happens in the brain of the recipient through specific stimulation. This view is supported by, among others, V. Gallese, G. Lakoff and V. Ramachandran. As V. Gallese notices,[23] people use embodied simulation in their cognitive approach to reality. In his opinion, simulation is the basic functional mechanism of the human brain, and its role consists in modelling objects, persons and events. The same neural structures that decide about how our body functions in the environment also contribute to our body's awareness and to being aware of the objects that are in our surroundings. Embodied simulation is a functional mechanism that is based on this double feature of neural circuits. At the same time, as V. Gallese writes,[24] simulation is of automatic, unconscious, prereflexional character, and takes part in creating the content of mental representations. Our brain allows us to automatically recall the behaviour of another person, thus we can recreate (map) their behaviour and feelings. Mirror neurons make it possible to mentally "read" and "restore" the behaviour of another brain. We adjust ourselves to the intentions of the other person and then we are able to experience more details and emotional nuances of what other people do and feel. As the author claims, it is possible thanks to us having the same behaviours and emotions.

The functioning of the mechanism of embodied simulation is easy to understand when we refer to research into emotional reactions. The area of the temporal insula takes part in both feeling disgust and interpreting the behaviour of another person that reacts with disgust. Research shows that these areas get activated when the experimenter pushes something exceptionally disgusting in front of the subjects' faces, as well as when they observe another person whose expression clearly shows that they experience equally unpleasant feelings. Another example of embodied simulation is the fear reaction which is a result of the functioning of amygdala, an important element of the limbic system. Research among people whose amygdala has been damaged proves that they do not react with fear to a situation of threat and at the same time they do not recognise the expression of this emotion among others.[25] Based on the concept of

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[23] V. Gallese, *Ucieleśniona symulacja: od neuronów po doświadczenie fenomenologiczne*, [in:] *Formy aktywności umysłu. Ujęcia kognitywistyczne*, ed. A. Klawiter, Warszawa 2005, vol. 2.

[24] Ibidem.

[25] A. Kapusta, *Problem intersubiektywności w świetle współczesnej neurokognitywistyki: od neuronów lustrzanych po narrację*, "Studia Philosopiae Christianae", 2008, vol. 44, no. 2.

simulation, we can also explain the existence of some disturbances of emotional behaviours. A person who does not experience a given emotion themselves is not able to simulate the fact of experiencing it by someone else, which is why they cannot interpret particular types of emotional expression. There is an area in the brain that is simultaneously linked to the representation of our body and its activity (or the so-called *proprioception* – feeling the state of one's own body), as well as to the ability to recognize facial expressions. It is the parietal lobe, mainly of the right hemisphere. Thanks to the functioning of this part of the brain we can instantly "jump" from the representation of, for example, facial expression, to feeling emotions, because emotions are always linked to the reaction of the organism, to feeling some physiological excitement. The role and meaning of mirror neurons seem to be the primordial and main system of directly "teaching" the brain behaviour, emotions and information processing.[26] It should be noticed that the reply of mirror neurons is specific to the type of action. "Some are sensitive to grabbing, manipulating or tearing (e.g. paper), while others to the way an object is grabbed or held. In case of men, the mirror system plays an important role in verbal communication or is strongly linked to it (e.g. through the relation with facial expression), because they have some features of "abstracting" the seizing of an object or state according to some aspect. According to Gallese and Goldmana mirror neurons are a prerequisite for the appearance of more complex interactional abilities".[27]

When comparing to anthropoid apes, the function of mirror neurons seems to be much more complex, because we can find them in brain areas that are responsible for empathy, understanding intentions or using the language. Rizolatti and Arbib[28] found them in the Broca area, where in 1950s Paul Broca located language functions. Researchers found out that listening to sentences that describe certain actions activates mirror neuron which are also activated while doing or observing such actions. V. Ramachandran[29] assigns great significance to the research into mirror neurons and claims that they are key to the development of social skills and building interpersonal bonds. According to the neurologist, mirror neurons become a basis of imitation and observational learning. The possibility of mocking others' behaviour requires the brain to adopt someone else's perspective. According to V. Ramachandran, mirror neurons became the basis of the explosion of human culture. The scientist substantiates his opinion in the context of changes that were particularly important for the

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[26] V.S. Ramachandran, *Mirror neurons and imitation learning as the driving force behind "the great leap forward" in human evolution*, http://www.edge.org/documents/ archive/edge69.html [access: 26.09.2006].

[27] A. Kapusta, *Problem intersubiektywności…*, ed. cit., p. 138.

[28] Ibidem.

[29] V.S. Ramachandran, op. cit.

development of the man and that took place 75 thousand years ago. This is when relatively suddenly many skills characteristic of men appeared and spread, such as using tools, fire, shelter and of course language, as well as understanding what the other person thinks and the ability of interpreting their behaviour. As the researcher notices, this phenomenon was not directly linked to the size of the brain, but to the sudden creation of the refined system of mirror neurons that made it possible to imitate and learn others' behaviour by observation. For this reason, a sudden and accidental discovery of something, for example fire or a tool, did not die when its discoverer died, but was spread horizontally (in the population, among group members) or vertically (passed on from generation to generation).

Imitating complex skills becomes the essence of human culture that is the basis of the civilisation.

In his studies, A. Damasio[30] points to the incredibly important role of emotions in the functioning of man – from the biological dimension, to the social one, to the cultural one. He underlines the links between emotions and the entire body, and at the same time tackles the dychotomic division into brain and mind, and into body and brain. The organism co-created by the brain and body enters interactions with the environment as one team. Complex organisms, such as the human one, do more: they not only enter interactions and not only create spontaneous or forced reactions to stimuli. They also generate internal reactions, a part of which builds images (visual, sound, somatosensoric etc.) which A. Damasio takes to be the basis of the functioning of the mind. The psychologists defines emotions as "momentary views of fragments of the body landscape"; they inform about the current state of our mind that was caused by some stimulus, either external or coming from the body. The biological function of emotions is, on the one hand, creating of particular reactions to a given situation, and on the other hand, regulating the internal state of the organism so that it is prepared for a given reaction.[31]

Evolutionary stage: V. Ramachandran's views are shared by M. Tomasello, M. Donald and A. Meltzoff, among others, who can be considered representatives of the evolutionary stage of development of the embodied-embedded mind paradigm.

Research conducted by A. Meltzoff,[32] who was interested in the analysis of the development of particular cognitive and social competences among children, proved that as soon as a few minutes after birth they are ready to show

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[30] A. Damasio, *Tajemnica świadomości*, Poznań 2005.

[31] Ibidem.

[32] A. Meltzoff, *Imitation and Other Minds: The "Like Me" Hypothesis*, [in:] *Perspectives on Imitation: From Neuroscience to Social Science*, ed. S. Hurley, N. Chater, Cambridge 2005, vol. 2, p. 55–77.

some imitative behaviour. The researcher explains this is due to the existence of an intermodal system of copying. The analysis of shaping the processes of imitation became the foundation for the model of development of the theory of mind (ToM) by A. Meltzoff. Understanding the state of mind of another person means going beyond just the observable, strictly behavioural data and is linked to understanding the intentions of behaviour of other people. What is more, the psychologist claims that the first years of life of an individual are decisive as far as creating the main nervous paths is concerned serving as the basis for the whole future ability to learn.[33] At the same time, he underlines the importance of sensitive periods of the brain and social relations that the child enters as they grow.

The concept of M. Tomasello's cultural imitation also confirms V. Ramachandran and A. Meltzoff's views. The author claims that the evolution of culture influences the development of people's cognitive abilities. The starting point of M. Tomasello's concept is to understand the specifics of cultural transmission that is characteristic of the development of human community. Its basis is co-intentionality that is a trait of the human species. Co-intentionality, or the ability to share intentions, is cooperation of common aims and socially coordinated plans of action (common intentions). It is a key to understanding the specifics of human competences; a key to explaining the phenomenon of human culture. The author indicates four pillars that support the ability of co-intentionality:

(1) Ability, exceptional for humans, to identify oneself with someone else and understand oneself and others as living creatures who strive to achieve a given aim and follow intentions, so as intentional beings, as well as (as a result) the ability to understand the intentional meaning of using the tool and symbolic practices,
(2) Motivation, specific for humans (discovered in the relatively latest research by Tomasello), to share emotional states, experiences and actions with others,
(3) Ability to create suitable and at the same time unique forms of cognitive (language) representations and,
(4) Specific human forms of cultural learning.[34]

Advanced mechanisms of cultural learning – the fourth pillar that human predisposition to co-intentionality is based on – contribute their specificity to the fact that they:

(1) Go beyond ontogenetic ritualization,
(2) Go beyond learning by emulation,

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[33] A. Gopnik, A. Meltzoff, P. Kuhl, op. cit.

[34] M. Tomasello, *Kulturowe źródła ludzkiego poznania*, Warszawa 2002.

(3) Are based on learning through imitation.
(4) Use techniques of learning through instruction.
(5) Develop collaborative forms of learning.[35]

Learning through ontogenetic ritualisation and emulation (characteristic of all primates, among others) does not require the ability to understand intentions and complex objectives that are hidden behind the behaviour assimilated. Learning through imitating is a type of learning where assimilating a given activity is conditioned with understanding the intention and strategy that are hidden behind its completion. The same condition is also hidden behind collaborative learning and learning through instruction. Specific only of people and defined as "stronger" forms of learning, all these three forms are "the ability of an individual to understand other members of their own species as beings just like themselves, having the same internal (intentional and emotional) life.[36] Motivation to share emotional states, experiences and activities with others causes a "whole avalanche of consequences" because it makes it possible for "new, exceptionally effective forms of cultural inheritance" to take place.[37] It triggers the effect of a "rachet" that is key to human culture, deciding on the cumulative character of the cultural evolution. The "rachet" makes the circle of cultural evolution never go back and each invention transmitted through the process of learning is supplemented with another innovative idea, a new solution. In this process, more and more diversified and complicated processes of sociogenesis take their indisputable part, which is understood as the cooperation of individuals in creating new solutions.[38]

The ability of co-intentionality as a foundation for cumulative cultural evolution is a special type of an internally motivated readiness to act that is characteristic of humans, which, according to M. Tomasello, originated some two million years ago. At that time, climatic and geographical conditions forced anthropoid beings (homo habilis) to adjust to a new way of living. It consisted in coordinating one's behaviour, cooperation and equal division of the results of their hunting. This resulted in a form of social selection that favoured cooperation: "Individuals who attempted to hog all of the food at a scavenged carcass would be actively repelled by others," writes Tomasello, "and perhaps shunned in other ways as well." This evolutionary legacy can be seen in our behaviour today, particularly among children who are too young to have been taught such notions of fairness. For example, in a 2011 study published in the journal Nature, K. Hamann and her colleagues found that 3-year-old children share food

[35] Ibidem.
[36] Ibidem, p. 12.
[37] Ibidem, p. 24.
[38] Ibidem, p. 58.

more equitably if they gain it through cooperative effort rather than via individual labour or no work at all. The implication, according to Tomasello, is that human evolution has predisposed us to work collaboratively and given us an intuitive sense that cooperation deserves equal rewards.

M. Tomasello also claims that humans have uniquely large population sizes, much larger than those of other primates. It was the human penchant for cooperation that allowed groups to grow in number and eventually become tribal societies.

Humans, more than any other primate, developed psychological adaptations that allowed them to quickly recognize members of their own group (through unique behaviours, traditions, or forms of language) and develop a shared cultural identity in the pursuit of a common goal.

To sum up these considerations, we can quote after M. Tomasello that (1) on the philogenetic level, in the process of evolution, the man developed an ability to identify themselves with the members of their own species, which led to humans understanding of others as beings that are similar to themselves, thus intentional and equipped with a mind. (2) On the historical level, this adjustment made it possible for new forms of cultural learning and sociogenesis to develop, which is turn led to the creation of cultural products and behavioural traditions that accumulate modifications in a historical time. (3) On the ontogenetic level, children grow up among those products and traditions shaped in the historical process, which allows them to (a) use the knowledge and skills gathered by the group they belong to; (b) develop and use cognitive representations based on a changeable perspective that have the form of language symbols (and analogies and metaphors built out of these symbols); (c) internalize some types of discursive interactions and develop the abilities to metalearn, redescribe, represent and think discursively.

Education of children and the embodied-embedded mind concept. Practical guidelines

According to modern psychologists, learning is a process "through which experience produces a lasting change in behaviour or mental processes".[39] This means that learning is experiencing.

From the praxeological point of view, learning is an integral collection of very different processes that influence one another. Most generally, one could

[39] P. Zimbardo, R. Johnson, V. McCann, *Psychologia. Kluczowe koncepcje*, Warszawa 2010, p. 116.

say that this collection includes processes of multidirectional relations that the learner and their environment remain in, and intramental processes related to assimilating, processing and using experience. These processes are of embodied character and are located in a given cultural context. As J. Bruner notices,[40] "unsupported with culture or cut off from culture, they would cease to exist or cease to serve their adaptive role. The mental life of the man develops only through sharing with others, communication, exchange, and all this is possible only through using cultural codes, referring to tradition, sharing meanings with other participants of social life". According to the psychologist, the process of learning consists in constructing an image of the world and oneself using tools that one is provided with by culture. This conclusion can be supplemented with the views of the supporters of embodied mind on the incredible role of the body in this process; where the body is not only a tool but also a constitutive element of the cognitive process. In this context, the role of education becomes equipping students with cultural tool and managing the process in a way that adopts culture to diverse needs to the students as members of the society, and students and types of knowledge to the needs of the culture. Education is thus an elementary embodiment of life in culture, and not only a preparation for it.

Adopting a particular concept of mind determines the educational behaviour. The conviction that children are ready to correct their behaviour; that they should be protected against the brutality of this world; that they are empty containers which should be filled with knowledge; that they are clay one can model according to a given pattern; or that they are uncontrollable savages who have to be socialized, or independent researchers into reality irrespective of how true or justified are the rules set by a given type of teaching, methods or strategies of education. The embodied-embedded mind approach does not reject these frequently common-sense convictions, but it makes an attempt at modifying them through setting them in a cultural context. As J. Bruner notices,[41] "educational practices in classrooms are premised on a set of folk beliefs about learners' minds, some of which may have worked advertently toward or inadvertently against the child's own welfare. They need to be made explicit and to be re-examined. Different approaches to learning and different forms of instruction – from imitation, to instruction, to discovery, to collaboration – reflect differing beliefs and assumptions about the learner – from actor, to knower, to private experiencer, to collaborative thinker". According to the psychologist, a progress in describing children's minds is a preliminary condition for any progress in pedagogy. Adopting the perspective of the embodied mind that is set in culture allows not only to understand the importance of every different

[40] J. Bruner, op. cit., p. 16.

[41] Ibidem, p. 78.

concept of the child's mentality, but also notice their legitimacy in the context of the whole that is built of them.

As an incredibly crucial element of culture, education is thus not only its reflection, but an important tool for creating it. Child's active participation in culture requires their active participation in education. For this reason, the child should experience such quality of it that would allow them for authentic, active and unlimited growth, innovative and creative approach to problems, cognitive independence, critical overview of reality, independent thinking, feeling of security and agency, courage to enter the unknown and achieve one's aims, desires and needs. This requires the teacher (adult) to have active contact with the child, which allows them to really overcome the current possibilities, i.e. in the zone of proximal development. Education should thus not be focused on the current growth of the pupil, because this is always a thing of the past, but it should focus on the potential growth. Otherwise education would not have any influence on the direction and dynamics of the development.

Due to this, one of the main tasks of the teacher (adult) is to arrange opportunities for active engagement of the pupil, or multisensory experience, exploration, living and finally verifying their personal understanding of the world. This can be done professionally by the teacher who uses many self-checked (and checked by others) didactic solutions that are strongly rooted in scientific knowledge. At the same time it is difficult not to notice that children's understanding of the world also depends on the influence of other people in the pupil's environment; those people may more or less intuitively, and often unconsciously, become the co-creators of what is constructed in their mind and what will undergo a further process of improvement.

According to the constructivist approach, knowledge is never finally constructed and undergoes the process of constant processing and verification. Due to this, the adult-child, child-adult interactions lead to transforming knowledge of all the participants of the interaction and as a result to changes in their behaviour, strategy of problem-solving, development of language and others. Thus, each opportunity for a qualitatively valuable meeting of the more competent (teacher, peer) with the less competent ones provides a chance for development and gives meaning to an educational situation. Authentic developmental changes occur only when the pupil is really active in multiple ways (behaviourally and mentally) and supported in a right way towards the modification of their internal mental structures. Knowledge that is built in this way is of personal and relatively long-lasting character. Current pedagogy is more and more based on the aspiration to create a rich, interactive learning environment where the child is an active subject who is aware of their own mental processes and capable of managing their own metacognitive competences.

As R. Grabinger puts it, the rich environment for active learning (REAL) is a complex system of particular strategies and techniques of education. The main objective of REAL is to engage pupils in dynamic, authentic and generative activities of learning. These activities allow pupils to take control and responsibility for the entire process of learning which leads not only to acquiring rich and multilayered content, but also to developing life competences, such as the ability to solve problems, think critically and cooperate. REAL refers to the constructivist theory of learning where knowledge is described as a structure that is built through experimenting, searching and finding meanings, as well as thinking about one's own actions. The author claims that this is only possible when the pupil is the centre of the learning process and has an unlimited opportunity for dialogue, negotiation, verification of their own ideas and is constantly encouraged and motivated to do so.[42] The main advantages of REAL are, among others, that it:

- Contributes to the development and improvement of pupils' responsibility, initiative and decisiveness, as well as conscious learning,
- Provokes to take up dynamic, interdisciplinary and generative learning activities that support complex mental processes, such as analysis, synthesis, problem solving, experimenting, creativity and multilayered research into various phenomena,
- Develops cognitive and metacognitive skills that are crucial in the process of conscious learning,
- Helps children integrate the newly acquired knowledge with the knowledge they already have and thus build rich and complex cognitive structures that make it easier to understand and create connections between ideas, views and judgements,
- Increases children's abilities to organise notions into larger categories,
- Promotes learning and researching in an authentic, natural, realistic and rich context,
- Cultivates the atmosphere of building knowledge in a wide and interactive social environment created together by pupils and teachers,
- Helps pupils achieve a higher level of thinking and reasoning making it easier to pass from concrete operations to formal ones.[43]

Conscious creation of a rich and interactive learning environment that optimises the learning process requires defining the strength of its influence on the educational process of the pupil's development. The notion of "powerful learning environments" was introduced by R. Grabinger (1996) in order to underline the meaning of educational environment for the process of learning.

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[42] R.S. Grabinger, *Rich environments for active learning*, [in:] *Handbook of research for educational communications and technology*, ed. D. Jonassen, New York 1996, p. 665–692.

[43] R. Michalak, *Dziecko u progu edukacji przedmiotowej. Studium teoretyczno-empiryczne*, Poznań 2013.

The characteristic feature of such an environment is its naturalness and authenticity of the teaching-and-learning process. It refers to both the situation, context and tasks that the child takes up, as well as to motivation. The authenticity and naturalness is important for children's active learning mainly for three reasons (Grabinger 1996, p.670). First, it encourages children to take control over the situation and the process of learning. Learning how to solve real problems at school makes an effort to meet the needs and experiences of pupils, because it refers to the problems pupils come across in their everyday life. It also makes it possible to use the previously acquired knowledge and skills, as well as the strategies of thinking and reasoning they have been using so far.[44] Second, the authenticity deepens and enriches cognitive structures, creates natural and rich neural connections, thus increasing the probability of using knowledge and skills in new situations. What is more, the authentic context encourages pupils to cooperate and negotiate. Most often, complex problems require a team approach, and team work creates an opportunity for every child to check and improve their ideas, and helps them understand and solve the problem.[45]

The nature of REAL is thus a function of four different though compatible strategies of education: (1) cooperative learning; (2) generative learning; (3) student-centred learning and (4) learning through problem-solving. *Team learning* takes place when individuals take up cooperation to solve a given problem. Team members take up some activities together in order to build and perfect their personal knowledge and skills, and as a result achieve a common aim. This also allows them to develop self-regulation through managing, monitoring and evaluating educational experience. Team work contributes to pupils' taking responsibility for their own learning.[46]

Generative learning is a type of learning where the child play the role of a researcher, explorer and discoverer of knowledge, and the teacher – the role of a facilitator. Generative activities occur in team work when pupils play certain roles and solve problems through discussion, presentation of their own opinions and negotiation of solutions. Generative learning engages complex cognitive processes and helps integrate new knowledge with the knowledge structures that one already has. This allows pupils to develop thorough problem solving. Facilitators pose questions, and pupils reply to these taking up research activity, engaging and testing their knowledge and the ideas that were generated together. Pupils organize knowledge according to the way that allows them to assign their own meaning and understanding to it. Generative

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[44] R.S. Grabinger, op. cit., p. 671.

[45] Ibidem, p. 670.

[46] G. Cox, *REAL Business Learning Environments: Design Considerations in the Integration of Business Simulations into Rich Environments for Active Learning*, 2006, http://rsvpdesign.co.uk/images/downloads/RSVP_Reals_complete.pdf/ [access: 5.05.2011].

learning also makes it possible to acquire knowledge and skills that are useful to solve real and authentic problems.[47]

The strategy where *the pupil is the central point of the process of learning* is focused on developing the following skills: metacognitive abilities, critical thinking, life-long learning, posing questions, reflection and attentive listening (concentration).

Posing questions by pupils makes them more involved in the process of learning. They add direction to their personal searches, thus making the process of learning an individual experience. Shaping metacognitive skills takes place when students consciously control the progress of their own learning, line of thinking and reasoning. This control is expressed through planning and selecting the strategy of learning, monitoring the process of learning, correcting mistakes, analysing the effectiveness of a strategy of learning and modifying the activity and strategy of learning. The reflectiveness of the pupil is shaped when they take up activities such as observing, analysing, interpreting, so they reply to the questions of who?, what?, where? and why?.[48]

The strategy of *learning through problem solving* is a type of learning where pupils who are interested take up research activities which have no simple and obvious answers, defined and precise rules and procedures of conduct. This strategy engages pupils in solving authentic problems that require analytical, synthetic and hypothetical thinking.[49]

Using metacognitive strategies in the process of educating contributes to taking up responsibility for their learning by pupils. Children become independent subjects of the process of learning, they are much more conscious of their individual educational needs, can plan and carry out their activities, set themselves targets, deal with new situations better, achieve higher results. This contributes to independence and autonomy not only in school reality but also outside school and makes the pupil capable of co-creating culture.

To sum up, it is worth quoting J. Bruner's words once again: "Modern advances in the study of human development have begun providing us with a new and steadier base upon which a more integrated theory of teaching-and-learning can be erected."[50] According to the psychologist, these advances show the child as an active, intentional member of the society, and knowledge as co-constructed by all the representatives of a given culture, both contemporaries and those long parted.

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[47] Ibidem.

[48] Ibidem.

[49] Ibidem.

[50] J. Bruner, op. cit., p. 98.

Art in the world of a child

Kinga Łapot-Dzierwa

Art accompanies mankind since ancient times. It was already our ancestors who discovered that having contact with products of distinct aesthetic and artistic qualities has a remarkable influence on forming attitudes. This puts art and its works at a very important position. It can be argued that art shapes the awareness of specific social groups, affects the processes of civilization. With art, the man is able to achieve harmony in his own personal development. Therefore, more and more often we tend to support the development of educational activities through contact with art and its creations (in a very broad sense).

The field of art is a very interesting and attractive space. Art is mysterious (waiting to be discovered). At the turn of the millenniums it can be noticed how creators evoked and graded the mystery in their works, on the one hand using their creative imagination and on the other counting on the sensitive mechanism of a recipient's perception. It is under their influence that seemingly banal situations, transformed in the creative process, using appropriate means of expression, gain new and often different meanings. Art has always utilized a secret. And not all the secrets of the art have been yet uncovered ... Might it be worth discovering them with children?

Is art elitist (in the concept of the "average" person), intended for a selected recipient? Not completely. It is us (the recipients) who make a certain distance. Why is a man afraid of meeting art? After all, it is present in his life at every turn. May it be caused by the fear of the unknown? By the lack of knowledge? Fear of expressing oneself? Undoubtedly, contact with art requires advance preparation, building an evaluative system by which the recipient will discover the eternal truth: an artist through his work attempts to establish a specific contact with it, using the language of symbolic and abstract signs aimed at non-verbal communication, instilling in it a higher aesthetic value, helping to understand the world and himself.

The values that undoubtedly lie in the works of art have been used by the creator of the **concept of education through art** – Herbert Read. The author himself defines the objectives in the following way: *The purpose of education through art is to make that all acquire movement and begin to develop (...), and the attitude of unthinking submission will be replaced in every human with a creative activity of imagination, the imagination, which becomes a free expression of his own personality.*[1]

In his analysis he highlights these features of the works that have a particular impact on human life and the processes taking place in it. He notes that education through art enriches the educational process, and going even further – the learning process. This results from the assumption that the area of art has a huge educational value, understood as a specific space in which the work is used in a multi-dimensional context.

The most important functions played by art in education comprise the aesthetic, cognitive, instructive, educational and social functions.

The aesthetic function is sometimes equated with the formation of a sense of beauty and discovering values based on this very canon. Moreover, it assumes that the recipient, in contact with the work, experiences strong emotional feelings (of a different undertones), is somehow obliged to verify his own view or judgment against the values embodied in the work of art.

Cognitive function. Works of art are a great source of information about man, nature, culture, and art. They are a documentation of the former and present cultural phenomena. They contain information about the language of art, which consists of the shape, colour, texture, and composition. After all, they are the irrefutable patterns of artistic achievements (over the centuries), and are the basis for one's own creative explorations.

Educating function. The reception of the works affects the harmonious development of an individual in all its dimensions. It stimulates thought processes, influences the emotional sphere, gives the opportunity to develop the imagination and creative thinking. This is a particular value due to the fact that traditional pedagogy focuses on instrumental actions and seems to be oblivious to these phenomena.

The educational function provides the basis for Read's theory. Participation in the educational process through contact with art and its creations gives the opportunity, according to Szuman[2], of educating future consumers of art who will be able to knowingly use the values and cultural goods. On the other hand, basing on previous experiences and acquired knowledge, they will be able to develop and nurture their own creative activities in the field of art.

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[1] R. Gloton, C. Clero, *Twórcza aktywność dziecka*, Warszawa 1976, p. 12.

[2] S. Szuman, *O sztuce i wychowaniu estetycznym*, Warszawa 1969.

The social function should be considered in the context of a child/pupil identification with their own group and its creations (in terms of culture and art). This identification allows to understand one's own place in the sociocultural space. Understanding the phenomena associated with it shapes the cultural identity based on tradition and history, but also affects the positive behaviour in relation to the "other" cultures, based on understanding and respect of their differences.

Irena Wojnar wrote: *Art is a means of education, because it shapes the attitude of a man, but it is also a means of teaching; it enriches the stores of knowledge and cognitive mechanisms.*[3] Therefore, in this text, I note that the values which lie in the works of art, and above all their didactic values make them become a permanent element in the didactic process. This is going to lead to a new quality of education in the field of visual arts education.

A child/pupil as the recipient of the works of art. The criteria for selection of the works of art

The most challenging activity in the preparation of the didactic process with the use of the works of art is the process of selecting them. It is important to define the criteria for the selection. It is reasonable to assume that only the most perfect works of art meet the criteria to play the proper role in this process. The content and subject matter should be familiar to a child, provide a natural need to investigate thoroughly the presented content, activate further processes associated with the emergence of emotional or evaluative reactions. It can be assumed that by analysing and interpreting the work of painting, by going into its formal and artistic qualities, by following the paraphrases of its hints and metaphors, we build a new idea on its basis.[4] As Robert Małoszowski further writes: *In visual arts education a painter's work is primarily to provide a tangible example of the implementation of a specific task. It becomes a model for solving formal problems. In terms of improving artistic skills and tools, the technique used, and finally, innovative ways of imaging, it is a basis for developing pupil's interests and techniques.*[5]

Introducing a child into the world of art is done in a spiral model. At the elementary level it is particularly important to acquaint it with the works of its

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[3] I. Wojnar, *Teoria wychowania estetycznego*, Warszawa 1976, p. 6.

[4] K. Łapot-Dzierwa, R. Małoszowski, M. Śmigla, *Na ścieżkach wyobraźni – katalog do projektu edukacyjnego*, Warszawa 2013, p. 5.

[5] Ibidem, p. 5.

own region. Then, by applying the content we introduce works from the area of our country, Europe, and the world.

It happens, however, that the teaching process will require a deviation from this principle. In such situations, the selection of works is carried out in accordance with existing (other) issues, and depends on them. Then the following selection criteria can be, inter alia, applied:

- Emotions – each work of art carries specific emotional values. Referring to them allows children to get acquainted with them and understand them fully. It contributes to the awareness of their own feelings and the feelings of other people,
- Cultural space – ethnological settings that allow to show the connections between art and the territory (area) and culture in which it was created (with traditions and religions). The content of the works exhibited are particularly useful in the area of regional, cross-cultural, and multicultural education. Getting to know these works of art contributes to the shaping of attitudes of tolerance, understanding and acceptance of the multicultural model of modern societies,
- Design that allows to explore a variety of stylistic features of the works, shows their diversity and richness,
- Subject matter – are the most commonly used settings in education. The selection of works by subject matter allows to show the diversity in its interpretation across different imaging modalities, eras, and styles. It also allows to show individual, characteristic artistic solutions,
- Skills and tools solutions – which allow for the presentation of works by their technical characteristics. We can get acquainted with the most perfect examples of technological solutions in the field of drawing, painting, sculpture, graphic arts, architecture, photography and film, explore the secrets of the workshop, acquire the terminology appropriate for different areas and disciplines of art.

These are only some examples of the criteria for the selection of the works of art. It should be noted that the first link in the selection is **a teacher**.

Didactic implications resulting from effective working with a work of art

Education in the field of visual arts education is conceived in three aspects: formation of attitudes, gaining knowledge, and acquiring skills. It is important to keep these three elements to preserve the lasting effect of education in the field of visual arts. We assume that the core key competence is cultural awareness and expression, including:

- *A sense of identity in relation to local, regional, national and European cultural heritage (as a basis of respect and openness to cultural multiplicity) and the belief in the need to participate in cultural life*,
- *Expressing oneself through artistic means in order to develop creative skills (including those that can be used in professional situations), and appreciation of the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life*,
- *Knowledge of works of art, including visual arts and contemporary popular culture (as well as the importance of ideas they convey through their means of expression and the use of language of the arts).*[6]

As the proposed provisions clearly show, visual arts classes should be taught by teachers with qualifications in the field of visual arts education. Assignments have been well defined for the school, which should create conditions for the implementation of visual arts tasks by appropriately equipping the school workshop with teaching aids such as reproductions of works of art on various media and media toolkits including software.

The task of the school is also to provide opportunities for active participation of pupils in cultural activities, such as permanent and temporary exhibitions organized by museums and cultural institutions, important artistic events organized at school and out of school, as well as provide opportunities for the public presentation of pupils' skills in visual arts.

This approach poses new challenges for a teacher. Above all, it requires that the teacher be aware of the values resulting from the work in contact with art, his expertise, and specific skills. *These skills are associated with the need to acquire basic qualifications. First of all, the knowledge of the works of art, but at a higher level of gaining skills in the analysis of the work, its form and content. This gives the teacher not only the possibility to make a conscious and evaluative choice, but also to create his own teaching strategies, building his own sets of works pertinent to the established educational objectives.*[7] And as we read on: *Most important, however, is that his "aesthetic sensitivity" develops in parallel to his pedagogical awareness. The teacher should take into account the child's perceptual capabilities, but also the level of its emotions. As a result, he should perceive in the work of art its educational and teaching values. This will encourage the formation of appropriate criteria for selecting the works of art, and consequently lead to a rational and pedagogically valuable introduction of children to the area of art.*[8]

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[6] K. Łapot-Dzierwa, *Jaka? Plastyka we wczesnej edukacji*, "Rocznik Komisji Nauk Pedagogicznych", 2011, vol. 64, p. 77–84.

[7] Eadem, R. Małoszowski, M. Śmigla, op. cit., p. 5.

[8] Ibidem, p. 5.

Thus, the teacher becomes the child's first guide to the world of art, helps discover its secrets and get to know them. His competent preparation for joint action allows the effective implementation of the established objectives. Each encounter with the work of art should be an effective and professional performance, which leaves a lasting impression (not just in the form of a work of art but also in the process of internal transformations). Such an impression is undoubtedly the development of competencies of the child/pupil with regard to:

- *Increasing skills in using the language of the visual arts,*
- *Broadening the scope of the concepts and knowledge of art including information on visual arts forms and techniques (the work is a tangible example of artistic problem solving),*
- *Training perception and aesthetic sensitivity,*
- *Ability to read documentary and narrative motifs in the work of art,*
- *Training emotional sensitivity through empathizing with the scenes and situations presented in the pictures,*
- *Improving the skills of analysis and evaluation of one's own works, as well as the works of one's colleagues.*[9]

Very important is the kind of interaction between the teacher and the child/pupil while working with the work of art. An open situation, involving children's/pupils' creative activity requires a subjective approach, treating them as partners. The interpretation space of the work of art is a space of freedom, thanks to which the characteristics responsible for creative behaviour are formed: courage in expressing one's own judgements, mobility of thought, originality ... This is important because when our children/pupils become adults, they will be prepared to consciously participate in culture.

On the Paths of Imagination: Towards a new quality of education

The project *On the Paths of Imagination* involves two cycles: an experimental programme to work with a child in kindergarten (5-6 years of age) and an experimental programme to work with children in grades 4-6 of a primary school. Both cycles include a fundamental issue (content) effective for different age groups centred around two overarching objectives of visual arts education.

For the authors (Kinga Łapot-Dzierwa, Robert Małoszowski, Maria Śmigla), the essence of visual arts education is the confrontation of the natural creative features of a child with the tradition and values of art, an attempt to link the past, present and future into one string of cultural phenomena. It is a constant

[9] Ibidem, p. 4.

enlivening of the language of art for which the imagination of a child is the future of the world. The knowledge of this language allows different cultures to communicate, talk to the artists through their works beyond time and space. Above all, it allows to develop child's personality and creative abilities. It promotes searching for universal values and shaping them. In this text, I will focus on the project for grades 4-6.

Programme requirements of the project

The basic idea is the statement that visual arts accompany children from the beginning of their life and are naturally inherent in their development. For over a hundred years, scholars such as Burt, Kerschensteiner, Szuman, Lovenfeld, Popek have been seeking connections between children's visual arts creations and their development. Currently, using their experience, we know that one of the most important tasks for visual arts education is to stimulate creative thinking and actions, remembering that creative possibilities are inherent in every human being and adults should skilfully support and develop them. Therefore, in the modern concept, all educational activities are focused on the teaching and upbringing of a search-oriented man.

In shaping creative attitudes, specific reading and writing a work of art is essential. Thus, in the programme issues we turn towards teaching the language of visual arts, acquiring visual arts concepts, techniques, and forms in direct contact with the work of art. Turning towards the work of art, observation and analysis of its components is to teach the skills of reception, to stimulate aesthetic sensitivity, but also to develop skills of perceiving the surprising, innovative solutions and ideas that can inspire visual arts creativity of the child. They also expand its cultural space at the same time making it become an aware and active receiver and an artist.

The proposed educational concept is a synthesis of the three other ideas already existing in pedagogy. **Education through art**, already mentioned in this text, promoted by Irena Wojnar, based on the theories of Read or Suchodolski, assumes that art has extraordinary qualities that allow for the recognition of facts and phenomena in new, always changing settings and integrities. A recipient discovers new truths about the world, which in the work of art are a kind of complement, the concretisation of the same truths, being made the subject of scientific knowledge, and therefore maximally generalized and objectified. Art is a source of knowledge not only in the sense that it refers to the real reality, acquired by way of vertical thinking, but it also constitutes a separate kind of reality, possible to acquire in the course of lateral thinking.

The concept of **education through art** (included in this programme) is based on: *using the products of art both as objects of knowledge, as well as measures used for broadening a pupil's knowledge, shaping his skills and creative attitude.*[10] Whereas, **education for art** is its natural continuation and should be understood as preparing the pupil for a conscious reception of the work of art, for participating in culture.

Taking into account the risk of a creativity crisis in the age group covered by the programme we put special emphasis on the development of creative attitude of the child, the development of creative imagination, improvement of perception and reception, and on broadening the field of expression through the use of various techniques and forms of expression in the process of a creative action.

The programme is designed to teach visual arts at the second stage of education, i.e. in grades 4-6 at primary school. It has been adapted to the current requirements of the law of education. The authors applied a spiral model (with rising levels of difficulty). The contents have been formulated according to the Core Curriculum guidelines. The second stage is a continuation of the issues from the first stage and preparation for stage 3. Its implementation will allow not only for the development of a creative individual but also one that is able to find the information needed and apply it in his own creative activity. Working with the work of art is also a necessary element in the preparation for participation in culture and the gained knowledge and acquired skills will be competencies required during the test after grade 6.[11]

The described issues are the details of the objectives and content of education contained in the Core Curriculum. The material was prepared in such a way as to create a choice for the teacher. He may use the prepared material in the form of proposals for exercises but he can also be a creator of his own actions.

The contents in each class were put into thematic areas, bearing rich illustrative material and texts addressed to children. Each text has the form of a short story about the work of art and includes basic visual arts terminology. This leads to the acquisition of knowledge without the necessity of assimilating information with the use of memory. The contents are supplemented by practical exercises in which the pupil himself can test his knowledge and skills. Each section ends with a lesson assigned for testing.

The illustrative material has been chosen in the manner to most properly characterize a specific issue. The works of arts include the works of Polish and

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[10] M. Guśpiel, J. Dyląg, R. Małoszowski, *Edukacja przez Sztukę. Nauczyciel i uczeń w edukacji zintegrowanej w klasach I–III (Nowoczesna Szkoła)*, Kraków 2001.

[11] K. Łapot-Dzierwa, R. Małoszowski, M. Śmigla, *Na ścieżkach wyobraźni. Poradnik metodyczny klasa IV*, Warszawa 2012.

foreign artists from different eras, belonging to the canon of art. This choice, however, remains open. The authors propose the following thematic areas.

Why are works of art created? This section is devoted to topics such as imagination (the basic factor of artistic creativity), perception, which is the basis for development of creative imagination, and expression, which reveals the need for artistic creation.

What may the works of art present? The section on the types of art (themes) by division into representational painting (there are subjects dedicated to portraits, still life, and landscapes), abstract art (geometric and lyrical abstraction), and decorative art.

Emotions in art. This is a special section, as in the present educational concepts the area of emotions was often ignored. In the presented concept the pupil is shown different emotional categories, including, among others, love and joy, fear, pleasure, and anger.

Creative experiments, i.e. in the studios of the artists. This section describes the features of various artistic techniques, so pupils can get to know their characteristics. They include, among others: drawing, painting, sculpture and graphic tool (using new technologies), film and photography techniques, as well as the issues associated with architecture.

What makes a work of art? A section devoted to the visual arts ABC in terms of such concepts as: composition, colour, texture, mass, space, etc. The pupil will find in it all the ins and outs associated with the media used by the works of art.

Art close to us is a section devoted to the pupil's nearest surrounding, which shows that art is present in our lives at every turn. It includes: applied art and folk art, fine arts in the theatre, fashion, industrial design, urbanism.

The section ends with a debate on the question of where we come from, who we are? A section dedicated to art and culture as well as tradition in the local and national environment. The pupil has the opportunity to learn about the role, functions, and responsibilities which rest upon cultural institutions such as museums, art galleries, cultural community centres.

Thanks to the use of the works of art in educational situations we can, according to Irena Wojnar, state that: *art is a source of knowledge not only in the sense that it presupposes the existence of the other, non-artistic reality. Art itself is a specific type of a cognitive process, a cognitive conception of reality; from this point of view, contact with art constitutes essentially the process of cognition, or participation in this process.*[12]

Such an action allows the child to experiment and search, also during visual art activities. Thus, the following circle is completed:

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[12] I. Wojnar, op. cit.

I COLLECT INFORMATION IN THE PROCESS OF PERCEPTION

I USE THE INFORMATION GATHERED IN MY OWN CREATIVE ACTIVITIES (EXPRESSION)

I PERFORM SUCCESSIVE TRANSFORMATIONS, I EXPERIMENT, I SEARCH

Conclusions

The observations presented indicate that the main objective of education through art is to create conditions that stimulate a child for learning, experiencing and processing the world in order to create his own system of values. I think that the sense of value gained in contact with art will facilitate the formation of an open attitude towards other people and to the constantly changing reality.

Applying elements of Dalcroze's method in the process of stimulating the development of the contemporary pre-schooler

Katarzyna Sadowska

As Kinga Kuszak and Hanna Krauze-Sikorska point out, "every man is equipped with a natural tendency to discover, explore and get to know the world".[1] In particular, this refers to a small child that between the age of 3 and 6 is able to develop 50% of abilities to learn, and their success in this respect will condition their further success in the next years of learning.[2] A child that attends a kindergarten enters a period of an intensive formation of its fundamental traits of personality, orientation towards action, gaining and gathering experiences, consolidating its faith in its own strength, development of volitional behaviours[3], and the kindergarten is supposed to be a place where the development of the above will be thoroughly stimulated.

Kindergarten pedagogues carry out duties that are not only linked to care and education; they are also teachers – they mildly introduce children to areas of knowledge about the world that surrounds the pre-schooler; often they are the first observers of potential developmental disharmonies; they are often the first ones in the child's life to show determinants of social functioning, thus helping the child to co-exist in a group, marking out paths of optimum interpersonal communication, showing ways of solving conflicts, they help to formalize the relations with the environment. Unfortunately, kindergarten teachers are not sufficiently appreciated in the Polish society. In colloquial language, there is no term to name "the kindergarten teacher"; the term "przedszkolanka" (kindergarten female worker) exists that often brings their work down to the stereotype of looking after the kids and helping them in basic everyday routines.

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[1] H. Krauze-Sikorska, K. Kuszak, *Przedszkole – obszary działań edukacyjnych i profilaktycznych*, [in:] *Wybrane problemy psychospołecznego funkcjonowania dzieci i młodzieży z utrudnieniami w rozwoju*, ed. these, Poznań 2011, p. 117.

[2] Ibidem, p. 106.

[3] Ibidem, p. 106.

This stereotype could be observed to an incredibly intense extent due to the social outrage that was caused in many groups by the amendment of the law on the education system (the so-called kindergarten law). With regard to this document, some parents' groups and a lobby of companies that offer extra activities for children started an aggressive campaign on the issue of impoverishing the process of kindergarten education (on the so-called paid extra classes) by sharing slogans such as "Give back my talents" or "We want our children to be taught by experts" on various websites. Thus, it has to be clearly underlined that a kindergarten teacher is an expert, thoroughly prepared for completing tasks described in the core curriculum, and it should be the kindergarten director's choice as far as any extra classes go, because often current practice shows that these can be carried out also by a kindergarten pedagogue that is prepared for this role.

The changes that were enacted on September 1, 2013[4] were dictated, among others, by the right assumption that every child should have a real access to kindergarten education, and previous years showed significant difficulties in this respect. A series of scientific research[5] confirms that common kindergarten education should be the state's priority because, as H. Krauze-Sikorska and K. Kuszak point out: "suitable educational activities carried out at this stage of the child's life can have permanent influence on its intellectual and psychosocial development. They can increase motivation for learning and develop learning competences and the knowledge how to learn; they also contribute to the reinforcement of the personal resources of an individual. Early investment in education can prevent many school and life failures. The participation in varied forms of educational activities in the kindergarten can counteract the effects of social and economic inequalities. If carried out correctly, educational programmes increase the child's effectiveness in many social roles. The kindergarten plays not only an educational function but also a tutelar one, thus allowing mothers to be more active in various spheres of professional and social life. It fosters the activation and consolidation of the local community; also, it is the first stage in the social integration of impaired children."[6]

The contemporary kindergarten is thus not supposed to provide a range of extra activities often detached from one another and from the areas of kindergarten education; it is mainly supposed to support children in developing their talents and shaping intellectual abilities that they will need in everyday situations and further education. It needs to be stressed that this interaction has to

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[4] *Ustawa z dnia 13 czerwca 2013 r. o zmianie ustawy o systemie oświaty oraz niektórych innych ustaw*, http://isap.sejm.gov.pl [access: 1.02.2014].

[5] Confer: H. Krauze-Sikorska, K. Kuszak, op. cit.

[6] Ibidem, p. 112.

be propaedeutic, it should build the child's system of values, shape its emotional endurance and social skills, create favourable conditions for harmonious playing together and learning by children of varied physical and intellectual capabilities. It has to be a place of looping after one's health and physical fitness; a place where children's knowledge on the social, natural and technical world is built, and where competences to present one's own thoughts in a way that is understandable for other are developed.[7] The kindergarten is supposed to introduce children in the world of aesthetic values and develop their ability to express themselves through art tools, shape their feeling of social belonging (to their family, peer group, national community) and form their patriotic attitudes, as well as provide children with better educational opportunities by supporting their curiosity, activity, independence and shaping the knowledge and abilities that are significant for school education.[8]

Music in the contemporary kindergarten

For many years, eurhythmics in kindergartens had a status of compulsory extra (paid) classes.[9] Few kindergartens used to offer eurhythmics teachers contracts of employment, which was caused by the lack of their qualifications in the scope of kindergarten education. Occasionally, there were teachers who held a diploma in Dalcroze's method and took up additional studies to achieve the qualifications of a kindergarten pedagogue; yet, these cases were isolated and observed only throughout the last decade due to the availability of postgraduate studies and the new Bologna system of higher education (the system of multistage education). Although the eurhythmics teacher was not "permanently" linked to the kindergartens where they taught music to crowds of preschoolers, it is difficult to imagine kindergarten education without using Dalcroze's method.

In September 2013, the above-mentioned protest on eliminating extra classes treated Dalcroze's eurhythmics equally with other extra classes such as: martial arts, modern foreign languages (English, French, German and the recently popular Chinese), ballet or ballroom dancing. It is impossible to present a typology of extra classes in the kindergartens' offers in the previous 5 years due to their wide range and the fact that the offer was often conditioned by unrelat-

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[7] *Podstawa programowa wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół obowiązująca od roku szkolnego 2009/10*, Warszawa 2009, p. 11.

[8] Ibidem, p. 11.

[9] Conclusion supported by interviews with kindergarten managers and eurhythmics teachers in Poznan kindergartens (interviews carried out in 2003–2013).

ed factors.[10] So far, most eurhythmics teachers were present in the job market based on contracts that did not linked them permanently to kindergartens, and many eurhythmics teachers would start up their own service companies. This state of affairs was related to the fact that during the week an average eurhythmics teacher would have about 25 eurhythmics classes in various kindergartens. From the point of view of the assumptions of modern education, this mode of pedagogical work did not meet the demand on the individualization in education, because it is difficult to learn anything about the most elementary needs and abilities of children if one meets even up to 626 pre-schoolers a week. Perhaps this fact, and the fact of 100 years of tradition of using eurhythmics in the Polish educational practice caught the attention of the legislator and allowed to introduce the new regulation.

In the law of 6 December 2013 that was introduced on 7 January 2014 (the so-called recruitment law) one can read the following: "in justified cases, following the approval of the chief education officer, public kindergartens can employ a person that is not a teacher to hold classes that develop various interests when the person's preparation is thought by the kindergarten manager to be suitable for conducting such classes".[11] This statement can of course be applied to other forms of children's activities; it seems, however, that to a large extent it applies to systematic solutions related to eurhythmics, and thus it allows one to suspect that its position in kindergarten education has been noticed.

The core curriculum for kindergarten education does not mention eurhythmics directly[12], but knowing the assumptions of the method it can be noticed that it can support almost all the areas[13] of the teacher's activities, and is an incredibly useful method for the prophylaxis and therapy of developmental disorders. Understood just as a method for shaping music competences, eurhythmics correlates with at least two areas of knowledge defined in the core curriculum:

– "education through art – the child as a spectator and actor"[14], when we talk about playing roles in paratheatrical activities (using speech, mimics, gesture and movement, props),

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[10] Even the above-mentioned ones do not fully reflect the assumptions of the core curriculum, and one could risk claiming that not all of them meet the scope of abilities and developmental needs of a child agreed between 3 and 6.

[11] www.sejm.gov.pl/sejm7 [access: 1.02.2014].

[12] It stems from the fact that eurhythmics is a method.

[13] It is assumed that teacher's areas of interaction are the areas defined in the core curriculum for kindergarten education.

[14] *Podstawa programowa*…, ed. cit., p. 13.

– "education through art – music and singing, moving to the music and dancing"[15], where the child is supposed to sing children's and traditional songs, willingly participate in singing, dancing and playing music in a group, notice changes in the elements of a music piece and recognise the features of sound, also interpreting it by moving to the music or dancing, create music – also through movement, listen to music with concentration.[16]

These areas mark the direction for the standards in the cultural education of children at the kindergarten age, but one should clearly state that "musical phenomena are linked to all cognitive subjects in the kindergarten programme, as well as they themselves become an object of interest, reactions, differentiation, recognition, defining and naming".[17] Such an assumption is in accordance with the concept of integrated teaching, therefore eurhythmics taught by a eurhythmics teacher who is not permanently linked to the kindergarten, and thus detached from child's everyday activity at the kindergarten does not fully meet the above-mentioned criteria.[18]

Moreover, at this point is should be noticed that the pre-school teacher is prepared for completing the above-mentioned areas of education, yet they do not always have their musical competences developed enough for them to include playing an instrument in the tasks defined by these areas (own accompaniment for musical games or signing), instrumental improvisation elements (which play a very important role in Dalcroze's system) in order to implement methodological assumptions as far as forming the child's voice is concerned, and finally to systemize the interactions in the same way they are systemized in the method. The most elementary assumptions of eurhythmics are completed by teachers intuitively; it is difficult to imagine a day in the kindergarten deprived of physical movement accompanied with music, learning or consolidating songs, playing with elements of sound and dance. One should also underline that students of pre-school and early school education improve their knowledge on forming children's musical competences at the university or postgraduate studies, to a large extent making themselves familiar with the elements of eurhythmics and Carl Orff's method, because these mark the assumptions of propaedeutic musical education. During studies for teachers there are classes on musical education methodology, and although they are often

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[15] Ibidem.

[16] Ibidem.

[17] Z. Konaszkiewicz, R. Ławrowska, B. Nowak, W.A. Sacher, B. Smoleńska-Zielińska, *Standardy edukacji muzycznej*, [in:] *Standardy edukacji kulturalnej. Materiały do konsultacji środowiskowych*, ed. A. Białkowski, Warszawa 2008, p. 107–108.

[18] An optimum situation is when the eurhythmics teacher would become a member of the kindergarten's staff.

completed within a small number of hours (usually 30-45 class hours in the course of the studies), methodological solutions during these classes are in line with the selected assumptions of eurhythmics.[19] The kindergarten teacher thus uses eurhythmics solutions in a spontaneous way, but above all in accordance with their knowledge on the developmental psychology of a small child and determinants for the organisation of the kindergarten's operations. Paradoxically, this knowledge (psychological, pedagogical) brings the teacher closer to the assumptions of the method, because Dalcroze's intention was to adjust pedagogical interactions to the developmental potential of the pupils in his charge.

According to the Polish Music Council's demand from 2008 on the musical competences of a kindergarten teacher included in the *Standards of Cultural Education* publication, "musical education at kindergartens is conducted by a pre-school expert pedagogue with musical background at least at the level of a secondary school, including this education in the full frame of everyday developmental, educational and training interactions".[20] In the first part of the quoted text, this demand can be viewed as controversial – the process of educating pre-school teachers in effect at universities (currently compliant with the 2012 standards of educating teachers[21]) equips the student with elementary skills and musical knowledge. Of course, a person with additional musical background would be much better prepared to implement the assumptions of the musical education methodology; however, in practice we face a situation where the kindergarten teacher usually does not have secondary-level musical background, which does not mean that their knowledge and skills as far as forming musical competences do not meet the criteria included in the core curriculum in effect. It is rather worth considering creating an order that defines the recruitment process for teacher studies where every candidate would have to show basic musical skills that would be verified at the exam.[22]

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[19] The syllabi of subjects on forming musical competences of a pre-school and early-school child valid in Polish universities in teacher studies often include in their content (or subjects of classes) terms such as "assumptions of E.J. Dalcroze and C. Orff's methods", "selected elements of musical education methods according to E.J. Dalcroze and C. Orff", "concept of the musical education of a small child in the light of E.J. Dalcroze and C. Orff's methods" etc.

[20] Z. Konaszkiewicz, R. Ławrowska, B. Nowak, W.A. Sacher, B. Smoleńska-Zielińska, op. cit., p. 113.

[21] Confer: *Rozporządzenie Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dnia 17 stycznia 2012 r. w sprawie standardów kształcenia przygotowującego do wykonywania zawodu nauczyciela* (*Journal of Law* 2005 no. 164 item 1365, with further changes).

[22] In 2008, when the quoted publication was created, public universities tested the musical talents of candidates for being pre-school teachers – this practice should be returned nowadays, and an appropriate order would be justified as it would give a chance for unifying the criteria in the recruitment process both at public and private universities.

The elementary assumptions of eurhythmics are thus applied in pre-school education on the day of child's activity in the form of musical games, and the main difference between eurhythmics and propaedeutic musical education carried out in kindergartens by group tutors consists in the fact that they do not carry out music (or eurhythmics) as closed classes limited to a defined time slot, but music with elements of rhythm and movement is integrated with the day schedule and permeates other areas of the pre-school education programme freely, it is not based on piano improvisation, it is not characterized by systematic interactions methodologically designed by Jaques-Dalcroze.

To sum up the considerations so far, the elements of the method included in the title of this paper are present in pre-school education due to the action taken by the pre-school teacher. This does not mean, however, that it is not worth introducing the method in a systematic and methodologically organized way. Most certainly, it is a verified method that makes it possible to form musicality, develop psychomotor skills, helpful in the prophylaxis of posture disorders, invaluable in the process of the prophylaxis of concentration disorders, beneficial for the emotional and cognitive development of the child. Eurhythmics is a point of reference for the assumptions of music therapy, as well as dance therapy and logorhythmics, plays an important role in special pedagogy and motor rehabilitation.[23] Consequently, the lack of eurhythmics as systematic classes held at least once a week would indeed be a huge loss and limitation of the child's opportunity to develop in harmony.

Eurhythmics classes allow to achieve positive changes in children's behaviour, acceleration in their reading and writing skills, which has a great value for challenges posed by pre-school education. These classes can also be one of main means in the process of treating child's personality disharmonies.[24] It is also worth adding that the eurhythmics teacher is thoroughly (in terms of their knowledge and methodology) prepared to work with the child, because eurhythmics was created by the method's author also remembering about the expressive and perception needs of a small child. What is more, addressing the job market needs, eurhythmics studies often introduce an additional pedagogical course, at the moment in accordance with the standards of educating teachers defined in the order by the Minister of Science and Higher Education of January 17, 2012 on the standards of education that prepares for the teaching profession.[25]

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[23] A. Sojka, *Rytmika*, [in:] *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, ed. T. Pilch, Warszawa 2006, vol. V, p. 566.

[23] A. Sojka, *Rytmika*, [in:] *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, ed. T. Pilch, Warszawa 2006, vol. V, p. 566.

[24] Ibidem.

[25] The conclusion was made after analysing schedules of studies at art universities that provide eurhythmics courses (the analysis carried out in 2012–2014).

Assumptions of the method and the developmental needs of the contemporary pre-schooler

According to E. Jaques-Dalcroze, education "consists in restoring and rematching various elements of life. The body is a means of transmitting our internal existence. As soon as it starts moving, we shall see how energy and existence combine and begin to live again, how the so-far soundless space supplements them, whereas time orders this teamwork".[26] Although this concept sounds quite archaic nowadays, it is applied in the process of contemporary pre-school education and can turn out incredibly helpful both in the process of stimulating the development of both children who grow in harmony and pre-schoolers with developmental disorders.

Next to improvisation and solfège, eurhythmics (that according to the author embraces both eurhythmics and arts and crafts) is one of three elements of Emil Jaques-Dalcroze's method. Dalcroze was a Swiss music teacher who created the assumptions of his concept based on his professional experience in the conservatoire in Geneva, and then in his own institute in Hellerau next to Dresden, thus becoming part of the current of thought characteristic of the New Education.[27] Dalcroze was one of the first pedagogues who noticed the potential of aesthetic education in the process of forming the man's personality. He called his programme "the renewal of man through their own activity".[28] The following words show that eurhythmics was supposed to stimulate the man thoroughly: "… music is a powerful mental power that results from our spiritual and verbal activity and that can order our life activities thanks to its stimulating and regulating capabilities".[29] The role of music, also of that completed with movement in space in the process of the man's development, is presented by S. Dylak in *Architektura wiedzy w szkole* [Architecture of knowledge at school].[30] The publication contains information on numerous studies that unambiguously show that "art is a great teacher indeed".[31] E. Jaques-Dalcroze's achievements from one hundred years ago become part of this current of thought on art.

Dalcroze drew on the way of thinking characteristic of representatives of humanistic pedagogy, and its objectives directly correlate with the objectives of

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[26] E. Jaques-Dalcroze, *Pisma wybrane*, Warszawa 1992, p. 14.

[27] M. Przychodzińska-Kaciczak, *Muzyka i wychowanie*, Warszawa 1969, p. 15.

[28] Ibidem, p. 17.

[29] Ibidem, p. 17–18.

[30] See: S. Dylak, *Architektura wiedzy w szkole*, Warszawa 2013, p. 33–38.

[31] Ibidem, p. 33.

general education and training.[32] Educational objectives include, among others: developing social behaviours (because eurhythmics takes place in group classes), forming the skill of contacting other people, caring about others, shaping the ability of "empathising" – emotional experiences through musical perception and reception, shaping the feeling of responsibility and self-reliance (each child controls its own motor music expression independently), adjusting to a group, independent and responsible acting within a social group, shaping one's self-esteem, self-assurance and trust in one's abilities, shaping the skill of self-control and self-assessment, aspiring to self-determination and deciding about oneself.[33]

In its original meaning, eurhythmics is mainly aimed at forming children's musical competences. With exercises, they experience and interpret ephemeral and asemantic (thus difficult to perceive) sounds with their movements. Thanks to experience, music signals become obvious and understandable for the child, which consequently leads to conscious perception and reception of music. For the development of a pre-schooler, the context of shaping their musicality is obviously important, but what is key for its development is rather the context of its versatile and varied activity through exercises that are characteristic of the method.

Music classes based on the guidelines of the method's author are given by a eurhythmics teacher at kindergartens. The so-called eurhythmics is a closed class unit where any educational objectives are achieved through the child's musical activity. This activity mainly involves "making music plastic" (thus the name of the method's part – eurhythmics and plastic arts, called "animated plastic arts" by the author), transferring its elements into movement, because as Jaques-Dalcroze assumed: "Music consists of sound and movement. Sound is a form of movement of secondary importance. Rhythm is a form of movement of elementary importance. This is why learning music should start with gaining motor experiences. By applying eurhythmics one should activate each body part separately, and then all of them at once, and finally the whole body as one".[34] Thus, during eurhythmics classes the child's body (its muscular apparatus) is completely engaged in expressing particular music schemes, including, to a large extent, rhythmic ones, because rhythm is the leading music element in eurhythmics. This concept seems to be very accurate, because rhythm is a factor that orders the child's daily activities, especially crucial in childhood. At the kindergarten, the child's daily routine is organised, and putting it off the stride is often associated with discomfort, or even losing the feeling of security.

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[32] Ibidem, p. 18.

[33] A. Sojka, op. cit., p. 566–567.

[34] E. Jaques-Dalcroze, op. cit., p. 23.

Rhythm is close to the child, it permeates its everyday rituals and is reflected in such basic activities as: having meals at specific times, evening bath, afternoon nap, it is also an element of knowledge about the natural world – with the sequence of week days and seasons being just an example. The method's author rightly notices that "… the child's body is naturally equipped with the most significant element of rhythm, i.e. measure"[35] – it is reflected in the heart beat, breathing, even walking.[36] Dalcroze also believed that rhythm is the basic element of all the fields of art, thus the method prepares the child not only to appreciate music achievements, but also perceive and receive any artistic works of man.

The method is based on assumptions that are close to the nature of man, it can be helpful in the process of making the child aware of the phenomena in the natural world that surrounds it and of the cultural achievements, it is based on sound phenomena – music signals and rhythmical movement. In his concept, the author points to issues that we do not remember about in everyday life, that once implemented into systematic exercise will allow one to realise their own potential. Dalcroze talks, among others, about elementary rhythm and its basic elements such as lifting and putting down one's foot while walking, or breathing in and out while breathing. This focus on the natural potential of man is a starting point for creating a sequence of gestures and movements in a way that is compliant with the child's physiology.

By means of motor and music exercises, the pre-schooler has an opportunity to form a cautious and focused attitude when waiting for signals, build their reaction time and learn to make the movements of all limbs (arms and legs) independent. The method is of great importance in the process of mastering the intensity and divisibility of attention, reactions to stimuli and accuracy of perception, good memory, processes of synthesis and analysis, imagination and shaping creative predispositions. As music exercises are carried out using the entire body, eurhythmics' functions are prophylactic, corrective and compensational in the process of preventing posture disorders. Also, thanks to including language, which next to movement is the core of Orff's method that is currently present in kindergarten eurhythmics, eurhythmics classes can be an alternative method of prophylaxis and speech therapy called logorhythmics. Coordinating rhythmic body movements with language can be quite beneficial for children who have problems with maintaining fluency in verbal utterances.

The advantage of applying eurhythmics at the contemporary kindergarten is that the child learns to "control their body energy".[37] Dynamic exercises are

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[35] Ibidem, p. 16.

[36] Ibidem, p. 16–17.

[37] Ibidem, p. 23.

done by "every muscle separately, as well as by all the muscles together at the same time"[38]; they take into account the gradation of strength, lead to expressing changes and contrasts with movement. While introducing the pre-schooler systematically in a range of tasks that result from the methodological assumptions of Dalcroze's concept we face a gradual introduction of time intervals. Those expressed with movement allow the child to freeze a gesture in time, i.e. achieve a skill that is especially difficult for small children, and almost unattainable for children with distorted attention. Similarly, with the independence of arms and legs stressed by the method's author, as well as the time necessary for completing particular movement sequences according to the gestures designed by Dalcroze (that in practice turn out to be physiological, and thus used in the rehabilitation of the movement organ), we face a situation when the child will not accelerate the speed wilfully, will not become unfocused, because in order to make a music signal with movement (tightening and relaxing particular muscles and "bringing" them in space, and then returning to the starting position) the child will need a specific time interval, and this limitation will not make it impossible to carry out additional, "superfluous" movement structures. For every pre-schooler, especially for children with developmental deficits, eurhythmics becomes a way of "discovering oneself, controlling oneself, taking one's own personality in possession". We thus reach a moment when eurhythmics fits the issues of the child's subjectivity in the process of education and training. What is more, as the authors claims, in the process of making music plastic, the child "... is not occupied with meaningless thoughts"[39], which in case of attention disorders can turn out to be a "happy therapeutic medium".

Eurhythmics consists of a range of exercises, from simple to musically complex. Among them are:

1. Exercises for relaxing muscles and breathing.
2. Exercises for rhythmic division and stressing.
3. Exercises for metric remembering.
4. Quick visual and auditory recognition of meter.
5. Feeling rhythms through the muscular sense.
6. Development of spontaneous will and inhibition skills.
7. Exercises for concentration. Developing the skill of internal listening to rhythms.
8. Exercises in maintaining body balance and assuring movement continuity.
9. Exercises that build various "automatisms" and match them with alternately with spontaneous acts of will.

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[38] Ibidem.

[39] Ibidem, p. 39.

10. Completion of musical time values and division of long values into short ones.
11. Immediate completion of musical rhythm through movement.
12. Exercises for motor divisibility.
13. Exercises for interrupting and stopping movement and doubling, tripling and making moves slower.
14. Polyrhythmic exercises.
15. Using word stress.
16. Exercises in writing down the rhythm.
17. Exercises in improvisation.
18. Conducting rhythms and performing it by several groups.

It is worth noting that the method is based on an assumption that is significant for child's developmental needs which claims that practice should precede theory. During systematic exercises the child can experience, consolidate and reflect. The child is not supposed "to know" but to "feel" and as a result of the joy of feeling find the motivation to create its own expression.

Eurhythmics as a significant area of experience for the contemporary child

The considerations on eurhythmics so far show that the concept of E. Jaques-Dalcroze is applied in the process of educational, training, prophylactic and therapeutic activities. The author underlined it that knowing the world and understanding it is mainly based on body movement and work of the senses. Body movement and work of the nervous system through receiving and analysing stimuli definitely facilitate understanding the world. When formulating his postulates, Dalcroze was right to notice a tendency that he verbalised in the following way: the body "got out of the habit of rhythm, as in the process of education purely intellectual tasks began to dominate"[40] again, referring themselves to the natural, inborn potential of the child. This element of the concept is significantly applied in music therapy, as well as matches well the strategy of integrated learning and educating of a small child.

Music classes of the eurhythmics character clearly support the psychomotor development of children, it is thus worth making them commonly available at kindergartens, as well as at schools, in after-school rooms, hospitals and various types of institutions supporting the child's development.[41] At kindergar-

[40] Ibidem, p. 66.

[41] This opinion is also supported by students of teaching majors at AMU in Poznan who familiarized themselves with the elementary assumptions of the method during classes on music with elements of music therapy (in the 2013/2014 academic year).

tens there should be systematic eurhythmics meetings, yet with a teacher who is permanently linked to the place, as thus they recognise current needs of their pupils and remains in touch with them all the time. The eurhythmics teacher should also be in regular contact with the kindergarten teacher so that eurhythmics classes correlate with areas of activity that arise from the kindergarten education programme and they should be able to participate in cooperation with the family environment of the pre-schooler.

Carried out according to the above-mentioned postulates, eurhythmics would be justified in the process of stimulating the versatile development of the child; it would be a way of "educating the whole man, their various mental, emotional and practical abilities".[42] They would then also match the postulate of viewing music "not detached from the multilayer basis of the human culture, but in line with it: philosophy, pedagogy, psychology and other art fields that aspire to integration in their works".[43] Together with the above-mentioned postulates and with the elementary assumption of the method to always part from practice and emotional experience, eurhythmics, next to a wide offer and availability of many contemporary methods that support the development of a small child, can play an important role in the process of preparing the child to take up compulsory schooling with optimally formed physical, cognitive and above all emotional and social resources. The contemporary kindergarten becomes a place where using eurhythmics seems to be absolutely necessary. With an assumption that the kindergarten tutor develops child's musical skills during their daily activities, one can even risk claiming that eurhythmics can not only aim at developing and consolidating one's musicality, but above all its potential should be perceived as far as stimulating the child's versatile growth goes in accordance with its innate abilities and current needs.

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[42] M. Przychodzińska-Kaciczak, op. cit., p. 21.

[43] Ibidem.

The world of the theatre as a student's learning space

Lucyna Maksymowicz

The school, in terms of an institution, cannot be an isolated-from-the-social-events island. Not only is this institution for the society but above all it is also for children, for young people. It is a spot in the social space where both intellectual and moral maturation occur at their greatest pace. One should think over how this period in every young person's life is to be used so that new opportunities for the development of their both personal and social competences are created. A crucial objective of the teacher's job will be to form in their pupils the need for searching as well as finding their own place in the social space of the postmodernism era.

The idea of the learning space itself remains still unspecified and unequivocal. The place, which is regarded as safety and space in terms of freedom, is considered to be one of many significant categories for a human being's life by Kwiatkowska.[1] The more a human being tames space creating places in it, the more friendly the whole world becomes to it. Also the author claims that the more places on Earth we mark owing to relationships with another person, the less solitary we are. One is also within the space with others "along with the awareness of coexistence, co-identification, co-presence, mutual disposal defined by an entity's social identification boundaries with other participants of the community life".[2]

Writing about learning space, Pasterniak[3] refers to the value as the major factor constituting learning space of subjective relationships. The subjects co-operate within the framework of mutually established rules and standards, in

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[1] H. Kwiatkowska, *Czas, miejsce, przestrzeń – zaniedbane kategorie pedagogiczne*, [in:] *Pedagogika u progu trzeciego tysiąclecia. Materiały pokonferencyjne*, ed. A. Nalaskowski, K. Rubacha, Toruń 2001.

[2] J. Modrzewski, *Socjologia przestrzeni edukacyjnych*, [in:] *Relacje podmiotów (w) lokalnej przestrzeni edukacyjnej*, ed. J. Modrzewski, M. Śmiałek, K. Wojnowski, Kalisz – Poznań 2008, p. 96.

[3] W. Pasterniak, *Przestrzeń edukacyjna*, Zielona Góra 1995.

the name of the shared values. The life and development habitat (natural, social, cultural, virtual) should be the groundwork for the creation of the learning space. According to Łukaszewicz, education is called "the great window of opportunities between being and becoming"[4], where one learns to be themselves now and in the future. It takes various forms and shapes. Not only a classroom but also a forest, a meadow, a park, a beach, an attic or imagination can be a learning space. It is sufficient sometimes for one to reject the routine, old-fashioned methods, relocate or rename the place in order to create favourable conditions for prolific work. A stage can turn out to be a safe place as well as space which stimulates a pupil's development. I have had a pleasure of becoming convinced by running my own drama workshops with children and teenagers including students with specific educational needs (deaf students with mental deficiency). Katarzyna Krasoń is right to notice that "a pupil's creative partaking in the theatre ought to be conditioned by the supervision of a competent teacher who is not only knowledgeable about acting forms and the possibilities of the theatralization of reality but also legitimizes his qualifications in personal theatrical activity."[5] This is where the idea to share the experience on the author's personal acting activities originated from.

From dramatic play to acting in a particular role

The Oxford Dictionary defines drama as a stage play, dramatic art, play-like series of events and dramatic as being forcible, theatrical and striking. The Greeks used the word drama with a rather different meaning, i.e. 'to live through' and it is in the context that we should consider drama and a child's growth. According to Tynan, "good drama is made up of the thoughts, the words and the gestures that are wrung from human beings on their way to, or in, or emerging from a state of desperation."[6] He further defines a play as being an ordered sequence of events that brings one or more of people in it to a desperate condition which it must always explain and should, if possible, resolve. In these two sentences lies the key to the essential nature of drama. The teacher's role in education is to provide learning situations.

A lot of situations in which a student finds himself provoked to be active, personally as well emotionally involved should be arranged as long as a teacher

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[4] R. Łukaszewicz, *Szkoła jako kawałek innego świata*, Wrocław 1997, p. 24.

[5] K. Krasoń, *Kilka cierpkich uwag o teatrze w edukacji wczesnoszkolnej, ale i poszukiwanie rozwiązań rzeczywistej aktywności nacechowanej twórczo*, "Problemy Wczesnej Edukacji", 2013, vol. 1 (20), p. 24.

[6] D. Heathcote, *Drama as Challenge*, [in:] *The uses of drama. Acting as a social and educational force*, ed. J. Hodgson, London 1981, p. 157.

really wants to support the development of the confided to him pupils. It is the drama and the theatre in terms of stimulating and releasing the child's energy that can be an immensely valuable didactic source.

The objective of the drama classes never alters. The activities are solely changed as the child grows up. The youngest yearn for the need to have fun, the need for a fairy tale and the need for real events occurring around them which can simultaneously be inspirational for them to create drama performances (staging). This term is known in literature as dramatic play in which a child explores its own universe imitating both the code of conduct and characteristics of the ones who surround it. It has been stated that in dramatic play the child creates a world of their own in which to master reality. In their imaginative world, they try to solve real-life problems that, until now, they have been unable to solve. "Through this activity the child is given an opportunity to imitate adults, encouraged to play out real-life roles with intensity, dramatize relationships and experiences, express their own most pressing needs, release unacceptable impulses, reverse the roles usually taken, try to solve problems, and experiment with solutions. If encouraged, by providing the place, equipment, and atmosphere in which the child feels free to express themselves, dramatic play is a natural and healthy manifestation of human growth".[7] For the child it is one of the first types of expressions in the sense of a dramatic form. Yet, it cannot be mistaken with drama nor can it be interpreted as a performance. A dramatic play is by nature fragmentary and exists only for a while. Even though it is rehearsed, it does not have the capacity of a rehearsal. It is rather a repetition of a creative experience for the process of creation's sake. One will virtually find it difficult to define a moment when a dramatic play turns into a more complex drama game and theatre game.

A child's active partaking reaches a higher level, takes new forms and enriches qualitatively along with their progressive mental development. As the child's awareness about the world improves, its active partaking gradually transforms into a conscious-of-the-ultimate-aim output. At this stage a term of creative game can be broadly discussed, which is believed to be a synthesis of the child's foregoing activity, a synthesis of both the light absorption and expressing oneself ergo the combination of the imaginary as well as of the real life. According to psychologists, the lack of such games for a child can eventually result in mental disorders, lack of mental stability and losing oneself. It is significant to arrange the creative games in such a way so that the children might show a lot of their own invention. Only when a child starts to generalise the roles they take upon themselves is it likely to happen (while playing the role of a police officer the child does not act as though they were the one they

[7] N. McCaslin, *Creative drama in the classroom*, New York – London 1984, p. 9.

knew or had seen in the street but "the police officer in general" being in certain relationships with other people).

By "being in a particular role" a child is required to be able to elicit characteristic features from a human being or an object, whose role they play; features that are peculiar to them. This elicitation and generalisation is done while creating the role. Playing somebody else and identifying with them allows an opportunity to understand and evaluate the situation more thoroughly. The term of role playing, used in educational activities, always refers to taking such a role which is of greater significance to a participant of the classes. For a student, role playing is the same thing as a dramatic game for a child. It might appear that playing is the continuation/prolongation of the dramatic game. Play is the principal instrument of growth. Without play there can be no normal adult cognitive life. According to R. Courtney, "play initially, and the arts subsequently, develop imaginative constructions whereby people function in the word. The arts are expressions of imaginations through which the personality develops, and which builds cognitive and abstract ways of working with the environment".[8]

Along with the child's growth, it is both linguistic and communicative competences that are improved at the same time. The way a story is told also starts to count. Although children, in order to express emotions released by a story (a script) still use their own words or gestures, one might clearly notice that a child is particularly interested in how to say or show something. A child is somewhat challenged to show not only the way they feel but also to be able to convey the thoughts, emotions and experiences to another person. It might seem that children are persuaded to feel as well as understand in the first place, to become aware of their knowledge in the second place and finally to turn them to the clear way of expressing themselves so that the ideas were not only well-played but also were well-arranged by the children themselves. Undoubtedly this is the essence of educational aspect of the actions of a child as an actor, which can be seized by merging the spontaneous creativity with the defined discipline of the theatre language.

A student is an actor in a school play and it is our objective to support their development. By this it is understood that young people ought to be provided with help so that their strengths would thoroughly be used, ought to be supported in the actions aimed at the development of their natural inclinations, which they might put effectively in practice and, last but not least, young pupils should be accepted and perceived as equal subjects participating in the education process who are in possession of their own needs and pastimes. If children have not had an opportunity to learn to express their own feelings and thoughts

[8] R. Courtney, *Re-Play: Studies of Human Drama Education*, Toronto 1982, p. 157.

in games or drama activities, they will not be able to interpret the authentic materials offered by the teacher. The content should by no means be imposed on. The topics are to be sought for by both the teacher as well as the pupils and it is the students who assign meaning to particular situations in their lives.

The theatrical techniques related questions, which are used in education, are still up-to-date and belong to those issues which have been discussed throughout the century. Owing to that, various new ideas and terms for defining what a theatre is for children have been coined: a natural theatre as the place where a child can freely express themselves or playing a theatre (Dorman).[9] These two very interesting reflections and practical achievements of the aforementioned authors turned out to be insufficient in removing or limiting the tendency of the educators or school staff members to copy a professional theatre, which is unfortunately happening these days.

From drama to theatre

The term drama stems from the English language and defines "the theatrical techniques used for educational purposes".[10] Taking part, improvising and the whole set of sources and strategies can be used as a pedagogical method within the framework of a variety of activities. It can also form an independent subject – drama workshops. The author of the paper has suggested a five-day series of games, exercises and drama games which had been structured in such a way so as to unite the physical, mental, spiritual and social areas of the student's life.[11] It is in the drama where a specific creation of an improvisation process can be found (an improvised performance). The dialogue is created by the participants (actors) regardless of whether the content has been obtained from a well-known short story or is an imaginary plot. Neither is the script written nor it is memorised. Every time it is performed, the story becomes more detailed and better-arranged, however, by nature it remains an improvisation and by definition it is never aimed at the audience, which does not eliminate encounters with appreciative audiences (a form teacher, parents, invited friends). The main objective in the drama workshops is creating various problem situations (ethical drama) so that students while playing the part of another character could look at the world from a different perspective. The first and utmost skill the

[9] J. Dorman, *Zabawa dzieci w teatr*, Warszawa 1981.

[10] H. Machulska, *Drama – jej istota, techniki i strategie*, [in:] *Drama w szkole podstawowej. Lekcje języka polskiego w klasach 4–6*, ed. eadem, A. Pruszkowska, J. Tatarowicz, Warszawa 1997, p. 9.

[11] L. Maksymowicz, *Drama jako metoda wspomagania rozwoju osobowości dziecka w wieku szkolnym*, Słupsk 2002.

students acquire is acting in a particular role. A teacher arranges the learning space by sketching the drama's topic assigning the parts while the students are obliged to solve the problem posed in the drama by playing the particular part. Not only are the students taught to make decisions by themselves resulting from such a course of action but also to take responsibility for the effects. We act as a group, learn to cooperate in a group and simultaneously critically estimate the situation, by which we are often amazed for it is merely an improvisation. Having performed the scenes by a few groups we discuss the decisions made by the characters the students impersonate. The moment is particularly important in terms of education. The students share not only their knowledge but also with their emotions accompanying them while making the aforementioned decisions.

In my pedagogical career I have been trying to implement a widely understood drama education, however, not only via drama itself. One might claim that I, along with the children, start the drama work beginning with the drama games. Only if the students express an interest in the theatre work, another step of creating the part and using the world of theatre for educational purposes is bound to begin. This time, however, our attention is drawn not only to students-actors but also to the audience without whom our theatre does not exist at all. We consciously learn to apply sources of artistic expression in order to communicate with another person. The way it is uttered is also taken into account, especially in the meaning of building a relationship with a viewer. Both drama activities and work over the play is preceded by a range of fun plays, games or etudes, whose aim it is to:

- Become aware of one's own body and accept it,
- Form the body's "eloquence" (flexibility, coordination, agility),
- Realise the efficiency of the voice and sensitivity to sounds,;
- Develop imagination with the use of exercises based on senses (sense of sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell) and perceptiveness as well as on concentration,
- Express feelings and moods by mimicry and gestures,
- Show the way people, animals act with the help of a movement (pantomimic etudes); engaging various objects, phenomena (the wind, warmth, colour), etc.,
- Be able to be in the particular role – acting social and ethical drama scenes.[12]

Drama games, pantomimic etudes or improvised performances turn out to be more effective in the education process. The methods, which use spontaneous tragedy, are just invaluable in the therapeutic work, in rehabilitation of

[12] Ibidem, p. 73.

chronically ill people or in the correction. Likewise dance, music or kinaesthetic activities. One might find it difficult to understand those teachers who barely use a range of such theatre sources as: a prop, the light, the stage. Even in the drama scenes I use music, mis-en-scene or costumes if necessary. In the process of communication the students are also believed to use such sources of artistic expression as: a gesture, articulation or composition not only in drama classes. Props are thought to be deliberately resigned from using in drama by a group of teachers or therapists who claim they are of lower significance. One might find it difficult to agree with this theory. A human being and the problem they are solving are undoubtedly the most crucial. However, an experienced educationalist knows that a prop (as well as the costume or an item of it) often enables students to take the role upon themselves, to gather the thoughts and is favourable to taking creative actions. Certain props can enhance the feelings of the drama's participants (for instance a puppet as a child), can play the role of a consciously implemented symbol.[13] It can be heard more and more often that "the significance of the phenomena is not in their nature but in the fact that they cross-refer to something beyond themselves. In the profoundness of experiencing the reality in this manner there are anchored symbols belonging to the primal layer of the psychological development of the human being. In any case, the origin of symbols is explainable by the need of possessing a visible picture of what is imperceptible".[14]

The traditional (in the theatrical sense) stage design is very often rejected in drama or in school plays by the author of the thesis. However, she does attempt to make the space of the performances distinctly sorted out by, for example, using a homogenous, dark backdrop and the illumination of "the stipulated/accepted stage" (floodlight). In certain cases, however, introducing the stage design can be meaningful, likewise using the music. The music, the sound, the costume, the light and a prop can stimulate the imagination, which as a result coordinates other senses and the mind. Practical actions made the author of the paper convinced to such a degree that not applying certain theatrical sources can even lead to the decrease in the efficiency of therapeutic actions.

What is educational theatre?

Some of teachers who are professionally connected with theatrical activities opposed the term "educational theatre", for they believe that education and

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[13] Eadem, *Ku teatralizacji dramy*, [in:] *Teatr. Terapia – edukacja – asertywność – twórczość – rozwój*, ed. M. Gliniecki, L. Maksymowicz, Słupsk 2004.

[14] K. Pankowska, *Pedagogika dramy*, Warszawa 2000, p. 121.

theatre are two separate, or even mutually exclusive domains. Others claimed that the adjective 'educational' is redundant because theatre has always been educational. The dispute over educational theatre is worth beginning with a general question on the nature of educational theatre as such.[15] Isn't it true that the label 'educational' is used in order to underline its uniqueness in comparison with other forms of theatre? In such case, why 'educational' and not 'instructive', 'informative', 'enlightening', 'edifying', 'sensitising'? The term may have been coined deliberately. Any human being can be considered a product of an educational process. In such cases it is difficult to distinguish how much the culprit's behaviour has been influenced by various factors: the work of professionals and non-professionals who educated him, family background, economic, political and cultural situation (including theatre). The accomplished contemporary educator, Kwieciński, proposed to use the term 'education' as the most broad category which covers all the processes of development, education and influencing personality. "Education, then, is the overall influence on an individual and groups of people, which is conducive to their development and uses their capabilities to allow them to become conscious and creative members of a social, national, cultural and global community, capable of establishing their own identity and developing the self by undertaking non-personal tasks and keeping the self in harmony with such undertakings. Education is a number of activities and functions which lead a person towards self-fulfilment, shape their personality as well as their attitude towards the world and other people".[16] So, if we use the term 'educational theatre', we ought to think of something more than 'didacticism', methods, sensitising. After all, instrumental pedagogy and modelling are out of fashion. Having read Kwieciński's definition, one cannot be surprised that so many educators have a positive attitude towards the idea of educational theatre.

It would seem obvious that among other forms of art, which enrich our experience and develop humanistic attitudes, theatre has a special position. It has been emphasised by art historians and philosophers since antiquity. I omit modern aesthetics of theatre and its significance to the process of education here, for it has been described in a vast literature on the subject[17], which contains a classification of educational functions of theatre (moral and social, reviving, intellectual, integrative, ludic).[18]

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[15] L. Maksymowicz, M. Gliniecki, *Czy(m) jest teatr edukacyjny? Tytułem wstępu*, [in:] *Teatr edukacyjny – komunikacja bez granic*, ed. these, Słupsk 2001.

[16] Z. Kwieciński, *Dziesięciościan edukacji (składniki i aspekty – potrzeba całościowego ujęcia*), [in:] *Wprowadzenie do pedagogiki*, ed. T. Jaworska, R. Leppert, Kraków 1998, p. 37–38.

[17] W. Żardecki, *Teatr w refleksji i praktyce edukacyjnej. Ku pedagogice teatru*, Lublin 2012.

[18] H. Witalewska, *Teatr a człowiek współczesny*, Warszawa 1983.

Thus, the intentions of those authors who claim that theatre is educational in its very nature are understandable, and so the adjective 'educational' seems redundant. It seems worth asking whether every theatrical work fulfils (from the educational point of view) these functions in the case of all the audience, and whether the creators (performers) consciously use artistic devices in order to exert influence on the reception of their work, and if so, can they fully influence the final effect?

Much depends on the members of the audience. Whether it is someone who has a particularly strong aesthetic sense, or can be satisfied with anything average and typical; whether it is a person who 'identifies' with the characters and objects in the play, or a person who is conscious of and 'understands' the quality of the work, and is capable of assessing it (accepting or rejecting). In various studies of the audience we can find many observations which emphasise its significant (active) role in relation to a performance. However, even these studies do not fully clarify the matter. It has been stated that every staging, even the most clear and simple, changes the text and interprets it in a way which is difficult to find in spoken or written commentaries, and it uncovers subtle nuances that are often unvoiced. But in the end it is the audience who frame and structure what they perceive, so every time the same performance is shown there can be a different relation between the audience and the play. There will be as many interpretations as participants, and although the matter has not been thoroughly researched yet, it is obvious that these interpretations influence the act of communication created by the performance.

The fact whether a potential viewer can be affected to be more active or creative by the founders of the theatre is the question that is constantly being posed not only by the author of the paper. A widely understood theatre education (performances, workshops, visits both inside the building and at the backstage and finally meetings with actors) is confronted with the aforementioned idea. Educational theatre is included within that notion as well. Perhaps educational theatre is the one which puts educational as well as pedagogical values above all others making them the basic objective to achieve. Various forms can be included within such a framework of assumptions, starting from drama, school theatre to the so-called lecture theatre (typical for dramatic theatres of Poland) or "theatre of life" defined by Śliwonik. "Theatre for life means using the methods of work in theatre and the potential of performance for purposes other than artistic: education, rehabilitation, and psychotherapy. Such a form of theatre does not exclude, however, a possibility of reaching a high artistic level, but this is not its main target (a good example is Olsztyn Pantomime Theatre, which has achieved success worldwide). It might be said that in such cases the-

atre (theatrical work) leaves the artistic domain and becomes more attached to everyday reality".[19]

Most teachers consider educational theatre to be an opportunity of fellow cooperation of children and teenagers (and not only) in the theatre play. However, the joint participation in the spectacle can be both as a viewer or as an actor. In either case, a set of rules which govern the efficiency of the theatrical actions must be inevitably complied with. A conscious creation of performances, in which a student becomes a co-author of the screenplay, can play an important role in the student's development. Students, having such a possibility of participating in the process of creating, wonder what and how to say about themselves and the world they live in. They learn to speak for themselves while being on stage and by looking for a form for their utterance they learn the language of the theatre. They learn metaphors.

The significance of the theatre: a man versus man encounter – unbounded communication

"What is theatre?" asks and answers Barthes. "It is a type of a cyber machine. When it is in a state of retirement, the machine is hidden behind a curtain. But when you unveil it, it begins sending messages to us. The specificity of these messages comes from the fact that they flow simultaneously, although in different rhythms. We receive six or seven different pieces of information at the same time – coming from stage design, costume design, lighting, the positioning of the actors and their gestures, faces, and words. Some of these messages endure (stage design), while others circulate (words, gestures). Thus, we deal here with a true information polyphony. And this just means theatricality."[20] The aspect of the creation of meanings and of their presentation has been emphasised here by comparing theatre to a cyber machine. The range and power of communication in theatre is amplified by the visual nature of the message. Visual language most often uses metaphor, and "the emotionality connected to the mechanism of metaphorisation which is a basis for the creation and perception of metaphors, explains the power of such a message. Emotion motivates action, deepens the process of comprehension, fixes memorisation".[21] Nonverbal messages also play a significant role here, as they can reach the ill, the intellectually disabled, and also children. In theatre, as well as in therapy,

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[19] L. Śliwonik, *Teatr dla życia*, [in:] *Teatr edukacyjny – komunikacja bez granic*, ed. cit., p. 123.

[20] K. Kowalewicz, *Teatr i odbiorca*, Łódź 1993, p. 120.

[21] J. Sołowiej, *Teatr a metafora*, [in:] *Teatr edukacyjny – komunikacja bez granic*, ed. cit., p. 130.

transmission occurs, unlimited by any conventions or borders of perception. Something hitherto unknown, but most essential, can be conveyed and experienced.

The theatre of the last few years – street associated, open, alternative – has been looking for new contents or new forms and most importantly has been yearning to play a more and more important role in the life of a contemporary man. A new theatre actor is no longer an actor but a "human being"; it is the human honesty that is vital, not the declamation and its way of utterance. An actor has to use a fictional character as an instrument enabling them to penetrate all the areas underneath everyday mask, reaching all intimate layers of our personality. "The provocation" of the actor, who exposes themselves in order to be as much realistic as it is possible, opens a viewer to accepting particular emotions, to perceiving themselves (perhaps as the one they do not dare to be).

The modern theatre tries to smash traditional stereotypes of seeing the world and thinking about human existence. Its creators attempt to create opportunities so that a human being would no longer be alone. They create situations forcing not the viewer but the participant of the play themselves to reflect on how to live. Actors tear off their masks more frequently than they put them on. As far as interpersonal relationships are concerned, actors prefer natural attitude striving for openness in them – they teach to experience the "plenitude of humanity." It is said that the significance of the theatre lies in carrying the burden from aesthetic features to creative reception. It is here in this moment when interpersonal relationships, shaped during the play, value the most for they determine a social significance of the play – meeting and at the same time determine a therapeutic feature of the theatre.

The art of theatre has accompanied people in their development since time immemorial, provided enthralling experiences and captivated their minds, presented a creative vision of the world, broadened their understanding of social life, but at the same time displayed *condition humain*. It seems to be even more up-to-date nowadays – in times of social dehumanisation, degradation of natural environment and numerous other determinants posing a grave threat to our civilisation. Practice has repeatedly proved that theatre education can often help to resolve the above-mentioned problems. Obviously, its success entails effort, but most of all, a close co-operation between instructors, psychologists and educators. Additionally, it requires innovations, an exchange of experience in the techniques used as well as instructional methods. In my opinion every child, including those attending nursery schools, can experience an 'adventure with theatre' as long as, of course, it is tailored according to their needs and capacity. I would like there to be more and more of these 'adventures' each year with something beneficial for everyone.

This article originated from a belief that there still exists an unsatisfied need to touch upon the problems of the interrelation between the art of theatre and children, or, generally speaking, the link between art and education, since a child's world is not merely limited to spontaneous play, but it is also a consciously created process of education. It must be stressed that the term 'art of theatre' comprises what is, in fact, broadly understood as artistic activity, both that leading to generating performances and being labelled as reception, often permeated with reflection and involving experience, participation and collective creation. Undoubtedly, this constitutes the core of educational values, frequently exceeding the limits set by the nature of particular performance or artistic activities. Furthermore, the concept of theatre comprises what may be of prime importance to young people – their own unconstrained, dramatic and creative activity.

Contemporary young Lemkos – the question of identity

Beata A. Orłowska

Contemporary youth are facing multiple choices and dilemmas. Everyone encounters a problem when it comes to trying to identify who they are. The question of identity is of particular importance as far as the members of national and ethnic minorities living in Poland are concerned. One of these minorities are the members of a small ethnic group of Lemkos, including the generation born and bred in new circumstances and, unlike their ancestors, with little emotional attachment to Lemkivshchyna.

Lemkos in Lubusz Land[1]

First Lemkos appeared in Lubusz Land right after World War II, more precisely in 1947 when after the Operation Vistula members of this ethnic group were forcefully settled in Western Poland. The beginnings were not easy – lack of housing conditions and hostile atmosphere Lemkos encountered in Lubusz Land did not encourage settling down in new conditions. In addition, they were denied the right to cultivate their identity, both cultural and religious. In such circumstances the process of searching, preserving and passing their identity on to next generations began.

From the perspective of the Act of 6 January 2005 on national and ethnic minorities and on the regional languages, Lemkos were recognised as an ethnic minority.[2] Isajiw pointed that to talk about separateness of a group certain distinctive features such as language, religion, common customs and awareness of common ancestry have to occur.

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[1] More in the author's work: *Transmisja Tożsamości (Studium przypadku Łemków)*, Strzelce Krajeńskie 2013.

[2] *Journal of Law* 2005 no. 17 item 141.

Contemporary perception of identity

The question of identity remains within the area of interest of different fields of science, which considerably hinders developing one comprehensive definition.[3] Thus, identity acquires a new, interdisciplinary dimension.[4] The ambiguity of this term can be demonstrated by, inter alia, quoting a few terms which appear most often and define identity as "self-concept, picture of self, self-assessment, personal I, private I, subject I, public I, object I, fuzzy I, collective I, reflected ego, ego identity, private identity, personal identity, own identity, public identity, social identity, identity of an individual, mass identity, collective identity, cultural identity, public identity, ethnic identity, national identity, religious identity"[5]. Such a great diversity of terms does not make this task easier. The ambiguity and multidimensionality of the term "identity" make it an interesting field for research.

The process of identity formation takes several different courses and raises various controversies. Jerzy Nikitorowicz was among those who pointed to the fact that this issue is not an easy one. He emphasises that it is "a creative effort of an individual which smoothes tensions and contradictions between fixed factors, inherited, arising from social rooting in family, local community, identification with people and groups of importance, ethnic symbols and values and variable factors constantly acquired in the process of socialisation and upbringing resulting from reaction to Others and interaction with Others as well as from roles performed and experience gained through participation in sociopolitical life and the created culture."[6]

Contemporarily, it remains a vital problem since, as Zygmunt Bauman notices, "ever since modernity replaced before-modern **states** (in which identity was determined by birth which, in turn, practically precluded asking the question "Who am I?") with **classes**, identity has become an assignment an individual is supposed to complete (...) through his or her biography"[7]. Perceiving identity as a certain task to complete, the author stresses that "identity is there-

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[3] Confer: Z. Bokaszański, *Tożsamość, interakcja, grupa*, Łódź 1989, p. 13–14; idem, *Identity of the Social Actor and Social Change*, "Polish Sociological Review", 1995, no. 4, p. 350; B. Misztal, *Teoria socjologiczna a praktyka społeczna*, Kraków 2000, p. 58; R. Szwed, *Ontologiczne podstawy koncepcji tożsamości*, "Studia Socjologiczne", 1999, no. 3.

[4] M. Karkowska, T. Skalski, *Kultura, socjalizacja, tożsamość*, Kraków 2010, p. 61.

[5] R. Szwed, *Tożsamość a obcość kulturowa*, Lublin 2003, p. 16.

[6] J. Nikitorowicz, *Koncepcja rozwoju tożsamości człowieka w społeczeństwie wielokulturowym w ujęciu pedagogiki międzykulturowej*, [in:] *Poza paradygmaty. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Profesorowi Tadeuszowi Lewowickiemu*, ed. A. Szczurek-Boruta, E. Ogrodzka-Mazur, Toruń 2012, vol. 2, p. 12–113.

[7] Z. Bauman, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy z Benedetto Vecchim*, Gdańsk 2007, p. 48.

fore a task to complete and a task inescapable"[8] Alina Szczurek-Boruta, likewise, points out that identity is "(...) first and foremost a task and an obligation".[9] The complexity of this task accentuates to what extent we are accountable for its completion not only to ourselves but also the social group we belong to. In addition, Anna Cierpka underlines that "the multitude of kinds of identity classifications irrefutably proves that there is a need to consider the identity issue from different perspectives and points of reference".[10]

Jerzy Nikitorowicz also indicates that the question of identity is still in the state of development. He also emphasises that identity is "a complex and variable phenomenon, a multidimensional construct which connects the elements of an individual's personal system with central cultural values of the group to which the individual belongs. The awareness of cultural identity results from contact with another group, the way of defining oneself through belonging to social groups of different kinds"[11].

Latter-day psychological and sociological theories consider identity a category which defines the position of an individual in the world. In sociology, identity is interpreted in the context of human behaviour and relations with different groups[12]. In addition, it can be interpreted through perception of self or the group by others. In such case, it is identity of somebody for somebody. Another dimension may mean that individuals visualise themselves through defining i.a. how they perceive themselves or what they think of themselves.[13]

In an era of globalisation, an attempt to evaluate and interpret identity is not easy for researchers, nor for social actors themselves.[14] National diversity and a considerable mobility cause a lot of problems with defining identity and constructing it, especially in young people.[15] Muszyńska accentuates that "with several cultures affecting an individual we can talk about of its [identity] dissipation and duality".[16]

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[8] Idem, *Dwa szkice o moralności ponowoczesnej*, Warszawa 1994, p. 9.

[9] A. Szczurek-Boruta, *Zadania rozwojowe młodzieży i edukacyjne warunki ich wypełniania w środowiskach zróżnicowanych kulturowo i gospodarczo*, Katowice 2007, p. 117.

[10] A. Cierpka, *Tożsamość i narracje w relacjach rodzinnych*, Warszawa 2013, p. 13.

[11] J. Nikitorowicz, *Młodzież pogranicza kulturowego Białorusi, Polski, Ukrainy wobec integracji europejskiej. Tożsamość, plany życiowe, wartości*, Białystok 2000, p. 58.

[12] S. Kawula, *Wielorakość kultur w dyskursie pedagogiki społecznej*, Olsztyn 2008, p. 34.

[13] E. Banaszak-Karpińska, *Tożsamość jako kategoria badawcza w badaniach nad jednostką i społeczeństwem*, [in:] *Religia – przekonania – tożsamość. Szkice socjologiczne*, ed. I. Szlachcicowa, Wrocław 1998, p. 91.

[14] *Encyklopedia* socjologii, ed. K.W. Frieske, Warszawa 2002, vol. 4, p. 252.

[15] S. Kawula, op. cit., p. 34–35.

[16] J. Muszyńska, *Interdyscyplinarność edukacji międzykulturowej na przykładzie teoretycznych koncepcji tożsamości jednostki*, [in:] *Poza paradygmaty. Pedagogika międzykulturowa. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Profesorowi Tadeuszowi Lewowickiemu*, ed. cit., p. 119.

Referring to Erik Erikson's concept, James Marcia interpreted identity as "[...] an ego-driven, internal, self-constructed and dynamic organization of aspirations, skills, beliefs, and individual history".[17] This is the fullest definition of the context of identity and at the same time it enables full understanding of this concept as well as the answer to the question "Who am I?"

Jean Claude Kaufmann points that "identity is our own truth. It is paradoxical in its meanings. Identity is what makes us similar to others, yet, at the same time, it is what differs us from them thus making us unique".[18] It is a very clear indicator which accentuates our own identity. Taylor underlines the complexity of this issue. This complexity is reflected by the fact that "my identity is »who I am«; to show an identity document is to reveal who I am. But »identifying« myself in that way means positioning myself in a social space, [...] in a family, a region [...]".[19]

In this context Tadeusz Lewowicki points to specific behaviours labelled as identification behaviours. The author also underlines that "identification behaviour is understanding behaviours determined by the sense of identity and serving to sustain national identity or (taking necessary modifications of the enumerated elements) perhaps any group identity".[20] Looking at the issue from this perspective enables passing certain behaviours connected with sustaining national or group identity on to the future generations.

Zygmunt Bauman argues that "searching for identity is no longer an isolated case – it is becoming a set of problems which I share with a still growing number of people, practically with everybody living in the era of »liquid modernity«".[21]

Roman Leppert turns attention to the fact that contemporary youth's search for identity takes several different courses.[22] It can be identity of mimicry, of resistance, and of protest. As far as the identity of mimicry is concerned, it is "a search for identity at the level of everyday life, through one's attire, hairstyle, behaviour which is seen as a sign, demonstration of one's individuality".[23] The identity of resistance is "a search for »self« and consists in manifesting anti-

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[17] M. Karkowska, T. Skalski, op. cit., p. 19.

[18] B. Jałowiecki, *Globalizacja. Lokalność. Tożsamość*, [in:] *Kręgi integracji i rodzaje tożsamości. Polska, Europa, świat*, ed. W. Wesołowski, J. Włodarek, Warszawa 2005, p. 112.

[19] Ch. Taylor, *Źródła współczesnej tożsamości*, [in:] *Tożsamość w czasach zmiany. Rozmowy w Castel Gandolfo*, ed. K. Michalski, Kraków 1995, p. 9–10.

[20] D. Misiejuk, *Badanie tożsamości kulturowej w pedagogice. O relacji grupy i jednostek z perspektywy tożsamości kulturowej i celu wychowania*, [in:] *Poza paradygmaty. Pedagogika międzykulturowa. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Profesorowi Tadeuszowi Lewowickiemu*, ed. cit., p. 140.

[21] Z. Bauman, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy…*, ed. cit., p. 15.

[22] R. Leppert, *Młodzież – świat przeżywany i tożsamość*, Kraków 2010, p. 16.

[23] S. Kawula, op. cit., p. 38–39.

modernistic attitudes and cherishing traditional values".[24] Whereas the identity of protest "consists in searching for and/or confirmation of identity by various types of more or less spectacular manifestations, which is in fact a goal on its own".[25]

Identity is transmitted i.a. within a social group. Family remains the basic source of transmission, but a peer group, which acts as a reference group, also plays a vital role. It is considered "an integrated collection of individuals who identify themselves with the goals of the group, or in other words, a group to the goals, principles, and behaviours of which an individual wants to compare himself or herself with and conform to".[26] It can be assumed, though, that they are not the only sources of identity transmission. Still, if they are not the only ones, where else can possibilities of identity transmission be sought?

Zygmunt Bauman pinpoints that identity transmission is strictly connected with its formation. He believes that "shaping »identity« as a task and purpose of the whole life was, compared to before-modern ascription to a state – an act of liberation".[27] In this context, identity formation should be considered "discovering values and implementing them as quality of life".[28] Such an attitude "requires subjective coexistence in interpersonal dimension. It is connected with an unceasing process of collision, exchange and modifications of various individual rights, which take place in a specific material and symbolic context. It is, therefore, a continuous process of interaction".[29]

According to Gordon, layers of identity can be observed. The author believes these layers to be connected with personality but the layers are not identical with it. He asserts that they surround human personality and are very often a combination of many different layers.[30] Nikitorowicz is of a similar opinion, as he also underlines the occurrence of layers of identity. According to him, they, in a way, surround personality which is acknowledged by the desire to retain ethnicity within another culture.[31]

On the basis of an identity-shaping process, after Robert K. Merton, the existence of transmission belts which transmit cultural patterns may be employed. The transmission belts may be numerous but, as the author emphasises,

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[24] Ibidem, p. 38–39.

[25] Ibidem, p. 38–39.

[26] W. Okoń, *Nowy słownik pedagogiczny*, Warszawa 2001, p. 118.

[27] Z. Bauman, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy…*, ed. cit., p. 48.

[28] A. Szczurek-Boruta, *Kształtowanie się tożsamości młodzieży – z doświadczeń edukacji szkolnej*, [in:] *Socjalizacja i kształtowanie się tożsamości – aktualne doświadczenia na pograniczu polsko-czeskim*, ed. T. Lewowicki, B. Grabowska, A. Gajdzica, Toruń 2008, p. 56.

[29] Ibidem, p. 56.

[30] M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, New York 1964, p. 26–27.

[31] J. Nikitorowicz, *Edukacja regionalna i międzykulturowa*, Warszawa 2009, p. 377.

family is the most important transmission belt, though not the only one.[32] A peer group is also of high importance. According to Pospiszyl, a peer group remains a basic factor "in the process of shaping youth's personal and social standards. However, in people with intense problems with self-identification it acquires fundamental significance as it intensifies the sharpness of the features young people would like to define as theirs".[33]

Basing upon the existence of transmission belts, the influence of tradition or regionalism on shaping young generation's identity cannot be omitted. John Paul II paid attention to the importance of one's roots and asserted that "a lot has changed in the Polish lands. Centuries are passing away and Poland is growing among the vicissitudes like an enormous historic oak tree, from its roots. It is a great heritage which we take into the future ... I want to encourage you to keep on guarding your tradition and cherish family ties through deepening your knowledge of the language and trying to pass your rich tradition on to the young generation".[34]

Piotr Petrykowski points to the fact that "the consequence of transformations in Poland, together with their European contexts, includes the extinction or at least partial displacement of many factors which are thought to form cultural identity such as i.e. the language (and, perhaps in the first place, vernacular and dialects) – more and more often replaced with universal gestures, slang; religion – first of all, ways in which it is manifested, material aspects of cultural heritage (i.a. decline in distinctiveness in architecture)".[35] Consequently, these changes may result in vanishing of cultural identity. It may particularly concern minority groups which embark on a process of blending in with the majority group and taking over its cultural identity. According to Bądkowski, this process can be held back with the help of regionalism which is understood as "a concept and social and organisational activity practice based on a specific ethnic group (or a collection of closely related groups) that in the historical and cultural process has formed itself into an internally coherent and lasting community which distinguishes itself from others".[36] It is the coherence and lastingness that give an opportunity to maintain continuity of identity in generations to come.

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[32] Confer: R.K. Merton, *Teoria socjologiczna i struktura społeczna*, Warszawa 2002, p. 222.

[33] I. Pospiszyl, *Agresja wewnątrzrówieśnicza jako sposób rozwiązywania problemów własnej tożsamości*, [in:] eadem, *Przemoc w instytucjach opiekuńczo-wychowawczych*, Warszawa 1997, p. 45–46.

[34] H. Skorowski, *Kościół a polskie spory okresu transformacji*, Warszawa 2009, p. 240.

[35] P. Petrykowski, *Tożsamość kulturowa a przestrzenie, miejsca, symbole*, [in:] *Tożsamość w kontekście edukacyjnym i społeczno-kulturowym*, ed. A. Cybal-Michalska, Poznań 2011, p. 105.

[36] H. Skorowski, op. cit., p. 243–244.

Identity can be also looked at from the perspective of a place taken in the world by man. As one has to be aware that there are other people living in the world "identity is a process of becoming in which an attitude towards other people is included".[37] Looking at identity from the perspective of a community, it can be seen as either a community of fate or a community of life. Siegfried Kracauer underlines that the life of community members is based on strict affiliation".[38] The affiliation is reflected in both individual and social identity.

According to Jerzy Nikitorowicz, looked at from this angle, "**identity can be defined as a meeting between the present, the past and the anticipated future**. It grows out of human conscious orientation on the values of a group which determine its peculiarity and distinctiveness and express themselves in an emotional attitude towards these values".[39]

In order to better understand the relationship between personal I and social I, it is advisable to familiarise oneself with the group identity model by Jolanta Miluska.[40]

Both identity models are complementary with each other. Such an approach suggests that "identity – as Tap points out – is bound to fit squarely in between the individual and the collective, between the intrinsic and the extrinsic, between existence and action, ego and alter, defence and offence, rooting and migration, assimilation and discrimination, ingrowth and marginality".[41] It is important to remember that group identity will not replace individual identity and vice versa. Nor is it able to compensate for it. Even though both these models of identity are complementary with one another, they are also different and incompatible.[42]

It is slightly different with cultural identity which is considered the next stage of personality development. In this phase social identity moves to a higher level where an individual points to the principles to live by and values to treasure.[43] Such an approach evokes various dilemmas which, on the one hand, stem from the ubiquity of culture all around us while, on the other hand, they flow from globalisation influences.

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[37] R. Jenkins, *Social Identity*, London – New York 1996, p. 4.

[38] Z. Bauman, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy…*, ed. cit., p. 13–14.

[39] J. Nikitorowicz, *Edukacja regionalna…*, ed. cit., p. 353–354.

[40] Confer: J. Miluska, *Ku tolerancji. Program wspomagania rozwoju tożsamości kulturowej*, [in:] *Edukacja międzykulturowa*, ed. J. Nikitorowicz, Białystok 2011, p. 304–306.

[41] After: K. Kwaśniewski, *Tożsamość kulturowa*, [in:] *Słownik etnologiczny. Terminy ogólne*, ed. Z. Staszczak, Warszawa – Poznań 1987, p. 352.

[42] Confer: P.K. Oleś, *Tożsamość osobista i społeczna – płynna czy określona?*, [in:] W. Łukaszewski, D. Doliński, A. Fila-Jankowska, T. Maruszewski, A. Niedźwieńska, P. Oleś, T. Szkudlarek, *Tożsamość. Trudne pytanie kim jestem*, Sopot 2012, p. 118–119.

[43] H. Mamzer, *Tożsamość kulturowa w świetle społeczno-regulacyjnej koncepcji kultury*, [in:] *Kultury tradycyjne a kultura globalna. Konteksty edukacji międzykulturowej*, ed. cit., p. 84.

Identity of young Lemkos

An analysis of the research on the contemporary dimension of the sense of identity in the youngest generation of Lemkos needs to be done from several angles. Since identity formation is completed by means of a few transmission belts, a question arises which of them can be better used for transmission and sustaining Lemko identity.

Family comes as a primary and the most important transmission belt. It is in the bosom of family where the transmission of tradition, culture, religion as well as history of both the family and the ethnic group occurs. Its sustaining function is represented mainly in observing the most celebrated and important holidays, quite often in a somewhat "modified" version, though (e.g. a smaller number of dishes served on Christmas Eve). Family is also the source of the Lemko language which is believed a determinant of identity of the utmost importance. Families speak the Lemko language, however, from generation to generation it is becoming more and more difficult. The reasons behind this trend are several. The most fundamental one is that any communication in everyday situations i.a. in schools, offices, is performed in the Polish language. Another reason is that the Russian language is no longer taught at schools, which, in the case of a Cyrillic language, considerably hampers the process of learning. Moreover, acquiring knowledge of history of one's family and group of origin is becoming harder; firstly, because the witnesses of the 1947 events are passing away which, consequently, may lead to minimising the scope of knowledge among the last-born generation of the displaced Lemkos.

Apart from family, another major area of identity formation in Lemkos has been religion. Participation in the religious life of a parish offers an opportunity to shape group identity. The youngest generation has a possibility to encounter and participate in traditional Lemko festivals owing to a priest's activity. It is thanks to religion that identity is reinforced by family and passed on to the next generations. Additionally, active participation in religious life is an opportunity to communicate in the language of the forefathers.

Beside the two above-mentioned transmission belts the environment is also of importance.

Both the activity of associations of different kind as well as a peer group create an opportunity to acquire identity-oriented behaviours. However, there is a noticeable change in these behaviours i.a. with regard to understanding the notion of homeland. The oldest generation of Lemkos identifies this term with Lemkivshchyna while the contemporary young Lemkos believe Poland to be their mother country.

Having analysed the transmission belts which pass identity on to the youngest generation of Lemkos and following Jerzy Nikitorowicz's classifica-

tion, the generation in question can be considered bicultural, which means that individuals identify themselves with at least two cultures. They are often referred to as "the Borderlanders". Another type, namely assimilation, which involves identification with the dominant culture, does not occur at this stage yet. It is also pinpointed that this socialisation is opposite to native socialisation. Its main manifestation can be observed in defying the values and the heritage of the forefathers. In the extreme case it takes form of separation which means identification with one's own ethnic group. It is understood as ethnocentrism or a process of finding oneself and one's culture. At times, a lack of identification with the above-mentioned groups occurs; this phenomenon is called marginalisation.[44] There may be different causes behind a specific behaviour ranging from personal experiences to the influence of media. On the basis of all these experiences cultural identity takes shape. Jerzy Nikitorowicz underlines that "cultural identity is an effect of mutual conditioning, interaction between and overlapping of: personal awareness of separateness of *I*, awareness of belonging to *We,* social recognition, affiliation and acceptance in *We*".[45] Cultural identity is frequently treated as "the protection of tradition, history and morality, spiritual and ethical values which are transmitted from generation to generation yet they can never mean unlimited adherence to the tradition and the past, not to mention stagnation"[46]. Such perception of cultural identity implies that it is not stable, quite the contrary, it is a dynamic and variable phenomenon.[47]

Conclusion

The question of identity of the contemporary generation of Lemkos is a very complex one. Nowadays, it is not uncommon for young Lemkos to represent bicultural identity. Unless an intense process of sustaining and transmission of the identity of the ancestors is commenced, the future generations will, for instance, be unable to speak the Lemko language. If they don't know the language, as a result, they will not read literature, either. Consequently, it may prove to be a threat to the future of this tiny ethnic group in Poland. Therefore, to maintain their identity it is necessary to work intensively with children and the youth. This work ought to be done within family, in the parish as well as in the peer environment and at school. The Act on national and ethnic minorities offers

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[44] J. Nikitorowicz, *Młodzież pogranicza kulturowego…*, ed. cit., p. 60.

[45] Idem, *Wielopłaszczyznowa i ustawicznie kreująca się tożsamość…*, ed. cit.

[46] B. Bratz, *Wzrost ruchu migracyjnego jako wyzwanie dla pedagogiki interkulturowej w kontekście niemieckim*, [in:] *Kultury tradycyjne a kultura globalna. Konteksty edukacji międzykulturowej*, ed. cit., p. 23–24.

[47] H. Mamzer, op. cit., p. 81.

such opportunities; all that remains to be done is to make full and proper use of them. On the other hand, everybody is conscious of the fact that nowadays sustaining the identity of the ancestors is not easy. Nevertheless, this task is well worth undertaking in order to maintain the identity brought to Western Poland in 1947 by the Lemkos displaced in the Operation Vistula for the sake of the generations to come.

Part II

Discourses of Subjectivity

Listening to children's voices, or on the paradigm shift in childhood studies

Małgorzata Kowalik-Olubińska

The notion of 'listening to children's voices' enclosed in the title of this paper signals some changes that current research on childhood is experiencing. The key change is the one which refers to how children are perceived, and how their place and role in the social space are defined. It is suggested more and more frequently that children must be seen as social actors, endowed with agency; this means the abolishment of the tradition in which children were reduced to the category of helpless ones, or persons devoid of the competence to genuinely participate in social life.[1] This viewpoint is clearly expressed by representatives of the research paradigm known as the new sociology of childhood or social studies of childhood.[2]

By accepting the children's right to the status of social actors, we justify the claim that children, like adults, construct and co-construct personal experiences

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[1] One of the rationales underlying the formation of such a perception of children was the emergence, in the second half of the 20th century, of interpretational and interactive approaches to analysis of everyday life, which stirred up criticism of the structural and functional approach to the role of an individual in the social structure. Other contributing forces were the counter-culture of the 1960s, growing feminism, and post-colonial movements. They challenge the hegemony of existing social and political relations, stimulating an interest among social scientists in opinions voiced by various social groups. It is also worth recalling the child liberation movement, which flourished in the 1970s, and which questioned the social position of children, disadvantageous to them and subjected to adults, as well as their absence from the social space. Without any doubt, the Convention of the Rights of the Child has played an important role in promoting the idea of treating children as social actors.

[2] A. Prout, A. James, *A New Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood? Provenance, Promise and Problems*, [in:] *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood. Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood. Second Edition*, ed. these, London 1997; J. Qvortrup, W.A. Corsaro, M.-S. Honig, *Why Social Studies of Childhood? An Introduction to the Handbook*, [in:] *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*, ed. these, Basingstoke 2009.

as well as influence their own lives inasmuch as the lives of others.[3] Consequently, a crucial research area in childhood studies is the one in which researchers, apart from exploring childhood images constructed by adults and analyzing the status of children perceived as a separate social group, take to listening to children's voices and use it as a viable research instrument. This means that researchers try to capture the ways in which children are able to speak about the issues and problems that constitute their life experience and which matter for them. Children and childhood lie in the centre of analyses as the basic research categories. These categories are considered to be conceptually autonomous, which means that they are not discussed in combination with other categories, such as family or school.[4]

Changes in the perception of children and their place in the social world lead to some modifications of the assumptions pertaining to the type and methods of constructing our knowledge about children in the course of a research process. The purpose of this article is to present the major shifts occurring within the assumptions fundamental to childhood research.

Shifts in the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the research on childhood

Changes within the ontological assumptions underlying childhood research are being more often manifested by researchers looking at children and childhood from the social and cultural perspective. The accent is shifted from the child as such to the social and cultural process of constructing the image of childhood. By adopting this perspective, one assumes that there is no such thing as a single, universal experience or comprehension of what childhood is, where it begins and where it ends; this understanding changes depending on time, place and space. It is therefore assumed that children's development and lives are rooted in social and cultural contexts.[5] Children are believed not to constitute a homogenous group and therefore childhood has more than one sense and more than one way to experience it.

The above considerations encourage researchers to use the category of children's voice(s). A way to understand and employ this concept is by relating

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[3] A. Prout, A. James, op. cit.

[4] W.A. Corsaro, *The New Sociology of Childhood. Third Edition*, Thousand Oaks 2011; J. Qvortrup, *Childhood as a Structural Form*, [in:] *The Palgrave Handbook of Childhood Studies*, ed. cit.

[5] M. Mead, *Dorastanie w Nowej Gwinei*, Warszawa 1962; Ph. Ariès, *Historia dzieciństwa*, Warszawa 1995; T. Buliński, *Człowiek do zrobienia. Jak kultura tworzy człowieka. Studium antropologiczne*, Poznań 2002; B. Rogoff, *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*, New York 2003.

it to all children. It then signals the integral nature of children and their culture with respect to the world and culture of adults. In this case, we deal with an integral voice of a group or a culture created by children.[6] This approach to the comprehension of the analyzed subject emerges from numerous research projects completed by authors who explore everyday lives of children in various social and cultural spaces. Their work seems to prove that the children's world is an independent sphere, filled with a specific type of children's folklore, rituals, rules and norms[7]; in other words, that children have their own, autonomous world of beliefs, values and meanings, which to some extent is independent from the world of adults.[8]

The concept of 'children's voices' is also related to the meanings which are ascribed to the world, to themselves and to their behaviour by children who belong to different groups distinguished by various criteria, such as age, sex, social class or ethnic group. In this case, we deal with many voices of children. The way the term 'children's voice' is understood here does not totally refute the universal concept of childhood. Although it does not refer to the childhood 'in general', it does signal the focus on a childhood lived by children within the same sex, race, age or the same social class; however, it does not explore the diversity of experiences among children who belong to the same group.

Finally, the concept of children's voice can also signal a multitude of childhoods or a variety of children's life experience. During a research process, we can therefore 'discover more than one set of children's meanings/voices, as well as more than one set of relations between children and adults, or between children and other children with whom they come into everyday interactions'.[9]

One of the key transformations, which occurs step by step in the investigations on childhood and especially in the new sociology of childhood, is the one which endows children with the status of social actors. Thus, children are considered to be the persons who construct their own biographies, have an influence on the shape of their life pathways and at the same time participate actively in the lives of people and communities to which they belong.[10]

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[6] J.M. Davies, *Understanding the Meanings of Children: A Reflexive Process*, "Children & Society", 1998, vol. 12.

[7] I. Opie, P. Opie, *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren*, London 1959; M.H. Goodwin, *He-said-she-said: Talk as Organization Among Black Children*, Bloomington 1990; W. Corsaro, *"We're friends, right?" Inside Kids' Culture*, Washington 2001.

[8] Ch. Hardman, *Can There be an Anthropology of Childhood?*, "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford", 2001, vol. 4.

[9] J.M. Davies, op. cit., p. 326.

[10] C. Jenks, *Socjologiczne konstrukty dzieciństwa*, [in:] *Wprowadzenie do badań nad dzieciństwem*, ed. M.J. Kehily, Kraków 2008.

The way children are perceived, as discussed above, is different from the universal vision of a child and childhood, frequently adopted by the mainstream psychological studies. A child is seen as being outside the social and cultural context; its development is predictable because presumably the development of all children is governed by the same mechanisms, and they all progress through the same stages.[11]

The choice of specific assumptions regarding the way children and childhood are perceived affects the formation of epistemological assumptions concerning the type of knowledge gathered during a research process. The adoption of the social and cultural perspective in looking at childhood implicates the need to construct the knowledge of subjective childhood worlds, including the diversity and multitude of life and development pathways followed by children. Our knowledge of children's worlds is constructed jointly by two cognitive subjects: an adult researcher and a child. On the other hand, should the universal model of children's development be adopted, the implication is that researchers objective knowledge, showing universal mechanisms and human development rules. A special role in gaining knowledge about children is delegated to adults, who are considered to be a substantial source of knowledge about children.

Shifts in the methodology of research on childhood

By introducing the idea of 'a voice' into childhood research, we assume indirectly that children will actively participate in a research process, which puts them in a position of participants rather than objects of explorations undertaken by adults. It is therefore possible to capture the ways in which children comprehend and experience the social world once a researcher resigns from conducting studies 'on' children for the sake of studies 'with' children. In the former approach, the subject of research is 'the child'[12] and the principal aim is to discover universal laws governing the human development. Such an approach is mostly implemented in the mainstream developmental psychology, which for years now has employed the so-called objective research methods (including

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[11] D. Hogan, *Researching "the child" in developmental psychology*, [in:] *Researching Children's Experience. Approaches and Methods*, ed. S. Greene, D. Hogan, London 2005; J.M. Garbula, M. Kowalik-Olubińska, *Konstruowanie obrazu dzieciństwa w perspektywie psychologicznej i socjokulturowej*, "Przegląd Pedagogiczny", 2012, vol. 1.

[12] M. Woodhead, D. Faulkner, *Subjects, Objects or Participants? Dilemmas of Psychological Research with Children*, [in:] *Research with Children. Perspectives and Practices*, ed. P. Christensen, A. James, New York – London 2008.

experiments and standardized tests) as well as complicated statistical analyses, leading to conclusions about 'the child' based on the measurements of specific actions done on a large group of children. This approach is a manifestation of the attachment to the universal development model, independent from the social and cultural context of children's lives; unsurprisingly, the research process issuing from the above approach is submitted to the strictest possible control of contextual factors.

On the other hand, the latter approach, mainly implemented in the new sociology of childhood, assumes that the main objective of exploration is to arrive at various ways in which children understand and experience their numerous contacts with the world. It is assumed simultaneously that children themselves are the richest and most appropriate source of knowledge about children, their everyday lives and the meanings they assign to the universe. As a result, children are considered to be trustworthy informers, playing the role of participants in the processes occurring in the research space.

The up-to-date research explorations completed from the perspective of the new sociology of childhood, and focused on reaching children's worlds, have been dominated by studies planned and conducted by adults. However, adult researchers are increasingly aware that children could and should be engaged in designing research or in collecting and processing data, which is why they are willing to grant children the status of research partners or possibly independent researchers. As research partners, children participate in the process of constructing research questions, collecting and analyzing data and publishing reports; in the latter case, as independent researchers, they initiate and perform their own research projects. Alderson[13] writes that young researchers are particularly interested in undertaking such projects whose results could lead to a social change, especially in terms of their living conditions or respecting children's rights by adults.

Researchers are becoming aware of the relationship of power between adult and child participants of a research process. Relations of power in the research space are reinforced by the concepts of power and control between adults and children present in our culture.[14] In everyday life, adults typically yield power over children, which prevents children from presenting opinions different from those expressed by grown-ups. Children do not want to oppose adults openly or to talk about things which they think will not be accepted by grown-ups. When participating in studies, children may have doubts whether

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[13] P. Alderson, *Children as Researchers: Participation Rights and Research Methods*, [in:] *Research with Children. Perspectives and Practices*, ed. cit.

[14] P. Christensen, *Children's Participation in Ethnographic Research: Issues of power and Representation*, "Children & Society", 2004, vol. 18.

their opinions will be taken seriously by adults, especially when their everyday experience tells them otherwise.[15]

In view of the above, researchers, mainly the ones busy in the sphere of anthropological tradition, make different attempts to suspend the sense of a generation gap and ignore differences in the status between themselves and the children who participate in research. Mandell[16], for example, took a radical stand claiming that an adult research should completely discard the authority of an adult and blend in a group of children researchers. During her ethnographic studies, she did her best to make her actions resemble these of the analyzed children in order to gain the status of a rightful member of the group. Corsaro and Molinari[17] presented a different standpoint. Molinari acted as an intermediary to help Corsaro gain access to a group of children in one of Italian preschools. In his actions, Corsaro relied on being distinctly different from children, which helped him enter their group. The children themselves were introducing him to the world of their norms, treating him as someone possible nicknamed 'an incompetent adult'. Thus, a researcher can be perceived as an unusual adult, who wants to understand children's world from their perspective, but avoids any attempt at becoming a child.[18] A researcher does not ignore the power relation between himself and children, being constantly aware that this relation cannot be removed from the research space, same as from any other social sphere.

A change in the position of children in a research process, together with an effort made to show the richness of children's lives, to listen to and understand children's voices, creates the necessity to apply qualitative strategies and methods for the collection, analysis and interpretation of empirical material. In micro-sociological studies on childhood issues, special attention is paid to ethnography, participant observations and individual as well as group interviews.

These methods are thought to be adequate for documenting the life in children's peer groups or to capture the ways in which children give sense to their own experiences and the surrounding world. Children have a great potential, as Corsaro says, and the reason is that they 'do not focus on the process of children becoming adults, which is the subject of most of traditional studies, but on

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[15] C. Cloke, *Forging the Circle: The Relationship Between Children, Policy and Practice in Children's Rights*, [in:] *Participation and Empowerment in Child Protection*, ed. idem, M. Davies, London 1995.

[16] N. Mandell, *The Least Adult Role in Studying Children*, [in:] *Studying the Social Worlds of Children: Sociological Readings*, ed. F. Waksler, London 1991.

[17] W.A. Corsaro, L. Molinari, *Entering and Observing in Children's Worlds: a Reflection on a Longitudinal Ethnography of Early Education in Italy*, [in:] *Research with Children. Perspectives and Practices*, ed. cit.

[18] P. Christensen, op. cit.

what they say about their life experiences and the struggle to gain control over more influential adults and the rules they set'.[19]

Studies on children more often employ the methods which are termed creative ones, as they appeal to the imagination and creativity of children. Such methods include storytelling, poem writing, photography, drawing or drama, and they are considered to enable research participants to construct knowledge, to describe and analyze own experiences and to assign their own meanings to them.[20] Such methods are particularly suitable for research projects in which the participating children, in different ways and to a different degree, are victims of ill fate. These children require special ethics and sensitivity on the part of researchers, while a research context constructed in these circumstances should enable children to talk about dramatic events and experiences in their lives with no fear or unnecessary tension.

Other opportunities for hearing children's voices and reaching the senses that children ascribe to their experiences are created by discursive approaches, which are gaining popularity. Discursive studies locate meanings on a cultural rather than individual level. This means that in research with children it is necessary to contextualize both children's utterances as well as reports on these utterances written by researchers. In discursive approaches, utterances of children are submitted to analysis in the context of culture-specific understanding of childhood. Moreover, discursive analysis is rooted in the context in which it is created by the researcher who is located in it.[21] A research process is therefore invariably connected with the interpretation undertaken both while listening and analyzing what children have to say, and later, while creating the representation of children's voices in a research report. In short, listening to children's voices is an active and subjective process, unlike the positivistic collection of neutral data, which is unaffected by the way in which a researcher perceives, describes and represents collected information.

Considering the question of creating the representation of children's voices in a research report from the anthropological perspective, it should be noted that the description of other people's points of view, prepared by a researcher, is obviously filtered through his own outlook on a given state of matters. Once researchers realize it, they will avoid claiming the right to talk about other forms of life; instead, they will be able to talk from inside the investigated world.[22] This

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[19] W.A. Corsaro, *The New Sociology…*, ed. cit., p. 52.

[20] A. Veale, *Creative Methodologies in Participatory Research with Children*, [in:] *Researching Children's Experience. Approaches and Methods*, ed. cit.

[21] P. Alldread, E. Burman, *Analysing Children's Accounts Using Discourse Analysis*, [in:] *Researching Children's Experience. Approaches and Methods*, ed. cit.

[22] C. Geertz, *Dzieło i życie. Antropolog jako autor*, Warszawa 2000.

will also enable them to challenge textual positivism, which presumes that the role of a researcher is to report meticulously all viewpoints of research subjects, and to believe that the test he has prepared is an authentic representation of their voices. Contrary to this, as Geertz[23] puts it, all ethnographic descriptions, despite any rhetoric tools employed by the researcher, are descriptions by the persons who is making them and not by those who are being described. The problem raised at this point forced anyone involved in the exploration of childhood issues to think more deeply. After all, it is an adult who submits children's perspectives to interpretation and the position that children occupy in a society as well as the researcher's assumptions, sometimes subconscious ones, about childhood create the risk of superimposing one's own interpretation. Some deeper reflection on this problem should encourage a researcher to look for such ways of presenting children's perspectives that would allow for the most faithful representation of children's voices. Thus, it is suggested that children should participate actively in the interpretation of data, starting from a description of a picture which they have drawn, for example, to expressing their opinions about the picture's authenticity. Thus, a researcher is advised to exercise special caution when creating a text, maintain the capacity of critical reflection over its content and answer the following question: to what extent has the image of children's lives contained in the text been authored by children themselves, and to what extent has it been written by the researcher? In other words, whose voice sounds louder – the children's or the author's?

Conclusions

There has been a distinct shift appearing in the current research on childhood within the fundamental ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. Regarding the ontological assumptions pertaining to children, we can observe a move from the universal to social and cultural perspective in studies on childhood, as a result of which it is more often accepted that there exists a multitude and diversity of childhoods. Also, a slow change has been noticed in the way children are positioned in the social space. This is manifested by the tendency to accept children as competent social actors. With respect to the realm of epistemology, the accent has shifted from creating objective knowledge of a child by an adult researcher to jointly constructing the knowledge of subjective childhood worlds and of the diversity of life pathways followed by children.

[23] Ibidem.

The changes mentioned above in the perception of children and their position in the social world, as well as the type and way of constructing knowledge about children during a research process have led to some changes in methodology as well. For instance, more researchers now abandon the tendency to treat children as research objects, but choose to give them the status of participants in a research project. Another change consists in a firmer belief that studies should be conducted under natural conditions, in relation to the social and cultural context of children's lives, which enables the researcher to show the variety and diversity of children's experiences. The above shifts are associated with the tendency towards reaching beyond quantitative methodologies in research for the sake of more frequent application of qualitative strategies and methods.

The ongoing changes in studies on childhood, particularly the emergent tendency towards hearing children's voices, enables researchers to gain an in-depth knowledge of children's perspectives, to capture their subjective experiences and to enter the world of their everyday lives. While exploring social worlds of children, researchers should be constantly aware that contexts in which children live can always be converted in such a way as to be able to hear and appreciate children's voices. As Jenks[24] suggested, childhood is a phenomenon 'towards which not only the cognitive but also the transformative aspect of social sciences should be manifested most clearly.' Studies on childhood should therefore be accompanied by 'the researcher's deep and active engagement so that during the process of reconstructing the childhood the researcher not only describes it but also tries to understand, interpret and make an effort to transform it, thus making a social change'.[25]

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[24] C. Jenks, op. cit., p. 112.

[25] Ibidem, p. 112.

The child as a subject in the family. Confrontation of theory with practice

Katarzyna Segiet

The issue of the child's subjectivity is of interest for both feature writers and scholars. The common interest in the topic of the child's subjectivity is an effect of thorough changes that have been taking place in the structure and functioning of the society. The process of understanding the child's subjectivity of in pedagogical sciences is mainly a research task, because it shows the position and meaning of the child in the society and family. It points the attention to phenomena that on the one hand protect the child and its life, and on the other contribute to increasing the awareness of phenomena and mechanisms that destroy them. It poses questions about barriers and impediments for its development, defines the factors that support and limit the child's subjectivity. In other words, it is a question about the conditions for socialization, adults' responsibility for children and the childhood adults themselves create for them. The major issue is for parents to understand that the child is a real man; it is a person that has its dignity and legal subjectivity since the very beginning of its life. This makes parents primarily burdened with the responsibility to enable the child a fully human life.

Interpretations of the child's subjectivity

The issues related to the child's subjectivity have been present in press and scientific publications for many years in many different approaches and contexts, for example in considerations on the child's fate, the person of the child, the sense and possibilities of a child's existence in the world. It is impossible to refer to all the views that touch upon this topic here.

Depending on the convictions, and theoretical and empirical analyses of various scientific disciplines, the meaning of the notion of subjectivity can be

seen differently. In philosophy, subjectivity means, among others according to P. Sztompka, the opposite of an individual's objectivity, objection to fatalism and determinism, rejection of a mechanistic theory of reflection and underlining the active role of a learning mind.[1]

Searching for the answer to the question on the personal existence of a child, the personalistic concept becomes particularly helpful.[2] The personalism term (Latin *persona – person*) refers to all the currents and trends in educational theories that unambiguously expose in their views a person that is autonomous, their dignity and rationality.[3] Getting to know the basic problems of "being a man" is linked to and is useful when describing and explaining the issues referring to children, especially the problems related to its socialization and upbringing. It is fundamental for the "adult" to realise that the child is a personal being; it is a person – according to John Paul II – "appointed to grow and develop"[4], whereas childhood is "an elementary condition, initial stage and integral part of the entire and indivisible process of human existence".[5] If the child is a person, a human being, and it is, then it means that it is an expression of something that is hidden beyond them, an expression of a deeper truth. It is necessary to talk about it just like Józef Tischner did – it is not what it is, but it is what it is not.[6] According to Max Scheler, a person has a structure of an individual expression of something hidden; they should not be thought of as a thing or substance.[7] The child as a person is an autonomous being; it is a carrier of their own essence; it is thus irreplaceable.[8]

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[1] P. Sztompka, *Socjologiczna teoria podmiotowości*, [in:] *Podmiotowość, możliwość, rzeczywistość, konieczność*, ed. P. Buczkowski, R. Cichocki, Poznań 1989, p. 11.

[2] Two philosophical currents can be distinguished. The first one – a metaphysical and Christian current that allows to get to know the genesis of the child's life in a transcendental personal Absolute. The other one is contrary to the first one – it is a immanentistic and secularizing current where the existence of God the Creator is negated, thus disturbing the inviolability of the child on every stage of their growth. See: K. Segiet, *Dziecko i jego dzieciństwo w perspektywie naukowego poznania i doświadczania rzeczywistości. Studium pedagogiczno-społeczne*, Poznań 2011, p. 30–37; *Dziecko. Studium interdyscyplinarne*, ed. E. Sowińska, E. Szczurko, T. Guz, P. Marzec, Lublin2008, p. 5.

[3] B. Śliwerski, *Współczesne teorie i nurty wychowania*, Kraków 1998, p. 64.

[4] John Paul II, *Adhortacja Familiaris consortio*, Watykan 1981, no. 36.

[5] Idem, *Evangelium Vitae*, [in:] idem, *Encykliki Ojca Świętego*, Kraków 2005, p. 842.

[6] See: J. Tischner, *Zarys filozofii człowieka*, Kraków 1991; idem, *Filozofia dramatu, Dialogue*, Paris 1990, p. 25–87, 223–247; M. Sawicki, *Dziecko jest osobą. Szkice z teorii kształcenia i wychowania*, Warszawa 1995, p. 18 and further pages.

[7] M. Scheler, *Istota i formy sympatii*, Warszawa 1980; idem, *Der formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, München 1996.

[8] M. Sawicki, op. cit., p. 19; J. Wilk, *Wychowawca wobec pytania: "Kim jest dziecko"*, [in:] *Oblicza dzieciństwa*, ed. D. Kornas-Biela, Lublin 2001, p. 181.

If the only "measuring device" of humanity it a man meeting a man, then this formula of identification also covers the child as a person.[9] The child is given in the first place their parents, especially its mother.

The sociological sense of the notion of subjectivity is different. The abovementioned P. Sztompka wrote that in the sociological sense, subjectivity is above all an active influence of human actions on the shape of the social structure.

The psychological view on subjectivity also stresses the activity of man. According to M. Kofta, in psychology, subjectivity is understood as either "the developmental potential of man", "drive to spontaneous activity and growth", or "a special form of taking a stance of oneself and the world in a given situation".[10] T. Tomaszewski underlines that subjectivity consists of a specific identity of man, a clear individuality distinguishing them from other people, and the fact that his own activity largely depends on themselves.[11]

Discussing subjectivity in pedagogical sciences has a theoretical sense when pedagogy as a scientific discipline uses the achievements of other sciences in this respect. However, as I have already pointed out before in the paper, the crucial issue for pedagogy is the correct understanding and completing the idea of subjectivity in pedagogical (educational) practice and defining optimum conditions for achieving high effectiveness of the actions taken in this respect.[12]

For a large group of pedagogues, especially for the representatives of traditional pedagogy, subjectivity was more often expressed in a pupil's own activity in the upbringing process rather than the need of deep psychological contact and understanding between the pupil and their teacher. In the fields of pedagogy and theory of education we clearly find more studies of a more thorough insight in the topic of subjectivity. A significant reason for the interest in these topics is the ever changing social, cultural and economic reality.[13]

According to A. Gołąb, upbringing "has to shape the personal causality, the feeling of agency, the freedom of choice, the ability of taking decisions and responsibility for these decisions".[14] The traditionally perceived upbringing will not achieve it, because there is space for the subject – object type of relation. This type of relation is a deterministic behaviour, oriented towards control and power.[15]

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[9] K.A. Wojcieszek, *Antropologiczne podstawy okresu dzieciństwa*, [in:] *Oblicza dzieciństwa*, ed. cit., p. 29.

[10] M. Kofta, *Orientacja podmiotowa: zarys modelu*, [in:] *Wychowanek jako podmiot działań*, ed. idem, Warszawa 1989, p. 35–36.

[11] *Psychologia*, ed. T. Tomaszewski, Warszawa 1978, p. 60.

[12] E. Kubiak-Jurecka, A. Molesztak, *Podmiotowość i podmioty wychowania*, [in:] *Wychowanie w kontekście teoretycznym*, ed. A. Tchorzewski, Bydgoszcz 1993, p. 52.

[13] Ibidem, p. 52

[14] *Wychowanie jako podmiot doświadczeń*, ed. A. Gołąb, Warszawa 1989, p. 15.

[15] Paulo Freire represents emancipation pedagogy and enumerates three types of relations: Subject – object. Subject – subject. Subject – subject with an external object / with external objects.

The idea of subjectivity can find its place only in upbringing understood as a social being, thus a phenomenon (fact, event, process) that is a result of at least two persons and the relation between them that is expressed by one of the subjects following the commonly accepted good and making it possible for the other subject to act in order to achieve their own identity.[16] It is the other type of relation underlining the subjectivity of the child, and according to Paulo Freire (representing emancipation pedagogy) mediation and exchange that result in a new quality accepted by both parties. It is completed through dialogue, leads to understanding one's own position, and as a result – honest, authentic participation in reshaping it, achieving new fields of freedom and rights. In this sort of reason, two subjects are distinguished: the educating and the educated one. The relation of cooperation of the subjects gives upbringing a humanistic dimension and unique character, creating unlimited opportunities for completing the idea of subjectivity.[17]

The ideas related to subjectivity accompanied western emancipation pedagogy, critical from mid 1970s, and were tightly linked to research on childhood, creating variable images of the child and childhood. The redefinition of subjectivity became an axis of reconstruction of the Polish pedagogy and search for subjective education. It became the main topic of open, humanistic and democratic pedagogy.[18] According to B. Smolińska-Theiss, subjectivity was to bring the citizen (the child) back their rights and create the opportunity to develop, it was supposed to plat a social function. Subjectivity was directed against the primacy of ideology, indoctrination and political enslavement.[19]

In pedagogy, child's subjectivity can be found above all in Janusz Korczak's pedagogy; in his actions and practice. It originates from the tradition of New Education and includes the challenges of emancipation pedagogy. For Korczak, the child's subjectivity is a pillar for changes in the totalitarian, communist and fascist pedagogies. In his statement: "there is no child – there is a man" he authorizes the child and childhood. He discovers the subjectivity of the child.[20] Korczak's theses have been very much valid ever since, and are a basis for educational sciences. Another representative of this current is the Reverend Janusz Tarnowski, "Janusz Korczak in cassock". According to Tarnowski, nowadays we are facing the end of the pedagogy of rulers, a pedagogy that uncritically ex-

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See: M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, *Pedagogika emancypacyjna. Rozwój świadomości krytycznej człowieka*, Gdańsk 2006, p. 112–113.

[16] A. Tchorzewski, *Dyskurs wokół paradygmatu teorii wychowania*, [in:] *Z problematyki metodologicznej teorii wychowania*, ed. idem, Bydgoszcz 1992, p. 20.

[17] Ibidem, p. 20.

[18] B. Smolińska-Theiss, *Korczakowskie narracje pedagogiczne*, Kraków 2013, p. 126.

[19] Ibidem, p. 126.

[20] Ibidem, p. 126.

posed the managerial role of the tutor. The pedagogy of the future has to be close to the other person, and not maintaining a distance, through authentic dialogue.[21]

Going further in the topic of subjectivity in the child's upbringing in the family as an educational environment, let us pause to review the attitudes adopted by adults towards the child in the contemporary world.

The creation of adult's attitudes towards the child in the process of socialization and upbringing

The modern pedagogical ideas that has the child as its starting point or oriented towards the child tries to thoroughly describe the conditions of the child's life, at the same time showing the richness of its links and relations that are the basis for gradually developing educational and socialization processes which make it possible for the child to achieve skills that are necessary for co-existence and co-action. The numerous versions of pedagogy, for example: anticipation, normative, intercultural, social and personalistic pedagogies, the pedagogy of heart, the pedagogy of love etc. is a proof that as a science, pedagogy concentrates on the child itself, because it is of value both for the parents and the entire society. Nowadays, many theoreticians and practitioners that deal with upbringing the youngest generation poses some fundamental questions: how to bring up children in the reality of the 21st century? What role is supposed to play the parent as a tutor? What are the requirements that they face? What is the most important in bringing up children and how does this process go in times of quick cultural and social changes? Does the parent have to decide about everything that refers to the child out of concern?

Having analysed literature on the subject, one can distinguish three types of adults' attitudes towards children. The first type is typical of Middle Ages; it is characterised with indifference, neutrality, lack of interest in the child; whereas the second one is typical of modern societies – the child is described as an "incomplete adult", a defective being that is behind an adult person. The child was started to be perceived as "a project to be made real and it was viewed from the angle of the objectives it was assigned".[22] The child becomes an object of special interest of parents, philanthropists, lawyers, moralists, doctors, psychologists and pedagogues. Scientific instrumentalism dominates, which according to

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[21] B. Śliwerski, op. cit., p. 71.

[22] T. Buliński, *Kulturowy wymiar wychowania: praktyki i ideologie*, [in:] *Wychowanie. Pojęcia, procesy, konteksty*, ed. M. Dudzikowa, M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, Gdańsk 2007, p. 102–110.

Tarzycjusz Buliński, an ethnologist, aspires at understanding the child – machine better in order to manage it efficiently and use its hidden potential.[23] The third attitude visible in the 20th century is to treat the child as a person; the child becomes a subject, a unique being that has the right to privacy and childhood. The world is focused on the child's needs, and not on the needs of the society.

Similar statements can be found in the works of Hans Saner, a Swiss pedagogue.[24] He presents three models of socialisation and bringing children up in the contemporary world.

The first model of upbringing is based on what the child "is not yet", because only adults are socialized, they are *apriori* authorized tutors and define the cultural frame of the first educational environment for the child, i.e. the family. Adults decide about the rights, work time and school order, since the beginning they manager the socialization process and limit the child's life chances through negative selection, they indirectly influence the lives of their offspring as future adults. It is the adults who know what it means to be an adult; they formulate and change the child's essence; they believe they have the right to "make a man out of the child"; they bring it up. It is a model based on obligation, obedience, orders and inequality before the law, compliant with M. Mead's type of postfigurative culture.

The second model is a model of equality, isonomy in the relation between the child and the adult, "being the same man as the adult". This model is based on equal terms and mutual tolerance. Irrespective of developmental differences, children and adults are people. In this model of upbringing, authority is an exchangeable relation, i.e. the adult can become an authority for the child due to their knowledge and experience, and the child can be an authority for the adult due to its bigger ability to learn. Both parties bring each other up and self-educate themselves. This model is compliant with M. Mead's cofigurative culture.

The last model is an autonomous model of the relation between the adult and the child named self-education or self-socialization of the child. The child is perceived as "more than". Children are their own authorities and they are no longer viewed as passive receivers of social information and pedagogical activities. They are subjects that influence these processes due to their own activity. They are also active subjects of their own developmental changes and competent creators of these changes in their everyday life. The model is close to the prefigurative culture type. The theory of upbringing and social sciences are

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[23] Ibidem, p. 102–110.

[24] I quote the presented models after: B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika dziecka. Studium pajdocentryzmu*, Gdańsk 2007, p. 102–133.

beginning to treat children as "their own authorities", as "competent actors", creators of their own environment. A new image of the child emerges; it is a new theoretical construct that initiates incessant discussions in the pedagogical theory and beyond[25], which often leads to "hamletism" among contemporary parents.

Who is the child as a subject of upbringing?

The notion of "subject" is often used, especially in psychology and pedagogy, in particular of the humanistic current. Each attempt at defining this notion depends on the concept of the essence of upbringing adopted. Authors who deal with these topics claim that the child (pupil) is, among others, a subject brought up, an experiencing subject, an individual undergoing educational influence, a participant of educational interaction, an individual whose personality is an aim of educational efforts, a recipient of educational information.[26]

Together with formulating the postulate of the child's subjectivity in the family, a wish of the following type would appear: "let the child be someone, let the child form itself as a person". What is meant here is, among others, the "child's own activity", "creative expression" or "autonomous personality".

Irrespective of these statements, a pupil is an authentic child that should be accompanied by an adult in the process of development; an adult that accepts it the way it is. Given such unconditional love, the child can express itself or the content of its experience of the world without fearing that it will be ridiculed. The child as a subject freely shows its understanding of the world, its values, desires and fears. P. Ruciński calls such upbringing introduction in valuable life.[27] Is there a place for such upbringing and child (the child being a subject) in the family?

When taking up the issue of the child's upbringing and socialization, one usually speaks of the need for changes in the relation between the parent and the child, in order to ensure its "subjectivity", which is a condition for its self-development. It is a right direction provided that the parent themselves can be an active subject. The subjectivity of the parent is expressed above all by their own pedagogical knowledge in their everyday being with the child.

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[25] Confer: H.M. Griese, *Nowy obraz dziecka w pedagogice – koncepcja "autosocjalizacji"*, [in:] *Nowe konteksty (dla) edukacji alternatywnej XXI wieku*, ed. B. Śliwerski, Kraków 2002, p. 40.

[26] See: *Podmiotowość w doświadczeniach wychowawczych dzieci i młodzieży*, ed. A. Gurycka, Warszawa 1989, p. 63.

[27] See: P. Ruciński, *Wychowanie jako wprowadzanie w życie wartościowe*, Warszawa 1989, p. 170.

Subjectivity in child's upbringing in the contemporary family. Attempt at confronting theory with practice

The knowledge on subjectivity presented in literature most often presents it in two meanings, both of equal importance. The first meaning focuses on the subjective character of upbringing, i.e. the way of upbringing. The other meaning refers to subjectivity as an upbringing aim. In such case, considerations on subjectivity cannot omit mutual relations between the child and the parent.

Thus, how should the term of "subjective upbringing" be understood?

Subjective upbringing should be understood as an educational situation, always defined by a system of people, things and tasks; it is a situation of two subjects. In this situation the subjects of upbringing include each other in the lines of their own actions, they become equal and equivalent actors.[28] In situations created in the family, it is the parent who creates conditions for the mutual acting of the child and the parent; they provoke situations that release the child's activity. It has the opportunity to pose questions, make suggestions, it does things on its own. It is a special indicator of the subjective character of the child's situation. It is an equal actor in the situation.[29] This has some serious consequences for the development and functioning of the child itself.

In the context of these considerations, a question appears on what subjective upbringing of the child in the family looks like in times of social and cultural changes? Is it rightly understood by parents themselves?

Pedagogues, and not only them, are especially interested in the crisis of family upbringing[30] that is related to the childhood crisis.[31] As a result, we can talk of the following positions the child can have in the family:

- Child as a "sociometric star of the family",
- Child that is lonely or emotionally abandoned,
- Child that merges the family system,
- Child that "replaces" the absence of the parent,
- Child with the task of making the parents happy,

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[28] *Wychowanek jako podmiot działań*, ed. cit., p. 15.

[29] A. Gurycka, *O sztuce wychowywania dla wychowawców i nauczycieli*, Warszawa 1997, p. 47.

[30] See: T. Biernat, *Kryzys wychowania rodzinnego – zarys problemu*, [in:] *Wychowanie w społeczeństwie permanentnego kryzysu*, ed. R. Borowicz, Z. Kwieciński, Toruń 2009, p. 202–216. According to the author, the crisis of family education is influence by the following factors: crisis of the educational environment of the family, crisis of family authorities, crisis of relations between parents and children, cultural crisis of the family, crisis of educational practice and axiological crisis in the family, and the related cultural crisis.

[31] More: B. Matyjas, *Dzieciństwo w kryzysie. Etiologia zjawiska*, Warszawa 2008.

- Child that creates (on its own or with its brothers and sisters) a subsystem of children as an element that supplements the subsystem of parents.[32]

All the types of the child's positions in the family mentioned are linked to the dynamics of changes caused by global phenomena[33], which then influence the functioning of the contemporary family.

A characteristic feature of the contemporary childhood is the dependence of children on parents in satisfying their elementary biological, emotional, cognitive and social needs.[34] Nowadays parents are concerned with competitiveness and difficult situation in the job market; they want to boast about their children's achievements as soon as possible, often leading to no proportion in various forms of the child's activities. Fighting for their own and their child's position in society, they organize its childhood according to their own expectations, bringing it up to achieve success. By excessive burdening children with activities, they contribute to warping rather than supporting the child's development.

The importance of the parents' action for the child is noticed by the adults themselves. As research reveals, as many as 76% of Poles believe that parents should do everything possible for children, even at the expense of their own good.[35] What Tomasz Szlendak, a sociologist, says, confirms this fact: children in Poland are an object of real concern.[36]

As Tomasz Biernat proves, from its youngest age the child – due to the pursuit of success imposed by its parents – is looked after various specialists, which on the one hand enriches its process of development and upbringing, but on the other hand forces it to continuously adapt itself to new conditions, requirements, expectations, which increases the stress related to the child's fear.[37]

Without doubt, we can claim that youth and adulthood brutally enters the stage of childhood, taking away what children are entitled to and what they deserve: play, joy, carefreeness, love and safety, forcing them to be independent and prematurely adult, damaging the previous relations between the child and the adult, undermining the shape of upbringing up till now.[38]

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[32] T. Bajkowski, *Miejsce dziecka we współczesnej rodzinie w dobie globalizacji*, [in:] *Dziecko i media elektroniczne – nowy wymiar dzieciństwa*, ed. J. Izdebska, T. Sosnowski, Białystok 2005, p. 52 and further pages.

[33] More: T. Pilch, *Nadzieje i zagrożenia globalizacji* (paper delivered at the 10th Convention of Pedagogues), Wrocław 2003.

[34] M. Karwowska-Struczyk, *Dziecko i konteksty jego rozwoju*, Warszawa 2007, p. 31.

[35] See: M. Falkowska, *Wychowanie dzieci w rodzinie i opieka nad nimi*, Warszawa 1998.

[36] See: T. Szlendak, *Zaniedbana piaskownica. Style wychowania małych dzieci a problem nierówności szans edukacyjnych*, Warszawa 2003.

[37] T. Biernat, *Znikające dzieciństwo*, "Wychowanie na Co Dzień", 2001, no. 2.

[38] Confer: T. Buliński, op. cit., p. 111–113.

On the margin of these considerations, one can pose the question on the extent to which upbringing in the contemporary family shapes the subjective orientation of the child and creates favourable conditions for its feeling of subjectivity. A partial reply can be found in the research conducted by Tomasz Szlendak and Hanna Palska.

What is worrying is that contemporary parents forget about the child's rights and privileges as frequently. At this point, it is worth mentioning three of them: the child's right to live their own childhood, the child's right to freely dispose of their time and the child's right to have childhood filled with play. The phenomenon of parents chronically treating childhood as an "entrance hall" to adulthood and inexpert balancing of the child's engagement in educational activities should cause more anxiety. According to Tomasz Szlendak and Hanna Palska's research, it is strongly linked to the affluence and profession of the parents. Parents who belong to the middle class, offer wonderful educational methods to their children. However, life marked with the lack of time verifies them roughly. Using the words of Annett Larean, an American researcher, today's children of middle-class parents are oversecured. Their time is rationed and busy. Even in free time, they are driven to extra classes, and their play with peers is organised and controlled by parents. Engaged parents often fall into the trap of being their children's half servants (especially mothers) and half trainers. Such oversecured childhood has its limits and, according to researchers, is caused by the lack of self-confidence and insecure cultural capital.[39] It is a result of parents' growing aspirations and submitting childhood to challenges of adulthood, growing social and educational inequalities, unstable situation in the job market, competitiveness and long and burdening professional work of parents that makes it difficult to manage the child's free time rationally.[40]

In such a situation subjective upbringing is helpful, as well as the suitable approach by parents toward the child, "giving it reasonable freedom, intellectual stimulation and accompanying it in decisions because people who are brought up this way – despite a poor start – are more self-confident and feel a greater need for change.[41]

The child's subjectivity in the family should thus be understood as creating conditions for such an activity of the offspring that is initiated by itself according to its own personal values and standards. Activity is a special type of regula-

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[39] E. Wilk, *Ile mogą dać rodzice. Jak dziedziczy się po rodzicach i przodkach charakter i przekonania? Jak wygląda dziś w Polsce dziedziczenie pozycji społecznej?*, "Polityka", 2014, no. 7 (2945), p. 24–27.

[40] More: A. Mitręga, *Dzieciństwo – między obowiązkami a zabawą. Edukacyjne aspiracje rodziców a funkcjonowanie dziecka w wieku szkolnym*, [in:] *Pedagogika rodziny – in statu nascendi czy uznana subdyscyplina?*, ed. A. Ładyżyński, Wrocław 2012, p. 241.

[41] Ibidem, p. 241.

tion of the relations between the child and its surrounding based on the feeling of agency, control over the environment and over oneself.[42] It is an activity that comes from one's own choice and embraces the child's right to have a choice, the right to seek for possible solutions, the right to one's own assessment and the feeling of control over the result achieved.[43] Both the child's (pupil's) subjectivity and the parent's (tutor's) subjectivity are important here.

One of the most important objectives of education is shaping the internal autonomy, i.e. the feeling of personal causality. It is focused on the task of teaching children to programme their lives, i.e. creating situations where children make their own choices, personal decisions, realizing the premises that stand for them.[44]

Shaping the subjective orientation of the child in the family is a long-lasting process. It covers situations created by parents where the child is capable of making its own free choices of action and the feeling of responsibility for the action chosen. W. Łukaszewski believes that by making free choices of action and seeing their effects, the child realises that it can influence the course of events.[45] It creates its own world that it can influence. In this way, with time, the feeling of subjectivity is created in the child.

Final considerations

To sum up the considerations in this paper, it is indisputable that the best and first environment for bringing up each child is its family. It is an intersubjective educational space. Being an educational environment, the family bears the basic responsibility for bringing up children, their school careers and preparation for independent life. In the family, the elementary process of shaping the moral notions of the child takes place, as well as forming its moral and social sensitivity. The role of the family as an educational environment is not limited to the early years of the child's life; it continues up till the moment the child becomes independent, gains education and professional preparation. The child is a self-reliant subject, and due to its mental, physical and emotional immaturity requires special care and legal protection. As a human being, above all it requires respect for its identity and dignity.

Contemporary parents perceive the child as inept, weak and requiring special care and concern in the current times. However, when aspiring to take this

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[42] See: K. Korzeniowski, R. Zieliński, W. Waniecki, *Podmiotowość jednostki w koncepcjach psychologicznych i organizacyjnych*, Warszawa 1983, p. 48.

[43] A. Gurycka, op. cit., p. 47.

[44] Ibidem, p. 48.

[45] W. Łukaszewski, *Szanse rozwoju osobowości*, Warszawa 1984, p. 335–336.

care over the child and protect it against threats, they have to bear in mind above all the child's needs and not their own. Their love towards the child is a feeling of closeness, need of contact and affirmation of the person[46], and this means accepting the other man the way they are; it means empathy and viewing the other person from their perspective. Korczak was right to warn many years ago that the good of the subject is an indispensable attribute of love.[47] Above all, this means concern, knowing, feeling of responsibility, respecting the dignity and rediscovering the great matters of small people.

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[46] After: B. Smolińską-Theiss, J. Gajda, *Oblicza miłości*, Warszawa 1993, p. 23.

[47] See: eadem, *Korczakowskie narracje…*, ed. cit., p. 158.

The implementation of the Family Life Education curriculum subject in the primary schools in the context of children with mild intellectual disability

Marzena Buchnat, Dariusz Skowroński
and Katarzyna Waszyńska

The need for sexual education is a consequence of the changes that have taken place in recent decades. These changes are related to the process of globalization, migration, differentiation of social, cultural, and religious processes, as well as the rapid development of modern media, especially the Internet and mobile phone networks. Apart from that, the need for sexual education is also associated with the emergence and global spread of the HIV infection caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (...), and as a result of the growing problem of sexual trafficking and sexual exploitation in children and youth, and finally – because of a change in the approach to sexuality issues and sexual behaviour of young people. These new challenges require the development of effective strategies to enable young people to deal with their own sexuality in a safe and satisfactory manner.[1]

Despite this, the issue of sex education in Poland still raises controversies, because evidence-based knowledge is subjected to an attempt of imposing ideologically fuelled opinions, time-honoured beliefs, and myths.

The issue of sexual education seems to be all the more difficult for people with intellectual disabilities. Despite the fact that the discussion on the sexuality of people with intellectual disabilities has slowly begun to be present both in literature and the area of education, it is still a topic being taken under scientific consideration and analysis occasionally and insufficiently.

The review of recent academic views indicates the ongoing process of evolving discussion on intellectual disability from the medical approach (individual model of disability) to social position (social model of disability)[2], and it

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[1] http://www.federa.org.pl/dokumenty_pdf/edukacja/WHO_BZgA_Standardy_edukacji_seksualnej.pdf –standards of sexual education in Europe [access: 26.04.2014], p. 9–10.

[2] R. Kijak, *Seks i niepełnosprawność. Doświadczenia seksualne osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, Kraków 2009, p. 23–24.

is increasingly recognized that the limitations affecting people with disabilities are associated rather with the structure of the environment they are surrounded by and live in, as well as common societal attitudes they are exposed to (...).[3]

The social model is based on the assumption that human sexuality is a product of the society, operating in the sphere of relations with another person. It is also recognized that a disabled person is given the same sexual rights as non-disabled people, and, therefore has the rights to the sexual freedom, sexual autonomy, sexual privacy, sexual equality, sexual pleasure, emotional and sexual expression, making free and informed decisions about offspring, unrestricted access to sexual information based on the scientific research, and finally to be given access to comprehensive sexual education.[4]

According to the Regulation of 17 November 2010 about the principles on providing and organizing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and institutions (Journal of Laws, 2011. No. 228, item 1487) and its latest amendment of 30 April 2013 and the Regulation of 17 November 2010 about the organization of training, education and care for children and youth with disabilities and socially maladjusted in the kindergartens, public schools and integration schools (Journal of Laws, 2011. No. 228, item 1490), a student with a mild intellectual disability is entitled to the compulsory education in the three possible forms regarding the educational system: special education, integrated classes or mainstream public school.

Under the law a student with a mild intellectual disability attending a mainstream school is subjected to the same regulations as other children and youth, taking into account that a teacher is expected to provide a suitable and adaptive level of education, taking into consideration student's assessed capabilities identified in the context of special educational needs.

With regard to students with a mild intellectual disability, the school principal is obliged to provide them with an opportunity to participate in sexual education classes. The scope of the content of the "Family Life Education" course is determined under the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2008 on the core curriculum of preschool education and general education in different types of schools (Journal of Laws, 15 January 2009).

On 17 February 2012[5] Krystyna Szumilas, the Minister of Education, signed the Regulation introducing the amendments about the teaching methods and

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[3] Ibidem, p. 25.

[4] Ibidem, p. 28.

[5] http://archiwum.men.gov.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2741%3Arozporzdzenie-dotyczce-zaj-wychowanie-do-ycia-w-rodzinie-podpisane&catid=204%3Aministerstwo-archiwum-aktualnosci&Itemid=249 [access: 21.03.2014].

the scope of information related to human sexual life, principles of the informed and responsible parenthood, family values, prenatal development and the contraceptive methods and means of procreation included in the core scope of general education curriculum. According to the new regulation, the number of hours allocated for a Family Life Education course has not been changed with regards to the current arrangements, meaning 14 hours in total, including 5 hours segregated by gender. In addition, the Family Life Education classes are allowed to be carried out in the combined groups of up to 28 students at a time.

As mentioned above, the Family Life Education subject is implemented in grades 5 and 6, in the second stage of education, when the youth enters the early phase of puberty, which has been described briefly below, with a particular emphasis on the functioning of people with a mild intellectual disability.

The adolescence – the second stage of education – primary school (grades 5 and 6)

During the adolescence, the important role is linked to experiencing the processes of biological growth and puberty, and the emergence of new functions and needs (including sexual desires), and resulting changes in interactions and relationships with other people.[6]

This is the time of the rapid growth in terms of biological, social and psychological changes. The suddenness and the scope of these changes usually mean that it could be an extremely turbulent period. Preparing a child for the emerging challenges of the adolescence period (offering information and providing support) is an important task (...), and its appropriate implementation may play a crucial part in contributing to entering early adulthood in a smoother way that is devoid of fear.[7]

The challenge is particularly relevant in the context of children with a mild intellectual disability. It is worth remembering that an intellectual disability does not affect the basic existence of a sexual need and sexual desire to get intimate with another human being, or even the curiosity related to the biological processes of puberty. Sexuality of people with intellectual limitations is subjected to the same laws of human development as of people living without any disabilities.[8]

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[6] M. Tyszkowa, *Rodzina, doświadczenie i rozwój jednostki. Paradygmat teoretyczny badań*, [in:] *Rodzina a rozwój jednostki*, ed. eadem, Poznań 1990, p. 72.

[7] K. Waszyńska, *Biograficzne uwarunkowania życia seksualnego*, Poznań 2010, p. 63.

[8] A. Depko, *Seksualność osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Niepełnosprawność intelektualna – etiopatologia, epidemiologia, diagnoza i terapia*, ed. K. Bobińska, T. Pietras, P. Gałecki, Wrocław 2012; I. Fornalik, *Młodzież z głębszą niepełnosprawnością intelektualną na drodze ku*

The sexual development is, at least on the biological level, universal and consistent with the features characteristic for the so-called general population, which traditionally has been categorized using the terminology of sexuality of children, youth, adults and the elderly people.[9] However, the difficulties associated with the mentalization and socialization of sexual needs by people with an intellectual disability imply the limited capability of the understanding of the psychosexual development linked to the biological changes. It is quite common that hormonal and somatic changes precede the ability of cognitive comprehension aimed at the psycho-social maturity; hence their emotional and sexual development is more likely to be impaired to some degree.[10] Because of this tendency, the preparation of a child with a mild intellectual disability to the upcoming changes seems to be particularly important in terms of the emerging challenges of the adolescence period. Providing the knowledge and developing effective competencies must be adapted to the needs and abilities of these children, so that they can effectively fulfil their developmental task of entering the early adult life.

In the initial period of puberty, the essential part of sexual development is also linked to the process associated with the formation of gender identity. During this period, young people learn their sexual manifestations both in biological and social sense. These experiences provide teenagers with a variety of new situations when they can test and master their skills of how to handle challenging emotional responses, especially during the early stage of life.

The process of forming gender identity is usually more difficult in children with mild intellectual disability because of their level of socio-emotional functioning, which is determined by the cognitive development. The mental processes of a child with a mild intellectual disability do not go beyond the level of concrete operational stage according to Piaget, and logical operations forming cognitive processes may occur only in a simplified and limited form. This means that a child may encounter problems during the transition from the sensual to the rationally driven cognitive processing, from the concrete to abstract forms.

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dorosłości, [in:] *Dorosłość, niepełnosprawność, czas współczesny*, ed. K. Rzedzicka, A. Kobylańska, Kraków 2003; *Seksualność osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną: uwalnianie od schematów i uprzedzeń*, **ed.** J. Głodkowska, A. Giryński, Warszawa 2005; *Wieczne dzieci czy dorośli: problem seksualności osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, ed. J. Graban, Warszawa 2002; R. Kijak, op. cit.; M. Kościelska, *Niechciana seksualność. O ludzkich potrzebach osób niepełnosprawnych intelektualnie*, Warszawa 2004; A. Mikrut, *O prawie osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną do przeżywania i wyrażania swojej seksualności. Między ideą, deklaracjami a rzeczywistością*, "Niepełnosprawność", 2013, vol. 9, p. 57–71; K. Nowak-Lipińska, *Pytania o miejsce edukacji seksualnej w systemie edukacji osób z głębszym upośledzeniem umysłowym*, [in:] *Społeczeństwo wobec autonomii osób niepełnosprawnych*, ed. W. Dykcik, Poznań 1996.

[9] M. Kościelska, op. cit., p. 30.

[10] A. Depko, op. cit., p. 429.

Because of it, children may experience a difficulty in defining abstract ideas which are so important during the psychosocial development, including the idea of friendship, relationships, gender identity, social norms, gender roles, etc.

Nevertheless, these concepts are defined through specific and concrete images, which significantly simplify their deep understanding. The limited processes of analysis, synthesis, generalization, and syllogistic reasoning by induction and analogy contribute to the difficulties in the understanding of a particular state of affairs, as well as their explanation. The lowered level of understanding of the surrounding world is even more affected by children's limitations in attention, verbal memory capacity, and perceptual abilities. The reduced degree of noticing changes makes it difficult to comprehend them, which in turn determines the greater difficulty in shaping psychosexual maturity. The emotional instability associated with hormonal changes occurring gradually in the human body and the emotions that accompany those changes, become often a major challenge to people with a mild intellectual disability.

Because of the dominance of the subcortical mechanisms resulting from abnormal development of the brain in people with a mild intellectual disability, their functioning is characterized by the impaired control of emotions and drives, which contributes to the malfunction in the control system of the self. Such deficits result in greater emotional lability, impulsive, and aggressive behaviour fuelled by anxiety, and the impaired mechanisms of self-control, which further worsen the difficulties arising from the core nature of the puberty period. The reduced criticism, emotional swings, and the lack of understanding of the situational context contribute to the risk of forming an inadequate self-image by people with a mild intellectual disability, which can be an obstacle in the typical sequence of the psychosexual development.[11]

The gradually occurring changes related to biological puberty (body proportions, physiological reactions) become a source of new emotional and social experiences. In girls at the age of puberty, we can observe the development of the pelvis bones, breasts and pubic hair growth, internal and external genital changes, as well as body hair growth and the onset of menstruation. In boys, a rapid growth is notable, especially the testicular and penis size change, the

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[11] M. Bogdanowicz, *Psychologia kliniczna dzieci w wieku przedszkolnym*, Warszawa 1991; M. Buchnat, *Zastosowanie socjoterapii do pracy z dziećmi z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Socjoterapia jako forma pomocy psychologiczno-pedagogicznej. Teoria i praktyka*, ed. B. Jankowiak, Poznań 2013; Z. Gajdzica, *Edukacyjne konteksty bezradności społecznej osób z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym*, Katowice 2007; *Upośledzenie umysłowe – pedagogika*, ed. K. Kirejczyk, Warszawa 1981; R. Kościelak, *Psychologiczne podstawy rewalidacji upośledzonych umysłowo*, Warszawa 1989; I. Obuchowska, *Dzieci upośledzone umysłowo w stopniu lekkim*, [in:] *Dziecko niepełnosprawne w rodzinie*, ed. eadem, Warszawa 2003; J. Wyczesany, *Pedagogika osób z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym*, [in:] *Pedagogika specjalna*, ed. W. Dykcik, Poznań 2001.

appearance of body hair, voice change, and nocturnal emissions – so called "wet dreams", etc. Although not all of these manifestations are easily visible to the naked eye, they are often the focal point of making comparisons between peers and may be used as criteria of in-group status. Changes in appearance (secondary and tertiary sex characteristics) are the source of many tensions and problems often leading to fluctuating self-esteem.

Entering the puberty period is a time when the peer group starts playing an increasingly significant role. During this period the vertical relationships with adults gradually recede into the background and, subsequently, the dominant role is taken over by teenage interactions – horizontal relationships, both with the same and opposite sex. Peers often become a source of accessible information and the "authority" regarding various topics (including sexuality), and they form a support group, or at least play an important advisory role in making choices related to the daily issues like appearance, clothing, behaviour, or dating. Also during this time, the memorable events, like falling in love, braking-up, first sexual experiences, take place and start shaping individual life paths. All this affects the process of learning and developing preferences and attitudes regarding sexual life.[12]

Peer environment is a complex and diverse area of interpersonal interactions – this is a sphere of intense social training and initial experiences, including erotic ones. Within the group, young people can take their first steps in practicing gender roles, testing and building a sense of attractiveness, as well as experimenting with sexual activities.

The peer group, which plays a significant role in the psychosexual development, in the case of people with a mild intellectual disability, unfortunately is often a source of negative experiences. Because entering the puberty period is associated with gaining position in the group, children with a mild intellectual disability do not have much chance to successfully compete, especially with their non-disabled peers, for a high position within the group. The tendency of comparing oneself with others and using superficial criteria that is typical for this period may be especially damaging and hurtful to "the others" – children with intellectual disability. These children become often isolated and automatically marginalized by a group, particularly with regards to treating them as potential sexual and attractive partners.

The growing sense of isolation and the deprived chance of gaining any importance in a group hierarchy tend to reinforce their low self-esteem. The difficulty to fully participate in group activities, which is determined by low social competence, is often a part of experience of children with an intellectual disability. The limited capabilities in cognitive analysis cause difficulties in the

[12] K. Waszyńska, op. cit., p. 53.

recognition and assessment of newly encountered situations. An important role is also played by slowed information processing and impaired thinking processes that significantly increase the required time necessary to analyze the stream of incoming stimuli. Additionally the difficulties related to the use of imagination and anticipation in solving new problems, as well as inflexibility in thinking patterns, reduce the pace and appropriateness of actions taken. This all means that children with a mild intellectual disability are more inclined to cope better only with familiar situations, but they struggle to transfer the acquired skills to their new experiences.

The beginning of puberty creates a number of new, previously unknown situations, which children find difficult to handle, so they need to be given an opportunity to practice new behaviours under favourable and controlled conditions. Young people with a mild intellectual disability will also be more likely to encounter problems with the fast and accurate assessment of the existing situation, in particular characterized by an ambiguous or hidden agenda. It is worth noting that interactions with a peer group during this period of development create ambiguous situations, often containing hidden sexual undertones, and they may tend to dominate the core structure of mutual relations. These difficulties are the result of the lack of criticism, associated with the uncertainty of their reasoning and verbal limitations in expressing their own thoughts, as well as reduced memory capacity, low attention span, and reduced level in the organization of perceptual activity. In addition, these obstacles are also conditioned by problems in the perception and assessment of others.

Children with a mild intellectual disability are able to characterize the other person both in terms of positive and negative traits, however, these features do not build a coherent whole, but they function in separation due to difficulties in generalization.[13] Such fragmented perception of people makes it difficult to understand the motives of their actions, and correct reading of other people's emotional states. Additionally, misreading of the intentions of the other person interferes with the process of building a relationship or causes the child to fail to notice that the relationship being developed brings undesired consequences. It all implies that a peer environment, which constitutes a place of social training and erotic experiments, may not bring the assumed benefits aimed at supporting gender identity development.

A person with a mild intellectual disability is at a higher risk of assuming a scapegoat role, followed by peer isolation.[14] The role of a scapegoat not only

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[13] M. Bogdanowicz, op. cit.; M. Buchnat, op. cit.; Z. Gajdzica, op. cit.; *Upośledzenie umysłowe – pedagogika*, ed. cit.; R. Kościelak, op. cit.; I. Obuchowska, op. cit.; J. Wyczesany, op. cit.

[14] J. Bąbka, *Psychospołeczne aspekty efektywności edukacji w systemie integracyjnym*, [in:] *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*, ed. Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik-

deprives them of any social benefits, but in addition reinforces the feeling of being inferior, used, and further lowers their self-esteem. In the case of isolation, people with an intellectual disability experience the lack of acceptance by the group, which deprives them of a chance to satisfy their basic needs, and also prevents from an opportunity of learning the consequences of being sexual and observing gender-related behaviours. As a result, children experience limited social training in this area, which aggravates the difficulties resulting from intellectual disability.

The Family Life Education curriculum subject and its implementation; potential obstacles; recommendations

The aim of Family Life Education classes during the second stage of education (primary school) in accordance with the existing guidelines is to promote the family value in personal life and to support the preparation in understanding and acceptance of the puberty changes. In order to achieve this main aim, the following objectives have been developed:

– With regards to the role of the family as a whole, the basic functions of the family are addressed with the emphasis put on the child's role within the family, the transmission of values and traditions in the family, shared family celebrations, leisure and quality time, family bonds, emotional and other family relationships, family conflicts and their resolution, motherhood and fatherhood, basic knowledge of the structure and functioning of the human reproductive system, pregnancy, foetal development, birth, infant as a new family member,

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-Chudowolska, Lublin 2003; M. Chodkowska, *Socjopedagogiczne problemy edukacji integracyjnej dzieci z obciążeniami biologicznymi i środowiskowymi*, Warszawa 2004; I. Chrzanowska, *Uczeń z upośledzeniem umysłowym w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, [in:] *Pedagogika specjalna szansą na realizację potrzeb osób z odchyleniami od normy*, ed. W. Dykcik, Cz. Kosakowski, J. Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, Olsztyn – Poznań – Warszawa 2002; K. Ćwirynkało, *Pozycja socjometryczna uczniów niepełnosprawnych a postawa nauczycieli wobec integracji*, [in:] *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i interakcjach społecznych*, ed. cit.; Z. Gajdzica, *O wychowaniu i kształceniu dzieci o specjalnych potrzebach edukacyjnych w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, [in:] *Uwarunkowania edukacji i rehabilitacji uczniów o specjalnych potrzebach rozwoju*, ed. J. Wyczesany, Z. Gajdzica, Kraków 2006; S. Sadowska, *Szkolne stosunki interpersonalne w ocenach zadowolenia uczniów z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w stopniu lekkim*, "Szkoła Specjalna", 2006, vol. 4; A. Zamkowska, *Psychospołeczne i edukacyjne funkcjonowanie ucznia z upośledzeniem umysłowym w stopniu lekkim w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, [in:] *Wspólne i swoiste zagadnienia edukacji i rehabilitacji osób z upośledzeniem umysłowym*, ed. Z. Gajdzica, Sosnowiec 2008.

- With regards to the preparations for upcoming developmental changes: differences and similarities between boys and girls; gender identity, acceptance and respect for the body, mental and physical changes during puberty, diversity, individualized pace of development, intimate hygiene during puberty, responsibility for one's own development, self-regulation,
- Referring to the psychosocial aspects of the functioning of the child: human rights to privacy and protection by law, assertiveness, companionship and friendship, mutual respect, helping each other, group cooperation, empathy, mass media – the critical selection criteria regarding appropriate magazines, books, films and television programmes, as well as social institutions supporting minors and their families.[15]

The successful implementation of these objectives within the Family Life Education subject regarding children with a mild intellectual disability requires the proper preparation of didactic methods and educational activities to support the developmental needs of these students. Educational activities related to the family should be adjusted to the specific characteristics of the family environment which is often linked to an intellectual disability. As a result, the predominant etiologic factor for people with a mild intellectual disability is a social factor – mostly reflecting the issues affecting "multi-problematic" families, where the implementation of the guidelines needs to be adapted to the specific situation of the child's family. In this group of children professionals often have to deal with emotional and social problems implied by the negative patterns of family environment. The content of the Family Life Education subject is intended to show various social patterns, and teaching the rules and behaviours consistent with social expectations.

Table 1 presents the potential main difficulties while implementing the curriculum content related to the role of the family, as well as levelling recommendations.

The second area of the Family Life Education subject, relating to the preparation of teenagers for upcoming developmental changes, is particularly important for students with a mild intellectual disability. Research findings indicate that most children are not prepared by their parents to developmental tasks emerging in the adolescence.

Parents are not skilled enough to bring this topic up and discuss it with their own children, and even if they do, it is often not providing the whole scope of relevant knowledge, but only fragmentary pieces of information, which they feel comfortable with and are not ashamed to address. For children with a mild intellectual disability, this problem is exacerbated for two reasons. First, children are often raised in multi-problematic families, which do not put much effort

[15] On the basis of: http://www.abc.com.pl/du-akt/-/akt/dz-u-09-4-17 [access: 19.03.2015].

Table 1. The curriculum topics related the role of the family.

The Family Life Education curriculum content related to the role of the family	**Potential obstacles in the implementation of the curriculum content**	**Curriculum content recommendations regarding children with a mild intellectual disability**
a) The basic functions of the family with the emphasis on the child's place in the family b) The transmission of values and traditions in the family, shared celebrations, spending free time c) Family bonds, emotional and other family relationships, conflicts and their resolution strategies d) Motherhood and fatherhood; basic knowledge of the structure and functioning of the human reproductive system e) Pregnancy, foetal development, birth giving, a child as a new family member	– Frequently present negative patterns of family life; – Low level of knowledge of the standards in the field of social functioning; – Difficulties in understanding the social context; – Reduced level of control over emotions and impulses, the limited level of comprehending the cause and effect reasoning, which determines the difficulties in developing effective strategies in resolving conflicts – Lack of knowledge in understanding the core essence of motherhood and fatherhood as a new social role associated with the responsibility for ensuring optimal developmental conditions of the offspring	– Training in recognizing, naming and dealing with children's emotions – Teaching the conflict resolution strategies through providing explicit examples and concretization of these strategies – Practicing newly acquired skills in different situational contexts – The identification and specification of basic standards in family functioning – Indicating the role of a mother and father in the educational process (transfer of knowledge regarding parental duties and requirements)

Source: own elaboration.

into reflecting on the development of their own offspring, which means not initiating talking to them and not analyzing children's needs. What is more, some families unfortunately reinforce the attitudes and behaviours with regards to the sexuality and intimate hygiene, which are highly undesired and deviant from socially acceptable patterns.

The second reason is the infantilization of adolescents with a mild intellectual disability by their parents, who tend to see their offspring as younger than they actually are because of the way they behave, which is determined by delayed cognitive, emotional and social development. However, it is well established that delayed intellectual development does not affect the biological puberty process. Children who are treated as younger than their actual age are not prepared by their parents, and because of the limited contact with their peers or interacting with a group of other children with intellectual disabilities only they do not have

a chance that would allow them to learn proper reactions from friendly relations with regular children. In addition, these children encounter difficulties in understanding the mechanisms of the biological determinants of a maturation process. Limited ability to analyze, synthesize and generalize, and a low memory capacity make it extremely difficult to comprehend the biological phenomena. Partial and unstructured knowledge, or often the total lack of understanding of the puberty processes develops the anxiety, which in turn worsens the situation that is already difficult because young people do not know how to handle it.

The main problems and recommendations for the implementation regarding the preparation of teenagers for their developmental changes are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The curriculum topics related to the preparation of teenagers for developmental changes.

The Family Life Education curriculum content related to the preparation of teenagers for developmental changes	**Potential obstacles in the implementation of the curriculum content**	**Curriculum content recommendations regarding children with a mild intellectual disability**
a) The differences and similarities between boys and girls; gender identity, acceptance and respect for the body b) The physical and mental changes during the puberty; diverse, individualized pace of development c) Hygiene during the puberty d) The responsibility for their own development, self-regulation	– Difficulty in understanding the biological principles of the puberty process (the lack of conversations at home on the subject, lack of knowledge); – Failure to understand the changes occurring in the body; – Difficulties regarding interactions with the peer group (less frequent social training of people with an intellectual disability); – Lower skills in personal hygiene	– Introducing and teaching the correct vocabulary and terminology relating to body parts (with a special emphasis on genital anatomy); – Teaching and providing training in setting up and protecting personal boundaries; – Simplification and presentation of the puberty period and bodily processes by providing explicit examples; – Indicating the relationship between biological processes and changes in body proportions (understanding and acceptance of changes); – Transfer of knowledge in the understanding of the bodily reactions (erection, ejaculation, sexual arousal, sexual tensions), learning how to deal with such reactions; – Teaching how to overcome a sexual taboo – discussing human sexuality openly; – Teaching personal hygiene regarding menstruation, ejaculation, juvenile acne, sweating; – Teaching self-skills to handle the physiological changes (menstruation, nocturnal emissions) in an appropriate manner; – Teaching how to express sexual drive in a socially acceptable manner

Source: own elaboration.

Table 3. The curriculum topics related to the psychosocial aspects of the functioning of the youth

The Family Life Education curriculum content related to the psychosocial aspects of the functioning of the youth	**Potential obstacles in the implementation of the curriculum content**	**Curriculum content recommendations regarding children with a mild intellectual disability**
a) The human right to privacy and protection by law; assertive attitudes b) The core value of companionships and friendship, mutual respect, helping each other, co-operation, empathy c) The mass media – the criteria regarding the selection of appropriate magazines, books, movies and TV shows d) Public institutions acting on behalf of the child and family.	– Lack of understanding of human rights (particularly in relation to privacy and self-respect); – Lack of understanding of social situations with sexual undertones; – Low level of emotional control, the need for closeness and acceptance and setting up boundaries to other people including peers; – The difficulty of assessing the educational value of television programmes, and Internet information	– Teaching by providing explicit examples of how to protect their rights (especially in terms of intimacy and respect); – The building of competences and skills to respect other people's rights; – Training how to say no and learning how to deal with rejection; – Setting up boundaries with peers and respecting the boundaries of others; – Transfer of knowledge about close relationships: companionship, friendship, romance (recognition of the type of relationships, developing social skills, practicing the expression of personal needs, developing skills of how to ask for help, learning coping skills regarding emotions); – Recognizing ambiguous situations and learning coping strategies in such situations; – Teaching how to respond in situations involving the psychological, physical, and sexual abuse); – Understanding the risks associated with new technologies like sending out nude photos over the Internet, etc.; – Teaching how to report the abuse of their rights (when it should be reported, to whom and how it should be done)

Source: own elaboration.

The last area related to the psychosocial aspects of the youth is implemented in conjunction with other objectives of the subject, which aim to address different social situations that can be encountered by young people during puberty. This period is difficult for children, as it involves attempting to gain acceptance among peers, who at this age tend to be superficial and not very empathetic. In addition, it is a time of the bodily changes, which can be difficult to accept in the light of social body cult and idealization. For students with a mild intellectual disability, due to their difficulty in establishing peer relationships

especially with non-disabled children and accompanying low self-esteem, decreased criticism, etc., it is difficult to understand situations with sexual undertones, which during that period of life are often one of major themes in peer relations. Additionally, the decreased emotional control can be observed, becomes particularly difficult to handle and requires adequate preparation by providing basic knowledge, as well as modelling specific patterns of behaviour.

Table 3 below provides the information on the difficulties that may arise during the implementation of the Family Life Education subject with children with a mild intellectual disability in the context of psychosocial aspects of the functioning of the youth.

Summary

As it has been already indicated in the paper, the sexuality of people with an intellectual disability follows the same development principles as in individuals without cognitive limitations. People with intellectual disability have the right to a sound and knowledge-based sexual education. A teacher running the subject of Family Life Education in the elementary school needs to draw attention to several aspects related to the specifics of sexual development during this period. These include issues relating to:

a) Physical changes during puberty:
   - Paying attention to individualized puberty pace,
   - Helping understand and accept the changes taking place in the body (disproportional body features, juvenile acne, changes in appearance),
   - Indicating which changes are associated with puberty (e.g. wet dreams, irregular menstruation), and what symptoms require medical consultation (vaginal discharge, phimosis, etc.),
   - Helping build a positive attitude towards one's own body and sexuality,
   - Providing a supportive environment which enables young people to learn the functions of their bodies and physiology.

b) Mental changes accompanying adolescence:
   - Helping understand and cope with emotional lability, a sense of misunderstanding, fears and anxiety,
   - Assistance in building and shaping their self-esteem,
   - Training and help in expressing emotions.

c) Regarding the social functioning:
   - Social skills training,
   - Communication training,
   - Building the coping skills to deal with difficult situations (conflicts, abuse, threats).

It is important to stress out that the information should be transferred to students in a form that allows them to comprehend it by people with a mild intellectual disability. Therefore, the materials are required to be presented in the concrete forms, which implies, in some cases, their simplification, and making frequent references to specific situations in life. When developing of new skills – their practical training followed by implementation and generalization to the various possible contexts of their use.

The teachers conducting Family Life Education classes are required to adapt the methods of work to the needs of students with a mild intellectual disability, and, therefore they need to take into account students' social standing in the class hierarchy. When adapting the curriculum of the subject, it is highly recommended to pay special attention to children's social functioning. As mentioned before, children with a mild intellectual disability are not always welcome in the group of non-disabled peers. Due to their presumed low social standing in the class, teachers need to implement the content keeping in mind that the subject aims for supporting in-class participation, and they should not risk the escalation of the negative interactions in the class. After all, the issues that are implemented in the framework of the Family Life Education course are designed to help prepare children to take on new developmental tasks and challenges during adolescence, both in cognitive and socio-emotional dimensions.

Parent-children relationships as a subject of parents' pedagogization

Patrycja Wesołowska

The subject of supporting parents in their educational and caring function has been frequently covered in recent years. The support is often fulfilled by the so-called pedagogization of parents. The subject of consideration presented in the article is the pedagogization of parents related to their relationship with the children.

Pedagogization is usually defined as an activity aiming at enriching parents' pedagogical knowledge, meaning the knowledge of raising children and teenagers, with the elements of scientific knowledge. However, I suppose that the modern understanding of pedagogization, apart from indicating the methods directed at the enrichment of the knowledge, should also take into consideration the people who aim at shaping parents' pedagogical skills.

In this sense, pedagogization may apply to various aspects of parents' actions, for example the method of upbringing. Parents' relations with the children are crucial not only in terms of the efficacy of upbringing and care but also in terms of the child's proper development. The parent-children relationships have an influence on a child's current functioning as well as his or her development. Pedagogization of parents in this scope seems to be an elementary task, thus taking up the discussion of this topic is fully justified.

The discussion about the issues related to pedagogization in the scope of parent-child relationships is worth starting by defining the term "relationship" as well as indicating what determines the relationship, how it manifests itself and what the importance of the relationship for the development and functioning of the child is.

In the most general terms, according to Tyszkowa, relationships could be described as "what happens between individuals in a given time",[1] while it is

[1] M. Tyszkowa, *Jednostka a rodzina: interakcje, stosunki, rozwój*, [in:] M. Przetacznik-Gierowska, M. Tyszkowa, *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. Zagadnienia ogólne*, Warszawa 2004, p. 132.

emphasized that relationships have a relatively lasting character and are associated with a sequence of interactions between the people, who are usually called relationship partners or interaction partners.

Relationships are frequently described as a mutual attitude between at least two people.

Plopa defines the attitude as "a relatively fixed organization of a cognitive as well as emotionally-motivating and behavioural factor, which defines a particular stance reflecting the subject's readiness to react positively or negatively towards the environment".[2]

The concept of a "relationship" is also used to determine emotional bonds.[3] According to Rembowski, the bonds are created due to the intimacy in the family and mutual long-term actions. The author claims that "every family has their own mode of feelings, motifs, beliefs, interests and mutual understanding, which, according to Hess and Handel (1959, p.11), is called "the family theme".[4]

Plopa, who describes parent-children relationships, determines relationships not only from the perspective of a mutual attitude, but also parental styles. Plopa claims that the parental style is "an elementary term, which allows to comprehend the dynamics of parent-children relationships".[5] The author also notices that the style of taking care of the children serves the purpose of executing tasks in the family. Plopa also adds that the style of upbringing which combines emotional warmth with control and an open dialogue has a positive influence on the children's development and functioning; unlike other styles, which are characterized by irrational supervision, hostility, rejection or applying coercion.[6]

Communication between a parent and the child determines the type of their relationship and everything that results from it. It is worth mentioning that a parental style and communication between parents and children are not only favourable categories of description and classification of a parent-child relationship, but more importantly, parental style may be put to pedagogical actions more easily than the mutual attitude or bonds. It is feasible to distinguish various parental styles, for example the one developed from an autocratic style "power relations", or related to the democratic style relationship based on a partnership. As far as communication between parents and children is concerned, a useful classification may be applied: "talking to a child" and "saying something to a child". Harwas-Napierała indicated that it is possible to

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[2] M. Plopa, *Psychologia rodziny: teoria i badania*, Kraków 2005, p. 244.

[3] See: A.P. Reber, *Słownik psychologii*, Warszawa 2000, p. 620.

[4] J. Rembowski, *Więzi uczuciowe w rodzinie. Studium psychologiczne*, Warszawa 1972, p. 14–15.

[5] M. Plopa, op. cit., p. 242.

[6] Ibidem, p. 242–243.

shape one's social skills by communication in the family. According to the author, these skills may be practised by expressing oneself freely, developing the ability to listen or learning constructive strategies of solving conflicts.[7]

Schaffer, who characterizes relationships, made an appropriate remark that relationships cannot be observed directly, but it may be concluded from the observation of people's behaviours that relationships do exist. A similar pattern can be applied to communication, which is either verbal or non-verbal. The nature of a parent – child relationship is defined not only by what the parent says to the child, but also by the manner in which it is said, thus both the content of the statement and the manner in which a parent talks to the child is crucial in the communication. Nęcka suggested that "every act of communication has two aspects – the content, which is the subject matter of the communication, and a relationship level, which defines the relationship between the interlocutors".[8] In the discussed matter – communication between parents and the children, it is also crucial whether the parent listens to the child, and how it is done. What is more, we are capable of passing our attitude to another person without using words. Harwas-Napierała notices that "every behaviour, either verbal or non-verbal, is significant for communication, hence people who stay in contact with each other, especially in a fixed contact as in the family, cannot escape communication".[9] Therefore, we communicate through words as well as through our body language and behaviour. It is worth mentioning that non-verbal communication plays significant role as far as the development of bonds with small children is concerned. The most important elements of a relationship between a parent and the child are: the touch, the tone of the voice and the intimacy between the parent and the child. Along with the process of the child's growing up, verbal communication is getting more and more important.

Relationships between parents and the children are significant for the child's development. As Plopa notices, "it is commonly acceptable that a parent-child relationship plays the central role in the psychosocial development of the child".[10] Ziemska also points out that "a number of empirical studies prove that parents' behaviour, which is filled with particular emotions, causes the child to react in a particular way".[11] According to the studies mentioned, Ziemska indicates that there are certain parents' attitudes which cause a number of the child's inappropriate behaviours and have a negative impact on the child's

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[7] B. Harwas-Napierała, *Komunikacja interpersonalna w rodzinie*, Poznań 2008, p. 123–130.

[8] E. Nęcka, [after:] B. Harwas-Napierała, op. cit., p. 17.

[9] B. Harwas-Napierała, op. cit., p. 15.

[10] M. Plopa, *Rozwój i znaczenie bliskich więzi w życiu człowieka*, [in:] *Osobowość a procesy psychiczne i zachowanie*, ed. B. Wojciszke, M. Plopa, Kraków 2003, p. 49.

[11] M. Ziemska, *Postawy rodzicielskie*, Warszawa 2009, p. 35.

development; those attitudes are: rejection, eschewing the contact with the child, overprotection, excessive demand, rectification and criticism.[12]

The parents play a significant role in the process of shaping the discussed relationships because it is them who initiate the character of the relationship. The younger the child is the more significant influence the parent has on the character of the relationship. As Schaffer declares, in case of young children, it is crucial that the adult is sensitive and reacts to what the child says. In the following way parents teach the children that the way they behave has an influence on the environment.[13] Fulfilling the child's needs indicates that voicing their needs is useful and teaches how to establish the relationships.

The very first relationships are those created in the family. Thus, they are particularly important. Family relationships are usually a safe base for the children to start experiencing the world; they also shape the child's image of interpersonal relationships, which in turn may build the foundation of creating relationships in their adult lives. The relationship that gives the child a sense of security and a feeling of being loved and important will reinforce the process of a proper psychological, emotional and social development. Creating a normal relationship with a small child, developing it and transforming properly along with the child's development may be a source of an inner strength for the family during the time of the child's puberty. Puberty often brings conflicts between the teenager and the parents,[14] but a healthy relationship and proper communication are the foundation of solving the conflicts favourably.

Bearing in mind that it is the parent who plays the significant role in creating and shaping the relationship with the child, it is worth reflecting on the issue of parent's pedagogization.

With reference to the definition of pedagogization presented earlier in the article, it should be noticed that the aim of pedagogization is to help parents, both directly and indirectly, in the process of upbringing. According to Kawula, "due to various information, advice and interventions, pedagogization contributes to a constant increase in parents' thoughtfulness during the process of upbringing".[15] The result of the process of pedagogization is supposed to be an increase in the parents' thoughtfulness and this way to cause an improvement in their functioning.[16] As I mentioned earlier, nowadays an emphasis is being put on providing parents with knowledge as well as developing their

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[12] See: M. Ziemska, op. cit., p. 65–69.

[13] H.R. Schaffer, *Wczesny rozwój społeczny*, [in:] *Dziecko w świecie ludzi i przedmiotów*, ed. A. Brzezińska, G. Lutomski, Poznań 1994, p. 120–121.

[14] Idem, *Psychologia dziecka*, Warszawa 2009, p. 106.

[15] S. Kawula, *Pedagogizacja rodziców*, [in:] *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna*, ed. W. Pomykało, Warszawa 1993, p. 581.

[16] Ibidem, p. 581.

abilities. Thus, not only is parents' knowledge being enriched but also practical exercises of new models of behaviour are facilitated.

Pedagogization in this sense may be achieved in two ways: directly, with the help of school teachers who arrange trainings and courses for parents and family doctors, and indirectly, with the use of mass media, TV, radio, books and the Internet.

The direct way of passing the knowledge to parents by the teachers was mentioned in the Ordinance of the Minister of Education of the 30th of April 2013 about the rules of providing psychological and pedagogic help in kindergartens, schools and other institutions. The regulation states that the help may be in a form of advice, consultation, courses and classes for parents and teachers.[17] The recommendation included in the mentioned piece of the regulation is generally enough for teachers to have some freedom of teaching parents how to raise children and teenagers. A wide range of issues may be brought up by the teachers, one of which is the knowledge of shaping relationships between parents and children and the significance of such relationships.

The indirect way of passing the knowledge to parents is significant and particularly fascinating at the same time. That is because nowadays parents have access to various sources of knowledge and pedagogical skills, the skills from the domain of both upbringing and care. Parents are able to shape their skills through different courses, dedicated specifically to them. Apart from the commonly known ones, such as the Lamaze class, where parents acquire the competence of taking care of small children, there have been more and more courses for parents of older children, where the educational skills are being mastered. The following campaigns are good examples of such an initiative: "Wise Parents" under the auspice of the Ombudsman for Children, "A School for Parents and Carers" organized by the Centre for Education Development and "A Good Parent Equals a Good Start" launched by the Nobody's Children Foundation. The "A Good Parent Equals a Good Start" campaign has three levels, for parents of children under 1 year of age, between 1 and 3 years of age and for those raising a child between 3 and 6 years of age. The course objective is to pass on the knowledge about a parent-children relationship, which is the aim of pedagogization mentioned in the article. The programme for parents of children under 1 year of age uses elements of video training which enables mothers and fathers to see their behaviour towards the child. Coaches pay attention to the positive aspects of the interaction and claim it is beneficial for the children and helps to communicate and satisfy the child's needs.

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[17] Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 30 kwietnia 2013 r. w sprawie zasad udzielania i organizacji pomocy psychologiczno-pedagogicznej w publicznych przedszkolach, szkołach i placówkach, § 7.4.

The programme called "A School for Parents and Carers" focuses on the importance of a parent-child relationship. The first part of the programme, called "Creating a parent-child relationship", includes the following contents:

- Expressing one's expectations and limits so that the child respects them,
- Active and supportive listening,
- Motivating the child to interact,
- Supporting the process of becoming self-dependent, and others.[18]

Recently, many private companies offering courses for parents have emerged. The companies usually work near youth clubs, kindergartens and other private institutions. Considering the variety of such companies, it is difficult to determine what subjects are brought up at those courses and what the quality of the offered courses is; thus, further research in this area is needed.

A valid source of parents' knowledge about how to treat the children are popular science books. The publishing market offers a countless number of handbooks concerning care and upbringing. The research I conducted in October 2013 revealed that in ten randomly picked bookstores in Poznań, Poland, there were 192 popular-scientific books directed at parents. The handbooks include instructions on how to behave towards the child, at the same time proposing models of relationships with the child. If an author suggests, for example, that parents should apply high demands and punish the child, they promote a certain model of relationship which in this particular case is an authoritative style of behavior.[19]

However, in the publications which deal with negotiations, a dialogue with the child and shared establishment of rules, parents are presented a democratic style of upbringing as well as a relationship with the child based on a partnership.[20] The publishing market also offers publications which instruct parents how to talk to their child.[21] This type of handbooks contribute to the facilitation of creating relationships between parents and children.

Some movies and TV programmes, especially those meant as educational, slip suggestions concerning desirable models of relationships by presenting various parent-children relationships. A viewer of a programme in which strictness plays a significant role may accept this kind of behaviour and sometimes even adopt it as a role model. There are also movies and TV programmes which present a situation where a child is encouraged to start a dialogue or

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[18] See: http://www.ore.edu.pl/strona-ore/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=923 [access: 13.03.2014].

[19] See: J.C. Dobson, *Dr Dobson zmęczonym rodzicom. Czyli o tym jak radzić sobie z trudami wychowania dzieci*, Warszawa 1993.

[20] See: T. Gordon, *Wychowanie bez porażek*, Warszawa 2011.

[21] See: A. Faber, E. Mazlish, *Jak mówić, żeby dzieci nas słuchały, jak słuchać, żeby dzieci do nas mówiły*, Poznań 2013.

present his or her own opinion, for example as far as the issue of skipping classes is concerned.

We, the educators, should realize that such publications bring a variety of ideas as well as a variety of consequences for parents and their idea of a perfect upbringing. Despite the fact that neither an authoritative nor a democratic model of parental behaviour directly mentions a relationship, some models of relationships are indicated by presenting parents' behaviours. Even though parents do not intentionally look for publications or TV programmes related to parent-children relationships, they still gain information about it simply by reading books and watching TV. What is more, the information may become an instruction for parents to behave in a particular way towards their children.

To conclude, it is worth emphasizing that pedagogization of parents in terms of shaping their relationship with the child does not limit itself only to the activities of experts such as educators, psychologists or teachers. There are many models of relationships provided by the media, sometimes those models are contradictory to one another, which may be the reason for parents' disorientation and loss. Both teachers and psychologists face a new challenge: to suggest which literature is valuable, to discuss every controversial idea and to find answers to questions about proper behaviour towards children and positive relationships with them. Bearing in mind the fact that proper parent-children relationships influence the child's adult life, the expert's reaction to the alarming content of modern handbooks, TV programmes and courses seems obvious, necessary and challenging at the same time.

Child-family-peer relations in the most recent Polish prose for children, in an educational context

Anna Józefowicz

The aim of this paper is to present the latest Polish prose for young children of preschool and primary school age as a source of support for parents and educators, as well as for the children themselves, in overcoming educational and emotional problems in the family and in the school environment. Structured problematically, the presented prose can be used in the bibliotherapeutic classroom, bringing the importance of family and social bonds in human life to the forefront. The criterion for the selection of literature to analyse the problems were the books submitted to the IBBY[1] "Book of the Year" contest, which has been held since 2011. Of the more than250booksanalysed,I have chosen examples which include protagonists that are contemporary small children, their family members and other children as peer representatives. I paid attention to the essence of interpersonal bonds, the problem of feeling safe within the family and the hardships that children face as they enter the social world.

The need to build emotional bonds

It is hard to believe that in the first half of this century "(...) the social norm did not designate feelings as a necessary condition for marriage" ["(…) norma społeczna nie czyniła z uczuć koniecznego warunku do zawarcia małżeństwa"].[2] Only in the 1930's was the importance of the meaning of feelings in relationships emphasized for the proper emotional and social development of children. Eric Fromm claimed that in order for children to develop properly, not only did they need parental love, but also the love of both parents for each other, because it gave them a sense of security and strength to overcome obstacles later on in life.[3]

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[1] www.ibby.pl

[2] A. Prost, *Historia życia prywatnego*, Wrocław 2006, vol. 5, p. 101.

[3] E. Fromm, *O sztuce miłości*, Warszawa 1971.

The family bond is one of the basic categories of sociology. It defines general social relations that include the relationship between family members and the general attitudes of those members to one another, and to the values and goals of the family. The familial bond is formed by drawing family members to each other and binding them together with such forces as: love, trust, care, responsibility, openness, sincerity, understanding, kindness, assistance, and cooperation.

Taking into account the role of the family in the educational shaping of a child's personality, many researchers (K. Horney, A. Maslow, D. Winnicott, H. Izdebska) place particular emphasis on those features of family life which compose the emotional bond.

An emotional bond is a strong sense of connection with a circle of people, resulting not only from blood ties, but above all from the common worries and joys experienced, resulting also from a sense of certainty that in every difficult situation help will be received. It is a strong feeling of attachment, affection and loyalty. Experiencing love, unconditional acceptance and maintenance of a close relationship with the significant person (in this case a child with their mother and father) is important in shaping healthy emotions.[4]

Between children and their parents exists an extremely strong emotional bond, which can be considered as the most durable relationship that joins two people.[5] This relationship is formed when the child is born and usually lasts until the death of a parent. By that time, the relationship has taken many various forms – beginning from total dependence on the mother by the child, to the gradual breaking of bonds, until the period of equal relations, and at the end parents becoming dependent on the child. The main responsibilities of the parent towards their child is to feed them, ensure their safety, and talk to them. A parent raising a child teaches them accepted forms of behaviour. A child who receives positive stimuli from an adult is able to reciprocate them, so the parent-child relationship influences a child's future interpersonal relationships.

Contact between parents and children may also be called the "initial compensation" („wyrównanie pierwotne"). "This compensation, in conditions of proper relationships of parents with their children, takes the following form: mother loves the child more than the father, the child reciprocates the love to her, but receives more love from her than they give" ["Wyrównanie to w warunkach prawidłowych stosunków rodziców z dzieckiem przybiera postać następującą: matka darzy dziecko większą miłością niż ojciec, dziecko odwzajemnia się w jej miłości, przy czym więcej otrzymuje uczuć od matki, niż samo daje"].[6]

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[4] M. Remisz-Skrojna, *Więź rodzinna*, [in:] *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, ed. T. Pilch, Warszawa 2008, vol. 7, p. 117.

[5] M. Agryle, *Psychologia stosunków międzyludzkich*, Warszawa 1999, p. 171.

[6] Z. Zaborowski, *Stosunki międzyludzkie*, Wrocław 1976, p. 163–164.

"Initial compensation", as a stable system of feelings between the parents and the child, has a major impact on the social development of the child; it becomes the model for relationships with others. A child transfers relationships with their parents to contacts with siblings or peers. A positive relationship between a child and adult is conducive to shaping the basic features of their personality. A child who has positive "initial compensation" with their parents is socialized, honest, optimistic, and cooperative.

As we age, we create other bonds: we gain friends, we go to work where we also establish professional connections, we fall in love and we enter into romantic relationships. Mentally healthy people have a need which Diana Dwyer defined as affiliation. This is a fundamental need for the presence of other people.[7]

Since the mid-twentieth century, we have been faced with transformations, or even the disappearance of bonds, as a result of industrialization, urbanization, democratization, the spread of capitalism, and the creation of mass culture. Zygmunt Bauman points out to the ambiguity and polyphony of contemporary culture, and the lack of its durability and solid reference points. We are also living in a time of digitization, where people who spend hours and hours in front of the computer lose the basic ability to communicate with others. Young people compensate for the lack of examples on how to spend time together as a family, as well as the quality of that time, by creating superficial connections with others on the Internet. Overworked parents, who are often educationally incompetent, neglect their children, which often leads to the disappearance of bonds between them, and causes feelings of loneliness in young people. The lack of bonds inhibits the achievement of social maturity by young people.

I would like to propose the content that I extracted from the analysis of the most recent Polish prose for children as an aid and chance for opening a dialogue and for "patching" bonds in the family. This content may also be used in the process of bibliotherapy in educational and care-giving institutions.

Proposals of what to read among the most recent Polish prose for children, highlighting the importance of bonds in a child's life, in the family and in a peer environment

Written in alight and humorous way by Marcin Witkiewicz,[8] the Lila i Spółka [Lilka and Company] novel describes the relationships among the youngest members of society on the family and peer level. When the siblings are sent by

[7] D. Dwyer, *Bliskie relacje interpersonalne*, Gdańsk 2005, p. 20.

[8] M. Witkiewicz, *Lilka i spółka*, Warszawa 2013.

their parents on a vacation that do not turn out the way everyone predicted, they have to cope with many new social situations. What role models have been transferred to the reader here? Parents who are caring, but not overprotective, who trust their children and believe in their mutual support and closeness to each other (the children spend the first weeks of the summer holiday without their parents at their aunt's). The siblings, who stick together through conversation ("(...) Mother says that you should make yourself feel better by talking to someone close to you, not with candy" ["mama mówi, że humor trzeba poprawiać sobie rozmową z bliskimi, a nie słodyczami"][9]), loyalty and support, have to handle the new, difficult situation of being away from their family. Staying with their grumpy aunt unites them and gives them the opportunity to see that they can trust each other, solve problems together and allow them to take a reflective look at themselves and the people around them.

There was also a very important common analysis by the children of the reasons for their own loathing and rivalry with their peers. When adults compare children to each other and give them examples of other, "better" peers, the children begin to rebel, and do not want to have contact with such a child. So it was in this case. "We honestly hated Wojtuś, because such an ideal could not be liked! It seemed to us that he was from outer space, because it is impossible to be so perfect. Smart, handsome, a good student, clean, and caring. Whenever we did anything wrong, we immediately learned that Wojtek was the master of the world at it. Wojtuś studies better, runs faster, reads more books, and is the best in general" ["Myśmy szczerze nienawidzili Wojtusia, bo przecież takiego ideału nie da się lubić! Wydawało nam się, że on jest z kosmosu, bo naprawdę nie można mieć samych zalet. I mądry, i piękny, i dobrze się uczy, i sprząta, i zajmuje się wszystkimi w potrzebie. Cokolwiek myśmy zrobili źle, natychmiast się dowiadywaliśmy, że Wojtuś jest w tym mistrzem świata. Wojtuś lepiej się uczy, szybciej biega, więcej książek czyta i w ogóle jest naj.].[10]

Wojtek turned out to be quite normal, which the children discovered through an open and sincere conversation, where all the confusion that had been caused by the adults was straightened out. "(…) – We've had enough of you. (…) – I've only just arrived.-Well, yes, but whatever we do, we learn that you do it better. You have better marks at school, you are more polite, you already know English, you clean up after meals, and I don't know what else. (...) In general we hear that you're amazing. More amazing than we are! (...) I don't know what to say – Wojtek muttered. I really did not want to come here. I have always been told that you are so beautiful, and that I slouch. That I watch too much TV, and you are so clever (...) in short, that you are a sack of virtues – he

[9] Ibidem, p. 31.
[10] Ibidem, p. 57.

began to laugh.-From whom did you hear that? – I asked, stunned. – Oh, from Aunt Jadźka" ["Mieliśmy ciebie dość. – (…) przecież dopiero przyjechałem. – No tak, ale cokolwiek robimy, dowiadujemy się, że ty to robisz lepiej. Że masz lepsze oceny, jesteś grzeczniejszy, znasz już angielski, pomagasz sprzątać ze stołu i sama nie wiem co jeszcze. (…) w ogóle słyszymy, jaki to jesteś fajny. Fajniejszy od nas! – (…) nie wiem co powiedzieć- mruknął Wojtek. – Strasznie nie chciałem tu przyjeżdżać. Zawsze słyszałem, że wy jesteście takie piękne, a ja się garbię. Że ja za dużo telewizji oglądam, a wy to tacy mądrzy (…) krótko mówiąc, że jesteście worem cnót! – zaczął się śmiać. -Od kogo to słyszałeś? – zapytałam oszołomiona. – No od ciotki Jadźki"[11]].

There is a short, brightly illustrated story about brotherly love, mutual caring and the ability to have fun, titled *Bajka i Majka [The Fairy Tale and Majka]* by Malina Prześluga.[12] "For the first time in my life I was completely alone and very scared, because I'm still tiny and my brother has to take care of me; even when he calls me "little kid", I love him!" [Pierwszy raz w życiu zostałam zupełnie sama i bardzo się bałam, bo ja jestem jeszcze malutka i mój brat musi się mną opiekować,nawet gdy mówi do mnie dzieciaku, to go kocham!"][13] – these are the feelings of the tiny heroine – a flea. The story presents the world as seen through a child's eyes – their fears, loneliness, longings, but also the spontaneous joy. The story leads adults through the world of children's feelings and also motivates children to look for adventure in their surroundings as well as to create a fairy-tale story from everyday situations.

For the youngest children, with Janusz Korczak's message to adults that children can be just as wise discussion partners as adults, is another book by Malina Prześluga titled *Ziuzia.*[14] This story underlines the importance of the relationship between a little girl and her mum and dad. The parents do not trivialize the childish fears of their daughter, they explain to their little girl what at a given moment is important for her; they are there to explain the big world into which their child is entering." – Honey – mother crouched down and stroked Ziuzia on the head–you do not have depression. You are cheerful, like to sing, like run around the yard and tell us stories, don't you? – Yes, I like to do all these things – said Ziuzia – because this was what she liked doing the most in the whole wide world.– Depression is really something sad, when you do not want to eat or read or cuddle with anyone (...) then you do only sad things. And you do not smile (...)" [– Słonko, mama kucnęła i pogłaskała Ziuzię po głowienie masz depresji. Jesteś wesoła, lubisz śpiewać, lubisz ganiać po podwórku i

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[11] Ibidem, p. 72.

[12] M. Prześluga, *Bajka i Majka*, Warszawa 2013.

[13] Ibidem (pages in the book are not numbered).

[14] Eadem, *Ziuzia*, Warszawa 2012.

opowiadać nam historyjki, prawda? – Lubię – rzekła Ziuzia, bo najbardziej na świecie lubiła właśnie to. – Depresja to cos naprawdę smutnego, gdy nie chce się jeść ani czytać, ani przytulać się do nikogo (…) wtedy robi się tylko same smutne rzeczy. I wcale się nie uśmiecha (…)"].[15] Being raised in such a family, this little girl has the potential to grow up to a brave woman (because she feels safe in the family), an optimist who knows how to admire the world around her (even a small worm in the bathroom) and when she simply asks "what is it?", she will not feel impatience but will hear an explanation.

At this point, it is worth mentioning a number of recent children's books emphasizing children's spontaneity and the possibilities of stimulating creativity in the family. They are: *Rany Julek. O tym jak Julian Tuwim został poetą* by Agnieszka Frączak[16] (about the passionate childhood of Julian Tuwim) and *O czym nie śniło się dorosłym [What Adults Don't Dream About]* by Joanna Wachowiak[17] where the emphasis is on children's unlimited imaginations, expressed in magical dreams. While reading, one can almost paint these dreams, and children are encouraged to paint their own.

In the above proposals, attention should be paid to the positive reinforcement that a child receives from their parents and how the contact between parents and child was constructed (by spending time together, playing, walking, reading every evening). The child feels that the parents are with them – through hugs, kisses, cuddles after a nightmare, by ceasing a household duty for a moment and listening to them. "Salad can wait. Bring the game. – Hooray! – I was so glad that I jumped" ["Sałatka może poczekać. Przynieś tę grę. – Hura! – ucieszyłem się tak, że aż podskoczyłam"].[18] These are stories about giving joy to the loved ones.

The spirit of the ability to enjoy life each day and "infect" much older people with childish joy, and in this way build relationships between grandchild-grandparent, is also present in the following books: *Moja babcia kocha Chopina [My Grandma Loves Chopin]* by Anna Czerwińska-Rydel,[19] *Kosmiczni odkrywcy – Franio i jego babcia [Space Explorers- Franio and his Grandma]* by Grażyna Bąkiewicz,[20] and *Świat według dziadka [The World According to Grandpa]* by Zofia Stanecka.[21]

Moja babcia kocha Chopina [My Grandma loves Chopin] is based on sharing the passion for music between the grandmother and her granddaughter,

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[15] Ibidem, p. 11.

[16] A. Frączak, *Rany Julek. O tym jak Julian Tuwim został poetą*, Łódź 2013.

[17] J. Wachowiak, *O czym nie śniło się dorosłym*, Warszawa 2013.

[18] Ibidem, p. 72.

[19] A. Czerwińska-Rydel, *Moja babcia kocha Chopina*, Warszawa 2010.

[20] G. Bąkiewicz, *Kosmiczni odkrywcy – Franio i jego babcia*, Poznań 2013.

[21] Z. Stanecka, *Świat według dziadka*, Poznań 2013.

whereas *Kosmiczni odkrywcy – Franio i jego babcia [Space Explorers – Franio and His Grandma]* describes the passion of having fun together.

I would like to focus on to the sentimental novel *Świat według dziadka [The World According to Grandpa].* This is one of the few, so sincere and serious, yet semantically understandable novels for children, giving an example of a child's difficult experience with the old age, passing and death. The author indicates how valuable a friendship with an older person is, and what kind of reactions are allowed in everyday contact. From the initial unwillingness based on a misunderstanding and distance based on age, a relationship was slowly born based on curiosity, then by the need for more and more frequent presence of the other person, even spent in silence. "Ryś returned the smile. Also jagged, like grandpa's. Suddenly he took courage. – Grandpa ... Why do you smell so funny? – He asked. – You mean, I stink? Ryś chuckled. And then he fell silent. He felt strangely sad. And ashamed. – Well ... – it's just the way it is as you get older. Think of a tree. It is beautiful and young for only some time. As it gets older, it bends and curls up, its leaves fall off (...) –I'm old, said Grandpa. But I'm still alive. And I'm glad I am. They stood in the hallway, hugging, as the tree, with a quiet murmur, began to get older (...)" [„Ryś odwzajemnił uśmiech. Też szczerbaty, jak ten dziadkowy. Nagle nabrał odwagi. – Dziadku… dlaczego tak dziwnie pachniesz? – spytał. – Chodzi czi o to, że podszmerduję? Ryś zachichotał. A potem zamilkł. Zrobiło mu się dziwnie smutno. I wstyd. – Cóż… – tak to już jeszt, jak szię starzejesz. Pomyszl o drzewie. Nawet ono jest pienne i młode tylko przez jaisz czasz. Na staroszcz więdnie, pochyla szię, liśnie z niego opadają (…) – Jesztem jużstary, Ryszu…. – powiedział – Ale wciąż zyję. I cieszę szię z tego. Stali przez chwilę w przedpokoju, przytuleni, a drzewo w tym czasie z cichym szmerem zaczęło się starzeć (…)"].[22]

We observe how the grandfather stops feeling so lonely and how the grandson enjoys the time spent with his grandfather more and more. The reader, together with the heroes, starts to think about what is important in life, as well as about the passage of time and the value of closeness. "– Maybe you first need to run around to learn how to sit calmly? – You see ... when someone stops once, it is not easy for him to move again. – And I think – Ryś said – it's all because of the armchair (...) – Do you think so? (...) I remember when I first sat on it. That was just after your mum got angry at me when I did not come to her exam. You see, I was so busy that I forgot about it. She told me then: – Just sit down, Dad. Maybe when you sit for a while, you will see how life is running away from you. – And what? – And then I sat down. I looked at your mum and I saw that she had grown into a big and wise woman (…). I looked at my hands and noticed that they were wrinkled. I felt great tiredness. Since that time I sat more and

[22] Ibidem, p. 14.

more often (...) I started to talk with my family, I had time to drink tea and meditate (...)" [„Może trzeba się najpierw wybiegać, żeby nauczyć się tego, jak siedzieć spokojnie? – Widzisz… kiedy ktoś raz się zatrzyma, nie jest mu łatwo się rozruszać. – A ja myślę – powiedział Ryś – że to wszystko przez fotel (…) – Tak myślisz? (…) Pamiętam, kiedy pierwszy raz na nim usiadłem. To było zaraz po tym, jak twoja mam się zdenerwowała na mnie, że nie przyszedłem na jej egzamin. Widzisz, byłem tak zabiegany, że o nim zapomniałem. Powiedziała mi wtedy: – Po prostu usiądź tato. Może kiedy posiedzisz przez chwilkę, zobaczysz, jak życie ucieka przed Tobą, kiedy tak ciągle biegasz. – I co? – I wtedy usiadłem. Spojrzałem na twoją mamę i zobaczyłem, że wyrosła na dużą i mądrą pannę. Spojrzałem na swoje ręce i zauważyłem, że są pomarszczone. Poczułem wielkie zmęczenie. Od tego czasu siadałem coraz częściej i częściej (…) Zacząłem rozmawiać z rodzina, miałem czas na wypicie herbaty i rozmyślania (…)"].[23]

The wisdom of seniors is granted to the reader, calm, full of humility resulting from experience. The fact that the difference between us is counted in many years does not necessarily mean a dissonance in building relationships. "– Adults and children often think quite differently. But it does not mean that they do not love one another. When your mum was little, she also thought that I did not understand her (...) I sometimes think that maybe she was right. I really wanted the best for her, but sometimes I was so busy with a variety of worries that perhaps I did not always listen to what she was telling me. She, in turn, did not really want to listen to what I had to say to her (…)" [„Dorośli i dzieci często myślą zupełnie inaczej. A przecież nie znaczy to wcale, że się nie kochają. Twoja mama, kiedy była mała, też uważała, że jej nie rozumiem. (…) czasami myślę, że może miała rację. Bardzo chciałem jej dobra, ale czasami tak bardzo byłem zajęty rozmaitymi troskami, że chyba nie zawsze słuchałem tego, co do mnie mówi. Ona z kolei nie bardzo chciała słuchać tego, co ja mam jej do powiedzenia (…)"[24]].

These three suggestions of books have the task of mobilizing children as quickly as possible to revitalize contact with the oldest members of their family.

In the most recent Polish prose for children I also noticed several books in which respect and friendly relationships of children and their families to animals is highlighted. This happens in the stories of Joanna Papuzińska titled *Jak się koty urodziły [When The Cats Were Born],*[25] based on the memories of carefree moments spent with grandparents in the countryside, where children learnt from adults how to care and be responsible for various animals (crows, bats, moles, cats, dogs). Also in the novel by Maria Cecylia Rajchel, *Psikusy Tigu-*

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[23] Ibidem, p. 19–20.

[24] Ibidem, p. 35.

[25] J. Papuzińska, *Jak się koty urodziły*, Łódź 2013.

sa [Tigus's Pranks][26] and Marcin Pałasz's *Elf wszechmogący [Elf, The Almighty],*[27] we have examples of hilarious human-dog relationships, but always based on love for "four legged" creatures. Giving a good example of respect for those who are weaker and smaller than we are should begin with those closest to the child. Then there is a chance that it will be transferred into an attitude of respect towards every being further on in a child's life. By learning to care for one another in the family, experiencing acceptance, justice and cooperation, the child is able to use such patterns in initiating social relationships, winning over people and making friends.

Staying in the area of responsibility for every life, and shaping the attitudes of brotherhood learnt from the family home, it is necessary to give examples of books about the Second World War seen through the eyes of a child (also due to the large number of titles giving weight to the subject and due to numerous literary prizes). It is worth presenting children's nonfiction literature, such as: *Asiunia* by Joanna Papuzińska and Maciej Szymanowicz,[28] *Wszystkie moje mamy [All My Mothers]* by Renata Piątkowska,[29] *Bezsenność Jutki [Jutka's Insomnia]* by Dorota Combrzyńska-Nogal,[30] *Pamiętnik Blumki [Blumka's Diary]* by Iwona Chmielewska,[31] *Czy wojna jest dla dziewczyn*? *[Is War For Girls?]* by Paweł Beręsewicz,[32] and *Mój tato szczęściarz [My Father, The Lucky One]* by Joanna Papuzińska.[33]

War in these books is shown from a child's perspective. Creating a ghetto, raids, hiding in the basement (previously regarded by children as terrible and gloomy but during the war seen as the only safe place), sudden lack of home or loved ones and relatives – children experience all of this in these novels. The reader, together with the juvenile protagonist, experiences several years of wandering, hunger and fear, but most important, learns how to stand up to evil by observing everyday gestures of humanity. Asi's father helped people hide during the war and the Warsaw Uprising. The little girl remembers conversations with him and presents his brave attitude to the memory of future generations. "It was children who were most defenceless, and my dad had orders to help children that did not have parents, home, food. He looked for care, shelter, food for them (...) After the war, for saving the lives of Jewish children that the Nazis murdered, he received a medal of Righteous among the World's Nations from Israel" ["A najbardziej bezbronne były dzieci i mój tato miał takie rozkazy,

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[26] M.C. Rajchel, *Psikusy Tigusa*, Gdynia 2013.

[27] M. Pałasz, *Elf wszechmogący*, Kraków 2013.

[28] J. Papuzińska, M. Szymanowicz, *Asiunia*, Łódź 2011.

[29] R. Piątkowska, *Wszystkie moje mamy*, Łódź 2013.

[30] D. Combrzyńska-Nogal, *Bezsenność Jutki*, Łódź 2012.

[31] I. Chmielewska, *Pamiętnik Blumki*, Poznań 2011.

[32] P. Beręsewicz, *Czy wojna jest dla dziewczyn?*, Łódź 2010.

[33] J. Papuzińska, *Mój tato szczęściarz*, Łódź 2013.

żeby pomagać dzieciom, które nie miały rodziców, domu, jedzenia, żeby szukać dla nich opieki, schronienia, żywności (…) Za ratowanie dzieci żydowskich, które hitlerowcy mordowali otrzymał po wojnie z Izraela medal Sprawiedliwy wśród Narodów Świata"].[34]

Simon Bauman mentions that he survived thanks to four mums, four unique women, including Irena Sandlerowa. "How many mothers can we have? I calculated that I have already had four. The real one, who stayed in the ghetto, my mother Maria in Warsaw, now my mum Anna and mother Irena, who has always helped me and who I promised to always listen to. Four mothers is enough.[35] Well, I probably would never have been found, if not for a jar buried under an apple tree (...) Ms Irena Sandlerowa kept narrow strips of tissue paper wrapped in a roll in the jar. She wrote the names of Jewish children on them, the true and the false ones, and the encrypted addresses of families who took care of them. Then (...) she buried these notes, so that they would not fall into the hands of the Germans. There were two and a half thousand tiny notes, because that is the number of children she managed to move out of the ghetto and save. She and everyone who helped her risked their own lives for these children every day" [No, a ile można mieć mam? Obliczyłem, że mam już cztery. Tę prawdziwą, która została w getcie, mamę Marię w Warszawie, teraz mamę Anię i mamę Irenę, która cały czas mi pomagała i której obiecałem we wszystkim słuchać. Cztery mamy wystarczą[36] (…) No cóż, pewnie nigdy bym się nie odnalazł, gdyby nie pewien słoik zakopany pod jabłonką (…) Pani Irena Sandlerowa przechowywała w tym słoiku wąskie paseczki bibułki zawinięte w rulon. Spisywała na nich imiona i nazwiska żydowskich dzieci, te prawdziwe i te fałszywe, a obok zaszyfrowane adresy rodzin, które się nimi zaopiekowały. Potem (…) zakopała te zapiski, żeby nie wpadły w ręce Niemców. W słoiku było dwa i pół tysiąca malutkich karteczek, bo tyle dzieci udało jej się wyprowadzić z getta i ocalić. Ona i wszyscy, którzy jej pomagali, codzienne narażali dla tych dzieci własne życie"].[37] However, from Blumka's diary the reader learns about the message of Old Doctor Korczak – how to love a child.

In each of the books on this subject, there is an emphasis for the need of a sense of security and unity of the family. "Although we were constantly hungry and even though it was so cold that water froze in the bucket during the night, we were together" ["Chociaż byliśmy ciągle głodni i chociaż było tak zimno, że w nocy woda zamarzała w wiadrze, to byliśmy wtedy razem"].[38] These

[34] Ibidem, p. 38.
[35] R. Piątkowska, op. cit., p. 35.
[36] Ibidem, p. 35.
[37] Ibidem, p. 41.
[38] Ibidem, p. 20.

books can encourage family members to have conversations, to remember and admire each day of life spent with the nearest people to them. These are reading proposals about the ability to perceive happiness in the possibility of just being together. "And then when were you lucky again, Dad? – When I found you – responds dad. And hugs us tight to himself (...) We remember those autumn walks, during which we heard about the Warsaw Uprising" ["A potem kiedy znowu miałeś szczęście tato? – Kiedy was znalazłem – odpowiada tata. I przytula nas mocno do siebie (...) Pamiętamy te jesienne spacery, podczas których słuchaliśmy o Powstaniu Warszawskim"].[39]

There are also some of the latest Polish novels for children about the basis of friendship – real and not, and about entering into relationships with peers. I suggest reading the philosophical stories of Małgorzata Strzałkowska[40] and the brilliantly perverse novel about relationships among peers in school by Paweł Beręsewicz.[41]

In *Green and Nobody* and *Green, Nobody and Somebody,* a two-part series by Strzałkowska, all the features of a good friendship are emphasized, such as: acceptance, willingness to speak together, assistance, loyalty, discretion. "– You called me, so here I am – said Green. He asked with concern in his voice: – Why are you sitting in the cupboard for umbrellas? -Because this is the only place I feel safe. – Then let's stay here. And talk. Green added" ["– Wołałeś mnie, więc jestem – odparł Zielony. I spytał z troską w głosie: – Dlaczego siedzisz w schowku na parasole? – Bo tylko tutaj czuje się bezpiecznie. – W takim razie zostańmy tu. I porozmawiajmy – rzekł Zielony"].[42] These parables touch the topic of crossing personal borders and show how true friendship can motivate and inspire optimism.

Noskawery by Paweł Beręsewicz is a novel in the spirit of the absurd about the disappearance of emotional ties and about contemporary children and adolescents yielding to fashion and consumption without any reflection. In this tale "the world has gone mad" – the only things that matter are well known brands and companies, and school children are divided into two groups, the cool kids and the rest. "(...) Now, to everyone who's cool, let's all wear Noskawery![43] Or (...) the whole world, and especially its richer part, wear Bonetti coats (…), and when the fashion for one thing passes and a new trend begins (...) It is only lightman, the new, sparkly earring. Great thing, you should try it. – Where is your noskower, Jack? With a naked nose at the concert? - Noskower? Come on,

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[39] J. Papuzińska, *Mój tato…*, ed. cit., p. 38.

[40] M. Strzałkowska, *Zielony i Nikt*, Warszawa 2009; eadem, *Zielony, Nikt i Ktoś*, Warszawa 2013.

[41] P. Beręsewicz, *Noskawery*, Warszawa 2013.

[42] M. Strzałkowska, *Zielony, Nikt i Ktoś*, ed. cit. (pages in the book are not numbered).

[43] P. Beręsewicz, op. cit., p. 17.

Bill, Noskowers are embarrassing!" ["(…) teraz wszyscy noszą noskawery, wszyscy najfajniejsi!,[44] czy (…) cały świat a zwłaszcza jego bogatsza część nosi płaszcze Bonettiego,[45] czy za chwilę, kiedy mija moda na jedno, a zaczyna się szał na drugie (…) to tylko lightman, nowy, świecący kolczyk. Świetna sprawa, powinieneś spróbować. – A gdzie twój noskower, Jack? Tak z gołym nosem na koncercie? – Noskower? Daj spokój, Bill, Noskowery to obciach!"].[46]

Here it is clearly shown how the producer creates not only the product but also the consumer – from a child, through advertising. This book shows how mass culture, using psychological knowledge – by referring to feelings, hidden desires, by using emotional phrases in advertising – manipulates consumers, where the goal is not only to sell a product, but also to influence the personality of the buyer.[47]

The book begs for dialogue, for discussion among readers of all age son the essence of kitsch, manipulation, advertising and marketing forces, and searching for ways to save humanistic values. It could be of great value to hear children's comments after reading the two following contrasting opinions. The first is grandmother's (her words flowing from the heart, streaked with concern): "Do you think you are not liked because you do not have a nose… what is it called? – she asked gently. And would it all change, if you had it? But, people should be liked by what they have inside, not for what they wear (…).[48] The second is of the dictator of fashion: They have naked noses! I forgot about noses! Get up humanity! – he screamed – Today I'll dress your noses! (...).[49] Where's the art in selling people things they need? Selling something that is completely unnecessary – this is a task for a true artist!" ["(…) uważasz, że Cię nie lubią bo nie masz tych noska – jak-im- tam? – spytała łagodnie. – I że jak będziesz je miała, to wszystko się zmieni? Przecież lubi się ludzi za to, co mają w środku, a nie za to co na sobie noszą (…)[50] i dyktatora mody: (…) mają gołe nosy! Zapomniałem o nosach! Wstawaj ludzkości! – wrzasnął – dzisiaj ubiorę wasze nosy! (…).[51] Co za sztuka, sprzedawać ludziom rzeczy, których potrzebują? Sprzedawać coś, co jest zupełnie zbędne – o! to jest zadanie dla prawdziwego artysty!"].[52]

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[44] Ibidem, p. 17.

[45] Ibidem, p. 10.

[46] Ibidem, p. 58.

[47] K. Żygulski, *Kultura masowa*, [in:] *Encyklopedia psychologii*, ed. W. Szewczuk, Warszawa 1998, p. 183.

[48] P. Beręsewicz, op. cit., p. 18.

[49] Ibidem, p. 13.

[50] Ibidem, p. 18.

[51] Ibidem, p. 13.

[52] Ibidem, p. 25.

Summary

Alice Baluch said that it is good if the one who writes understands the one who reads. The latest Polish prose for the youngest children presented here is just such an example of an intergenerational agreement, news of the contemporary problems of a small child, where special attention was placed on the child's relationship with their closest family members as well as with their peers. Selected books transmit patterns of behaviour to children, teach sensitivity to human harm and injustice, and at the same time they can do it in a humorous way. These novels underline healthy relationships with other people, which are saturated by positive bonds, and are an important source from which the child can draw the vital powers. Therefore, I emphasize the important role of the bibliotherapist in the ability to select the current literature for children, that which can be considered due to aesthetic value by art, and that according to Herbert Read's thesis can help to protect young people from decay and deconstruction.[53]

[53] H. Read, *Wychowanie przez sztukę*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Gdańsk 1976.

Mental violence in the family and child's functioning in their age group. The need for preventive measures and assistance

Aneta Baranowska

Nowadays, as a result of global changes, negative phenomena that generate a number of threats for the internal structure of a family and its functioning are escalating.[1] One of the threats are social pathologies, i.e. "behaviours of family members that are contradictory to the acknowledged and accepted norms and values in a given community, group, social or cultural system".[2] In today's world, one of the most frequently occurring pathologies of the family life is child violence, which consists of "every not accidental act exceeding the social principles of mutual relations, that aims at the personal freedom of a minor or contributes to physical as well as mental damage of a person".[3] The World Health Organization lists the following ways of harming children:

a) Physical violence,
b) Sexual abuse,
c) Mental/emotional violence,
d) Negligence.[4]

The subject matter of the following article is mental violence towards a child in a family, which is why I focus solely on this form of harming children.

Mental violence towards a child in a family – the description of the phenomenon

Mental violence towards a child is the most elusive and treacherous form of abuse, as it is extremely hard to measure its genuine scope.[5] Literature defines

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[1] J. Izdebska, *Dziecko w rodzinie u progu XXI wieku. Niepokoje i nadzieje*, Białystok 2000, p. 34.

[2] A. Podgórecki, *Patologia życia społecznego*, Warszawa 1969, p. 24.

[3] I. Pospiszyl, *Przemoc w rodzinie*, Warszawa 1994, p. 67.

[4] Raport of World Health Organization, [after:] M. Makara-Studzińska, *Dziecko jako ofiara przemocy domowej*, Lublin 2010, p. 17.

mental violence towards a child in a variety of ways. According to James Garbanino, it is "a consistent act of an adult, that destroys the child's ability to function in the society and aims at their personal development".[6] In turn, Daniel Barnnet claims that mental violence is "parents' actions which prevent children from fulfilling their basic needs like: the sense of security, a need of living in a society that is free from hostility and violence, a need of contact with an even-tempered guardian and a feeling of self-respect".[7] However, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children maintains that a mental maltreatment of children is "a recurring pattern of the guardian's behaviour, which causes the child to feel worthless, bad, unloved, unwanted and that they are only valuable when they fulfil the needs of others".[8]

Mental violence, which is also called a violence in velvet gloves, can be either active or passive. The former is the following behaviour of parents toward their children: threatening, terrorizing, putting contradictory expectations and announcements, showing disrespect to the child's dignity and privacy, destroying the child's property (for example their pets), taking advantage of the child, menacing, forcing the child to eat or limiting the food and sleep, among others.[9] Active violence also manifests itself as an emotional blackmail, which aims at imposing subordination under the threat of suffering the consequences addressed at the foundation of mutual relations.[10]

However, the most frequent form of active mental violence is verbal degradation, or, to put it differently, destroying with words, which consists in calling names and humiliation. The subject of a verbal assault may be the child's appearance, their intelligence or skills.[11] Susan Forward[12] distinguishes two types of verbal despots: the ones who attack directly, openly say what they think about their children, and the ones who are more sophisticated, their features are: acrimoniousness, sarcasm and subtle abasement.

As far as the passive violence is concerned, it consists in: avoiding interaction with the child, isolation, emotional rejection, negligence of the child's emotional needs, ignorance, deprivation of stimulation or emotional coldness.[13]

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[5] I. Pospiszyl, op. cit., p. 104.

[6] J. Garbanino, [after:] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 22.

[7] D. Barnnet, [after:] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 22.

[8] American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, [after:] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 22.

[9] E. Jarosz, [after:] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 24.

[10] S. Forward, D. Frazier, *Szantaż emocjonalny. Jak się obronić przed manipulacją i wykorzystaniem*, Gdańsk 1999, p. 12.

[11] S. Forward, *Toksyczni rodzice*, Warszawa 1992, p. 75.

[12] Ibidem, p. 73–74.

[13] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 24.

One of the reasons why parents resort to mental violence towards their child is their low self-esteem. Growing children remind them of their own weaknesses and transitoriness. For example, when seeing their growing daughters women realize that they begin to get old, and they try to transfer their anger on children, by means of mental violence.[14]

The source of emotional violence towards children frequently resides in the rivalry between parents and children. The most prominent example is the rivalry for father's favours between a mother and a daughter. When a man spends more time with his child than with the wife, his partner feels abandoned and uncared-for, puts the blame of lack of interest on the daughter and thus she tries to take revenge on their daughter and humiliates her.[15]

Parents often cannot resign themselves to the fact that their children are growing up and thus become more independent and self-reliant. Parents fear that they will lose their previous status and control over the child, which is why they resort to using mental violence to force submission and subjugation.[16]

Another reason of mental violence towards children is the belief that harshness and coldness make the best preparation to their adult life.[17]

It is frequently suggested that mental violence is handed down from one generation to another. This phenomenon consists in adults replicating the harmful behaviours that they experienced in the childhood and unconsciously absorbed the way their guardians behaved. Nothing but observing parents, who are the most significant people for children, makes them similar and prone to replicate the observed people's behaviour. Many people claim they are well-brought up, which additionally strengthens their desire to imitate their parents' behavior.[18]

Analyzing the sources of applying mental violence, especially in the case of excessive demands, it is worth mentioning that parents tend to transfer their own unfulfilled dreams to their child. Frequently, when parents had some plans and dreams which could not be fulfilled in the past, they seem to be so attractive for the parents that they want their children to fulfil those dreams.[19]

The literature also indicates there are factors contributing to the risk of appearance of mental violence in the family. One of the factors is choosing an inappropriate spouse, who either consciously or unconsciously, looks for objects to give vent to their anger at the fact that they do not match with their spouse. The probability of emotional violence towards children raises when the child was not expected, that is in the case of an unwanted pregnancy. Another predi-

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[14] S. Forward, op. cit., p. 78.

[15] Ibidem, p. 78.

[16] Ibidem, p. 78.

[17] A. Miller, *Zniewolone dzieciństwo: ukryte źródła tyranii*, Poznań 1999, p. 78.

[18] D.G. Dutton, *Przemoc w rodzinie*, Warszawa 2001, p. 129.

[19] J. Brągiel, *Zrozumieć dziecko skrzywdzone*, Opole 1996, p. 94.

cate of applying mental violence in the family is also an unfulfilled need of a parent who still tries to fulfil them. A child is a burden and prevents parents from fulfilling their dreams in this situation. It has been proven empirically that other forms of violence correlate with mental violence towards children.[20]

So far, there has not been much research into the emotional violence towards children or the scope of this phenomenon. Psychologists examined patients coming to their offices and confirmed that about 14-23% of the patients have experienced mental violence in the family.[21] Among sparse Polish research, the one worthy of notice was done by Anna Piekarska. Her research was conducted amid families from Warsaw and revealed expressive ways of hurting children mentally, for example: threatening (84-97%), ridiculing (28.6%), shouting, cursing (28%), jeering (21%), calling names (18.1%), threat of throwing out or sending the child to a reform school (3.5%).[22]

Mental violence sets a mark on the child's psycho-social functioning and has an unfavourable influence on the process of development. The significance of this experience is being emphasized by the fact that parents, who are naturally predisposed to provide the feeling of security and acceptance for a child, are the perpetrators of mental violence.[23]

Victims of mental violence experience greater damage than victims of physical violence. In the mind of a victim of mental violence, there is a distorted image of themselves, the world and other people. Emotional violence leaves scars on the soul of the victim. The detailed list of repercussions of mental violence towards children includes: speech and sleep disorder, psychosomatic trouble, destructive behaviour, excessive subordination to adults, high demands on oneself, constant focus on oneself, passivity and even suicide attempts.[24]

Children suffering from mental violence are characterized by low self-esteem. Even though some minors have already had low self-esteem before they experienced mental violence, frequent suffering from mental violence triggers the changes in self-assessment.[25] The reason for this is that offensive words and humiliating remarks may become information about themselves for the children. When a parent makes a child believe that they are hopeless, useless and they will never achieve anything in their life, the child starts to believe it and behaves according to the label they were given by the parent. It is very likely that in the adult life such a child will be lacking abilities and neither education, nor professional success will change that, because the negative image of

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[20] Ibidem, p. 94.

[21] Ibidem, p. 94.

[22] A. Piekarska, [after:] I. Pospiszyl, op. cit., p. 107.

[23] I. Pospiszyl, op. cit., p. 156.

[24] J. Maćkowicz, *Przemoc w wychowaniu rodzinnym*, Kraków 2009, p. 59.

[25] S.D. Herzberger, *Przemoc domowa. Perspektywa psychologiczna*, Warszawa 2002, p. 56.

themselves will be deeply ingrained and the pain will be trapped forever in their heart and mentality.[26]

People with low self-esteem are more likely to blame themselves for bad events arising in life. It has been proven empirically that those individuals are prone to seek for reasons of bad events in their own behaviour. Parents' behaviour definitely has an impact on this phenomenon, as they suggest the responsibility for the faith to their children by humiliating them.[27]

Children suffering from mental violence are also less sensitive to verbal abuse towards others, which means that it is highly unlikely that a child who is emotionally harmed would react if someone was being humiliated.[28]

The influence of mental violence towards a child on their functioning in a group of peers

Victims of emotional violence have difficulties with functioning in a group of peers. Marta Makary-Studzińska[29] has confirmed this thesis in her study which reveals that almost 4/5 of people who experience emotional violence in the family are not satisfied with their social life and relations with peers. The close scrutiny of empirical studies of the author as well as the literature prove that direct consequences of mental violence have an impact on the level of satisfaction of social life. Children experiencing emotional violence display hostility towards society and low level of tolerance towards people.[30] Another characteristic feature of children that are victims of mental violence is a poor level of sustaining interpersonal relations, which makes functioning among peers much harder.[31] These children prefer to live a solitary life, which undoubtedly makes striking new friendships harder. They also display a certain distance as far as social contacts are concerned, because they fear derision or rejection. Children experiencing mental violence are also shy, which is a direct result of their low self-esteem.[32] It is characteristic for people having troubles with excessive social contact to avoid any contact with other people.[33] The victims of mental maltreatment are also more prone to being neurotic, and thus showing an emotional instability, this in turn is the reason they are being rejected by their peers.[34]

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[26] Ibidem, p. 56.
[27] Ibidem, p. 57.
[28] Ibidem, p. 65.
[29] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 77.
[30] Ibidem, p. 105.
[31] I. Pospiszyl, op. cit., p. 160.
[32] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 105.
[33] J. Poland, *Wrażliwe dziecko*, Poznań 2011, p. 85.
[34] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 17.

Another reason for occupying a low social position in a group of peers by the children who are mentally abused is that they display aggressive behaviours. Not only experiencing violence but also witnessing it increases the risk of acquiring tendency to aggressive behaviours. These children replicate their parents' behaviour, and consequently they apply this behaviour to their friends, for example they use verbal degradation. The modelling process described earlier has definitely a great impact on this kind of child's behaviour[35]. On the one hand, aggressive behaviour may be applied by the child unconsciously, on the other hand it may be aimed at recovering from the emotional stress they go through at home. Yet another reason why children use mental violence towards their peers may be a desire to share their suffering with someone else. The victims of mental violence may feel it is important that other children feel the same as they have to feel every day at home. This way, they are sure that it is not only them who suffer. This kind of behaviour may be a peculiar cry for help and an attempt to draw an attention of peers to them.[36]

Excessive subordination also makes functioning in a peer group harder. Children who suffer from emotional violence get poor results as far as dominance and leadership is concerned. Nobody takes into account their opinion in the group they belong to.[37]

Emotional violence through the lens of law – selected aspects

Parents who apply mental violence to their children are not left unpunished. Criminal law, civil law and regulations concerning the counteract of domestic violence bring up the subject of this kind of violence. An insult may be set as an example here – it is a form of emotional violence towards children, in the eye of the law an insult is a crime against honour and bodily inviolability[38]. According to paragraph 1, article 216 of the penal code "he who insults another person in his presence or even in his absence but in public and deliberately, so that the insult reaches the person, is liable to pay a fine or to have his freedom limited".[39] Another example of a punishable form of mental violence may be a mental abuse, i.e. "intentionally causing a moral harm".[40] Paragraph 1, article 207 of

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[35] D.G. Dutton, op. cit., p. 130.

[36] S.D. Herzberger, op. cit., p. 65.

[37] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 76.

[38] O. Trocha, *Przemoc psychiczna wobec dziecka – aspekty prawne*, "Dziecko Krzywdzone", 2011, vol. 4, p. 59.

[39] Article 216 of the Penal Code, [after:] O. Trocha, op. cit., p. 59.

[40] O. Trocha, op. cit., p. 59.

penal code states directly that "he who mentally torments a close person or a minor, is liable to be deprived of liberty from 3 months to 5 years".[41]

Unfortunately, a child is not licensed to perform any legal act in the course of legal proceeding, thus there is a problem of their representation in performing the acts like for example: applying for prosecution or submitting a private arraignment. The problem is not the case if the perpetrator is someone else than the parent. Then, it is the parent who represents the child in the legal acts mentioned above. However, if the parent is the perpetrator at the same time, a clash of interest occurs, which in the eye of the law prevents from representing the child by the parent. The Supreme Court orders to appoint a guardian to represent the minor in this case. Nevertheless, the child has to confide in someone for any legal acts to take place, it may be for example a teacher at school, who is obliged to intervene according to the Blue Card procedure. The teacher should also try to help the child as far as the competence of an educational institution are concerned, for example provide the help of psychologist or another teacher. Moreover, if the teacher suspects that there was a crime committed towards the child, they are obliged to inform the law enforcement authorities immediately, according to article 304 of the Penal Code as well as article 12 of the act against domestic violence.[42]

Another problem lies in the assessment of the limits of using the authority by parents. It is worth mentioning that there are certain circumstances that repeal the penalty of the prohibited act that was committed to the detriment of the child, as long as the act was committed within the framework of parents' powers and with educational aim in view. The premises that allow rebuking a child are for example: rebuking a minor by his parents or legal guardians, having an educational aim in view, proportion of means to the magnitude of the offense, justice, using moderate and socially acceptable means that are not threatening to the mental development of a child. Some of the behaviours mentioned above that have traits of prohibited acts could be licit in the parent-child relationship.[43]

Counteraction to mental violence in a family

Bearing in mind the above characteristic of mental violence towards children and its repercussions to the psycho-social development of minors, it seems vital to prevent this phenomenon that gets more and more frequent.

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[41] Article 207 of the Penal Code, [after:] O. Trocha, op. cit., p. 59.

[42] rticle 304 of the Penal Code as well as article 12 of an act against domestic violence, [after:] O. Trocha, op. cit., p. 61.

[43] O. Trocha, op. cit., p. 62.

One of the forms of prevention is to shape the pedagogic culture in future and present parents.[44] A number of young people become parents without any previous preparation to play this role. These people frequently lack basic knowledge, which could help them to understand the child's behaviour, or skills to react appropriately to the troublesome behaviour of their children. Parents usually do not have a good grasp of effective techniques of discipline or teaching the right conduct. The greater knowledge could help them to create a friendly family environment and to promote proper child development. That is why educational workshops should be held with an aim to equip young parents with basic knowledge about the proper way of raising children.[45] An example of good practices in this area is the program called "Family at the start line" carried out by the foundation "Child in the center" from Poznań. During a few meetings with experts and other parents, young people had an opportunity to: explore their parental experiences, gain knowledge about different phases of child development and needs as well as learn various ways of dealing with difficult situations that frequently occur in the course of taking care of small children.[46]

Another type of preventive actions should be a special educational programme that would equip children who are potential victims of mental abuse with the knowledge about mental violence as well as the institutions offering help in the event of mental abuse. This is crucial, as the children who are abused usually do not realize there are various solutions to the problem.[47]

However, the large scale of actions aiming at the elimination of violence as well as education of the whole society should not remain forgotten. We should not remain indifferent towards hurting children either physically or mentally.[48] We give a tacit permission to this kind of behaviour by not reacting to that. Social campaigns should aim at educating the society about the negative implications for the child development that result from violence they experience.[49]

An example of this kind of social campaign is "Words hurt forever" by the Nobody's Children Foundation. The campaign aimed at raising the parents' awareness of the verbal abuse causing long-term and negative consequences on the current as well as future functioning of the child.[50]

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[44] J. Izdebska, op. cit., p. 149.

[45] S.D. Herzberger, op. cit., p. 178.

[46] *Rodzina na starcie*, Poznań 2012.

[47] S.D. Herzberger, op. cit., p. 67.

[48] Ibidem, p. 183.

[49] A. Piasecka, *Kampanie społeczne – ku indywidualizmowi w kulturze popularnej*, [in:] *Poradnictwo w kulturze indywidualizmu*, ed. E. Zierkiewicz, V. Drabik-Podgórna, Wrocław 2010, p. 193.

[50] http://fdn.pl/slowa-rania-na-cale-zycie [access: 29.04.2014].

Currently, a very popular social campaign is an Irish campaign entitled "This girl is a stupid bitch" illustrating verbal abuse. During the few-minute clip created for the campaign, a pretty girl talks about herself in offensive words that are used by her parents.[51] Authors of the campaign try to show that a child who experiences verbal degradation transfers the negative opinions about themselves to their subconsciousness. In other words, the information about themselves is being changed from "you" to "you are stupid", which after some time changes into "I am stupid".[52]

Another strategy of taking action in the society is to limit the violence in the media, also in the news. Movies, TV series and commercials in which people offend, criticize and jeer at each other have become a day-to-day grind on TV.[53]

Obviously, actions concerning emotional violence should not be limited only to prevention, but they should also take the form of a second degree prevention, meaning a therapeutic intervention towards the perpetrators of the abuse. Thus, it is vital to construct programmes that will be aimed at changing behaviours or teaching techniques of relaxation. Sending the perpetrators to support groups where the members help each other to change their behaviour towards their children is yet another strategy to act against emotional violence.[54]

Abused children also need taking care of, the action should aim at correction of their social as well as emotional development and raising their competence in the scope of peer interaction. Abused children should also develop social sensitivity, which will help them to comprehend other people's emotions, see things from different perspective and react properly if no violence is used.[55]

Conclusion

To sum up, humiliation, mockery and manipulation has become a common way to communicate and to educate children in families nowadays. Unfortunately, applying mental violence to a child has a lot of psychological, cognitive and emotional consequences, even years later when the abuse has already reached

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[51] http://www.kampaniespoleczne.pl/kampanie,2479,ta_dziewczynka_jest_glupia_suka [access: 29.04.2014].

[52] S. Forward, op. cit., p. 87.

[53] S.D. Herzberger, op. cit., p. 184.

[54] Ibidem, p. 190–193.

[55] Ibidem, p. 197.

its end.[56] Repercussions following emotional violence are particularly visible as far as problems with functioning in a group of peers is concerned.[57] In relation to that, it seems vital to prevent this kind of violence from happening. It is also worth mentioning that mental violence is much more severe than physical violence, which is more frequently mentioned in literature as well as in research.[58]

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[56] I. Pospiszyl, op. cit., p. 168.

[57] M. Makara-Studzińska, op. cit., p. 76.

[58] J. Maćkowicz, op. cit., p. 60.

A child as a person: Child's quality of life in the world of (un)perfect parents

Hanna Krauze-Sikorska

Everyone is a unique, one-in-a-thousand individual and even though we change, become autonomous, can intentionally control our drives, develop or destroy them as we grow, we still remain the same person. Henri Bergson[1] called this process lasting. We experience the feeling of continuity, continuation, bond with what happened in particular when we have a retrospective look at the past. Intuitively feeling a bond with our childhood, since the beginning we grow up convinced that we can precisely answer the question of what it is or what it was. And even though childhood memories are influenced with later images, narrations and experiences, and for many of us it is a stage that irrevocably passed, bringing back those images unnoticeably forms our conceptions on who we are, reminds us of who we wanted to be, but also builds a conviction on what childhood should be for others.

It becomes more and more complicated to explain and be able to see the sense in this world that is described with the following terms: tyranny of the moment, supermarket of culture, society of risk, narcissistic society, McDonaldized society, society of experiences, liquid postmodernity. In the context of the changes that occur in modern times, Neil Postman[2] posed a thesis about the disappearance of childhood, and modern scientific research undermine the myth about happy childhood showing that it is childhood that is characterised with social inequalities in the access to culture, education, health care; childhood of lack of psychical and mental security; childhood where adults' expectations are not always in line with the needs, expectations and abilities of children who experience learned helplessness and loneliness more and more often.

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[1] H. Bergson, *Świadomość i życie*, [in:] I. Wojnar, *Bergson* (*Myśli i Ludzie*), Warszawa 1985.

[2] N. Postman, *Technopol. Triumf techniki nad kulturą*, Warszawa 1995.

In times that require reflectiveness, it may then be worth thinking about a message that points to the child as a **Person** included in the history and culture of the society, because this is what gives the child subjectivity and follow Janusz Korczak's questions: "What is a child as a spiritual organization that is different from ours? What are their features, needs, what possibilities are yet unnoticed? What is this half of humanity that lives together and next to us in a tragic split (…)" that we more and more "(…) burden with the duties of the man of tomorrow (…)".[3]

Childhood at the crossroads

Theoretical concepts of childhood differ in their approach to the child, factors that determine their growth and the meaning of social environment. They also indicate that each culture adopts different assumptions on the position and role of the child in the society, decides about ideals, patterns of behaviour and requirements.

Barbara Smolińska-Theiss[4] underlines that childhood is not only the first stage of the child's life, its particular phase of physical and psychosocial development, a period of intensive environmental influence, but also the fate characteristic of each man's biography. Each experience of the child should thus be perceived in the context of individual developmental paths. This gives the hope that none, even the most traumatic, experience has to mark the child for their entire life, because the growth path is not defined once and for all by particular experiences, irrespective of how early they occurred and how harmful they were.[5] Later experiences, characteristic turning points that the individual may follow and make changes, should be taken into account, too. This is what Janusz Korczak probably wanted to tell adults when in his "Pisma"[6] he pointed that the child is a separate, enclosed world, but one child means different worlds in different situations; not always the bitterness of defeat depresses us, sometimes quite to contrary it can trigger more energy to act.

However, if adults' support that should be given to every child undergoing early deprivation, trauma or simply adversities does not appear in the right moment, the path will not be redirected, because a specific transmission lane will come into play, and the effects of harmful experiences will disturb the process of psychophysical development of the child. The child will start to become a victim of their own past, because it is a "parchment tightly filled with tiny

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[3] J. Korczak, *Jak kochać dziecko*, Warszawa 1992, p. 61.

[4] B. Smolińska-Thaiss, *Dzieciństwo w małym mieście*, Warszawa 1993.

[5] H.R. Schaffer, *Psychologia dziecka*, Warszawa 2005, p. 371.

[6] J. Korczak, *Pisma wybrane*, Warszawa 1984, vol. 1.

hieroglyphs out of which you will be able to read only some, and some you can wipe out or just mark and fill with your own content."[7]

When discussing childhood constructs, we very often forget that the modern child functions in a world that does not resemble the images we remember from our childhood, because the features of the incessantly built neoliberal world include not only its discontinuity and transitory nature, but also the fact that new quality starts to be symbolized with "quickness", "instant change", "short terms" and "reinvention obsession"[8] that trigger the FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) syndrome. The world we created for children is full of fear of "something that they may miss out", and one of the many tasks assigned to children is also the necessity of getting to know more and more people, continuous following the lives of one's friends and strangers, being in the centre of attention.

Adults rarely understand the world of children's emotions, feelings and expectations. Focused on themselves, they do not notice that "being a child" is not a synonym of feeling safe, loved, happy, that it does not protect against pain, fear, isolation and rejection, that "sometimes life is bad when you are a child", because, quoting the character from Janusz Korczak's "Kiedy znów będę mały" [When I am small again] novel[9]:

„(…) all our issues are dealt with quickly and anyhow (…)" "(…) for adults, our lives, problems and failures are just an addition to their real problems. It seems there are two different lives: theirs – serious and estimable, and ours – like a joke, apparently. Smaller and weaker, so we are just like a toy. Thus, disrespect. Children are future people. So they will be, as if they were not yet around. But we do exist: we live, feel and suffer."

When one looks at children's worlds, one can conclude that with their hardly coherent and illogical structure they often resemble the collages of Manolo Valdes[10], who creates his works by applying small pieces of canvas over one another.

Collage elements look as if they came from different paintings, were a fragment of something that was destroyed or torn. Poorly glued together, with coming off corners, the pieces look as if they were to cease to exist in a moment. It is actually unclear whether Valdes's works are still unfinished or coming apart because of how old they are, whether someone is still working on them or they are just rejected and abandoned. What is more, and what seems particularly important, all these canvas created by putting together unlinked pieces always portray the same person; they are an unfinished portray that may be finished in the next collage.

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[7] Idem, *Jak kochać dziecko*, ed. cit., p. 10.

[8] Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna i tożsamość młodzieży*, Kraków 2013, p. 314.

[9] J. Korczak, *Kiedy znów będę mały*, [in:] idem, *Wybór pism*, Warszawa 1958, vol. II, p. 298.

[10] Z. Bauman, *Płynne życie*, Kraków 2007, p. 102–103.

Already a child, one can start becoming its "unfinished element", because adults often cease to understand that "(…) the man is this strange being which first has to investigate the thing it wants to be; which has to, like it or not, ask themselves a question about what the things in their environment are and what they are among those things (…). The man is a desire of being exactly what they are, of making real their own individual I".[11] As Kazimierz Obuchowski[12] notices, the man can become so subjective that they find fulfilment in themselves and for themselves, by creating new conditions and opportunities for satisfying their needs. The man learns to establish the sense of their existence, develops their personal I, but in order to be able to do that they have to cover and know new areas of their activity until they understand them. If they do not do it because they do not know how, do not want to or simply is afraid, they lose the ability for intentional actions, ceases to head towards transgression, degression appears, and their mental state begins to be controlled with fear, acquires stereotypes and environment's expectations.

However, adults more and more frequently "create" their child according to their own conceptions, patterns and preferences, and in pursuit of unfulfilled dreams and aspirations they ruthlessly use children's natural tendencies for play, game and being somebody else for a moment.

The current neoliberal adult that designs strategies for creating their own identity, and relate them to both their professional life and interpersonal relations with others, including their own partner and children. Above all, these relations are supposed to be unproblematic, such that do not imply the need to deepen them, and will more or less fit the more instrumental needs of the man. Erich Fromm underlines that we live in times of "calculating instrumentalism in relations with others".[13] Some adults do not cope with the situation when "children that do not fit their life concept"[14] are born, e.g. children with an intellectual impairment that violate their neoliberal, clear structure, and that may require care which may upset the completion of the action planned with reference to the following questions: "Am I adequate?", "Can I be successful?", "How to get rid of problems with oneself?". In this case, a child with developmental disorders becomes a burden, which may "be loved" but which for some adults may be too heavy to bear because this child will not be an investment "(…) that will pay off in the form of increased dividend in the fu-

[11] J. Ortega y Gasset, *Bunt mas i inne pisma socjologiczne*, Warszawa 1982.

[12] K. Obuchowski, *Galaktyka potrzeb. Psychologia dążeń ludzkich*, Poznań 2000, p. 14 and further pages.

[13] E. Fromm, [after:] I. Wilkinson, *W stronę socjologicznej konceptualizacji problemu lęku*, [in:] *Socjologia codzienności*, ed. P. Sztompka M. Bogunia-Borowska, Kraków 2008, p. 869.

[14] R. Radłowska, *Karton*, "Gazeta Wyborcza", 19.10.2011, http://m.wyborcza.pl/wyborcza/1,105226,10497814,Karton.html?as=2 [access: 19.03.2015], p. 15.

ture".[15] The protagonist of Renata Radłowska's "Karton" documentary leaves her child with Down's syndrome at a Small Children's Home and says "(…) Do I love this child? I assume I do. Biology is like this, you just simply love it. (…)" and she adds "(…) Please do not think I am cruel. I am not. I have free will, I can choose. I would be a bad mother, I know it. That is why I am handing over this child (…)".[16]

Maria Flis, professor at the Jagiellonian University and a sociologist, points out that more and more often we deal with a generation of "difficult parents" because "(…) we didn't teach responsibility to those young people who are in their thirties today and took part in a rat race. So, they come to children's homes and are not ashamed to say that they are handing over their child because it simply does not fit (…)", does not match the image of an ideal family, and the parents (...) were not expecting such an offspring (…)".[17]

However, a dividend is, according to her mother, the 10-year-old Thylane Lena–Rose Blondeau that appears on the covers of the "Vogue". The positions of the little model presented during a photo session that emphasize her sexuality shocked the world; yet her mother cut it short by saying that "there is nothing to quarrel about: she has been a model since the age of 5, **she likes it** (…)". And even though children on the covers of fashion magazines are no longer anything special, Thylane's photos caused a stir even in the fashion circles. Carol White, a co-founder and director of Premier Model Management analysed this and many other similar situations, and says: "This is terrible. I cannot understand the mothers of these girls; how can you allow your kid to do something like that". And she continues "**Children have to be children**"[18], because otherwise after two years they become yesterday news that nobody is interested in (…)".[19]

One can only hope that Thylane's life path develops differently than Mary-Kate Olsen's, who tackled anorexia in public, or Drew Barrymore, who has been an actress since early childhood, and dealt with addictions till she was 30.

Such neoliberal world where the title of Noam Chomsky's monograph "Profit Over People"[20] starts to be reality does not make it easier for the child to "be a child", but also to "become an adult", because although becoming an adult happens in various ways, more and more often the path is winding and does not lead to freedom, independence and self-reliance as the family home frequently ceases to be the place where one learns to love in a way that is un-

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[15] Ch.J. Hurn, *The Limits and Possibilities of Schooling, An Introduction to the sociology of Education*, Boston 1985, p. 36.

[16] R. Radłowska, op. cit.

[17] Ibidem.

[18] Emphasized by the author.

[19] *Nie bawi się lalkami jest modelką*, "Magazyn Rodzinny" ("Polska Głos Wielkopolski"), 20.08.2011, no. 193(20524).

[20] N. Chomsky, *Zysk ponad ludzi. Neoliberalizm a ład globalny*, Wrocław 2000.

distorted by false interpretations of reality. Children come out battered in such situations, because their protest against adults and the fact that it is impossible to reach an agreement with them trigger the strategies of giving in to the world of "perfect" adults, "cleverer and more mature than the child", or escaping the world that is so difficult to understand and accept the rules that govern it.

They try to free themselves in various ways, sometimes like Hikikomori[21], children closed in rooms filled with technological devices, losing interest in the outside world, withdrawn and passive, unable to find their way in the reality. Competitiveness, requirements and social expectations, as well as the lack of ability to deal with stress often lead them to take the decision on self-reclusion from social life, although many of them still try to build their own I from the pieces that seem to come from separate, totally unrelated biographies. Still, it is not always possible to match the knowledge they have included in the roles they play and gain the integration of one's past with presence and the concept of future, because what comes into play is:

- The feeling of one's internal identicalness and continuity,
- Noticing this identicalness by people around,
- Confirmation of the self-perception of an individual in their interpersonal experiences.[22]

In a situation where the social surrounding does not provide clear identification patterns, where there is no external stability, roles get mixed up. The inability of solving an identity crisis leads to the emergence of a synthetic identity (an individual joins a social group and adopts ready patterns shaped by this group) or a negative identity. The latter is visible in unfavourable educational conditions – opposition occurs towards the socially assigned roles which leads to the feeling of ostracism and alienation in the form of internal disorganization and emptiness.[23]

„We ignore the child because it has many hours of life ahead"[24]

The factors that determine life in a neoliberal reality do not foster creative building of such a world by the child, and in this way both autonomy and men-

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[21] Hikikomori appeared in Japan, one of the most affluent societies in the world; this phenomenon show problems that are caused by the lack of agreement between the generation that led Japan to become an economic superpower, and their children who are unable to find their place in this reality. See: M. Bruczkowski, *Bezsenność w Tokio*, Warszawa 2004.

[22] H. Krauze-Sikorska, *Specyfika relacji interpersonalnych w młodzieżowej "społeczności" Digital Natives*, "Studia Edukacyjne", 2010, no. 14, p. 137.

[23] I. Obuchowska, *Drogi dorastania*, Warszawa 1996, p. 109.

[24] J. Korczak, *Prawo dziecka do szacunku*, [after:] P. Wołoszyn, *Korczak*, Warszawa 1978, p. 153.

tal security are achieved, because the changes occurring in cultural patterns and social norms trigger hyperindividualism, materialism, worship of success and "powerlessness" simultaneously. This feeling "causes respect for strength; everyone, not just adults, but everyone older and stronger, can brutally express their dissatisfaction, support their requests with strength (…) can hurt others with impunity. With our own example we teach to treat with contempt what is weaker. Bad school, gloomy prophecy."[25]

More and more often, empirical research points out that children experience violence not only from adults, but also from their peers at school.[26] The "Przemoc w Szkole 2011" [Violence at School 2011][27] report show that tormented children are most numerous at primary schools (12%) and junior secondary schools (10%). 41% of children experienced detrimental lies and rejection by their peer group. The existence of a child nowadays can thus be deprived of positive feelings and emotions, as it becomes more and more "transparent".

(…) he was a very quiet boy. Such a good child. Maybe because of that he couldn't defend himself, snap back, stand up to them. He preferred to run away from them, by running away from school. (…) After an unpleasant chat with his parents, he was supposed to return to his room and think about what they told him. He chose to run away once more (…).[28] This time it was for good.

Children whose childhood we describe as happy and joyful more and more frequently experience a feeling of losing the sense of existence and losing their own world, because they feel that nobody looks after them, that they do not have anyone they could share values such as love, understanding and trust with.[29] Internal disruption and alienation appears and their behaviour heads towards depersonalisation; they hide their problems by putting on masks that make it impossible to identify their real I, they seek their identity creating the image of themselves that chops and changes, they create new approaches in various everyday situations and meetings with adults and their peers. They become more and more embroiled in a net of stable frameworks of particular attitudes and ways of perceiving themselves, their lives and the world.

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[25] Ibidem, p. 150.

[26] H. Krauze-Sikorska, *Dzieci i młodzież z utrudnieniami w uczeniu się w przestrzeni edukacyjnej i społecznej szkoły powszechnej. Systemowe strategie pomocy – nowe wyzwania, nowe perspektywy*, unpublished.

[27] www.szkolabezprzemocy.pl [access: 25.03.2014]

[28] *Wolał samobójstwo niż szykany kolegów*, www.gloswielkopolski.pl, 18.02.2012, no. 43 (20676) [access: 19.03.2015].

[29] See: e.g. *Loneliness. A Sourcebook of Current Theory. Research and Therapy*, ed. L.A. Peplau, D. Perlman, New York 1982.

And although loneliness and solitude are a type of reality assigned to a human individual, a defined state that accompanies the man in every period of their life irrespective of their age, solitude is rather a matter of choice, a state that may not be fully desired but it is accepted and can generate a creative approach towards reality. Loneliness is a necessity, there is hardly any space for choice and decision when it comes to being a lonely person, or at least it is heavily limited. The situation where we come across loneliness is linked to real isolation, Lack of social contacts or staying away. The feeling of loneliness is equal to the lack of the feeling of security, trust, love, belonging, understanding, common goals and the feeling of common life. It is also characterised with an "escapist" tendency, becoming withdrawn, that is accompanied with a feeling of pain, sadness, bitterness, internal emptiness, despair, fear. Loneliness often goes together with depression, but it should not be confused or regarded as identical.[30]

Depression becomes an experience among children and youngsters[31], can take on various forms, and mood disorders that accompany this state, even though they are unpleasant, characterized with sadness, discouragement, pessimism and lack of faith in one's own capabilities, disappear when they achieve a certain extent, sometimes fulfilling an adaptive function.[32] In this case it is possible to have a feeling that such a state is in a sense necessary, because after a period of incapacitation, one starts to act even more energetically, the child deals with what tormented it more easily, new perspectives open up. However, there are types of depressive disorders that do not lead to adaptation but to indifference, regression, anhedonia, feeling of helplessness and hopelessness, and even self-destruction. Effects can include suicidal attempts and suicides committed by children that are younger and younger. The data quoted by David R. DeMaso from Children's Hospital Boston indicate that suicides have become fourth most frequent cause of death of children aged 10 to 14; there are also data about suicidal attempts by children younger than 7.[33] Similar results can be gathered in Poland as well.

Before she jumped from the 10th floor, Magda planned her funeral with every detail.

„(...) On a piece of paper she drew what her grave would look like. And her funeral. She wanted everyone to come with one rose. And what she would wear in the coffin. She always wore black. She would now, too. She wanted the little earthenware elephant to be laid next to her (...) And the beads. She would be able to

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[30] K. Kmiecik-Baran, *Osamotnienie a zdrowie psychiczne*, Gdańsk 1991, p. 122–127.

[31] Confer: P.B. Sorenson, C.M. Rutter, C.P. Aneshensel, *Depression in the community: an investigation into age of onset*, "Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology", 1991, no. 59, p. 541–546; P.L. Speier, D.L. Sherak, P. Hirsch, D.P. Cantwell, *Depression in children and adolescents*, [in:] *Handbook of depression*, ed. E.E. Beckham, W.R. Leber, New York 1995.

[32] J. Bowlby, *Attachment and loss, III: loss, sadness, and depression*, New York 1980.

[33] www.childrenshospital.org/health-topics/conditions/suicide-and-teens [access: 15.04.2014]

wear them on the other side, because death is just a disappearance, and the disappearance is only death, nothing happens finally and definitively (…)".[34]

The statements and behaviour of children who are thinking about a suicidal attempt should be treated very seriously, even if it was only a risk of taking such a step, because every attempt is a child's call for help.

„(…) She was a very pretty girl, she had long light brown hair and full lips. She caused no trouble, always reserved, she never told her parents about what happened at school. When she hanged herself at her home, she was so quiet that her little sister who was playing next door did not hear anything. After the suicide, her parents discovered the gloomy world of her daughter step by step. They learnt that she was fought against at her new junior secondary school. People called her names, she was prodded, even beaten. Two months later Piotrek from the same school hanged himself. He wasn't liked. Always stooping. Maybe it is a coincidence, and maybe it is what psychiatrists call imitative suicide (…)".[35]

The lack of support from adults is extremely visible in these situations, as well as a huge helplessness of children that results from the conviction that they are unable to take control over events. And it does not matter if the death was planned or if it was a dramatic act of despair, of desperation that appeared suddenly, or a need to attract attention. It is more important that they were left with their problems alone, because

„A child draws our attention when it disturbs us and ruffles; these are the moments that we notice and remember. We do not see them when they are quiet, serious and focused. We ignore the saint moments of them talking to themselves, the world, God. When a child is forced to hide their yearnings and impulses for fear of being sneered at and gathering rough comments, it hides their willingness to achieve an agreement (…)".[36]

Vita brevis, although their educators' task was to "(…) let them live, achieve the right to be a child."[37]

Understanding childhood

Indicators of modernity are not only changeability, individualisation or pluralism, but also a constant race with the aim to achieve success. In the "schizo-

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[34] B. Pietkiewicz, *Dzieci mówią sobie dość*, "Polityka", 30.01.1999, no. 5 (2178), p. 27–28.

[35] *Dzieci których nie ma*, http://polska.newsweek.pl/dzieci-ktorych-nie-ma,15429,1,1.html [access: 19.03.2015].

[36] J. Korczak, *Wybór pism*, ed. cit., vol. III, p. 395–423.

[37] Idem, *Prawo dziecka, by było, czym jest*, [in:] P. Wołoszyn, *Korczak*, ed. cit., p. 173.

phrenic culture of consumption"[38], a category of "a supermodern child"[39] appears; a child affected with the tyranny of optimism, pretending that everything will be okay, because it is unseemly to be defeated; a child that is not characterised with mobility that can set the direction for creative adaptation and forming of a personal sense of life, and also the development of a child's personality, but mobility equivalent to the ability of constant adaptation to various forms of institutionalised life. When analysing some children's biographies, one can notice that they have been dominated by "features of mind of a mass culture man", mentioned by Ryszard Kapuściński in one of the fragments of "Lapidarium" who pointed to the lack of curiosity about the world, indifference, passivity, unimaginative thinking, blind faith in stereotypes and reluctance to revise or reject them, as well as a growing distrust towards the world and other people.[40] More and more frequently, we head with the child into the future in such a way that unfortunately the processes of early socialisation do not guarantee creating a stable structure of the I, learning to play subsequent roles, dealing with one's emotions and the emotions of others, although, according to Maria Braun-Gałkowska, the aim of the relation between an adult and a child should always be:

„*to head in the same direction (...)"* and *"(...) to head together towards a common objective. When the Big and the Small set off on a journey like this, the Big show the direction, helps the Small not to get lost, teaches what shoes to take for the trip, sometimes encourages, sometimes supports, and sometimes admires not only the views, but also the fresh look of the Small. (...) When one is small, it is good to be able to follow the Big that one can always count on. But it is also good for the Big, because they are not alone and they feel needed. They walk together, talk, (...) help each other, their friendship grows. In their friendship they are equal, but because the Big is more experienced, he bears more responsibility. Thus, they shouldn't take the Small with them if they don't know where they are going".*[41]

With a relation understood as above, they learn each other and they can develop. The adult is able to build "a friendly support circle" that allows the child to experience the feeling of security, competence and authorship. They can set high requirements for the child, because at the same time, as the situation requires, they will be able control their abilities and burdens, providing them with adequate support. They become open to the child's needs, and by provid-

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[38] Z. Melosik, *Kryzys męskości w kulturze współczesnej*, Poznań 2002, p. 16.

[39] U. Beck, *Skizzen zu einer biographischen gesellschaftanalyse*, Frankfurt am Main 1997.

[40] R. Kapuściński, *Lapidarium*, Warszawa 1990, p. 107.

[41] M. Braun-Gałkowska, *Psychologia domowa*, Lublin 2008, p. 213.

ing them with suitable experiences at the right moment they prevent what is rightly described by Jan Maria Sztaudynger: "Experience is a gift from heavens that you have when you no longer need it". In this way they prepare the child for satisfying their personal needs on their own, and for obeying social norms and rules, they create a source that powers not only the knowledge, cognitive skills and ways of thinking, but also the skills that make it possible to deal with oneself and build relations with others effectively.

When watching with respect as a child becomes a new man, we can and we should help them in this. A form of help is to shape the ability of playing social roles, because presenting one's own view seems to be an indispensable ability. For this, it is necessary to be aware of one's own attitude, to be able to verbalise it and – most importantly – to have no fear or anxiety related to its self-representation. Satisfying the needs of the child, as well as a wise permission to experience, explore the world and make one's own choices lets the child not only learn to argument and convince others of one's own right, but also respect the states and needs of other people. A chance is created to learn what limitations are linked to freedom; it always ends where the freedom of another man begins. Such sort of interaction allows the child to notice that there are areas that are their strengths, but a constructive relation with an adult also means gaining experience in coping with negative emotions related to postponing the satisfaction of one's needs and learning how to tackle defeat. By creating "a friendly support circle" we equip the child with bigger emotional resistance, and thus with the ability to deal with stressors much better.

By watching the world around together with the child, the adult is also provided with an opportunity to learn something about themselves, because the way children behave often reflects what adults do. In this distorted, or even grotesque picture "(…) one can not only recognise themselves [a caricature is good only when it resembles the original], but also the distortion itself, because it show some features of the object in an exaggerated way, can be useful and lead to a better understanding of oneself (…)".[42]

For many adults, choosing the common path with the child is a difficult and responsible task that requires an attitude of love and acceptance towards the child, but also the will to really get to know it. Even though as early as in 1904 Ellen Key wrote that "the 20th century will be a century of children" and "(…) it will be doubly so, first because parents will finally penetrate the child's soul, and second because this soul will share its purity and simplicity with adults (…)"[43], we still often do not know children and not always want to get to know them. The distance between adults and children is gaining dangerous dynamics.

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[42] L. Kołakowski, *Mini wykłady o maxi sprawach*, Kraków 2003, p. 114.

[43] E. Key, *Stulecie dziecka*, Warszawa 2005.

It seems that there is a lack of dialogue where the child and the adult could express and discover themselves, and only then would it be possible for the child to develop as a unique Person both individually and socially. Even though, as Hans Saner points out, the adult and the child can remain in diversified relations[44], the child should always be considered as an individual that is separate from the adult, characterised with their own self-sufficiency, with their own life and needs.

Conclusion

Almost every aspect of a reality determined by technological and information progress provides children with chances for growth and getting to know the world. However, it is only possible when we assume that the bigger is not more important than the small, and small people are not necessarily "small joys, needs and sorrows".[45]

However, the current discourse on children and their relations with the world of adults indicates that even though the worlds of children and adults do not have to overlap, a progressive growth of children as a Person has to be linked with the processes of socialization and personalization. The first process, according to Hartmut M. Griese, is linked to the notion of self-socialisation that consists of three phases: (1) children socialise themselves by assigning their own meanings to things and themselves (2) children follow their own logics of acting (3) children themselves formulate the aims of their own actions[46], where the second option allows the child to search for their individuality, create themselves step by step "(…) according to their own project (…)".[47] Yet, in order for it to be possible, it is necessary to aspire at changes in the world of adults, who shape the child's life and make the child a submissive elements in the game in the world of fashion, relationships, circumstances and markets[48], and their specific protectionism sometimes leads them to attempts at making the child and

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[44] (1) Of submission, where the child means "not yet adult" or "more than adult"; (2) of equality, where the child is the same person as the adult; (3) relative independence/autonomy, where the child is like the adult, the child is an independent subject, however the scope of this independence is of different dimension and scope – see: B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika dziecka. Studium pajdocentryzmu*, Gdańsk 2007, p. 36.

[45] J. Korczak, *Wybór pism*, ed. cit., vol. II, p. 395.

[46] H.M. Griese, *Nowy obraz dziecka w pedagogice – koncepcje "autosocjalizacji"*, [in:] *Nowe konteksty (dla) edukacji alternatywnej XXI wieku*, ed. B. Śliwerski, Kraków 2001.

[47] J. Kozielecki, *Koncepcja transgresyjna człowieka*, Warszawa 1987, p. 51.

[48] H. Sunker, *Dzieciństwo – między indywidualizacją a instytucjonalizacją*, [in:] *Pedagogika społeczna jako dyscyplina akademicka. Stan i perspektywy*, ed. E. Marynowicz-Hetka, J. Piekarski, E. Cyrańska, Łódź 1998.

childhood a tool for politics and reinforcing the business of those in power.[49] It may thus be worth ceasing to settle accounts with the world by pointing to "others" as those responsible for the life among substitutes of interpersonal bonds, lack of psychological security or competitiveness that eliminates those who are unable to face it, and start settling accounts with oneself. Let us have the understanding of child's messages as a basis and let us remember that it does not only mean giving them the right to "speak out" in the social space, but above all breaking with the "culture of silence".[50]

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[49] B. Smolińska-Theiss, *Trzy nurty badań nad dziecińśtwem*, "Problemy Opiekuńczo-Wychowawcze", 1995, no. 10.

[50] P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York – London 1993, p. 32.

Children having children. A phenomenon of a premature parenthood – conditions and family implications

Agnieszka Skowrońska-Pućka

Premature parenthood refers to a situation when a woman gives birth to a child or when a boy becomes a father prior to coming of age and thus they have problems with reaching parental maturity. In the discussed case, the process of acceptance is hindered significantly by the state of life dependency and consequently makes the fulfilment of a new, unknown role of a parent much harder. Other consequences include the feeling of threat, anxiety, helplessness and ambivalent attitude to a newborn baby and taking care of it.[1]

Everyone plays a number of various roles during their lives. We are children of our parents, parents for our children, spouses, employees etc. It should be emphasized that for each role there are both upper and lower age limits. Moreover, if a person has certain features, i.e. those necessary to fulfil a particular role, he or she acquires a certain social status as well. As far as the premature parenthood is concerned, parents' young age has a negative influence on the level of competence essential to fulfil the role of parents, at the same time it diminishes the significance of young parents. Teenage parents are frequently being condemned and the value of their parenthood loses the "power of unquestionable value".[2]

Furthermore, if the roles are to work in an undisturbed and optimal way, each individual should work in accordance with their needs and fulfil the expectations of others simultaneously.[3] There is no doubt that adolescents should fulfil other needs, characteristic for their stage of development, instead of being parents. Moreover, the parental duty coming this early and suddenly for teen-

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[1] A. Maciarz, *Macierzyństwo w kontekście zmian społecznych*, Warszawa 2004, p. 32.

[2] E. Włodarczyk, *Nastoletnie macierzyństwo jako problem indywidualny i społeczny*, Bydgoszcz 2009, p. 455.

[3] K.J. Tillman, *Teorie socjalizacji. Społeczność, instytucja, upodmiotowienie*, Warszawa 1996, p. 124.

agers is definitely contrary to the social expectations addressed to the people their age. Apart from all of the consequences of the given situation, the social aspect really makes parenting much harder.

Parenting is rarely associated with teenagers; however, the modern family is currently going through dynamic changes, which is why a discussion on parental roles, that more and more frequently concern young and unprepared people, is necessary. According to Alicja Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska, teenage parenting is not a modern phenomenon; teenagers have always become pregnant. It is more the circumstances accompanied by the maternity, or parenthood broadly speaking.[4]

Like father like son? The influence of the family on the future performance of the roles of parents and creating one's own family

It is difficult to indicate unambiguously what the factors determining the appearance of a premature parenting duty are. Premature parenthood has been repeatedly perceived as the reason as well as the result of poverty and social alienation. Most frequently, premature parenthood is the result of the three factors appearing at the same time:

- Low expectations and ambitions of young girls and boys descending from underprivileged societies,
- Lack of knowledge about birth control,
- Uncontrolled influence of mass-media.

Furthermore, premature parenting is also caused by:

- Strengthening of moral changes, rejecting the traditional model of behaviour, based on religious standards,
- Dynamic changes of the family life (both in the functioning and the structure of a modern family),
- Liberalization and reduction of social control, which leads to lowering the age of sexual initiation,
- Prevailing low level of sexual education (both at schools and in families).[5]

Taking up the role of a mother or father is determined by gender; however, the method of serving as parents depends directly on socio-cultural conditions.

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[4] A. Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska, *Doświadczenia małoletnich rodziców*. *Aspekty socjopedagogiczne*, Gdańsk 2010, p. 58.

[5] N. Pęcherzewska-Kaczmarek, *Problem ciała i cielesności w edukacji szkolnej*, [in:] *Społeczeństwo, opieka, wychowanie*, ed. J. Żebrowski, Gdańsk 2004, p. 300–304.

It is worth paying attention to families started by young parents. There is no doubt that the family has a crucial influence on shaping the person's personality. Parents' attitude and the way they do their duties is of great importance, as it influences the behaviour of children descending from these families. The definition of a term 'role' is also confirmed by it. In literature, the term 'role' is described very vaguely and has a lot of meanings. The majority of definitions have one thing in common, i.e. the fact that a lot of authors connect the term with the process of socialization. The socialization influence that has impact on young people concerns different psychic and behavioural qualities, however one of the major elements of the socialization process is the preparation to play different roles in life. This concerns professional, social, civil, gender and most importantly, family roles.[6]

The scrutiny[7] reveals that teenage parents frequently descend from demoralized, marginalized and dysfunctional families, which are characterized by the incorrectness of functioning that makes basic functions harder or impossible. Failure of family functions may be connected with many factors, such as:

- Difficult socio-economic conditions (family living in poverty, unemployed, sick, disabled parents, families of prisoners),
- Addictions (alcohol and drug abuse),
- Disturbed family structure (single parents, premature parents, families with many children or reconstructed families),
- Low parenting competence (deficiencies in understanding the parents' role, troubles with analyzing everyday parenting experiences, low reflectivity towards one's own actions).[8]

Cultural negligence, which is characteristic for poorly educated people – the research done by Mariola Bidzian confirms this thesis, as it follows that underage mothers usually descend from poorly educated families. Vocational education prevails both for mothers and fathers. Other authors' research also support this stance.[9] "Parents that are badly off as far as money is concerned cannot provide personal development and creative way of spending time for their

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[6] A. Dudak, *Samotne ojcostwo*, Kraków 2006, p. 16.

[7] T. Rymarz, *Sytuacja emocjonalno-społeczna nieletnich matek wychowujących nieślubne dziecko*, [in:] *Zagadnienia marginalizacji i patologizacji życia społecznego*, ed. F. Kozaczuk, Rzeszów 2005; T. Kucharski, M. Palkij, *Charakterystyka porównawcza wybranych cech osobowości młodocianych matek i uczennic liceum ogólnokształcącego*, [in:] J.A. Malinowski and others, *Środowisko – młodzież – zdrowie: pedagogiczne wymiary zagrożeń i rozwoju młodzieży*, Toruń 2007; G. Mikołajczyk-Lerman, *Małoletnie rodzicielstwo jako problem psychospołeczny*, "Polityka Społeczna", 2007, no. 8, p. 54–58.

[8] M. Kowalska-Kantyka, S. Kantyka, *Możliwości wsparcia rodzin i osób dysfunkcyjnych przez ośrodki pomocy społecznej*, Warszawa 2011, p. 83.

[9] M. Kościelska, *Trudne macierzyństwo*, Warszawa 1998.

growing children. Whereas sexual activity is an easy way of providing the stimulus, breaking the monotony and boredom; it is a substitute of having a hobby or interests. (…) It is a vicious circle: low social status lowers the chance of personal development, and this in turns leads to the demise of higher aspirations, bitterness and frustration, which is reflected in deviated behaviour, sexual freedom that is connected with a frequent change of sexual partners, which is conducive to premature parenting".[10]

Another characteristic feature of families descending from teenage parents is their low socio-economic position, i.e. a difficult material situation. The situation is so disturbing, because an unexpected pregnancy for a teenager causes an additional deterioration of their economic situation. It is also a favourable condition to suspend education or quit school to raise a baby. Graduating from vocational school instead of a university leads to a lack of good profession and job that could help to provide for a young mother and her child.

Teenage parents frequently descend from broken families of incomplete structure.[11] There is no doubt that it influences the quality of being a spouse or a parent later in life, which was verified empirically and reveals indisputably that the presence of both parents in the process of child's upbringing is essential for their proper development and functioning in adult life.

For the families of teenage or pregnant mothers, the lack of formal legalization of their relationship and an inappropriate fertility model are characteristic features. The risk of premature sexual activity and its consequences grows if the mother and sister also were premature mothers.[12]

It is worth mentioning that other problems are also characteristic for the families of premature parents, the problems which may lead to premature sexual initiation and consequently may result in premature parenting. One of the most frequent problems are:

– Using violence, both physical and emotional (towards children),
– Rejection by the mother.

Other problems occurring in the characterized families are for example:

– Emotional deprivation,
– Inconsistent breeding,
– Excessive or loosened control,
– Alcohol abuse,
– Drug abuse,

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[10] G. Mikołajczyk-Lerman, op. cit., p. 55.

[11] A. Komorowska, *Ginekologia wieku rozwojowego*, Warszawa 1991; D. Rodacka-Wróbel, *Nieletnia matka – diagnoza zjawiska*, "Wychowanie Fizyczne", 1996, no. 4, p. 138–144.

[12] Z. Izdebski, T. Niemiec, K. Wąż, *(Zbyt) młodzi rodzice*, Gdańsk 2011, p. 133; A. Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska, op. cit., p. 63–68; M. Bidzian, *Nastoletnie matki. Psychologiczne aspekty ciąży, porodu i połogu*, Kraków 2007.

– Disorder of emotional relations in the family, lack of family bond and open communication.

Maria Łukaszek completes the list with the following features:
– Distinct disorder of internal interactions,
– Single parenthood,
– Biological or social orphanhood,
– Parents' negative attitude,
– Sexual abuse towards children,
– Demoralization of family members (imprisonment).[13]

There is no denying the fact that growing up in families characterized by the mentioned features may influence the quality and manner of fulfilling the parent's duties in the future. It can also make introduction to a proper parenthood as well as acquiring caring and educational abilities very hard. Furthermore, "the results of the mentioned factors are above all: disordered identification of one's own gender, the ignorance of the way the gender roles work, lack of communication concerning one's feelings, its understanding and receiving (…)".[14] It is conducive to evading responsibility for sexual activity, which leads to premature pregnancy and makes the new role harder.

Young parents frequently grow up in families deprived of love, intimacy, support and understanding. This situation is especially undesirable, as parents are paragons for their children. Wąż emphasizes the role of parents by saying that "only parents may naturally provide the patterns of behaviour to their growing children by expressing their feelings toward the spouse, building and sustaining close, emotional bonds or overcoming the conflicts with close people".[15] Such families are not capable of creating a comfortable atmosphere at home or creating a norm of family behaviour. It is crucial as far as young parenthood is concerned, as it may determine the way young people function as parents. For it is in the childhood that one creates patterns of behaviours: as a wife, mother, husband, father or patterns of relationships: parents-children, children-parents. The patterns of two-way relations in the family are, according to Krystyna Wielińska, the point of reference for one's own behaviour later in life as a parent. These patterns are either copied, modified or declined. As far as social orphanage and lack of proper interaction with a child are concerned, there is no point of reference for one's own behaviour towards one's children. Adolescents that start their own families do not have these patterns, they have to create the parental attitude toward their own children. It is highly probable

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[13] M. Łukaszek, *Wczesne formy aktywności seksualnej młodzieży nieprzystosowanej społecznie*, [in:] *Zagadnienia marginalizacji i patologizacji życia społecznego*, ed. cit., p. 208.

[14] Ibidem, p. 208–209.

[15] Z. Izdebski, T. Niemiec, K. Wąż, op. cit., p. 56.

that young people will have problems with performing social roles in families. The problems may result from both lacking the correct patterns of behaviour acquired at home (i.e. no model behaviour to follow) and personal qualities that are developed incorrectly at home. Both performing the roles of husband/wife and father/mother cause trouble. The roles of fathers and mothers may be frequently associated with the wrong parental attitude. "The influence of childhood experiences is crucial for the shaping of the correct, socially accepted personal qualities as well as for the creating of a model of a perfect behaviour of one's own children based on one's own family's patterns. Lack of the family or its dysfunction makes acquiring the correct patterns impossible and may manifest itself as a difficulty in performing the social roles of parents in adult life".[16]

Furthermore, such a difficult family situation makes young parents emotionally and socially immature, uneducated; they have no self-respect, no plans for the future. Paradoxically, it helps to decide to start sexual activity with all of the consequences (that unfortunately are not on the minds of young people) and makes introduction to responsible parenthood harder.[17]

The consequences of premature parenthood – difficulties in performing the roles of parents

The consequences resulting from premature parenthood determine the character and the shape of relationships young parents create, which is not insignificant for the way of performing the roles of parents.

Youth and immaturity cause young people to start having sex and not treating their partners as a potential candidate for a father or mother of their child. Teenage relationships tend to be fleeting. The research conducted by Izdebski, Niemiec and Wąż corroborates the thesis. The researchers noticed that couples taking part in the experiment usually had problems with maintaining the relationships and their lives were complicated. Almost half of the examined girls lost contact with the fathers of their children a year after they gave birth and one out of three marriages ended up with a divorce.[18]

Numerous researches also indicate that young parents frequently cannot count on their young partners. They are often lacking the support from their families and are doomed to be single parents. As a result, a family of an incomplete structure is created. The family, in which either the mother or the father

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[16] K. Wielińska, *Funkcjonowanie osób wychowywanych w domach dziecka w rolach rodzicielskich*, Poznań 1985, p. 231.

[17] T. Rymarz, op. cit., p. 185–190.

[18] Z. Izdebski, T. Niemiec, K. Wąż, op. cit., p. 209–210.

raises children alone is called an incomplete or monoparental family.[19] This family type is characteristic for young parents. Trawińska distinguishes various categories of incomplete families. The author emphasizes that this type of families is usually created by teenage mothers and families created by teenage mothers that are of different age and legal situation.

According to the author, an incomplete family is characterized by:

- The deficiency of permanent partner and generation structure (the absence of one gender in the process of socialization of the child),
- A forced responsibility, legal and moral obligation to support the younger generation (although the obligation to pay alimony is not always executed);
- Loneliness in making life-changing decisions, concerning both the parent (oneself) and the child. It often results in helplessness (organizational and financial) and solitude. The feeling of loneliness seems to be a significant feature for the individual as well as for the process of socialization.[20]

Paradoxically, all of the above features influence the common lack of acceptance and support (emotional, social and often also institutional) that young parents experience particularly severely.[21] They frequently become ostracized and stigmatized. A label given once may change a young person's life forever, activating the phenomenon of "a self-predicting prediction", which causes the first wrong conclusion to influence the image of oneself. In this case it is the image of young and insecure parents, who start to perceive themselves as stigmatized, and thus they fulfil the false prediction about themselves.[22] Due to all of these issues, adolescent parenthood may be called difficult parenting. The phenomenon of stigmatization concerns not only young parents but also their children, who frequently fall victims to "an unfriendly public opinion". They also come across various kinds of violence (verbal, physical and mental) since they are young.

The analysis of young parent's families reveals that the structure of the family as well as the quality of the functions they perform are similar to the original families of young parents. Repeating the life choices of parents and establishing an unfavourable socio-economic situation is characteristic of young people. One cannot disregard the scientific report concerning the long-term effects of having children during the period of growing up on the adult mothers and their

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[19] F. Adamski, *Rodzina. Wymiar społeczno-kulturowy*, Kraków 2002; Z. Tyszka, *Rodzina współczesna – jej geneza i kierunki przemian*, Warszawa 2005; K. Slany, *Alternatywne formy życia małżeńsko-rodzinnego w ponowoczesnym świecie*, Kraków 2008.

[20] A. Dudak, op. cit., p. 53–54.

[21] L. Niebrzydowski, *Poziom samoakceptacji u nieletnich matek samotnie wychowujących nieślubne dzieci*, "Problemy Rodziny", 2001, no. 3, p. 44–47; A. Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska, op. cit., p. 108–115.

[22] R. Meighan, *Socjologia edukacji*, Toruń 1997, p. 328–333.

child's childhood. The majority of the effects are negative and they determine the later lives, even though it is hard to determine which of the effects are the result of premature parenthood and which are the result of poverty. "Most of the researches reveal that having children while growing up is connected with having many children, a small age difference between them, a shortened period of mother's education, worse professional career, low income and high risk of a divorce. Such interrelations are perceived in Afro-American, Latin-American and Anglo-Saxon teenagers, thus the negative effects concern everyone, regardless of their ethnicity". [23] The results, as I indicated above, are also confirmed by the researchers occupied by the phenomenon of premature parenting in Poland.[24]

Conclusion

The most important thing for adolescents is to overcome the crisis of identity. There is no doubt that this task is definitely much harder for a young mother, who has repeatedly experienced maturation crisis, searching for acceptance and making decisions concerning education or professional career apart from being forced to perform a new role – as a mother.

Identity crisis may be discussed as the cause of premature sexual initiation (experimenting, adopting a negative identity) and an unexpected pregnancy. The crisis may also be a result of premature maternity duties, as the new role and its duties do not allow to "experiment", which is characteristic of the period of social moratorium, thus making the answer to a vital question "who am I?" very hard. The situation is additionally complicated by the psychological dislocation phenomenon, which consists in the girl's transferring from a situation and role she already knows and which are connected with her age and current development tasks (the role of a student and a children in a family) to a situation she hardly knows, and which is characteristic for later developmental stages (the role of a mother and an employee).[25]

A positive resolving of the identity crisis becomes harder and harder, as the ability to benefit from the young age was taken away from young parents. Teenagers do not have time for the activities typical for their age, which is caused by the overload of parents' duties. A strong, satisfying and long-lasting identity is hard to attain and causes the dispersion of roles or a feeling of diso-

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[23] H. Bee, *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, Warszawa 1998, p. 338.

[24] Z. Izdebski, T. Niemiec, K. Wąż, op. cit., p. 133; T. Rymarz, op. cit., p. 184; A. Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska, op. cit.

[25] T. Rymarz, op. cit., p. 185.

rientation as far as one's own identity is concerned. Teenagers are forced to play the roles of parents for real and they do not have a chance to try any other roles, which might help them to shape some fixed attitude or values. Grażyna Mikołajczyk-Lerman points out rightly that "snatching of this period of life of the youth is an irreparable loss in finding experience".[26]

In the face of this problem, there is no denying the fact that a group of young parents should be lavished with help – starting from preventive actions and immediate help, ending with system solutions. As I have tried to prove, by rough characteristics of families descending from premature parents, the most important thing is to apply help to the whole family, not only the young parents, but also the families they descend from. However, I am well aware of the fact that the reality is different and changing the whole system remains in a wishful-thinking zone. If working with the biological family is hampered, probably it is worth investing in the newly created family – created by adolescents and their child or children.

One form of help are institutions that specialize in supporting young parents. Introducing reliable parenting and teaching how to perform a new role is realized in those institutions due to the fact that: they provide shelter and the feeling of safety for young parents, subjective treatment, partnership in mutual relations and creating home-like conditions, take into consideration individual needs of the foster-children and their children, offer psychological, pedagogical and medical support, material support (a layette for a newborn child, essential medicine etc.) and consequently shape nurturing, protective and educational skills of young parents. Furthermore, a better socio-economic situation achieved by the possibility to attend school and finding a decent job during the parents' stay at the institution helps to fulfil the parental duties. This, in turn, may contribute to preventing social orphanage by preparing for a conscious and responsible performance as a parent as well as counteracting the duplication of the incorrect family and social patterns, acquired helplessness included.

The support of the institutions may prove to be especially helpful when young parents cannot count on their families or when there is a necessity to separate them from the negative family environment.

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[26] G. Mikołaczyk-Lerman, op. cit., p. 56.

Existential dilemmas of parents of impaired children

Hanna Kubiak

A situation when parents learn about their child's impairment is without doubt an event that changes their worldview, disrupting the course of their life and their interpretations. It is also a new experience, most often surprising, thus most influential.[1] Parents have to refer to the diagnosis on the child's impairment and take a stance on it. The disruption of the world order that happens in the life of a man forces them to realize a conscious self-conception[2], causes a break in the chain of automatic reactions to events in order to define the situation of oneself and one's child, take one's stance on it, be able to act in it, and its possible consequences. This means that parents face the need to deal with a crisis that involves (1) questioning an axiom, (2) being put out of one's emotional balance, (3) thwarting a priority.[3]

Questioning an axiom means underscoring one's fundamental convictions about the world, other people, one's relation with the world. What is disturbed is the conception of life that did not have to be even conscious before, but still it played a central and organizing role in the system of personal convictions of an individual.[4]

When talking to parents of children with impairment, it turns out that what is underscored most often are the life convictions on the justice of fate, personal inviolability of oneself and the members of one's family, calm course of events, certainty of health and life. Out of these statements, the most elementary one is the one that refers to the favour of fate towards an individual. Simone Weil, a French existentialist, presents it in the following way: "On the bottom of the heart of every human being, since the very first moments of life till death, there

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[1] P. Oleś, *Psychologia człowieka dorosłego*, Warszawa 2011, p. 147.

[2] K. Obuchowski, *Galaktyka potrzeb*, Poznań 2002, p. 267 and further pages.

[3] P. Oleś, op. cit., p. 147.

[4] Ibidem, p. 147.

is an insurmountable expectation that they will come across the good and not evil, despite all the known crimes that have been committed, experienced and observed".[5] This statement can be considered a source of the feeling of sense of any activity. Questioning it leads to the loss of the feeling of security and disturbing the feeling of the comprehensibility of the world. A mother of a 3-year-old boy with cerebral palsy said:

"*I thought that if I look after the pregnancy, if I make the effort, nothing bad can happen, there were no cases of illness in my family. When I heard the diagnosis, I thought it wasn't happening for real, that I would wake up soon. It can't be possible that my life changes just like that in one moment. And I was haunted with questions: why my child?*"

Parents mention it that when the information on their child's developmental disorders or impairments strikes them, they use their weapon they have always used and that has been fail-safe in case of other problems: logical thinking. They search for the explanation of a fact that very often cannot be explained, they look for its consequences, but these are also difficult to foresee with certainty, they try to prepare themselves for any possible difficulties related to a child's impairment, but at some point everyone notices that it is all impossible. They thus experience the unpredictability of fate in a very painful way.

This is linked to another above-mentioned aspect of going through a life crisis – being thrown off emotional balance. The strength of the negative emotions that one feels with regard to the child's impairment makes it possible to call the situation a trauma. Parents speak of an overwhelming despair or paralysing fear. Not everyone experience so tense emotions; yet the emotional balance of parents is most often disturbed and it is not possible to easily restore the original state. Emotional working through the event, searching for a new emotional and cognitive balance often leads to better functioning in the future; however, achieving it is preceded by a painful process that can be described as tackling emotions and the thoughts that accompany them. Parents of impaired children point to the fact that initially it seems impossible, because most of them think that living with an impaired child cannot be happy. Another aspect of the crisis that is linked to the need of making changes in the system of people's convictions is the so-called prevention of deprivation of a priority. It is "blocking the central or very important motivational tendency, taking away (the possibility of completing) of such a motif or aspiration that used to give or substantially influenced the feeling and conviction about the usefulness of actions and the sense of life".[6]

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[5] S. Weil, *Human personality*, New York 1943, [after:] J. Allen, P. Fonagy, A. Bateman, *Mentalizowanie w praktyce klinicznej*, Kraków 2014, p. 302.

[6] P. Oleś, op. cit., p. 147.

For many people, bringing up children is a significant value that regulates action, sometimes even gives their lives sense, makes it possible to act for somebody, leads, at least in theory, to the possibility of continuing one's own plans and actions by a different subject, yet an subject that is "ours", related to us. When an impaired child is born, the above-mentioned plans have to reinterpreted. The possibility of caring about someone becomes a necessity for many years, and the lack of hope for the child's independence in the future is a source of tiredness and fear. When parents are asked about their joy of parenthood, most often they indicate its two aspects: first, their satisfaction and pride stemming from their child's growth, and then from how it conquers the world, takes its position in it, interprets it in its way and changes it, and second, living their relationship with their child as an area where one can clearly experience love. In case of parenthood of an impaired child, these both aspects of parenthood are completed differently than in case of a completely healthy child. The child's limitations due to its impairment and related to the perception, organisation of sensual impressions, understanding the world, experiencing it and behaving in it, make the participation of the child in the world incomplete or specific, and parents usually learn to notice and approve of those signs of their child's growth and individuality that most probably go unnoticed for parents of fully healthy children, such as holding one's head within the body axis, maybe crawling or the satisfaction that one can feel when touching sand on a beach.

It is also impossible to easily continue the generation relay related to passing on patterns of relations as it happens in families with healthy children. Impaired children, especially when their impairment is related to damage to the nervous system, have problems making and maintaining social interactions. Parents find it difficult to understand the signals coming from their child, and what follows, to satisfy their needs. Emotions linked to the diagnosis make it difficult for parents to adjust to the child.[7] Most often, these problems are tackled, and the result is a safe style of attachment that also most frequently can be come across in families with impaired children.[8] However, one has to realize that the process of building a bond between parents and an impaired child, irrespective of the final effect, is linked to living through many difficult and unclear situations for both side of the relation. It can upset the feeling of sense of the actions parents take. Some of them talk about bitterness that stems from the fact that what others seem to achieve without effort, in their case requires a lot of work and endeavour.

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[7] A. Twardowski, *Wczesne wspomaganie rozwoju dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami w środowisku rodzinnym*, Poznań 2012, p. 51–52.

[8] E. Pisula, *Rodzice i rodzeństwo dzieci z zaburzeniami w rozwoju*, Warszawa 2007.

To sum up various issues related to parents going through a crisis caused by news about their child's impairment, one can thus indicate their upset sense of events, influence on fate, which is linked to the feeling of fear, sadness and grudges towards fate.

Existential crisis that parents of impaired children go through

As Piotr Oleś indicates, "just like existential fear, a crisis is linked to threatening full existence in the physical, mental, social or spirituals sense".[9] Thus, a crisis can be treated as a turning point on the path of growth, a situation that leads to the so-called existential openness[10], resulting from freeing oneself from the limitations of previous ways of thinking and experiencing the world. A situation where the previous way of being in the world turns out insufficient means risk and opportunity at the same time. As Antoni Kępiński[11] points out, squaring up one's strength with the danger of the world, the need to go beyond the known schemes inside a person's mind, is related to the essence of life. According to him, safety has a touch of death, and losing it makes it possible for life as such to fully exist. Such an unknown, unwanted, and yet potentially freeing situation awaits parents who learn that the growth of their children will not be typical, and thus their life will be different than what they expected. A mother of a boy with cerebral palsy said:

"*I lost the vision of my world; nothing will ever be the way I planned it. Yet I don't know what my life would really be like even if my plan was coming true. Neither do I know what it will be now when everything is different than planned. Maybe nothing has changed but for the fact that now I just know that I don't know it.*"

The woman's thoughts reflect some openness to experience which might not have happened in other circumstances. Such a moment of openness, freedom from patterns, involves the readiness to go beyond norms, e.g. those resulting from the fear of being assessed. Parents of impaired children often confess that in their new life situation they have freed themselves from the need to seek social approval, e.g. linked to the pressure on possessing material goods or holding a particular position in the social hierarchy. Sometimes they spontane-

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[9] P. Oleś, op. cit., p. 148.

[10] B. Jacobson, *Authenticity and Our Basic Existential Dilemmas*, "Existential Analysis: Journal Of The Society For Existential Analysis", 2007, vol. 18, issue 2, p. 288–296.

[11] A. Kępiński, *Lęk*, Kraków 1992, p. 244 and further pages.

ously use the term that was used by philosophers and psychologists: authentic life. It means life in accordance with one's own choices, values and objectives. It is thus linked to self-awareness. Difficult experiences in life often open the gate towards thinking and as a consequence can lead to such a life.

According to Sonia Lyubomirsky[12], when asked about the best and worst experience in their lives, people often point to the same situation that is a source of ambiguous feelings and interpretations. By analysing the dynamics of the process of referring to those significant life situations, one can notice that initially people sometimes experience suffering and fear due to some event, and then they manage to reinterpret it in a way that leads then to feel their own strength and the joy it gives. In other cases, an event that was first thought to be favourable can lead to disappointment and suffering. As Lyubomirsky summarizes it, very often in life we follow erroneous convictions on the conditions for feeling happiness. Going beyond the so-called myths on happiness comes hard, is painful, but in the end it makes it possible to grow.[13] It will also involve bigger emotional stability of those who take the effort, a wider scope of their internal freedom, and a more limited dependence of the emotional condition of a man on the current events.

Supporting the parents of impaired children in their existential considerations

When analysing the situation of parents of impaired children, one can notice that many of them are absolutely devoted to the process of supporting the development of their offspring. Parents learn, among others, therapeutic techniques, apply them in their everyday contact with the child, take the kid to visit specialists. They are also forces to intensive professional work due to significant costs of rehabilitation, treatment and therapy for their child. Frequently, their children behave in untypical ways that are incomprehensible for their parents, and that also require a reply from their parents.[14] The hardship related to bringing up an impaired child together with the social reception of the situation, the tendency to isolate children whose development is not correct and their parents from natural groups of reference such as neighbourhood or group of friends, subtle discrimination e.g. at integrated schools or kindergartens lead the parents to look for a friendly space where they could be listened to, noticed

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[12] S. Lyubomirsky, *Mity o szczęściu*, Warszawa 2013, p. 13.

[13] Ibidem, p. 9.

[14] H. Kubiak, *Wiek poniemowlęcy – pomiędzy biernością a radością sprawcy*, [in:] *Człowiek niepełnosprawny w otoczeniu społecznym*, ed. eadem, A. Jakoniuk-Diallo, Warszawa 2011, p. 41.

as people who have their own dilemmas, plans, dreams, and not just as mothers and fathers of their children. This is especially significant in the light of the existential dilemmas that these parents experience with regard to their children's impairment. As mentioned above, they result from mothers and fathers going through a crisis that requires new cognitive patterns. Various problems bring the need to consciously define oneself against values. This process is intertwined with assigning individual meanings to experiences that have already been discussed. Many parents directly declares the need to devote time and attention to their own internal dilemmas. A mother of a boy with cerebral palsy said:

"*I run with Tomek up and down to various classes, I am exhausted, I live in the car at the time. I have a feeling as if life was slipping through my fingers in the endless race that I don't quite feel makes sense. I want to live a different life, calmer and more at ease. I want to see what else matters for me in life. Is there anything else besides Tomek's illness?*"

Admittedly, one can deduce that the time and energy directed at supporting the process of the child's growth suggest that the child and its life quality are a superior value for the parent, but it does not exhaust the diversity of dilemmas on values and meaning of events that parents of impaired children want to address. Some of them even need an external permission in order to get down to wondering about what they think, feel and how they perceive the world. Undoubtedly, a confrontation with the social stereotypes of a mother or father of an impaired child, perceived as "poor" and always busy with their child[15], makes it more difficult for parents of impaired children to focus their attention on themselves, their internal state, their mind. They may need help in their existential search, also because of the heavy burden that they actually experience and that sometimes distort the clarity of their thoughts. Still, the most important reason is that the group of people described often needs company in the process of posing oneself existential questions and seeking answers; the man achieves its full potential through dialogue, and thus needs another man to define their attitude towards them or at least in their presence; to realize what has not been expressed, or ordered, before.

Getting to meanings through focusing on the contents of one's mind, analysing one's thoughts and emotions, is achieved to the full by means of an interpersonal dialogue.

The subjects referring to the most important human dilemmas related to the sense of life, suffering and love that parents of impaired children try to take

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[15] J. Miluska, *Społeczny obraz osób niepełnosprawnych i jego uwarunkowania*, [in:] *Rodzina z dzieckiem niepełnosprawnym – możliwości i ograniczenia rozwoju*, ed. H. Liberska, Warszawa 2011, p. 17–40.

a stance on are taken up above all in existential concepts.[16] They stem from philosophy, and one of the creators of this philosophical current was Martin Heidegger who dealt with "understanding the existence of an individual as being-in-the-world".[17]

Despite the variety of psychological or pedagogical concepts that originated from the existential philosophy, it is possible to differentiate their common traits, such as focus on human existence and turning towards the man and his individual experience, searching the meanings of these experiences, acknowledging freedom as a value pertaining to the man and focusing the attention on the dialogue that the man takes with the world and oneself in order to fully show one's essence.[18] The representatives of existentialism offer support that goes beyond the psychological dimension, and reaches the spiritual layers of humanity to those tackling fear or feeling of nonsense.

Such a perspective on understanding the human fate was adopted, among others, by Victor Frankl, the founder of logotherapy from Vienna. He reinterpreted his concept created in the 1920s after he went through the nightmare of a concentration camp. According to Frankl, searching for the meaning and sense of a situation is possible irrespective of the suffering, pain and fear.[19] According to him, the need of sense is the man's elementary motivation that can get updated in every conditions of life. He even claimed that a man who experienced unimaginable suffering gains a new area of freedom; they "do not have to be afraid of anything any more, apart from their God".[20] One can thus assume that according to Frankl a difficult situation, or even an extremely difficult one, opens up new opportunities or necessities linked to searching sense in it. In this sense, difficult situations can be interpreted as critical with an instilled need of taking a decision – how to interpret the situation, what meaning should be assigned to it, and consequently, what way to direct one's life. Frankl underlines that the situation of choice is an element of every man's life; the man takes decisions all the time, also by taking action or allowing a situation to shape the human fate. As a matter of fact, Frankl does not judge these attitudes; having gone through a concentration camp, he learnt that it is impossible to assess whether acting or refraining from acting will be beneficial for the man.[21] The elementary choice is related to something else – one can be for the sense or against it.

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[16] J. Tarnowski, *Pedagogika egzystencjalna*, [in:] *Pedagogika*, ed. Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, Warszawa 2003, p. 248–260.

[17] C. Hall, G. Lindsey, *Teorie osobowości*, Warszawa 1990, p. 292.

[18] J. Tarnowski, op. cit., p. 248–260.

[19] V. Frankl, *Człowiek w poszukiwaniu sensu*, Warszawa 2013, p. 169 and further pages.

[20] Ibidem, p. 145.

[21] Ibidem, p. 109 and further pages.

From my experience as a person working with parents of impaired children, the assumptions of Frankl's concept seem to be inspiring when working with them and taking up subjects that are most difficult from the parents' point of view. They point to the "unprofitability" or senselessness of pain and limitations that are experienced by the child and its parents due to the impairment.

Searching and assigning sense to suffering makes it possible for them to notice particular logics in the course of the fate, and as some parents say, ask the question that Frankl used to ask his patients, i.e. "What could your suffering serve? Is it possible to define how much a man has to suffer?" and thus start to think which makes no toil, sorrow or hopelessness seem fruitless. Importantly, such talks can only be led in a context of a good relation between the person supported and the supporting person. Even its existence does not free the supporting person from special attention and gentleness while holding conversations that touch the most important and most painful human experiences. An indication of the lack of subtlety and reflectiveness would be to claim that, irrespective of what the parent says, the experience related to the impairment of the child's is in its essence or at least can in some circumstances be positive. A necessary condition when touching upon important life issues with people who experienced extremely difficult events is to pay them "tribute", express respect and understanding for pain or fear. In my opinion, it is worth using the conditional mood when asking about various aspects of these experiences or commenting on them; the mood that is far from being categorical, leaving more space for interpretations by the interlocutor.

When talking to parents of impaired children, they often express their fear and disappointment related to the above-mentioned feeling of the unpredictability of fate, inability to influence the most important areas of life, e.g. health or children's fitness or their own freedom, opportunity to experience carefreeness or even lack of fear for tomorrow. The mother of Tomek suffering from cerebral palsy says e.g.:

"*I cannot project or plan, for example it would be impossible for me to go out alone for a weekend. It is enough for one epileptic fit of Tomek to turn my life upside down, because we constantly fight for the medicines to be well chosen, and nobody but me can deal with him when the fit comes. My mother for example is afraid of staying with him, exactly because of the fits, and it is me who is afraid of leaving him with the baby-sitter."*

Life circumstances of parents of impaired children make one phenomenon occur particularly clearly; Rollo May, an American existentialist, assigned this phenomenon a universal character "specific for our times", i.e. the crisis of will[22]

[22] R. May, *Miłość i wola*, Poznań 1993, p. 187 and further pages.

(1993). He claimed that this crisis embraces a feeling of powerlessness, lack of faith that one's actions will change reality and push it in the desired direction. He pointed that overcoming this crisis was difficult but not impossible. Self-awareness, developing intentionality instead of automatism of reactions lets one notice not only the essence of internal conflicts that are present inside oneself, but also their solution. Rollo May underlined that the gate leading to knowing oneself is not only analysing one's mind, but also contacting one's own body. In a sense, these thoughts can be found in the currently strongly developing psychological current of carefulness.[23]

I think that this current can be very inspiring for people who find themselves in difficult life situation e.g. parents of impaired children. Its creators recognize that despite our continuous aspirations towards happiness, achieving it is not "compulsory". As Ronald Siegel points out, "evolution did not lead us to be happy".[24] Based on my observations, if the assumption that being happy ceases to be a priority that one has to achieve, then paradoxically the lack of pressure and tension related to thwarting this priority leads to improved emotional condition, acceptance of glimmers of happiness, experiencing it – be it incomplete, fragmentary but real – instead of a continuous feeling of lack and disappointment that one is not "fully" happy.

Paradoxically, as one accepts that experiencing suffering, uncertainty and fear in life, it can lead to calm and reassurance.

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[23] J. Kabat-Zinn, *Życie piękna katastrofa*, Warszawa 2013, p. 117 and further pages.

[24] R. Siegel, *Uważność – trening pokonywania codziennych trudności*, Warszawa 2011, p. 20.

The application of peer tutoring in the education of intellectually impaired children

Andrzej Twardowski

Since late 1970s, the child has been treated as an "empty vessel" that gradually "fills" with knowledge and skills under the influence of adults. It was assumed that educational activities are carried out in one direction: from the adult towards the child. It was not noticed that children learn from one another. Finally, Hugh Foot, Michelle Morgan and Rosalyn Shute undermined the thesis that children are barely recipients of the tutoring influence of adults.[1] They documented the fact that children can also play the role of teachers and assistants provided that suitable conditions are created for them and that they are made jointly responsible for the course of the learning process.

Research conducted in the past 30 years shows that contacts with peers positively influence the motor, cognitive, social and emotional development of the child. It is in their relations with peers and not with adults that the child learns to make social contacts, cooperate, help and share with others. They acquire skills such as coming forward with initiatives, protecting their own interests, negotiating, achieving objectives, yielding to the leadership of others and playing the role of a leader. Interactions with peers support cognitive development. It was concluded that the simple presence of friends encourages mental activity of the child. For example, in the presence of peers, preschool children solved tasks quicker and better than when they had to solve them in solitude.[2] Contacts with peers also stimulate the emotional development of the child. They foster the shaping of the ability for empathy and emotional self-control, the skill of expressing emotions in a socially acceptable manner, and recognizing the emotions of partners.

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[1] *Children helping children*, ed. H.C. Foot, M.J. Morgan, R.H. Shute, New York 1990, p. 3–17.

[2] C.R. Cooper, *Development of collaborative problem-solving among preschool children*, "Developmental Psychology", 1980, vol. 16, p. 433–440.

Types of tutoring interactions with peers

Two types of peer interactions of tutoring character can be distinguished: peer tutoring and peer collaboration.[3]

Peer tutoring describes a situation where one child (the tutor) helps another child (the pupil) to master certain knowledge and skills through sharing instructions or directly managing the activities of the partner. Tutors are usually of the same age as their pupils, and only sometimes they are slightly older than their pupils. However, despite the same of similar age, there is a difference in competences between the children. The tutor has a higher level of knowledge and skills than the pupil. The tutor is an expert and the pupil is a novice. The relationship between them is of asymmetric character. The expert provides hints, instructions and advice, and directs the efforts of the pupil that are aimed at solving a specific task.

Peer tutoring is justified in the concept of Lev Vygotsky.[4] According to this idea, the mental development of the child occurs in relations with people who know more about the culturally accepted ways of acting and tools, among which language is the most important. First the knowledge and skills are experienced in social interaction, and only then they are internalized and destructured. In order to show the social and interactional nature of development, Lev Vygotsky proposed the concept of the "zone of proximal development".[5] According to him, for mental development it is crucial to solve problems under the direction and in cooperation with adults and more competent peers. The concept of the zone of proximal development is based on an assumption that the difference in the levels of competence has to occur together with a better understanding of the pupil's needs by the tutor, because the information provided in a way that considerably exceeds the cognitive abilities of a novice would be useless. Thus, Lev Vygotsky's theory requires the relationship between the tutor and the novice be an intersubjective relation that includes a certain dose of mutual understanding. For Vygotsky, ideal partners are not equal, but the inequality concerns understanding and not power. "For this reason, both adults and peers can contribute to the cognitive development of the

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[3] W. Damon and E. Phelps also distinguish cooperative learning. This term describes a situation when the teacher divides a class into groups of a few members who solve a given problem or task through cooperation because only cooperation can ensure them success (W. Damond, E. Phelps, *Strategies uses of peer learning in children's education*, [in:] *Peer relationships in child development*, ed. T.J. Berndt, G.W. Ladd, New York 1989, p. 135–157).

[4] L.S. Vygotsky, *Wybrane prace psychologiczne*, Warszawa 1971.

[5] The zone of proximal development is the difference between the level of competence that the child displays when carrying out a task with the help of "a wiser" person and the level that they display when carrying out the task on their own.

child through interactions. However, in order for the development to take place during peer interactions, it is necessary for one partner to have a superior level of preparation".[6]

The peer collaboration describes a situation where children of a similar level of abilities share information in order to solve a given task. The knowledge that the children possess is incomplete and because of that none of them is able to solve the task on their own. Yet, they can solve it by cooperating, exchanging the information they have and helping each other to achieve new data. It is learning through discovering together. It happens within a symmetrical relation, in the atmosphere of mutual friendliness and with both partners equally engaged.

Peer collaboration is justified in Jean Piaget's theory, where Piaget underlined that the interaction of a child with an adult is asymmetrical because the adult has bigger knowledge and power, and this infringes the condition of mutuality that is indispensable to achieve balanced cognitive structures.[7] As the adult's point of view dominates, the child abandons their ideas which are often poorly crystallized and cannot compete with the adult's ideas. As the child agrees with the adult's ideas, at the same time they do not learn to verify them on their own. Agreeing with the adult does not lead to cognitive restructuring, and thus does not stimulate the cognitive growth of the child. It is different when it comes to relations with peer, because they are characterized with a balance between cognitive abilities and power. In a situation when their partner is of a different opinion, the child aims at clarifying their point of view through confronting it with that of their partner's. Thus, contacts with peers cause cognitive conflicts and force the child to solve them. At the same time, they motivate the partners to cooperate intellectually and contribute to their overcoming of cognitive egocentrism.

However, how can we explain the fact that peer collaboration leads to a real progress in the cognitive development of a child? After all, the progress that the child makes are not a result of imitation or an effect of instructions provided by their friend, because both partners are equally incompetent. According to Willem Doise, the mechanism that causes the change is a social and cognitive conflict.[8] The conflict occurs in the course of solving tasks together when the child encounters a different though not necessarily correct point of view presented by the partner. In such a situation, cognitive reconstruction is necessary, be-

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[6] J. Tudge, B. Rogoff, *Wpływ rówieśników na rozwój poznawczy – podejście Piageta i Wygotskiego*, [in:] *Dziecko wśród rówieśników i dorosłych*, ed. A. Brzezińska, G. Lutomski, B. Smykowski, Poznań 1995, p. 191.

[7] J. Piaget, *Mowa i myślenie u dziecka*, Warszawa – Lwów 1929.

[8] W. Doise, *The development of individual competencies through social interaction*, [in:] *Children helping children*, ed. cit.

cause the child has to link the idea proposed by the partner with their own idea for solving the task. In other words, the occurrence of a conflict between one's own perspective and the perspective of their partner forces the child to remodel their previous representation. As a result, the child gains new knowledge that is not a simple sum of the information that their partner and themselves possess. Thus, social interaction becomes a source of progress in cognitive development because it leads to social-cognitive conflict. "Of course, the social and cognitive conflict does not create new forms of mental operations of its own, yet it leads to a loss of balance, which on the other hand triggers cognitive activity. Social-cognitive conflict may be figuratively likened to the catalyst in a chemical reaction: it is not present at all in the final product, but it is nevertheless indispensable if the reaction is to take place".[9]

Preparing non-handicapped children for the role of tutors

In order for non-handicapped peers to be able to play the role of tutors, they have to master certain skills during a dedicated training. The training may have an individual or group character, and should include the following stages: /1/ presenting a detailed description of a given skill, /2/ demonstrating the skills by a teacher, /3/ practicing the skills in relation with a teacher through role play, /4/ using the acquired skill in relations with disabled children in role play, /5/ using the acquired skills in relations with non-handicapped peers in natural situations.[10] This last stage is particularly important, because when transferring the skills acquired through training to real situations unexpected difficulties may appear. Some authors claim that at the beginning of the training non-handicapped children should be made familiar with the objectives of peer tutoring, and at the end of each session they should have an opportunity to express their own opinions on the skills acquired. They also underline the need to monitor the tutoring influence of tutors after the training is over and provide them with regular feedback.[11]

The first successful attempt at including non-handicapped children in the process of educating disabled peers was undertaken by Phillip Strain and his

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[9] A.N. Perret-Clermont, *Social interaction and cognitive development in children*, London 1980, p. 178.

[10] E. Murphy, I.M. Grey, R. Honan, *Co-operative learning for students with difficulties in learning: a description of model and guidelines for implementation*, "British Journal of Special Education", 2005, vol. 32, p. 161–162.

[11] E.W. Carter, L.S. Cushing, C.H. Kennedy, *Peer support strategies: improving all student's social lives and learning*, Baltimore 2009, p. 48–50.

colleagues.[12] Using a modelling procedure they taught 4-year-old children of a high intelligence level (over 130 points) and high social development level various ways of inviting disabled mates to join their games. Training sessions were 20-30-minute classes conducted with every child individually. First, the experimenter asked the child to provide all the utterances they would use to try and start a game with an intellectually disabled peer. In this way, it was established what repertoire of utterances that initiate interactions the child possesses, and then they were taught some new ones. The experimenter would provide the child with examples of initiating utterances such as: "Shall we play?", "Would you like to play with blocks with me?", "Shall we play with cars?". Then, they would ask the child to include them in the game using a maximum number of this type of utterances. To every other utterance, the experimenter would react positively: "Very well, this may encourage your friend to play". They would ignore other utterances by staying silent for 10 seconds, and then they would say: "Sometimes your friend will not want to play. Don't worry, just try again". Next, the children would learn to enter interactions using toys. The experimenter would show samples of such behaviour – for example they would approach a child with a ball and say: "Shall we play with the ball?", "Do you want to play with the ball?", "Will you throw the ball at me?". Then they asked the child to use the same or similar way to try and include them in the game. Just like previously, after some attempts the experimenter would praise the child, and after others they would not react and they would encourage the child to use another initiating utterance.

After finishing the training described above, the children would use the acquired skills when playing with three of their peers with mild intellectual disability. After just a few days the handicapped children started to join the games and undertake conversations. The same procedure also turned out effective with regard to children with a more profound intellectual disability and autistic children. In later research Phillip Strain and his colleagues taught nonhandicapped children how they should encourage handicapped peers to communicate through: asking questions, asking for answers or feeding answers to the partner. This procedure also brought the planned effects.

In Howard Goldstein and Susan Wickstrom's research, two nonhandicapped preschoolers were taught strategies that make it possible for their intellectually handicapped peers to start an interaction and keep it going for some time.[13]

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[12] P.S. Strain, R.E. Shores, M.A. Timm, *Effects of peer social initiations on the behavior of withdrawn preschool children*, "Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis", 1977, vol. 10, p. 289–298.

[13] H. Goldstein, S. Wickstrom, *Peer intervention effect on communicative interaction among handicapped and nonhandicapped preschoolers*, "Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis", 1986, vol. 19, p. 209–214.

The facilitating strategies consisted in: /1/ making eye contact, /2/ initiating playing together, /3/ encouraging the partner to express requests, /4/ talking about the actions taken by the partner or oneself, and /5/ reacting to the partner's utterances by repeating them, expanding them or asking for additional information. After the training, nonhandicapped children would use the strategies acquired in their relations with three autistic peers when at the kindergarten. After 20 days, the number of social interactions started by autistic children would increase considerably and would be maintained at the same level after the therapy.

In further research, Howard Goldstein and Donald Ferrell[14] taught a group of 6 nonhandicapped preschoolers to use the above-mentioned strategies that help initiate and keep up a social interaction. It turned out that all the children mastered the facilitating strategies and were able to use them in relations with their intellectually handicapped peers that display behaviour disorders such as: inability to make contacts with other children, inability to participate in games and lack of response to the requests and instructions of teachers.

Pam Hunt and her colleagues conducted a training for nonhandicapped children at adolescence age.[15] They taught them how they should talk to their more profoundly intellectually handicapped friends using a textbook that includes illustrations showing various social situations and collections of words and phrases used in these situations. Nonhandicapped pupils were instructed to link their replies to the content of their partner's utterance and finish them with questions, because questions are more obliging to give a reply than affirmative sentences. After the training, its participants would carry out everyday 10-minute therapeutic activities. After just a few days, a considerable increase in correct answers was noticed among handicapped pupils, as well as a considerable decrease in reactions that were inadequate in a given situation.

In another experiment, Pam Hunt and her colleagues tried to establish whether the skills acquired by handicapped pupils undergo generalisation, e.g. are also used in new situations and contacts with new people.[16] Adolescent pupils with a profound intellectual disability took part in therapeutic sessions led by their nonhandicapped peers. As a result, they experienced a significant

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[14] H. Goldstein, D.R. Ferrell, *Augmenting communicative interaction between handicapped and nonhandicapped preschool children*, "Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders", 1987, vol. 52, p. 200–211.

[15] P. Hunt, L. Goetz, M. Alwell, W. Sailor, *Using an interrupted behavior chain strategy to teach generalized communication responses to students with severe disabilities*, "The Journal of The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps", vol. 11, p. 196–204.

[16] These, *Generalized effects of conversational skills training*, "Journal of the Association for Severely Handicapped", 1990, vol. 15, p. 250–260.

progress in their skill of having a conversation. After the therapy, handicapped pupils were observed during their interactions with nonhandicapped peer preschoolers with regard to their use of strategies that facilitate having a conversation to their partner and peers who did not take part in the training. It turned out that the level of dialogue skills of handicapped pupils remained on the same level irrespective of whether their interlocutor used the facilitating strategies.

Linda Paul describes an experiment that showed that even without any special training nonhandicapped children can support the development of social skills of their intellectually handicapped peers.[17] The aim of the experiment was a change in the social position of preschoolers who were rejected by their peers. The authors matched children in pairs made of rejected children and kids that were 12-20 months younger. Each pair was given a set of toys that foster playing theme games. The control group was comprised of pairs of children all of whom were rejected by their peers. The experimenters did not interfere in the course of the games. After six weeks it was concluded that the sociometric position of those children who played with their younger peers increased considerably. On the other hand, the position of control group children did not change. These results are very interesting, because they undermine the traditional view that the child masters new skills only in relations with more competent peers. It turned out that relations with less competent peers are also beneficial to the development of the child.

The effectiveness of peer tutoring in the education of intellectually impaired children

Many researchers consider that the effectiveness of peer tutoring of pupils with intellectual handicap can be measured with their progress in school achievements. Based on literature review, Joseph Fisher and his colleagues stated that peer tutoring causes improvement in the reading and writing skills, masters mathematical competences and facilitates intellectually impaired children's speaking. It is also beneficial for nonhandicapped pupils that play the role of tutors, because it enriches their knowledge, language competences, memory and thinking.[18] On the other hand, Kristen McMaster and her colleagues report on broad experimental research which indicated that using peer tutoring leads

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[17] L. Paul, *Programming peer support for functional language*, [in:] *Teaching functional language: Generalization and maintenance of language skills*, ed. S.F. Warren, A.K. Rogers-Warren, Austin 1985, p. 289–307.

[18] J.B. Fisher, J.B. Shumaker, D.D. Deshler, *Searching for validated inclusive practices: A review of literature*, "Focus on Exceptional Children", 1995, vol. 28, p. 1–20.

to considerable progress in reading skills of intellectually impaired pupils from grades 2 to 6.[19]

Robert Slawin conducted research on the effectiveness of peer tutoring in mathematical and language education among children aged 7-12 with mild intellectual impairment.[20] Tutors taught handicapped peers to solve mathematical tasks and correctly read and write text fragments. The tasks and texts were chosen by the teacher. The tutors themselves checked the correctness of carrying out the task by handicapped friends. If a handicapped child did not master the material in 80%, further teaching was carried out by the teacher. Such cases were rare, because nonhandicapped children were very successful in their role of tutors.

Erin Dugan and her colleagues analysed the effectiveness of peer tutoring conducted by 16 nonhandicapped children with 2 autistic and intellectually handicapped children.[21] All the children were at the age of 9 and 10. After 12 weeks of interactions, positive changes in the school functioning of both handicapped children were noticed. Clear improvement was noticed in: writing skills, involvement in the tasks carried out, reading to oneself and aloud, talking about school tasks, asking questions and replying.

It was documented that peer tutoring can be successfully used in teaching children who are moderately or profoundly intellectually handicapped. For example, Lisa Cushing and Craig Kennedy taught nonhandicapped children how they should behave in their relations with their peers with a profound intellectual handicap.[22] Among others, how they should: make interactions, give feedback, ask questions and carry our conversations. Preschoolers were eager to start interactions with their handicapped friends, which led to an increased involvement of the latter in the process of learning. It was especially beneficial when one handicapped child was simultaneously tutored by two children. It was concluded that thanks to the tutoring relations with nonhandicapped children, the kids with a profound intellectual handicap: focused on the task they carried out for longer, were more willing to take up new tasks, completed their task more often and committed fewer mistakes.[23]

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[19] K.L. Mc Master, D. Fuchs, L.S. Fuchs, *Promises and limitation of peer-assisted learning strategies in reading*, "Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal", 2007, vol. 5, p. 97–112.

[20] R.E. Slavin, *Cooperative learning. Theory, research and practice*, Boston 1995.

[21] E. Dugan, D. Kamps, B. Leonart, N. Watkins, A. Rheninberger, J. Stackhaus, *Effects of cooperative learning groups during social studies for students with autism and fourth-grade peers*, "Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis", 1995, vol. 28, p. 175–188.

[22] L.S. Cushing, C.H. Kennedy, *Academic effect of providing peer support in general education classrooms on students without disabilities*, "Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis", 1997, vol. 30, p. 139–151.

[23] A.F. Ashman, *Peer mediation and students with diverse learning needs*, [in:] *Co-operative learning. The social and intellectual outcomes of learning in groups*, ed. R.M. Gillies, A.F. Ashman, New York 2005, p. 92–93.

Treating school achievements as a measure of the effectiveness of peer tutoring may cause reservations, all the more so because usually school achievements are identified with the results that the child has gained in tests on their knowledge. Therefore some researchers suggest assessing the effectiveness of peer tutoring based on a comparison of the level of acceptance of the handicapped child by their nonhandicapped peers before and after the interactions take place. For example, Maureen Piercy and her colleagues conducted research where 6 intellectually impaired children were taught by 45 nonhandicapped peers.[24] After 10 weeks of interactions, handicapped children were definitely more accepted by their nonhandicapped peers.

Joanne Putnam and her colleagues checked how relations change between nonhandicapped and intellectually handicapped children after 8 months of using peer tutoring.[25] It turned out that in classes where peer tutoring was not used a negative image of handicapped children was created among nonhandicapped children and this image persisted till the research was over. On the other hand, in classes were peer tutoring was used, nonhandicapped children had a positive attitude towards their handicapped peers and assessed them positively. Only one impaired child was negatively perceived and assessed, even though the kids was taught by their nonhandicapped peers. Based on the results gathered, the researchers formulated a thesis that even though peer tutoring definitely fosters the increase in the acceptance of intellectually handicapped children by nonhandicapped children, it does not guarantee that the acceptance of each child will grow. According to Joanne Putnam and her colleagues, peer tutoring may not lead to the increase in the acceptance of a handicapped child for two reasons. First, because nonhandicapped peers assess the intellectual capabilities of an impaired child negatively. Second, because behaviour that hinders cooperation occurs among handicapped children.

Dianne Gut underlines that peer tutoring helps overcome social isolation of intellectually handicapped children. It allows them to start positive relations with nonhandicapped peers and make friends with them.[26] The author analysed changes that occurred in the behaviour of handicapped children who used to be isolated by their peers after they were introduced to peer tutoring. It turned out that the level of engagement increased significantly among handicapped children

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[24] M. Piercy, K. Wilton, M. Townsend, *Promoting the social acceptance of young children with moderate-severe intellectual disabilities using cooperative-learning techniques*, "American Journal of Mental Retardation", 2002, vol. 107, p. 352–360.

[25] J. Putnam, K. Markovchick, D.W. Johnson, R.T. Johnson, *Cooperative learning and peer acceptance of students with learning disabilities*, "Journal of Social Psychology", 1996, vol. 136, p. 741–752.

[26] D.M. Gut, *We are social beings learning how to learn cooperatively*, "Teaching Exceptional Children", 2000, vol. 32, p. 46–53.

with regard to learning activities. The children would listen more carefully, ask questions, become involved in task solving and cooperate with the tutor.

Some research show that after tutoring interactions are conducted, the level of acceptance of intellectually handicapped children did not increase, which proves that peer tutoring was inefficient. The reasons for such a state of affairs should be found in difficult, and even destructive, behaviour of handicapped children. Withdrawing from contacts, aggressive behaviour or a very low level of emotional self-control considerably hinder, or even make impossible, the cooperation with a tutor. For example, Bonnie Brinton and her colleagues encountered substantial impedimenta in using peer tutoring with intellectually retarded children with speech disorders.[27] These children were unwilling to enter interactions with their peers, avoided taking up tasks, preferred activities in solitude and were involved in activities that were unrelated to their group work. It also proved unsuccessful to give them detailed instructions on how they should cooperate with the tutor. Bonnie Brinton's research proves that for an impaired child to be able to integrate with their nonhandicapped peers, and especially to have a fruitful cooperation with their tutor, it is indispensable that they possess an appropriate set of interpersonal skills. This means that it may not be suitable or beneficial to qualify some of intellectually handicapped children for peer tutoring before they master appropriate skills. In order for them to use this form of help, two conditions have to be met. First, teachers and nonhandicapped peers must know how the handicapped children function very well. Second, handicapped children have to have social and interpersonal skills that make it possible for them to take part in interactions with the tutor.

In some research, the effectiveness of peer tutoring is assessed based on interview with teachers who use this method. Teachers are asked to assess the results achieved and the benefits for handicapped children and tutors. Rollanda O'Connor and Joseph Jenkins asked the teachers to: justify why they use peer tutoring, give the objectives it serves and present opinions on its effectiveness.[28] The teachers concluded that the effectiveness of peer tutoring depended above all on: the way of choosing the tutor-pupil pairs, regularity in monitoring the pairs and type of tutoring strategies used by the tutors.

Joseph Jenkins and his colleagues interviewed 21 teachers.[29] All the subjects claimed that using peer tutoring substantially fosters educating children

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[27] B. Brinton, M. Fujiki, L.M. Higbee, *Participation in cooperative learning activities by children with specific language impairment*, "Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research", 1998, vol. 41, p. 1193–1206.

[28] R.E. O'Connor, J.R. Jenkins, *Cooperative learning as an inclusion strategy: a closer look*, "Exceptionality", 1996, vol. 6, p. 29–51.

[29] J.R. Jenkins, L.R. Antil, S.K. Wayne, P.F. Vadsay, *How cooperative learning works for special education and remedial students*, "Exceptional Children", 2003, vol. 69, p. 279–292.

with intellectual impairment. In their opinion, peer tutoring increases the self-esteem in handicapped children, reinforces the feeling of safety and increases the level of school achievement. Teachers claimed that teaching by a more competent peer contributes both to the development of social skills, and improved school achievements of intellectually handicapped pupils, but it fosters the development of social skills even more. On the other hand, teachers researched by Erin Dugan and his colleagues claimed that the peer tutoring method equally contributes to progress in learning and social development of handicapped pupils. They also declared that they do not encounter any major difficulties in using the method.[30]

So far, no broad research has been conducted to help reply the question on how handicapped children assess the effectiveness of peer tutoring. Some data on this was gathered by Joanne Putnam and her colleagues.[31] Namely, 74% of pupils with special educational needs declared that they like learning in cooperation with nonhandicapped peers, 13% were not able to take a stance on this issue, and other 13% claimed that they did not like such a form of learning.

The data gathered so far makes it possible to claim that peer tutoring can be successfully used to educate pupils with intellectual impairment. The method contributes to their progress in learning and development of social competences of the child. Among other things, it increases: the level of knowledge, motivation to learn, position in peer group, engagement in tasks carried out and the quality of interactions with nonhandicapped peers and their teacher.

Tasks of the teacher as the organizer of peer tutoring

Including nonhandicapped peers in the process of educating intellectually impaired children can be a serious challenge for the teacher. It is worth noticing that as early as in 2005 publications on peer tutoring did not include a single one that would contain a proposal of an empirically verified programme for preparing teachers to use the method in class.[32] Only recently have publications addressed at teachers appeared, yet usually they are concerned with educating children with a specific type of impairment.[33] On the other hand, proposals on

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[30] E. Dugan, D. Kamps, B. Leonart, N. Watkins, A. Rheninberger, J. Stackhaus, op. cit., p. 175–188.

[31] J. Putnam, K. Markovchick, D.W. Johnson, R.T. Johnson, op. cit., p. 741–752.

[32] E. Murphy, I.M. Grey, R. Honan, op. cit., p. 163.

[33] A.N. Grauvogel-MacAleese, M.D. Wallace, *Use of peer-mediated intervention in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder*, "Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis", 2010, vol. 43, p. 547–551; T. Smith, *Making inclusion work for students with autism spectrum disorders*, New York 2012.

using peer tutoring in educating children with various handicaps are of too general a character. What is more, there are usually stark divergences between the experiences gathered by teachers and the solutions proposed by researchers.[34] Above all, the teacher cannot allow for the whole burden of tutoring interactions to rest on nonhandicapped peers' shoulders. The interactions of nonhandicapped peers should be an element of a therapy programme carried out by the teacher and should remain strictly controlled by them. Peer tutoring places the teacher in the role of an organizer of teaching activities, and not someone who transmits the information. This means that the teacher has to undertake many tasks. The most important of these are presented below.[35]

1. Selection of nonhandicapped children for the role of tutors. The teacher should remember that children who are entrusted with the role of tutors should be highly socialised, i.e. possess a wide range of prosocial behaviours and a high level of communicative competence. They should have a positive attitude towards their handicapped peers and be willing to make interactions with them. What is more, they should react to teacher's instructions and guidelines correctly.
2. Establishing how the tutor perceives their abilities, and how the pupils perceives their needs. In order to achieve this, the teacher should have a chat with the children. The teacher should ask the potential tutors the following questions: "How do you think you can help your friends in learning?", "What can you teach them best?", "How will you explain something to your friend when they do not understand …?", "How will you reply when they ask about …?". On the other hand, the following questions should be asked to handicapped children: "What is the most difficult for you to learn?", "How can you be helped?", "What information do you need to solve this task?", "Would you prefer to be helped by a boy or girlfriend?", "Does your helper have to be of your age or older than you?".
3. Preparing the tutors. It is not sufficient for the candidates for the role of tutors to possess an adequately high level of knowledge. They also have to know how to transmit this knowledge to less competent peers. To achieve this, they should take part in special trainings of individual and group character. During a training methods of model ling and role play are used. Would-be tutors learn, among others: how to make and keep

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[34] L.R. Antil, J.R. Jenkins, S.K. Wayne, P.F. Vadsay, *Cooperative learning: prevalence, conceptualization and the relation between research and practice*, "American Educational Research Journal", 1998, vol. 35, p. 446–449.

[35] A. Twardowski, *Rola pełnosprawnych rówieśników w procesie wspomagania rozwoju dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, [in:] *Wspomaganie rozwoju i rehabilitacja dzieci z genetycznie uwarunkowanymi zespołami zaburzeń*, ed. idem, Poznań 2004, p. 91–92.

tutoring interactions, what didactic materials to use, how to transmit information, how to ask and answer questions, how to identify errors and correct them, what awards to use.

4. Selecting the "tutor-pupil" pairs. When matching children in pairs, the teacher should take into account their interests and level of mutual acceptance. Pairs should consist of children who like to spend time together and are eager to take up activities together. As David Johnson and Roger Johnson notice, peer tutoring does not bring the expected results when children are matched in pairs, triads or groups of more children in a random way and for a short period of time. In such a situation, partners would spend most time on getting to know each other rather than activities related to learning.[36]
5. Creating situations that foster entering tutoring interactions. This aim can be achieved by using situations and circumstances that occur naturally where children have to cooperate to achieve certain aims. The teacher should provide the children with toys and didactic aids that foster taking up activities of cooperative character. The teacher should teach tutors strategies that facilitate initiating interactions with handicapped peers. Such strategies include: making eye contact, attention sharing, talking about the partner's activities, asking questions, soliciting information, urging the partner to carry out a given request.
6. Monitoring changes in the skills of handicapped children. The teacher should carefully follow the course of the classes and encourage tutors to use tutoring strategies. The teacher should cue them about the strategies that they should use, award them for using these correctly and correct their possible mistakes. The enumerated activities are indispensable because positive changes among intellectually handicapped children can only occur after 30 or 40 peer tutoring sessions.[37] What is more, from time to time the teacher should conduct additional training sessions for tutors in order to remind them some strategies or teach them some new ones.
7. Gradual withdrawal of direct supervision over tutoring interactions. As nonhandicapped children become more and more skilled in using tutoring strategies, the teacher should gradually limit the control and allow them for more and more independent actions. However, the teacher themselves should focus on organising classes that create favourable

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[36] D.W. Johnson, R.T. Johnson, *Learning together and alone: cooperative, competitive and individualistic learning*, Boston 1994.

[37] M.J. Guralnick, *Peer interactions and development of handicapped children's social and communicative competence*, [in:] *Children helping children*, ed. cit., p. 275–305.

conditions for peer tutoring and discreetly monitor the behaviour of tutors. The teacher should establish a simple and at the same time effective system of information Exchange with tutors. For example, each strategy can be assigned one of the pictograms that hang on the wall and are visible from various places and distance. Pictograms serve two functions then. First, they remind the tutors about various strategies. Second, the teacher can point to the symbols and thus cue about the strategies the tutors should use in a given situation.

Research up to date proves that tutoring interactions between nonhandicapped children and their intellectually handicapped peers, the latter take part in group games more often, make interactions with their peers more frequently, are more eager to talk and behave in a socially unaccepted way less often.[38] After the interactions finish, the skills acquired are maintained on the same level and used in new situations. Thus, it is worth using the peer tutoring method in educating intellectually handicapped children. It should not be forgotten, however, that the effectiveness of this method depends on how the teacher manages to deal with the above-mentioned tasks.

Directions for future research

Using peer tutoring in educating intellectually impaired children brings about many questions that require verification in further research. Some most important ones are presented below.[39]

1. How to include peer tutoring in the organisational system of classes and lessons in the school functioning? How to arrange the classroom space and what didactic aids to collect? How to organize classes for the pairs or groups not to interfere with one another? And finally – what additional preparation is necessary for the teacher to successfully use this method and how can they gain it?
2. Is it possible for the role of the tutor to be played by a pupil who is not an expert in the field that is taught and hardly knows more than their pupil? According to Jerome Bruner, such a "teacher" will not make the pupil familiar with a deep structure of knowledge and will not give exhaustive answers to questions about the meaning of various notions and relations

[38] J.R. Jenkins, L.R. Antil, S.K. Wayne, P.F. Vadasy, *How cooperative learning…*, ed. cit., p. 279–292.

[39] A. Twardowski, *Wpływ nauczających relacji z pełnosprawnymi rówieśnikami na rozwój dzieci z niepełnosprawnościami*, [in:] *Pedagogika specjalna – koncepcje i rzeczywistość. Socjopedagogiczne aspekty rehabilitacji osób niepełnosprawnych*, ed. T. Żółkowska, M. Wlazło, Szczecin 2008, p. 150–151.

between them.[40] Thus, it is possible that peer tutoring is effective on the level of knowing, understanding and applying, but not on the level of analysis, synthesis and assessment.

3. Do all pupils have the same predispositions to carry out tutoring activities with a handicapped peer? Are pupils who achieve high notes in subjects of artistic or humanistic character equally predisposed for the role of a tutor as compared with those who achieve high scores in mathematics, natural science or technology?
4. According to what criteria should the tutor-pupil pairs be created? There are many possibilities – for example: a pair of kids who are of different ages and level of skills; a pair of children of the same age but different level of skills; or a pair of children of the same age and level of skills. It also remains unsolved whether the effectiveness of peer tutoring is higher when the pairs is made of children of the same sex or not. It would also be interesting to establish whether it is girls or boys who perform better in the role of tutors and in relations with what partners.
5. What attitude towards peer tutoring do parents of nonhandicapped and handicapped children have? Parents of nonhandicapped children may not support peer tutoring, especially when they do not notice any benefits for their own child. Because the school of today is dominated by rivalry and not cooperation, some parents may assume that the time their child devotes to a less skilled peer is a time that they lose instead of learn themselves.
6. Peer tutoring causes controversies of ethical nature. Above all, the teacher has to make sure that it is equally beneficial for both the "tutor" and the "pupil". In case pupils are intellectually impaired children a problem appears: what should nonhandicapped tutors know about the impairment of their partners and influence of this impairment on the process of learning? Another open question is also about how to protect the pupils who play the role of tutors against the unjustified conviction about their own uniqueness and possessing special skills? Finally – should the pupils who play the role of tutors participate in teachers' meetings where their work is discussed and where the progress of "pupils" is analysed?
7. How to build a positive attitude towards peer tutoring among education authorities, teachers and parents? Above all, it is necessary to change the traditional view according to which the child can gain real knowledge only from a teacher, and the knowledge from peers does not have any value from the point of view of learning objectives. Also, it is necessary to eliminate the quite common conviction that the teacher who transfers their

[40] J.S. Bruner, *W pozyskiwaniu teorii nauczania*, Warszawa 1974.

rights to pupils disregards their own duties and does not understand how difficult and responsible their work is. This is why it is so important for the authorities, parents and teachers to understand that there may be situations when a handicapped child "with a little help from their friends" can achieve as much, or even more, than when they are educated exclusively by teachers.

The experiences with peer tutoring so far show that it contributes to increased achievements of all the pupils and creates a more friendly and kind atmosphere in class. Pupils have an opportunity to share their ideas and exchange the information that they possess. At the same time, the number of sources that they take their information from increases, and this in turn allows them to achieve better results. Peer tutoring stimulates the creativity of pupils, increases their interest in the tasks they carry out and increases their motivation to learn.[41]

Conclusion

Including nonhandicapped peers in the process of educating impaired children is beneficial for both. Nonhandicapped children can understand the content transmitted in a better way, because teaching someone else fosters ordering and deepening one's own knowledge on a given topic. In the area of social and moral development, tutoring can increase the sensitivity to the needs of handicapped peers, the feeling of responsibility and empathy. In the sphere of personality building, tutoring can contribute to improved self-evaluation, faith in one's own capabilities and self-esteem. Above all, thanks to peer tutoring, nonhandicapped children can get to know and understand their handicapped peers better. They have a chance to see for themselves that it is possible to play and talk with handicapped peers, as well as learn a lot from them, that their internal world is rich and worth knowing.

Tutoring by nonhandicapped peers is also very beneficial for intellectually handicapped children. It enriches their knowledge and skills. Thanks to peer tutoring, the level of engagement of handicapped children in the life of the group increases. Their contacts with peers are intensified and the number of conversations they can participate in increases. Handicapped children have a chance to see for themselves that their nonhandicapped peers pay attention to them, that they want to learn and spend time with them. They have an opportunity to experience how they can influence other people and achieve their

[41] K.M. Tateyama-Sniezek, *Cooperative learning: does it improve the academic achievement of students with handicaps?*, "Exceptional Children", 1990, vol. 56, p. 426–437.

aims while using their skills. In this way, intellectually impaired children form a feeling of competence, i.e. a conviction that they can control themselves and their environment. Also, their autonomy is increased, because in their relations with peers they have to rely on themselves to a larger extent and together with their partners work on the programmes of action.

It has to be underlined that peer tutoring is particularly important for integrative education. Directing attention to the possibility of having nonhandicapped pupils play the role of tutors for their handicapped peers allows to perceive the class as a space where there are as many teachers as there are pupils at the same time, and not as a space where all the pupils are educated by one teacher.

A deaf child, which means… who? On imprecision in the definition of deafness

Anna Wiśniewska

A person who wants to start research regarding the functioning of the community of people with hearing loss faces a major challenge at the very beginning. From a plethora of various definitions of hearing loss or deafness, he or she is forced to make a decision on how to define a deaf person; if he or she chooses to distinguish between deaf people and people with hearing loss or, maybe, to recognize these words as synonyms. Yet another important question is the following: what criteria should he or she refer to – linguistic, cultural, medical? The author of this paper will refer to a few selected and widely cited approaches to the problem of defining deafness, trying to trace the evolution of thinking about this issue in Poland over the last half century. The author will also comment on the possibility of using various definitions for the purposes of scientific research.

Deficiency

In one of the first post-war works on deafness, Kazimierz Kirejczyk identifies six main categories of deaf children: deaf children with total or profound hearing loss, children with residual hearing who are able to hear with the use of special equipment, hard-of-hearing children who have the ability to hear loud speech and normal speech with the use of prosthetic hearing devices, late deafened children, deaf-blind children who do not have the ability to both see and hear, and deaf children with parallel mental disability. The classification introduced by Kirejczyk takes into account many factors such as the possibility of perceiving speech sounds with or without the help of hearing aids, the level of mental functioning and the ability to see.[1] The categories of deaf people as dis-

[1] K. Kirejczyk, *Głusi – wybrane zagadnienia*, Warszawa 1957, p. 15–22.

tinguished by that author, despite their multidimensional scope, lack definitions which would eliminate individual interpretation, that would allow for their use in research on the functioning of people with hearing loss. In the most thorough Polish monograph entirely devoted to the psychology of a deaf child so far, written about 20 years later, Jadwiga Smoleńska refers to Kirejczyk's works and his way of thinking about categorizing deafness. In addition, Smoleńska quotes the classification developed by Streng, where the degree of hearing loss is measured in decibels, and the obtained result allows to make predictions about the potential difficulties in child's linguistic development, e.g. the damage at the degree of 20-25 dB does not cause speech disorders. The loss of 40-60 dB, in turn, results in great difficulty in language acquisition and is often linked to impoverished lexicon. Smoleńska also notes that in the deaf child's rehabilitation process it is not only the degree of damage that may be important but also its type (conductive or sensorineural hearing loss).[2] Therefore, in relation to Kirejczyk, Smoleńska refers to much more objectivised (by their measurability) criteria in describing deafness. The tradition of medical and objectivised thinking about deafness was continued by Bogdan Szczepankowski, who is one of the most important figures in the history of Polish deaf education studies. In his extensive monograph published in the 1990s under the title "The deaf – the Deaf – the deaf-mute", much attention is paid to the description of deafness from a medical perspective. Just like Smoleńska, Szczepankowski recognizes the legitimacy of distinguishing between people with hearing loss based on the results of audiometric tests. The author quotes, among others, the classification of the International Bureau for Audiophonology (BIAP), which is based on the assessment of pure tone sensitivity thresholds for frequencies characteristic of speech sounds. For the purposes of the BIAP classification, calculations shall be made separately for each ear and the degree of hearing loss is established taking into account the results obtained for the better ear. Szczepankowski also points to other factors that can have crucial influence on the type of necessary rehabilitation activities, such as the location of the hearing loss and the time of onset – before or after mastering language, etc. In his work, as one of the first researchers, Szczepankowski pays a lot of attention to the history of education for people with hearing loss in Poland and in the world as well as the educational and culture-creating function of various organizations for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.[3] Lublin-based researcher,

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[2] J. Smoleńska, *Niedosłyszący*, [in:] *Psychologia dziecka głuchego*, ed. T. Gałkowski, I. Kunicka-Kaiser, J. Smoleńska, Warszawa 1978, p. 262–265.

[3] B. Szczepankowski, *Niesłyszący – głusi – głuchoniemi. Wyrównywanie szans*, Warszawa 1999, p. 76–78, 204–208, 253–256.

Kazimiera Krakowiak, aware that there have been many documented cases when a person with 115 dB hearing loss was able to communicate by means of verbal speech using their residual hearing,[4] concluded that in order to make predictions about the development of a given individual's communication capacities one should create a much more detailed typology, taking into account several factors such as:

- The onset of hearing loss,
- Modified BIAP classification, where the degrees of hearing loss were shifted and additional detailed breakdown was made within particular groups – e.g. within the category of *moderate hearing loss* three degrees of moderate hearing loss were identified.

In addition, Krakowiak introduced a breakdown into several groups of persons: the functionally hearing (with a slight or mild hearing impairment), the hard-of-hearing with moderate hearing damage, the hard-of-hearing with severe degree of hearing loss and the functionally deaf (not using their hearing to communicate). Taking into account all of the above factors, the author has identified 107 subgroups of people with hearing loss. Nevertheless, she failed to take into account all of the possible scenarios of the development of people with hearing loss; she ignored, for example, the group of hearing children of deaf parents who lost their hearing after the development of speech.[5] The typology of deafness presented by Krakowiak, despite its potential usefulness in rehabilitation planning, does not seem to be applicable in research, e.g. on the cognitive functioning of persons with hearing loss. Due to the adoption of detailed criteria, it would be very difficult to find even a handful of participants belonging to the same category.

In deciding to conduct research on people with hearing loss and reaching out to the medical model of thinking about deafness, the researcher is in a difficult situation because of the lack of criteria that could be considered unequivocally determinant of the direction of cognitive and linguistic development in persons with hearing loss. A perfect example of this problem lies in the misleading nature of the classification of the International Bureau for Audiophonology as the main criterion used to infer the potential path of cognitive development of persons with hearing loss. The researcher is therefore forced to select variables in respect to the analysed problem, since the combination that takes into consideration too many factors would involve a great number of subgroups.

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[4] B. Hoffman, *Surdopedagogika w teorii i praktyce*, Warszawa 2001, p. 35.

[5] K. Krakowiak, *Pedagogiczna typologia uszkodzeń narządu słuchu i osób nimi dotkniętych*, [in:] *Nie głos, ale słowo... Przekraczanie barier w wychowaniu osób z uszkodzeniem narządu słuchu*, ed. eadem, A. Dziurda-Multan, Lublin 2006, p. 267–281.

Cultural affiliation and language

In the second half of 1990s the concept of thinking about deafness from the perspective of its culture-creating function has begun to become more popular. Sign language used by the deaf in Poland interested linguists, such as Michael Farris affiliated to Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, who became, among other things, the co-founder of the actual name *Polish Sign Language (PJM)*[6] [translator's note: acronyms of the names of sign languages are usually formed with the initial letters of the local name of the language, hence, polski język migowy (pol.) is abbreviated to PJM]. Later, in his paper entitled "Very tentative remarks on the grammatical description of the Polish Sign Language", professor Marek Świdziński proved that the Polish Sign Language is a complete language with its own grammar, lexicon, etc.[7] The recognition of PJM as a natural language has constituted a justification for considering the Polish deaf community in terms of a cultural minority. An additional incentive to change thinking about persons with hearing loss was also brought about by the Polish edition of two important titles: "The mask of benevolence" by Harlan Lane (1996) and "Seeing Voices" by Oliver Sacks (1998), in which the deaf community has been presented in terms of a fascinating (Sacks)[8] and, unfortunately, often deprecated (Lane) cultural minority.[9] It turned out that in the West (especially in the United States) deafness has long been thought of in terms of its culture-creating function.

The discussion on the possibility of examining deafness in socio-cultural terms broke out not only in the academic community, but also among the deaf themselves. A debate was provoked on questions such as: what does it mean to be culturally deaf and who has the right to identify with the deaf community?[10] Some people with hearing loss began to capitalise the word deaf to emphasize their cultural affiliation. No strict definition, however, has been adopted to decide who can be called Deaf with a capital "d".[11] Questions arose about the criteria to be met in order to be able to speak on behalf of the whole community – is it enough, for example, to be a person with profound hearing loss who knows

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[6] M. Farris, *Sign language research and Polish Sign Language*, "Lingua Posnaniensis", 1994, vol. 36, p. 15.

[7] M. Świdziński, *Bardzo wstępne uwagi o opisie gramatycznym polskiego języka migowego*, "Audiofonologia", 1998, vol. 12, p. 69–83.

[8] O. Sacks, *Zobaczyć głos*, Poznań 1998, p. 11.

[9] H. Lane, *Maska dobroczynności – deprecjacja społeczności głuchych*, Warszawa 1996, p. 25.

[10] E. Woźnicka, *Wprowadzenie*, [in:] *Tożsamość społeczno-kulturowa głuchych*, ed. eadem, Łódź 2007, p. 7.

[11] A. Kołodziejczak, *Pomiędzy dwoma światami – problem tożsamości społecznej wybranej grupy niesłyszących*, [in:] *Tożsamość społeczno-kulturowa głuchych*, ed. cit., p. 28.

the Polish Sign Language fluently, but who is not a native user of PJM? Also, a new sign began to gain popularity, which is a combination of signs DEAF and PURE denoting a person who comes from a family in which parents, and sometimes even grandparents, were also deaf. It has been considered that only those "multigenerational deaf" persons, who constitute a small percentage of the entire community of people with hearing loss, can without any doubt be considered Deaf. In other cases it usually remains a matter of debate which can arouse much controversy. An example of a situation where one can observe a high level of tension in the deaf community is the dispute that has been held for many years over the members of the Board of the Polish Association of the Deaf. Although the current president of the Polish Association of the Deaf, Mrs Kajetana Maciejska-Roczan is a hard-of-hearing person who knows sign language, the open letter of one of the most influential organizations in the deaf community, the association of the Social Movement of Deaf Persons and Their Friends (RSGiP) reads: *[...] According to the statements of Deaf people, it turns out that the Presidents of the branches of the Polish Association of the Deaf are hearing. This is an example of overt discrimination of our community because, as the name suggests, the leaders of the community should be Deaf [...]*,[12] while in their demands, RSGiP indicates that: *[...] The President of the Board of the Polish Association of the Deaf has to be fluent in PJM and must come from the community and the whole Board of the Polish Association of the Deaf must entirely consist of Deaf people. In all branches Presidents must also be Deaf! They need to know PJM! […]*.[13] Members of the Social Movement of Deaf Persons and Their Friends do not define, however, what criteria must be met in order to be recognized as a deaf person with capitalized initial "d" apart from the supposed membership in the RSGiP. In this situation, when conducting research on the deaf community, it is difficult to relate to the criterion of cultural affiliation.

From the perspective of a researcher analysing psychological functions, the last possible criterion distinguishing between the members of the deaf community is the linguistic criterion. It can, in fact, be assumed that the language in which the thinking of people with hearing loss developed has decisive influence on the later functioning of that person. Unfortunately, at present, there are no Polish Sign Language dictionaries or Polish Sign Language manuals developed by linguists. The members of the Section for Sign Linguistics, that has existed since 2010 at the University of Warsaw, are in the process of developing a comprehensive grammatical and lexical description of PJM.[14] The lack of data on what can be considered the linguistic standard of Polish Sign Language makes

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[12] *List otwarty do ZG PZG*, http://g.klyo.net/list-otwarty-do-zg-pzg/ [access: 2.04.2014].

[13] *Postulaty*, www. http://g.klyo.net/list-otwarty-do-zg-pzg/ [access: 2.04.2014].

[14] *Pracownia Lingwistyki Migowej – O nas*, www.plm.uw.edu.pl [access: 16.03.2014].

evaluating which language (PJM or Polish) is better known by the participant only intuitive and burdened with large risk. Indeed, there is no possibility of creating accurate, reliable and standardized tools for assessing participants' language competence.

Summary

In Polish literature of the last half-century we have observed a change in thinking about deafness. Until the 1990s it was only considered in terms of deficiency and has been reported by means of various indicators, such as the degree of hearing loss (measured in different scales), the type of damage, its onset, etc. With the recognition of the Polish Sign Language as a natural language, deafness began to be viewed from the perspective of its culture-creating function. Some researchers have also become interested in the sign language itself and its impact on the cognitive functioning of people with hearing loss. There is still, however, some confusion in the definition of basic concepts, for example that of a *deaf person*. For some researchers, it will mean a person with the BIAS hearing loss degree above 90 dB, for others, a person who communicates primarily in the Polish Sign Language. The situation is similar to that described in the Indian Ballad about an elephant, in which six blind men are touching different parts of the body of one elephant:

It was six men of Indostan.
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant ~ (Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation ~ Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side ~ At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant is ~ is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried "Ho! what have we here?
So very round and smooth and sharp? ~ to me 'tis might clear
This wonder of the Elephant is very like a spear! […]

[…] And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his opinion ~ Exceeding stiff and strong,
Tough each was partly in the right ~ And all were in the wrong! […]

John Godfrey Saxe,
The Blind Man and the Elephant

Although none of the blind men is able to see the entire animal, each one considers that, based on his contact with one part of its body, he is able to create a complete image of an elephant. This brings about six independent ideas on what the elephant looks like. Paradoxically, none of them is true, but none of them is untrue, either.[15] A similar situation exists in the case of different ways of defining deafness and operationalising them for the purpose of research. It is therefore difficult to discuss the superiority of medical approach over socio-cultural approach (and vice versa) in thinking about deafness. It is crucial, however, to clearly define the basic notions and take relevant factors into consideration when conducting research, for example, in studies concerning the difficulties of children with hearing loss in learning how to speak an important criterion may be the onset of hearing loss, the type of damage and its degree. However, when trying to anticipate potential problems in a deaf child's education, it is probably better to focus on the level of linguistic development. Unfortunately, both Polish and foreign publications lack transparency in defining deafness and its related concepts. Consequently, it significantly reduces, for example, the possibility of carrying out meta-analyses of existing studies.[16] Under Polish conditions, due to unfinished research on the Polish Sign Language and the lack of a clear definition of a culturally deaf person, it is difficult to choose the socio-cultural perspective, which forces researchers to use vague definitions. We can, however, hope that this will change with the progress of research.

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[15] J.G. Saxe, *The Blind Man and the Elephant*, [in:] *The poems*, Boston 1868, p. 259.

[16] M. Marschark, P. Hauser, *Cognitive Underpinnings of Learning by Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students: Diffrences, Diversity, and Direction*, [in:] *Deaf Cognition – Foundations and Outcomes*, ed. these, Oxford – New York 2008, p. 14–15.

The meaning of sex education in the development of children and youth with autism spectrum

Anna Gulczyńska and Aneta Wojciechowska

Despite social and ideological changes, the sexuality of children and youth remains a difficult subject. This aspect of functioning is still tough to talk and write about. According to opinions of many people, a child is not defined as a sexual entity and they become one only during adolescence when their physical appearance changes. This narrow perception of a child as non-sexual entity probably comes from the need of perceiving a child as a pure being, and sexuality is still identified with something dirty, improper and obscene. A child, as a pure entity, is supposed to be innocent, pure and clear. This concept of sexuality, which has an influence on people's beliefs, contributes to thinking about interest of adolescent sexuality as something improper and not natural. Exploring the body and asking about the names of organs is often treated as an unhealthy attitude to eroticism and supposedly is a sign of a dysfunctional family, pathological parents, access to pornography or sexual harassment. It is worth mentioning that even when children do stay in an eroticized atmosphere, it leads to displaying sexuality in a more open way. Because of that, the ability of distinguishing things which are developmental and behaviours that lay outside the norm is essential.

The situation of youth seems to be even more difficult. Acceleration of developmental processes, including sexual sphere, and the impact of the world which is filled with sexual subjects cause that on the one hand youth is too eroticized, while on the other hand they have lack of elementary knowledge about the fundamental biological processes. Adolescents know a lot about behaviours outside the norm as well as numerous "experiments and plays"[1], whereas they have shortage of basics concepts from biology, anatomy and physiology of sex-

[1] B. Jankowiak, A. Gulczyńska, *Edukacja seksualna w socjoterapii*, "Neodidagmata", 2013, no. 35.

ual responses. Sexuality is more and more presented without any personal subject, it is isolated from relationship with another person; the idea of emotional engagement and feeling is even missed. The sexual world which adolescent is exploring is highly inconsistent, full of changing rules and chaotic patterns of behaviour.

In such a complicated and multifaceted social reality, caring about proper, or at least close to optimal, sexual development of children and youth is strongly significant. It is important to emphasize its meaning in declarative sphere as well as in practical sphere, related with introducing particular tasks and ideas from the range of sexual health. Nowadays, it is more and more visible that knowledgeable sex education is absolutely necessary. Access to modern technologies and world of billboards or shop displays filled with sexuality cause, that human is sexualized very early- so early that one doesn't notice the process during which is a main actor. The mentioned moment comes when human starts watching TV and using Internet, according to studies of L. Steinberg and K. C. Monahan the sexual contents (including conversations about sex, passionate kisses, touching and sexual intercourse) appear in 70 % of all TV shows, and on the Internet the access to erotic or pornographic contents is perpetual and unlimited.[2]

Thus, the powerful myth that the proper moment for passing this particular knowledge will come in the proper time seems threatening. It often appears that before child or adolescent acquire any knowledge about sex education, they have already had some sexual experiences which may be assimilated from peers' relationships or even from their from lives.

Issues which were presented above concern so-called normal people, but even though, they are still tough and require complex reactions. When we talk about people who are outside the norm – clinical, statistical, medical or they are in any way different than accepted a priori standards, discourse upon sexuality is even more difficult. We have to face the questions like how to educate children and adolescents who are physically or psychically disabled in sexual area, how to impart knowledge to deaf or blind people and how to people with behavioural disorders and neurological diseases. Finally, how should the sex education of people from intellectual norm but with such an unusual disorder like autism spectrum look like, how to pass knowledge and form proper attitudes towards sexuality and whether is there any point of doing it or not and which guidelines should we follow to adjust actions to character of disorders people with autism spectrum.

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[2] L. Steinberg, K.C. Monahan, *Adolescents' Exposure to Sexy Media Does Not Hasten the Initiation of Sexual Intercourse*, "Developmental Psychology", 2010, vol. 47, no. 2, p. 562–576.

Theoretical inspirations

Inspirations to write the following work had a few sources. As the first one, we can recognize the curriculum which functions in school education – both mass and special. The second source were the guidelines from the European Union, UN, WHO which postulate the necessity of providing education on the gender in pro-healthiness strategies and actions[3] and which were signed by Poland. The third source, which addresses the conceptual work aspect, are theories involving the functioning of people with an autism spectrum. The fourth source came from the necessity of citing significant English researches as there is a lack of Polish publications and studies concerning sex education of people with an autism spectrum from intellectual norm.

Every child in Poland is obliged to school education which enables strict control of the information submitted. Therefore, schools are obliged to implement contents about sex education by virtue of the "About family planning, protection of human foetus and conditions of pregnancy termination acceptability" law of January 7, 1993 and appropriate ordinances. The history of changes in sexual education at schools was described in detail in another publication by Kasperek-Golimowska.[4] Of particular importance is the order of February 27, 2012 by the Minister of National Education. It modified regulations concerning the system of school education and scope of contents involving knowledge about human sexual life, principles of conscious and responsible parenthood, family values, life during prenatal development and methods and means of procreation in the curriculum.

We can read that:

§ 1 section 2: Classes are held in grade 5 and 6 in primary schools, in junior secondary schools, vocational schools, secondary schools and in grades 1 to 3 of technical colleges, including special ones, for children and youth, in the public and private education system with state school privileges.

§ 3 and 3a: According to the curriculum, classes should be held for 14 hours in each school year for students of particular grades, including 5 hours for classes with boys and girls divided into separate groups.[5]

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[3] A. Gulczyńska, E. Kasperek-Golimowska, P. Rąglewska, *Edukacja zdrowotna w kontekście różnic płciowych*, "Nowiny Lekarskie", 2011, no. 5 (80), p. 344–348; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/ LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:2006:146:0004: 005:PL:PDF [access: 5.12.2013]; http://osha.europa.eu/pl/publications/reports/20 [access: 12.01.2014]; http://www.parpa.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=188&Itemid=20 [access: 5.01.2014].

[4] E. Kasperek-Golimowska, *Edukacja seksualna jako forma ochrony i promocji zdrowia seksualnego*, [in:] *Przemiany seksualności w społeczeństwie współczesnym. Teoria i rzeczywistość*, ed. K. Waszyńska, Z. Lew-Starowicz, Poznań 2012, p. 87–131.

[5] http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20120000300 [access: 1.03.2014].

Sex education is taught during Family Life education classes. The contents of the curriculum in primary schools are: elementary functions of family with emphasizing the child's role; values and tradition in the family; spending leisure time and celebrating with the family; family ties, emotional relationships and other relations in the family; disagreements and ways of solving them; motherhood and fatherhood; elementary knowledge concerning the structure and functioning of the reproductive system; pregnancy, foetus development, acceptance of a child as a new family member; similarities and differences between boys and girls; gender identification; body acceptation and respect; physical and mental changes of adolescence; diversification and individual pace of development; hygiene of adolescence; human right to intimacy and respect of this law; assertive attitudes; essence of friendship, mutual respect, giving help, cooperation, empathy; mass media – rules and criteria of choosing magazines, books, movies and TV shows; institutions helping children and families; responsibility for own development; self-upbringing.[6]

In junior secondary schools, the lawmaker claims that the following subjects should be discussed during Family Life education classes: showing respect to others, appreciating their efforts and work, following the self-respect attitude; a positive contribution to the family; integral vision of a person; choice and implementation of values supporting self-development; directing of self-development, taking self-upbringing effort in accordance with accepted norms and values; recognizing, analyzing and expressing emotions; solving the problems and struggling adolescence; knowledge of human body and its changes and acceptance of own gender; ability to protect intimacy and inviolability and respect to other person's body; using mass-media in a selective way, enabling protection against disruptive influence; ability of using crisis centres for children and youth.

As we can see, the thematic scope of sex education is very wide. The question is, which contents should be chosen for people with an autism spectrum, taking in consideration their cognitive, social and emotional limitations?

The directives from the World Health Organization related with sexual education claim that there is a necessity of providing it – also for people with varied limitations in order to maintain and develop sexual health comprehended as integrating biological, emotional, intellectual and social aspects of sexual life which are essential to positive personal development, communication and love.[7] We can read about indications to executing another type of sexual education in the document of WHO's Country Office. Education is less threatening and

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[6] http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20090040017 [access: 1.03.2014].

[7] http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/sh_definitions/en/ [access: 1.02.2014].

less concentrated on a potential risk, and more holistic, involving human psycho-physical unity in a particular point of life. "It can help children and young people develop elementary abilities enabling self-defining of their sexualities and relationships on different levels of growth. This attitude helps them experience their sexuality and relationships in a satisfactory and responsible way. These abilities are also essential to protect them against potential factors of risk.[8]" Children's learning about sexual behaviours, both in a formal and informal way, was also emphasized in the document and people with an autism spectrum have a much more difficult task with the informal way of learning it. The difficulty with forming one's own sexual identity and absorbing knowledge from unintentional sources comes directly from their cognitive and social limitations. At the same time, these people, as well as their standard developing peers, need space and understanding in the social background where they live. People with autism who function near the norm line will develop in the same biological way and their physiological and social needs, weak or hardly mentalized, will be observed in behavioural rates and strictly determined behaviours.

There comes a huge need of proposals of specific reactions which are possible in Poland according to the law.

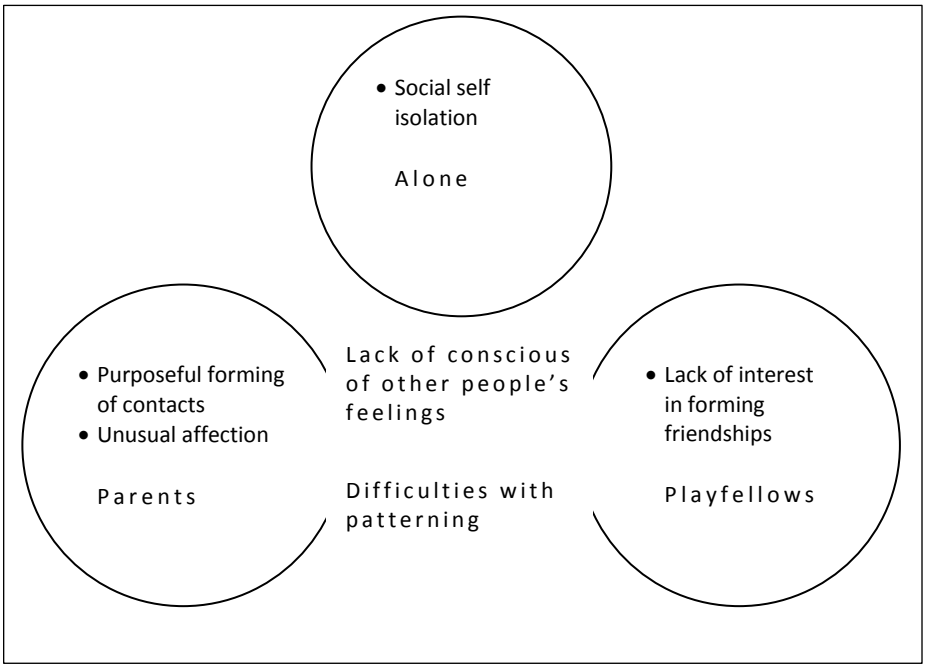
Relationships development of people with autism spectrum disorders

Building proper relationships during the lifetime is associated with an appropriate social development, which is processed in a very particular way from the earliest years of people with autism spectrum.

The social sphere is a main area where dysfunctions of people with an autism spectrum appear, both qualitative and quantitative. Siegel recognizes characteristic aspects of social development of a child with autism spectrum which, according to literature, are the most common problems that underwent the analysis and interpretation of many scientists. People with autism spectrum, in spite of their normal appearances, are considered in social communication as "different" which comes from their abnormal and sometimes strange behaviours and specific language. Interpersonal contact with such people is a very difficult barrier in social functioning. The following diagram presents the aspects of the social development of people with an autism spectrum.

Characteristics of she ocial developmental aspects of children with autism spectrum disorders:

[8] http://www.federa.org.pl/dokumenty_pdf/edukacja/WHO_BZgA_Standardy_edukacji_seksualnej.pdf, p. 5.



Source: B. Winczura, 2008

The peer relationship development of people with an autism spectrum is defined as a hard and complex process which is surely influenced by difficulties with social abilities development, such as disorders of the perception of other people's behaviour, difficulties with assessing feelings and their proper performing, difficulties with reading nonverbal communication which is indirect or ambiguous, difficulties with understanding jokes, metaphors and tropes – theory of mind disorders.

The studies show that children and youth during school period have negative experiences with peer contacts, they often meet verbal and physical abuse towards them. They are also aggressive which, on the one hand, comes from the lack of understanding of social functioning rules and, on the other hand, the lack of understanding of the problem by the peers of people with an autism spectrum disorder. Relationship models, which are built by teenagers with an autism spectrum are on the lower level in comparison to their age. The youth is characterized by building of relations based on a much lower level of understanding of social relations and functioning in peer group. These are mainly task relations which are characteristic of children at a younger school age.[9]

[9] E.g. T. Attwood, *Zespół Aspergera: wprowadzenie*, Poznań 2006; S.E. Gutstein, *Czy moje maleństwo nauczy się tańczyć? Badania nad związkami przyjaźni i koleżeństwa u nastolatków z zespo-*

Young people with autism spectrum disorders are willing to have a friend, a close person who they can confide in with their secrets, emotions, difficulties, but when it comes to contact with another person, the difficulties on the communication level appear so the friendship is recognized by these people only on the theoretical level.[10] Because of these difficulties, the abnormalities, which are observed during the forming of mature relationships and sexual relations, appear. Having this knowledge, it is worth implementing specific solutions during the school education level, with sexual education especially advisable.

Proper sexual development is defined by adolescence and physical growth which integrate the right social functioning which influences the comfort of a person. Sexual health represents a basic element of sexual education. It can be perceived as a result of sexual development which causes proper functioning in adult life.

Tolman and McClelland (2011) distinguish three aspects of sexual development: 1) sexual behaviour – a repertoire of behaviours associated with sexuality, individually or towards others, (2) sexual personality – internal development of people including their knowledge, attitudes, identity, idea of oneself as a sexual individual and as a partner in a relationship, (3) sexual socialization – different social backgrounds where people learn about relations and sexuality and where they can experience it.[11]

When we observe different aspects of sexual development, it is worth considering if these are elements which are properly implemented to people with an autism spectrum. Undoubtedly, dysfunctions of social developments influence perceiving oneself as a sexual individual. If a young person does not have positive experiences with peer contacts, he or she will not identify oneself as a socially accepted person. Knowledge about social behaviours of a person with the problem in question is often insufficient to take collaboration in peer group or to build relations with peers suiting their age. We can conclude that these difficulties will have significant meaning in building relations on a partnership level.

Youth with autism spectrum disorders are exposed to a range of sexual behaviours effects including sexual abuses and behaviours related with normative adolescence. The researches quoted in this work indicate that youth with an autism spectrum disorder are interested in sexuality just like their fully able

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łem Aspergera, [in:] *Zespół Aspergera w okresie dojrzewania. Wzloty, upadki i cała reszta*, ed. L.H. Willey, Warszawa 2006.

[10] A. Wojciechowska, *Wśród ludzi na własnych zasadach? O możliwościach i ograniczeniach w budowaniu relacji z rówieśnikami przez młodzież z zespołem Aspergera*, "Studia Edukacyjne", 2013, no. 28.

[11] D.L. Tolman, S.I. McClelland, *Normative sexuality development in adolescence: a decade in review, 2000–2009*, "Journal of Research on Adolescence", 2011, no. 21, p. 242–255.

peers are. However, the knowledge of teenagers with ADS about building relations, engaging into relationships and sexual relations is significantly lower in comparison to their peers' without autism spectrum.[12] Abnormal behaviours observed during adolescence can be a result of disorders coming from characteristic features of the problem of development in question, which are disorders of social functioning, communicating and nonstandard behaviours related with it. These areas are essential to build proper relationships and incorrect perception of social situation leads to wrong functioning in relationships and presenting inadequate behaviour. A young person with ASD can misinterpret other person's behaviours, they can have difficulties with judging if a particular behaviour can be presented in public or only in the private situations. There can also be problems with assessing the intentions of other people which can cause provoking unwanted sexual behaviours. Some people present abnormal and sometimes obsessive behaviours towards others in order to start contact. Social disorders of people with an autism spectrum, in combination with their desire to build relations and create relationships, can lead to sexual abuses, engaging into risky sexual acts or being a victim of sexual harassment.[13]

Numerous researches show that despite the difficulties, people with an autism spectrum are still interested in the opposite sex as well as relations between two people and sexual sphere. Research by Byers and others (2012) proved that half of the people with an autism spectrum disorder in the intellectual norm who took part in the project built relationships and initiated sexual behaviours with their partners.[14] Similar observations were held by Hellemans and others who also claimed that half of the examined youth group with the problem in question were in the partner relationships as well as in the physical relations.[15]

Other studies showed that most of the people with autism spectrum are interested in sexuality, only few persons performed asexual behaviours and were not interested in that area of functioning.

Henault and Atwood discovered that the average age of initiating sexual interest is about 14, and the age of first experiences is 21. It was also proved that

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[12] M.P. Ballan, *Parental Perspectives of Communication about Sexuality in Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorderp*, "Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders", 2012, no. 42, p. 676–684.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] E.S. Byers, S. Nichols, S.D. Voyer, G. Reilly, *Sexual well-being of a community sample of high-functioning adults on the autism spectrum who have been in a romantic relationship*, "Autism", 2012, vol. 17, no. 4.

[15] H. Hellemans, H. Roeyers, W. Leplae, T. Dewaele, D. Deboutte, *Sexual behavior in male adolescents and young adults with autism spectrum disorder and borderline/mild mental retardation*, "Sexuality and Disability", 2010, no. 28, p. 93–104.

men are more interested in sexual topics than women. They claimed that the homosexual orientation of women with an autism spectrum is more frequent than of women in a clinical control group. Many participants of the study also mentioned homosexual fantasies.[16]

The sexual education of students with an autism spectrum is a complex process. There are no educational solutions in this area in Poland; Polish literature does not provide information about the methods of working with the youth who suffer from the developmental problems discussed. Moreover, textbooks which are available on the official website of the Ministry of National Education are also improper for people with an autism spectrum disorder. They do not explore the sexuality of people with disabilities and developmental disorders. Perhaps because of a narrow range of readers, there are no extra brochures or scripts with educational guidelines for teachers and parents. Subject literature about people with intellectual disorders is not very varied, either; however, these contents are available.[17] We also need to consider two areas of sexual education – for people with an intellectual disability and for people with autism spectrum disorders in intellectual norm. The second group constitutes a big challenge for Polish education.

Practical tips for executing sex education among a group of people with an autism spectrum in intellectual norm:

1. Using scientific research and news, for example concerning the theory of mind, to create and realize tasks of sex education.
2. Less theory, more practice and teaching-specific behaviours (this method of learning seems to be easy for people without an autism spectrum because knowledge is absorbed unintentionally, while participating in social life).
3. Creating a script – first on the basis of foreign studies – about sex education which can be used when working with people with an autism spectrum.
4. Emphasizing the broad meaning of sex education – not just learning it in the scope of biological conditioning, but also as a part of social reality.
5. Adjusting contents to needs and their completion over learning through activities. We should remember about the difficulties of people with an autism spectrum which appear in understanding of contents, verbal and nonverbal messages. It is emphasized to use vocabulary proper to the age of each person in sex education. In case of a person with an autism

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[16] I. Henault, T. Attwood, *The sexual profile of adults with Asperger's syndrome: the need for support and intervention*, [in:] *Asperger's Syndrome and Sexuality: From Adolescence through Adulthood*, ed. I. Henault, London 2006, p. 183–192.

[17] E.g. M. Kościelska, *Niechciana seksualność. O ludzkich potrzebach osób niepełnosprawnych intelektualnie*, Warszawa 2004; R. Kijak, *Seks i niepełnosprawność. Doświadczenia seksualne osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, Kraków 2009.

spectrum, we should remember about adjusting vocabulary to the ability of understanding it by the student.

6. Need to focus on relations and what is important to start, maintain and finish them. Firstly, we should focus on giving knowledge and building practical abilities in starting and maintaining talks, following talks of peers, performing different social roles (acting these roles is recommended – we should remember that social therapy classes are supposed to be an element of the whole process of sex education of person with autism spectrum). These classes should be continued on every level of children and youth school education in order to give a young person an opportunity to gain the necessary practical abilities of social functioning on every level of life.
7. Knowledge (information) concerning human sexuality (biological basis and socio-cultural conditioning) in comparison to other areas, in case of people with ASD it is quite simple to absorb it, therefore pressure on its practical aspect, especially interpersonal relationships, is essential.
8. Creating, developing and improving abilities of sexual behaviours, including these undertaken between two people.
9. Creating, developing and improving social competences of sexual behaviours.
10. Education of parents focused on showing the necessity of executing sexual contents in the upbringing of a young person with an autism spectrum. Giving knowledge to parents – in a short and clear form, which is supported by examples from realized materials as they could require from their children social contents and behaviours adequate to their age.
11. Education of teachers in order to deal with difficulties which can appear during the development of a young person with an ASD in the context of sexual behaviours – difficulties with understanding their biological changes and difficulties with comprehending the significance of peer relationships and adjusting their behaviours to the situation. Teachers should be informed how to talk about sexual behaviours which a person with an autism spectrum can present in contact with peers, how to respond to these behaviours and in which situations not to react. "Communication code" should be established with the teenage in order to consult the difficulties in a discreet way or to receive discreet signals from the teacher about abnormal behaviour.
12. It is very important to sensitize peers to different characters of people with an autism spectrum. They have to understand that, in spite of a normal appearance of a friend, this person may not totally understand what happens around him or her. Teaching and classifying that behaviours can be understood in different ways is essential. It is a good idea to teach how to react to these behaviours in a respectful and acceptable way.

Simple obesity in children in the context of their dependence on the field of nutrition

Małgorzata Cichecka-Wilk

The notion of simple obesity describes the condition of an organism characterized by excess body fat[1] which is a direct result of a disturbance of the balance between the energy supply and its expenditure. As opposed to complex obesity, associated with disorders and syndromes (which are endocrine disorders, diseases and injuries of the central nervous system, chromosomal abnormalities or pharmacotherapy with some medicines), simple obesity does not result from pathological reasons.

The current researches on the frequency of occurrence of simple obesity in children indicate the significant extent of this phenomenon. It is assumed that in the whole world 155 million children are overweight or obese[2]. The number is still growing. It was also noticed that the pace of this growth had become faster and faster. In the majority of regions of the world, simple obesity has already become a common disorder of the young generation. In some societies (e.g. in the USA) it is even referred to as epidemics.

In Poland, simple obesity is also the most frequent disorder in the physical development of children and teenagers. Depending on the age and sex, it is diagnosed in 5 to 15% of the population.[3] According to the research of the Institute of Cardiology in Warsaw (POL-MONICA), every fourteenth child in their first decade of life and every tenth in their second decade has excess body mass.[4] Other data show that the number of Polish children who are overweight

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[1] In Poland it was established that in case of children, obesity is characterized by the value of body weight placed above the 97th centile in the centile chart.

[2] A. Obuchowicz, *Epidemiologia nadwagi i otyłości – narastającego problemu zdrowotnego w populacji dzieci i młodzieży*, "Endokrynologia. Otyłość i Zaburzenia Przemiany Materii", 2005, no. 3, vol. 1.

[3] K. Kubicka, W. Kawalec, *Pediatria*, Warszawa 2004.

[4] K. Czyżewska, *Patofizjologiczne podstawy wybranych chorób. Część III. Otyłość*, Poznań 2000.

or obese accounts for 10 to 30%.[5] Specialists inform that in the upcoming few years the escalation of this phenomenon can be expected, as well as the growth of the scale of negative consequences connected to it.

The substance of simple obesity is the accumulation of the fatty tissue in the organism when its amount exceeds physiological needs and adaptation capacity. Research proves that this state provokes very serious consequences of the somatic, psychological and social-economical nature.

Scientists provide convincing findings that simple obesity carries serious threats to children and teenagers' health. It multiplies the risk of the occurrence of numerous diseases as it has a negative influence on developing systems and organs. In connection with the excess of the fatty tissue in the organism, the activity of various internal organs becomes dysfunctional. Therefore, obese children often suffer from osteoarticular illnesses, problems with thermoregulation and skin inflammatory states. Significant vulnerability to the illnesses of the respiratory system (tendency to inflammations of the respiratory tract, allergies, increased risk of genesis of asthma, sleep apnoea) and the digestive system (slowness of the motor activity of the digestive system, inflammation states of the gallbladder, cholelithiasis). The excess of lipids in blood, including cholesterol, seriously increases the risk of ischemic heart disease, coronary attack, arteriosclerosis and type 2 diabetes[6] in these children. Even before age 10, the children may be diagnosed with hypertension.[7] More than their slim peers, obese children are exposed to disorders of the processes of growth and puberty, neoplastic and autoimmune diseases and many more. The negative results of simple obesity are not only limited to somatic disorders occurring during the childhood period. Numerous researches on obesity prove that there are links between the occurrence of simple obesity during childhood and the genesis of many illnesses at the adult age. What is more, it has to be noticed that childhood obesity significantly increases the possibility of keeping excess weight until the adult age.[8] In the perspective of the whole life, obesity should be indicated as a factor directly conditioning its length. In connection with more and more common occurrence of obesity among children, it is estimated that they can be the first generation in history whose life expectancy will be shorter than their parents'.[9]

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[5] M. Wosik-Erenbek, J. Szpotan, *Opieka ambulatoryjna nad dziećmi z otyłością i nadwagą – własne doświadczenia*, "Polska Medycyna Rodzinna", 2002, no. 4.

[6] Type 2 diabetes (the so-called non-insulin-dependent diabetes) – metabolic disease which is initially characterized by insulin resistance (decreased sensitivity of tissues to insulin), relative insulin deficiency and hypoglycemia (too high blood sugar level).

[7] M. Jablow, *Anoreksja, bulimia, otyłość*, Gdańsk 2000, p. 88.

[8] M. Montignac, *Metoda Montignac dla dzieci. Zapobieganie i leczenie otyłości dziecięcej*, Warszawa 2004, p. 12.

[9] M. Gadziński, *Generacja XXL*, "Gazeta Wyborcza", 2004, no. 26/590, p. 12.

Nevertheless, obesity is not only a threat for the physical health. It can also have negative consequences for children's psyche. Being obese is sometimes a difficulty and a source of bad mental feelings for children. It is connected with the fact that obese people come across a kind of discrimination in society. They are not only perceived as less physically attractive but they are also attributed worse character features and lower educational or work competences. Obese people are accused of being lazy, having poor intelligence and a tendency to lie, being untidy and showing the lack of feelings.[10] Therefore, excess weight is a kind of stigma. Obese children often become subjects of persecution. It was assumed that they were victims of verbal and physical violence and social isolation significantly more frequently than slim children.[11] The unfavourable attitude of the society makes obese children easily believe that they are worth less. Their negative self-esteem refers to their mental and physical features as well as to their social functioning. Perceiving oneself as unattractive to others contributes to the creation of low self-esteem and the feeling of loneliness. It is connected with experiencing sadness, sorrow and even depression. Therefore, for children, excess weight happens to be a serious problem which significantly changes the quality of their mental functioning.

What is more, it should be noticed that the results connected with excess weight not only affect the obese person but also their closer and further environment. A child's obesity may lead to negative changes in the family life. For example, the occurrence of medical problems in an obese child often makes the family members overconcentrate on the disease and push aside other important family issues. Against the background of the problems, the child's overweight often leads to conflicts in the family.[12] In the broader perspective of the general social consequences, obesity may somehow take away the chance of full and healthy development and making advantage of one's own potential from the children. It has already been known how obesity decreases the sources of physical and mental health in children. What needs to be emphasized here is that obesity significantly changes the quality of their social functioning. Obesity contributes to the impairment of their contacts with other people. It hinders children from making friends and, as for the future, it heralds problems with finding a life partner or a job.[13] Due to health complications and sometimes limited ability to move, excess weight happens to be an important obstacle in performing social roles. In the childhood period, it causes frequent school

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[10] http://www.bupa.co.uk.

[11] I.W. Janssen, W. Boyce, *Association between overweight and obesity with bulling behaviors in school-aged children*, "Pediatrics", 2004, no. 113 (5).

[12] I. Niewiadomska, A. Kulik, A. Hajduk, *Jedzenie*, Lublin 2005, p. 160.

[13] A. Basdevant, M. Le Barzic, B. Guy-Grand, *Otyłość*, Kraków 1996.

absenteeism and limits the obese students' possibility of succeeding at school. It was also researched that, in connection with the experienced emotional difficulties, obese children usually resigned from further education earlier, which exposed them to poverty and unemployment in their adult lives.[14] Apart from the outcomes mentioned so far, obesity also entails expenses. In connection with being so widespread, obesity currently constitutes a very serious economical burden for many societies.

Summing up, it needs to be stated that simple obesity is a phenomenon provoking numerous negative consequences, in the individual aspect as well as the social aspect. The awareness of the consequences induces asking the question about the factors which contribute to the genesis of obesity and possible ways of eliminating them.

Currently it is known that the aetiology of simple obesity is not homogenous. There are many factors which are causes of its genesis. They can be divided into: biological factors (e.g. disposition to abnormal storage of fatty tissue and lowered pace of metabolism), socio-cultural (e.g. incorrect eating habits in a family or low physical activity) and psychosocial (mainly connected with satisfying the mental needs with food).[15] Simple obesity in children is the outcome of their combined influence.

As far as prevention is concerned, the greatest opportunities are created by modifying the influence of the environment because it is the environment which shapes particular lifestyles, health behaviours and awareness in children. It constitutes a great chance of preventing children's simple obesity and problems connected to it. That is why it is adults' role and responsibility for developing correct behaviours related to nutrition should be underlined, as well as their role and responsibility for possible disorders in this area.

Previous considerations and research outcomes indicate the parents and family's fundamental role in nutritional education (and generally health education) in children because family is the first and basic institution where a child learns the elementary behaviours and gains the health information and experience crucial for the child's development. The fact that a family has a possibility of a very early influence on a child, actually from the moment of their conception, is exceptionally significant. What is more, no other educational environment has a chance of such a long-term influence (usually, until coming of age, and sometimes even till the end of their life) as a family.

The family's influence on the children's eating habits starts in their mothers' intrauterine environment. According to David Barker's scientific hypothesis, the so-called nutritional programming takes place in the foetal period of

[14] Ibidem.

[15] I. Niewiadomska, A. Kulik, A. Hajduk, op. cit., p. 118.

a human life. Therefore, the malnutrition of a foetus in the first and second trimester of pregnancy causes intrauterine hypotrophy[16] in children which (as it was found out) in advantageous nutritional conditions after birth joins with a tendency to a very fast weight gain, which is significantly conducive to the development of obesity. Future mothers' eating practices which are characterized by excessive consumption of some nutritious elements may have similar results.[17] The research carried out in 1995 showed that unfavourable nutritional environment in the uterus could result in diseases occurring in the far future.[18] Mothers' bad eating habits in the period of pregnancy influence the foetuses' development, structure and organic functions, which occurs as the organism's tendency to some diseases tens of years later. According to scientists, pregnant woman's diet rich in saccharides and dairy products of high glycemic indexes.[19]is one of the reasons of bearing children with weight gain tendencies.[20] Incorrect way of feeding can activate them, even in the infancy stage. Therefore, the care for proper nutrition, and prevention from the excess body mass in children should start in the prenatal period from the highly aware parenthood of the mothers.

In infancy, in turn, natural feeding is of a great importance to obesity prevention. According to doctors' conclusions, breastfeeding children during at least the first half a year of a child's life, reduces the frequency of the occurrence of obesity at the school age by about 30% in comparison to children fed with milk mixture.[21] It was stated that the longer the period of breastfeeding a child was, the smaller the risk of obesity occurrence in a child was.[22] In the opinion of specialists, during the first five months of life, mother's milk should be the only food of a child. It is not recommended to apply new nutrients. Too early differentiation of a child's diet may disturb their nutritional balance because of the excess of proteins (included e.g. in cow milk, eggs, meet, fish). It results in a faster development of the child, provoking precocious overweight states (preceding the natural body mass gains occurring around the age of 6

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[16] Intrauterine hypotrophy – birth weight deficiency in relation to body weight proper to specific week of fetal life.

[17] A. Obuchowicz, *Otyłość dzieci i młodzieży – przyczyny, sposoby oceny i metody zapobiegania*, "Forum Profilaktyki", 2007, no. 3 (8).

[18] M. Montignac, op. cit., p. 101.

[19] Glycemic Index (GI) – classification of food products on the basis of their influence on the blood glucose level 2–3 hours after their consumption (postprandial glycemia); the higher the GI value of a specific product, the higher the blood glucose level after consuming the product; products with high glycemic indexes cause both high peak blood glucose level and its fast decrease.

[20] M. Montignac, op. cit., p. 102.

[21] A. Obuchowicz, *Otyłość dzieci i młodzieży…*, ed. cit.

[22] M.W. Gillman, S.L. Rifas-Shiman, C.A. Camargo, *Risk of overweight among adolescents who where breastfed as infants*, "Jama", 2001, no. 285 (19), 2461–7.

and in the puberty period), threatening with obesity in later years.[23] Feeding infants with food including cereal flour has similar results. This kind of food mainly results in producing useless energy which leads to storing fat reserves. What is more, it is a source of carbohydrates of high glycemic indexes which cause unwanted metabolic processes (hyperglycemia[24] and hyperinsulinism[25]) leading to obesity in further years. Giving water with sugar to infants also contributes to excess weight gain. Giving children biscuits or bread crust in breaks between meals is equally disadvantageous. They contain gluten and saccharides of high glycemic indexes. What is more, this kind of practice develops the precocious habit of snacking in children.[26]

Scientists emphasize that the improper quality composition of food which is given to children by adults is one of the crucial environmental factors which condition overweight and obesity. In the prenatal period, the foetus is under the influence of the products eaten by its mother. However, in the first two years of life, when a child is only fed with milk, as well as after applying the varied diet, the kind of food which is regularly eaten by a child shapes their future metabolic profile. A bad choice of products may therefore cause a child to have a tendency to become fat. This kind of feeding mistakes fixed by a child's guardians in the following stages of a child's development seriously increases the probability of occurrence of overweight or obesity.

Not only is the quality of the food given to children important but also the amount. In the context of the problem discussed, the elementary significance is assigned to its surplus. In the infancy period, feeding children at strictly scheduled times of a day is conducive to overfeeding. Infants fed this way do not receive food in pursuance of their own needs (as the children fed on demand), led by the feeling of hunger or satiety. They eat at fixed times, often not even being hungry. The children who are given mother's breast to suck whenever they cry also happen to be overfed. A baby's crying does not always mean that the baby is hungry. They may only demand attention, caress or they may be annoyed. A mother reacting this way makes her child get used to reaching for food whenever she shows affection to them. What is more, she teaches the child to fulfil the needs different from hunger with food. In the future, the child may display tendencies to fulfil boredom, loneliness, nervousness or sadness with food which leads to a bigger threat from the problem of overweight.[27] However, in many adults' opinion, a plump child is a picture of health and physical vigour.

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[23] M. Montignac, op. cit., p. 147.

[24] Hyperglycemia – too high blood sugar levels.

[25] Hyperinsulinism – excessive production of insulin.

[26] M. Montignac, op. cit., p. 148.

[27] N. Ogińska-Bulik, *Psychologia nadmiernego jedzenia*, Łódź 2004, p. 26.

This kind of parents usually shape improper eating behaviours in their children, due to the consumption of great amounts of food. Usually, they are the examples of the models of the behaviours. The children brought up in the companion of overeating parents become convinced of the need of very plentiful food consumption. They copy their parents' habits and they usually 'inherit' their abundant silhouettes. It also happens that children eat excessive amounts of food under the pressure of constant encouragements, and sometimes under the duress from the entourage.[28] In some families food plays the role of an educational measure. It can replace support, it may be used as a reward, it may also be a duty to perform regardless of the child's natural sense of hunger.[29]

Other incorrect eating behaviours learnt by children are also not indifferent to the phenomenon of obesity. In numerous researches it was proved that childhood obesity was connected to eating too few meals and the irregularity of their consumption. Obese children often do not eat breakfasts, and their main meal is usually late and abundant dinner which is followed by equally abundant supper in a short time. Therefore, they eat rarely but in big portions. Meanwhile, the rhythm of eating meals has an influence on the proportions of transformation of the nutritive agents into fat and muscle proteins. The scarcer the foods are eaten, the bigger the build-ups of the fatty tissue are.[30] That is how the organism protects itself and in a way gets addicted to irregular supplies of new portions of needed energy. Moreover, what is also conducive to weight gain in children is the habit of snacking between meals cultivated in many families. It is exceptionally unfavourable when in the breaks between the fundamental meals, guardians let children eat sweets and drink great amounts of sweetened beverages.[31] It shows that the family environment influences children's attitudes towards eating in a predominant way. Unfortunately, it also often creates wrong behaviours connected to eating, preparing favourable conditions for the development of obesity.

As the time goes by, the broadly understood environment gains bigger and bigger influence on the way the children eat. What needs to be remarked is, first of all, the role of schools. Apart from the family, this is the environment which bears the burden and responsibility for conducting health education and its results (including nutritional education). Unfortunately, the teaching programmes which are in force at Polish schools do not ensure sufficient nutritional education for children. The main reason for this state is the fact that educa-

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[28] M. Grójec, *Otyłość bez tajemnic*, Warszawa 1983, p. 26.

[29] N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 58.

[30] A. Gutowska-Wyka, *Biopsychospołeczne przyczyny nadwagi i otyłości u dzieci*, "Zeszyty Naukowe WSHE w Łodzi", 2000, no. 6, p. 11; N. Ogińska-Bulik, A. Gutowska-Wyka, *Lęk i radzenie sobie ze stresem u dzieci z nadwagą*, "Sztuka Leczenia", 2001, no. 2.

[31] S. Owczarek, *O otyłości i odchudzaniu*, Warszawa 1989.

tion on nutrition in Polish schools does not have a proper rank in the society. Teachers themselves treat this topic neglectfully and they often resign from it for the benefit of other issues. Apart from it, schools lack specialized teachers, school books and teaching aids. Classrooms are poorly equipped and often devoted to various classes. Thus, it may be stated that schools in Poland generally do not use even the possibilities of teaching about nutrition which are created by the existing programme to a sufficient degree.[32] The situation regarding collective feeding looks equally unsatisfactory. A lack of awareness of the role of proper nutrition in the right psychophysical development of children is observed among its executers. Research shows that the level of knowledge among the people who organise collective feeding is low, especially in the area of the principles of evaluating the hygienic situation of the feeding institutions and composing proper menus.[33] The insufficient knowledge of the principles of proper nutrition results in badly balanced meals in schools.[34] In many schools canteens function in a wrong way because of poor financing. Only 40% of schools have proper conditions to prepare warm meals, and only every third school serves them.[35] In numerous cases school canteens are closed. The attempts at popularizing school breakfasts and 'a glass of milk' were not successful. What is also observed is the negative phenomenon of eliminating long breaks between lessons, which were intended, between other arrangements, to give children the opportunity of calm consumption. In the majority of schools the attention is only paid to ensuring the meal only to the children from the poorer families (10-15% of all the students), meanwhile, it is advisable, with regard to the physiological matters as well as the educational ones, that all the students eat meals at school. School stores and food vending machines in schools are the other problematic matter related to children's nutritional education. In many schools they take over the role of canteens. In the meantime, the products bought there only suppress the sensation of hunger instead of fulfilling the children's nutritional needs. That is because most of the products are the so-called 'junk food'. According to Szponar and Rychlik[36], school stores or buffets work in 83.7% of schools in cities and towns, and in 46.2% of schools in the village environment. They mainly offer sweets, fruit juices and fizzy

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[32] M. Jeżewska-Zychowicz, *Zachowania żywieniowe i ich uwarunkowania*, Warszawa 2007, p. 95.

[33] L. Szponar, K. Stoś, *Poziom wiadomości o wymaganiach higienicznych i zasadach racjonalnego żywienia wśród pracowników stołówek w szkołach podstawowych i przedszkolach w Polsce*, "Żywienie Człowieka i Metabolizm", 1997, no. 4.

[34] K. Wolnicka, *Żywienie zbiorowe dzieci i młodzieży*, "Nowa Medycyna", 1998, no. 5.

[35] M. Gajewska, B. Ignar-Golinowska, *Ocena żywienia uczniów w Polsce na podstawie danych stacji sanitarno-epidemiologicznych za rok 2001*, "Rocznik Państwowego Zakładu Higieny", 2003, p. 2.

[36] L. Szponar, E. Rychlik, *Żywienie zbiorowe dzieci i młodzieży szkolnej w Polsce*, "Roczniki Państwowego Zakładu Higieny", 2000, p. 51.

drinks. Groceries which could provide children with a balanced meal at school as sandwiches, milk preserves or fruit are sold only by few shops. This practice causes significant limitations of the role of the school as a source of proper nutritional knowledge and the example of the right eating habits. At the same time, it contributes to its students' wrong nutrition. What is worth emphasizing here is that it is not only teachers who perform the role of educators in schools. This task belongs, to some degree, to all the adults working in schools (including the owners of the school stores). Considering the school environment as a source of knowledge about nutrition, one also needs to take into account the influence of a peer group. It is not difficult to notice that the group takes its part in changing nutritional beliefs and behaviours in children. The desire of imitating or being better than others in their nutritional experiences plays an elementary role in this process.[37] What usually underlies such motivation is the need of being accepted by friends and the feeling of being included in a group. The approval of the behaviours and standards valid in a specific peer environment results from the fact that the deviations from the beliefs and behaviours expected in a group cause disapproval, and often even hostility. The desire for adaptation in a peer group may potentially have both positive and negative effects on the nutritional education. The teachers and parents' everyday observations incline to the conclusion that the influence of a peer group has unwelcome results in this matter more frequently. In the face of this phenomenon, what is clearly visible is the important role of the educators in schools as people correcting the incorrectness which occurs in the process of children's nutritional education. Teachers are the people who should set the examples of the right nutritional behaviours for their students (and their parents as well).

The mass media are also very important in the course of shaping the awareness and behaviours connected with eating. At present, children use media for about five and a half hours a day. This is longer than the time spent on any other activity except from sleeping.[38] However, in the broadcasting directed to children, much time is taken by advertising campaigns. Many of them promote food like candies, fizzy drinks and various snacks (the so-called "junk food"). Researchers pay attention to the fact that since the broadcasting for children (as entertainment TV programs, cable television programs, videos, computer programs and websites) started increasing, the number of cases of obesity has started rising. Specialists assumed that the media contribute to the development of obesity in children to a significant degree. Inducing to unhealthy diet, the mass media repeatedly destroy the parents and doctors' pro-

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[37] M. Jeżewska-Zychowicz, op. cit., p. 106.

[38] *The Role of Media in Childhood Obesity*, http://kff.org/other/issue-brief/the-role-of-media-in-childhood-obesity/ [access: 19.03.2015].

health efforts. Especially as the influence of advertisements on children is really effective. It can be suggested by the enormous sums of money spent by food producers on the advertisement directed towards young consumers. Undoubtedly, there is a need for a supervision over the commercials of food products in media, mainly those directed straight towards children. Some of the specialists opt for placing a complete ban on advertising the food products which are directed towards the youngest clients.[39] Taking into account that at present they are mainly advertisements and commercials of the unhealthy products, the conclusion seems to be justified. Nevertheless, including media in the actions for obesity prevention would be the best solution, especially as their influence on the children's eating behaviours is so significant. They should promote healthy eating principles and examples and propagate the knowledge on the proper nutrition. It would surely require many legal solutions. However until that time, the family environment can play the positive role. The researches convince that limiting the time children spend on using media gives a great chance to get rid of their unhealthy kilograms. Another fact which may be conducive to the thesis is that as the time and development go by, children become more resistant to the persuasion of the media. They are more and more aware and critical towards their content, and at the same time they become more able to protect themselves from the harmful influence of the media.

In this context it is also worth considering to what degree the knowledge on nutrition which the children may have conditions their eating behaviours and potentially guards them against harmful effects of the incorrect behaviours connected to eating. I tried to explain this matter carrying out my own scientific researches. Their aim was, inter alia, finding answers to the following questions: (1) what are the eating behaviours and the knowledge on nutrition in obese children and are they different from the ones which are presented by the children with the right body mass? (2) Do the eating behaviours and the knowledge on nutrition change in children with simple obesity as they become older and do the changes differ from the ones which characterize children with the right body mass? (3) is there any relation (and if there is, then what kind) between the eating behaviours and knowledge on nutrition in obese children and does it differ from the one which can be possibly observed in the group of children with the right body mass? (4) does the possible relation between the eating behaviours of children with simple obesity and their knowledge on nutrition change with age, and if it is so, in what way and do the possible changes differ from the ones which may occur in the group of children with the right body mass? To the test I put groups of younger (aged 7-8) and older (aged 11-12) girls and boys with simple obesity and children with the right body mass.

[39] M. Gadziński, op. cit., p. 12.

The results of my research let me assume that the level of correctness of the eating behaviours among children with simple obesity was differentiated in the aspects I distinguished, such as: – eating food according to specified motivations, – consuming and not consuming specific food and beverages, – eating fixed number of meals during a day and the regularity of the consumption, – eating food and drinking beverages at fixed times, – consuming fixed amounts of food and liquids – eating meals in a specific way, – eating specific forms of meals, – eating meals in specific places. In most of them, the level was average, low or very low. As far as the differences in the correctness of eating behaviours among the children with simple obesity and the children with the right body mass are concerned, they turned out to be statistically significant with regard to a half of the aspects researched. Then it must be stated that the eating behaviours among obese children are not significantly worse than the eating behaviours of the children with the right weight.

With regard to the researched level of knowledge of the children with simple obesity on eating, I stated that in 7 in 8 analyzed aspects of knowledge such as: – knowledge on the motives of eating food, – knowledge on food and beverages which should and should not be consumed, knowledge on advisable number of meals during a day and regularity of their consumption, – knowledge on times of eating meals and drinking beverages, – knowledge on amount of food eaten and beverages drunk, – knowledge on the ways of consuming meals, – knowledge on forms in which food should be consumed, – knowledge on places of consuming meals, it was average or high. Only with regard to one aspect (knowledge on motives of consuming food), the level of knowledge among the obese children turned out to be low and only in this single case it could be said that the obese children's knowledge on nutrition was wrong. Research also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the level of knowledge on nutrition between the obese children and the children with the right weight. In other words, the knowledge on nutrition among the obese and slim children was at the same level.

With age, in both researched groups of children there was no significant increase in the correctness of the eating behaviours in any of the eight aspects of these behaviours mentioned above. The younger and the older children, the obese as well as the slim, showed the same level of correctness in all the aspects of eating behaviours. (This general dependence is only slightly different when the sex factor is taken into account.) There were also no differences between the groups of obese and slim children which were compared, as far as the changes in their knowledge on eating coming with age are concerned. However, in this case the similarity lies in the fact that among the researched children the level of knowledge increased as they got older.

The most important conclusion of the research which was carried out is that in most of the aspects the nutritional behaviours, among the children with the right weight as well as the obese ones, are not connected with their knowledge on the topics related to nutrition. With age, this tendency remains the same. The reasons of this status quo may be mainly assigned to the fact that children aged 7-12 are dependent on their adult guardians to a very high degree. Therefore, even if they possess correct knowledge on the topics related to nutrition, in most of the cases they do not have the possibility to take decisions on their own and make their own correct nutritional choices. It is highly probable that in the future, when they gain this opportunity, it will turn out that the power of the wrongly formed habits is stronger than the will.

Therefore, it seems to be particularly important to emphasize the adults' responsibility for the way children eat and the possible disorders related to eating which come to being. In the context of prevention against] simple obesity in children, the need to educate parents on whom the children are dependent to the highest degree becomes the main issue.

Determinants of cultural development in early childhood education

Michalina Kasprzak

Cultural development of a small child has been still emerging in recent years. It is a very dynamic process. It also stimulates a need to build a new perspective which would update current research interests. One of the reasons of forming a new attitude toward the issue in question is the fact of environmental changes, and also the broadening of interests concerning conscious functioning in the culture from an early age.

The original group a man derives from is the family. The family is mainly responsible for further processes during infant's development, till their adulthood. Moreover, the family focuses child's forward thinking and indicates the initial awareness of experiencing the culture. Thus, cultural development is largely dependent on family life. However, in this context, there is a need to refer also to the social and educational role of the school. Its duty in cultural development resulting from the core curriculum is, among others, to support the development of talent, shape attitudes, introduce children to the world of aesthetics and provide for actions, activities and creative expression. A number of proposals for changes in the approach to various aspects of child development in early childhood education pay attention to the cultural context, as important in the design of theoretical and practical training.

The factors which affect the child's development can be viewed from a few angles. Depending on the family, school career and environment, I will pay attention to cultural development in the educational process. Referring to child's cultural potential, I juxtapose it with Lev Vygotsky's theory and confront it all with contemporary views. Moreover, based on personal observations I will point out some areas that should still be updated.

The cultural space of the child in the family

In the sociological terms of Comte, the family is a basic social group and a foundation for the whole society.[1] The family shape firs relations between child and parents (adults), which largely depend on the idea of education adopted by the parents. Through the family educational process, child's development, including cultural development, is formed. The child establishing first contacts with the surrounding world experiences values, traditions and the culture of the language of their ancestors, meets both the forms and ways of its transmission and survival, while gaining abilities and predispositions shaping and directing their own individual ways of perceiving and understanding the culture. Therefore, the design of family style determines the child's approach to the past, and also to the future. According to the proponents of this type of self-discipline and obedience of the child to their parents, such an influence from an early age strengthens the authority of parents and the educational process in the family.[2] Children of about five years of age begin to create their own basis of "culture" as a need for self-organization, cooperation and incessant changes in the child-parent relation.[3] Following this, or another type, or the ideology of education, as parents we give children specific predispositions to play the same patterns in the future.

The cultural development of a child also largely depends on family resources. A vital role is played by the material and economic status of the family.[4] In a financial crisis, the family is not able to provide the child with additional forms of creativity, in order to foster cultural development. Low financial resources, or lack of them also cause a decrease in the activity of the family (including the child's activity) in the use of cultural heritage and the tangible cultural property, such as museums, or the theatre. This adversely affects the level of understanding the cultural and historical knowledge of the culture of the previous years.

However, family resources can be seen as a system approach. These include adaptability, an emotional, organizational and communicating family.[5] Due to

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[1] Z. Tyszka, *Rodzina w świecie współczesnym – jej znaczenie dla jednostki i społeczeństwa*, [in:] *Pedagogika społeczna*, ed. T. Pilch, I. Leparczyk, Warszawa 1995, p. 137.

[2] I. Kisa-Bogorodź, *Dominacja i reprodukcja znaczeń kulturowych w dyskursach władzy rodzicielskiej*, [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnej edukacji. Dyskursy, problemy, otwarcia*, ed. D. Klus-Stańska, D. Bronk, A. Malenda, Warszawa 2011, p. 322–328.

[3] M. Cole, P. Hakkarainen, M. Bredikyte, *Culture and Early Childhood Learning*, [in:] *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development*, published online, February 2010, http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/documents/Cole-Hakkarainen-BredikyteANGxp.pdf [access: 23.01.2014], p. 3.

[4] P. Wise, *Family Structure, Child Outcomes and Environmental Mediators: An Overview of the Development in Diverse Families Study*, Melbourne 2003, p. 4–6.

[5] P. Harkness, Ch.M. Super, *Culture and Policy in Early Childhood Development*, [in:] *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development*, published online, July 2010, http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/documents/Harkness-SuperANGxp.pdf [access: 23.01.2014], p. 2.

the use of these resources by the family, a small child during everyday experiences at home shapes their attitudes similar to those of their parents. Thus, they use the resources of the family from an early age. This does not mean that the child lacks creativity, their own cultural attitudes, because culture affects the child but also the child in a spontaneous way reflects the culture of its nature.[6]

Lev Vygotsky's concept and contemporary cultural development of the child in an environment of cultural development

According to Vygotsky, in the process of a child's cultural development it is necessary to distinguish between two existing developments. "First, there is the line of natural development of behaviour which is closely bound up with the processes of general organic growth and the maturation of the child. Second, there is the line of cultural improvement of the psychological functions, the working out of new methods of reasoning, the mastering of the cultural methods of behaviour".[7] Referring to the two-track vision, a small child has quite different abilities to store and a memory process structured differently than among older children or adults. It is based on the principle of cultural development, which is based on understanding and mastering various symbols of behaviour through experience developed over the centuries. In the cultural development of the child, one of the important symbols are those of the language. Not only considered in the perspective of strict education – stimulating children's speech, but also in the approach represented by Vygotsky. In this concept, it is regarded as a carrier of primitive behaviours that children exhibit when they try to express themselves.[8] We find children primitivism, among others in "their delay in cultural development, is primarily due to the fact that for some external or internal cause they have not mastered the cultural means of behaviour, especially language".[9] However, this primitivism also shows the tendency of natural cultural development of the child. On the other hand, language is an important means for communicating their thoughts and feelings.

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[6] B. Smykowski, *Psychologia kryzysów w kulturowym rozwoju dzieci i młodzieży*, Poznań 2012, p. 50–53.

[7] L. Vygotsky, *The problem of the cultural development of the child*, [in:] *The Vygotsky Reader*, ed. R. van der Veer, J. Valsiner, Oxford – Cambridge 1994, p. 57.

[8] M. Zaorska, *Rozwój kulturowy dziecka w koncepcji Lwa p. Wygotskiego*, [in:] *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici*, "Pedagogika", 2012, no. XXVIII; "Nauki Humanistyczno-Społeczne", vol. 405, p. 31–33.

[9] L. Vygotsky, op. cit., p. 58.

Younger children have different features (resulting from the development of their neurophysiological structures) to the use of language. However, the fact that they use "children's folklore", which is a product of their own words and texts, should not be negated.[10] It contributes to the development of various spheres, such as the cognitive, emotional or psychosomatic spheres of a small child. A comprehensive approach to explore culture in the process of early childhood education is still a big challenge for them.[11]

The cultural activity of a child outside the above stated indicators is also focused on the psychogenesis of cultural behaviour of a small child. On the basis of personal research, Vygotsky presented four stages of cultural development. The first stage – the behaviour of the primitive psyche. At this stage the child mainly uses mnemotechniques that shape their thinking and behaviour. The second stage is called "naive psyche". During the development the child experiences different situations that appear to be insufficient. It is a transitional stage from which the child very quickly moves to the next one, namely to use the experience of cultural behaviour conditioned by external influences. This stage also does not take long and is partially replaced by the next and last stage, which is characterized by the use of external signs.[12]

Indeed, Vygotsky's concept of the early years of the twentieth century is still reflected in the functioning of the child. The stages of cultural development are closely related to the child's developmental crises that are necessary and constant. Each child (except for those having some biological issues) experiences various forms of crises, such as the inner experiencing (structural crises) and the external perception of the child changes (functional crises).[13] This is also related with the context of cognitive science in the cultural development of the child. Vygotsky argued that the distortion of reality in the fun paradoxically strengthens the science used in real life, mainly by changing the understanding of children, the relationship between objects and their meanings.[14] Indeed, cultural development environments such as the House, House of Culture, as well as kindergarten or school, etc. provide children with everyday situations that foster their learning. Apart from systematized knowledge one of the important factors to influence the child's cultural environment is the perception by adults (not just parents) of their potential. Early childhood is a period that is most important in the development of cultural awareness, because of the development of the child. In order to enable them to acquire, explore situations or

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[10] A. Wasilewska, *Dziecięcy dyskurs w przestrzeni kulturowej. Projekt badawczy*, [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnej edukacji. Dyskursy, problemy, otwarcia*, ed. cit., p. 331–333.

[11] M. Cole, P. Hakkarainen, M. Bredikyte, op. cit.

[12] L. Vygotsky, op. cit., p. 64–66.

[13] B. Smykowski, op. cit., p. 117–120.

[14] M. Cole, P. Hakkarainen, M. Bredikyte, op. cit.

things, they have to experience them personally. Friendly conditions of accessibility to the cultural environment for children positively influence their development. Thus, a child staying at home, isolated from society may be deficient in cultural development, because there are two ways that affect the development of the child in the environment – towards development and social maturity and they should be closely related. The acquisition of cultural behaviour and cultural thinking takes place spontaneously. It is completely natural that the forms and methods of cultural adaptation on the part of the child are dependent on the cultural environment, because it determines the child a variety of conditions that the child meets or not. As a result, the child forms their own cultural development. Consecutiveness of activities of the cultural environment on the child's cultural development is still an active area of research.[15] [16]

The use of cultural development of a small child at school

Nowadays there has been an increase in the formation of kindergartens and schools with arts profiles, "Little Artist" clubs, as well as artistic schools of creative thinking, etc. Moreover, in recent years, Poland has also developed the use of Maria Montessori pedagogy, which emphasizes the spontaneous needs of the child and their activity[17]. Therefore, it is a wild range of initial and further education. However, most of the institutions mentioned are private and some people cannot afford them. According to the educational programme[18], cultural development should be supported at every stage. In early education students' development should proceed in a multifaceted way because: "In their early years, the child knows the world by all their senses, mostly in a direct experience of it, by their own activity".[19] Therefore, it is important for the child to develop culturally because: "Based on the qualitative changes in children's functioning, brain activity, body and behaviour and accompanying modifica-

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[15] B. Smykowski, op. cit., p. 187–191.

[16] A. Luria, *The problem of the cultural behaviour of the child*, [in:] *The Vygotsky Reader*, ed. cit., p. 46–48.

[17] M. Center-Guz, *Stymulująca rola otoczenia w systemie Montessori*, [in:] *Edukacyjne konteksty rozwoju dziecka w wieku wczesnoszkolnym*, ed. K. Kusiak, I. Nowakowska-Buryła, R. Stawinoga, Lublin 2009, p. 274–275.

[18] *Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 27 sierpnia 2012 r. w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz kształcenia ogólnego w poszczególnych typach szkół*, see: *Journal of Law* 2012 item 977.

[19] M. Suświłło, *Holistyczne podejście do wczesnej edukacji – założenia i realia*, [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnej edukacji. Dyskursy, problemy, otwarcia*, ed. cit., p. 553–554.

tions to the relationship between children and their socio-cultural experimental environment".[20] Unfortunately, the results of the research conducted among teachers of primary school (under the direction of Josephine Balachowicz) show low interest in integrated teaching and lack of using different methods tailored for each student individually. Teachers also choose schematic teaching instead more creative forms. Research conducted by Ewa Szatan in 2006 confirmed the negative attitude towards using music education in the learning process. Other researchers show the sporadic occurrence of artistic education or a total lack of it in early school years.[21] However, without doubt the main aim "early education should be a vision of integral development that determines the direction, shows an effect and reaches all aims, which they are subordinated to".[22] That is the reason why literature often uses issues which concerned the application of arts education in working with a small child. I noticed that the most popular form is art, then music and theatre. We could also support children in their cultural development in other ways. There are many ways to involve children in active, creative or expressive work, for example by using films, games, media, but their use depends on the teacher. In Poland, the basic problems showed during inspiring and mobilizing students to express themselves are the atmosphere in the classroom and pointing out to errors. Teachers forget about tolerance and possibility of children's interpretation, as well as they might be authorities for children. So children are reluctant and scared of speaking out their minds. Despite repeatedly discussed issues in the context of a wider use of arts education and directions how to practice it so that children are more active and happy with learning, I feel that cultural development in early school age is still not adapted to current capabilities. Apart from teachers, we could also blame parents. Forming general cultural attitudes in family is also reflected in a child's education. It is good for parents to be interested in a child's desires and follow "their footsteps" to be able to make decisions about the school, because it is quite an important factor in cultural development. There is no doubt we should look at early education from different perspectives. However, changes in Polish schools are less approved of than in other countries, especially these concerned with skills development and cultural values.[23] In her studies, Regan Meighan confirms the validity of the early period to further learning process. According to her: "a good education in childhood has a posi-

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[20] M. Cole, P. Hakkarainen, M. Bredikyte, op. cit., p. 1.

[21] M. Suświłło, op. cit., p. 555–557.

[22] A. Niziołek, *Wspomaganie twórczej aktywności dziecka w aspekcie integralnego rozwoju*, [in:] *Edukacyjne konteksty rozwoju dziecka w wieku wczesnoszkolnym*, ed. cit., p. 227.

[23] S. Włoch, *W poszukiwaniu edukacji rozwijającej myślenie ucznia*, [in:] *Ku integralności edukacji wczesnoszkolnej*, ed. E. Smak, S. Włoch, Opole 2011, p. 151.

tive impact on the further life and that participating in a structured and stimulating the development education allows children from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve long-term benefits".[24]

Summary and conclusion

When analyzing the cultural development of the child in early childhood education one can say that it is still underestimated in Poland. The implementation of constant changes to the education system without clarifying them much is not conducive to normal patterns of education in general. I think that the changes are necessary, yet not only in the system, but also in the individual approach of teachers, parents and students, and the general public.

First, I propose a different approach to the problem from the first grade teachers. Implementation of a mandatory six-school system is demanding especially from the teacher. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the smooth transition from the earlier stage of development, which is the pre-school period. School desks restrict the use of different creative play, dance and movement classes, theatre, music or visual activities. Moreover, art classes raise the cognitive part of the image building your own "I". Therefore, to support the cognitive processes from an early age it is helpful to develop the child in many ways, both in the cultural context, as well as personal and social ones. There is no doubt that "culture does not create anything more than what is given to people by their nature, but changes and modifies human nature by surrendering its objectives designated by the people".[25] Therefore, the teacher is able to teach in other places than at school. If for a given week the introduction of various professions is planned, you can take the kids to the bakery, the fire brigade, police, office, or take advantage what enthusiasts, professionals, and non-governmental organizations offer, as they often conduct classes as volunteers. You can therefore benefit from the lessons of history (for example, invite the brotherhood of knights), dance classes with different profiles (instructor of ballroom dancing, modern dance, contemporary, hip-hop, Latin dance), music classes (bands), course information (student research, passionate and specialists in programming, graphic designers), as well as physical activities (karate instructors, parkour). In short, the possibilities are as many as there are ideas in your head. However, to be able to carry out activities for children in a creative way, the approval on the part of teachers, parents and administrators is needed.

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[24] R. Meighan, *Wczesne wychowanie i kształcenie*, [in:] *Nieobecne dyskursy*, ed. Z. Kwieciński, Toruń 1997, [after:] S. Włoch, op. cit., p. 152.

[25] M. Zaorska, op. cit., p. 34.

Another suggestion is to use the content of problem situations and the introduction of changes to the ways that can impact the school life. They combine a sense of the above proposals. Namely, it is about changing the role of the teacher, because they do not just provide the knowledge and skills of their own, thus giving specific schemes and ready answers is not a good option. The teacher should be a person who helps you reach meaningful conclusions and opinions, and do not give their own, or those contained in the textbooks. Unfortunately, in our schools at the stage of early school and school children are still limited by the possibilities of creative thinking and are taught obedience to the given scheme.

The effectiveness of the classes conducted by teachers can also help build positive information towards students. Children hearing continuous orders and prohibitions do not feel the satisfaction when carrying out their tasks. However, if we use positive messages they are more likely to experience pleasure, and will thus be happy with the work done. It is also worth suggesting this change to parents. The use of positive messages and correct feedback to their child or student allows for their own search for solutions and reinforces their determination in making decisions.

In addition, I propose to change the role of the parent in the context of the teacher and the school. Improving relations between the two partners would facilitate better communication, but also the functioning of the child at school. In very few schools all parents of children from the class come to meetings with teachers. The problem with regard to the situation assessment is obvious. The division of children into great, good, bad and worse results in families' emotional frustrations, especially of those parents who did not hear anything good about their child at those meetings. In my opinion, individual counselling should be used. Of course, all are limited in time, but if the collective meeting would include only the information content (not evaluation), and then there would be individual meetings of a few minutes with the teacher, it could lead to a greater involvement of parents in cooperation. As a consequence, the impact of positive contact and cooperation would be beneficial for the multifaceted development of the child.

The cultural development of the child, its meanings, symbols, objectives, etc. is hidden in educational activity.[26] It is not just about starting in a place related to culture (theatre, cinema, museums, meetings, poetry); other ideas than the usual classes in the classroom are also attractive and foster development. However, it is worth noting that the cultural development of the child begins at an early ages. It affects not only the artistic education of the child, but also the whole process of learning, for example, the absorption of the material. It affects

[26] M. Cole, P. Hakkarainen, M. Bredikyte, op. cit., p. 1.

a child's functioning in future years. This is especially important for children from disadvantaged, dysfunctional families that do not have corresponding patterns in the family. Children do not need to feel inferior and doomed in advance to failure. It is worth pointing out the importance of cultural development and the factors that may help implement it. Certainly, it will strengthen the positive effects of preparing children for future life.

Peer contact and the level of state of being of a six-year-old child

Izabela Kujawska

A child that demonstrates both linguistic and cognitive skills would have big problems in their social relations without the necessary abilities of social and emotional reaction. Children not only develop acquiring knowledge about the nature of physical reality. Their development also depends on forming effective and meaningful relationships with other people. Apart from that, they must learn to internalise many rules of conduct recognised as valid in the society in which they grow up. Also, they must identify their feelings and properly react to those of others.

Socialisation is a life-long process of shaping the individual's ways of behaviour, their values, standards, skills, attitudes and motives, so they are in line with those desired in the society. Many people are involved in the process of socialization: mother, father, brothers and sisters, relatives, friends and teachers. Institutions, such as schools, churches and legal systems exert pressure on the individual to adopt socially acceptable values and behave in accordance with the established standards. It is the family, however, that is the most influential in the individual's socialization. It helps shape fundamental ways of the child's reactions to others, which is a basis of the style in which the individual will spend their whole life building their relations with other people.[1]

Harris emphasizes that "is not a vacuum"[2] that underlies social contacts. If the child is to learn how to socially coexist with others, they must be provided with ample opportunities to learn. The sooner these opportunities are provided, the easier the child will learn these norms of conduct, which, in turn, will facilitate their adaptation to social groups.[3]

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[1] P.G. Zimbardo, *Psychologia i życie*, Warszawa 1999, p. 179–180.

[2] E.B. Hurlock, *Psychologia i życie*, Warszawa 1999, p. 350.

[3] Eadem, *Rozwój dziecka*, Warszawa 1960, p. 350.

How many benefits the child will derive from social contacts outside home largely depends on the principles instilled by the parents. It has been ascertained that the scope and intensity of social contacts of the child strictly depends on the scope and intensity of social contacts of their parents. Children reared at institutions where social coexistence is limited are socially less mature that those who make use of the normal possibilities of social intercourse.

Contacts with a peer group at pre-school age are a crucial development factor. When entering a pre-school group, the child endeavours to adjust to rules laid down, among others, by peers, and learns how to act. Both the child's position in the pre-school group and relationships with others may influence self-assessment, and the child's experiences gathered through interpersonal contacts influence their emotional, social and cognitive development.

Family in a pre-school child's social life

In the beginning, the most important persons in the social environment of the child are the parents and adult guardians. Since birth, contacts with them create contexts in which the child's social development occurs. In that period the cognitive activity and capability to learn are directed to interactions with adults. The child demonstrates greater sensitivity to visual and aural stimuli that accompany typical behaviour of guardians towards the infant, for instance bringing their face close to the infant's face or a specific way of talking to the infant. Children show their joy when their activity causes adults to react, for example, when they respond to their cooing and babbling or hug them when they cry.[4]

To be able to act without making a threat to themselves or others in the environment outside home, children must not only master a number of skills, but their actions must first of all become social in nature.

Pre-school age marks considerable changes in the child's social situation. Their plays with peers are looked at with a growing distance by the parents. This decreased involvement in emotional relationships with the parents opens a possibility to enter into relationships with other people. In the pre-school period peer emotions get developed with great intensity.

Not only the weakening of emotional nearness, but also a possibility to grow despite the physical distance between the child and the parents are of crucial importance in the development of the child's social relationships outside home.[5]

When entering the kindergarten, the child begins functioning in two environments: family and pre-school. Experiences gathered at family home are

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[4] *Psychologia rozwojowa*, ed. P.E. Bryant, A.M. Colman, Poznań 1997, p. 60.

[5] *Psychologiczne portrety człowieka*, ed. A.I. Brzezińska, Gdańsk 2005, p. 176–177.

a basis for behaviour in the kindergarten environment. The problem is that they vary greatly from child to child, and the limit of requirements towards them is uniform with slight deviations. Therefore, one may presume that one of the reasons of non-adaptation is a state of diversity between children's possibilities related with their individual development, skill resources and social experiences brought from their family home, and the requirements and expectations of the kindergarten. This is also connected with the children's individual emotional sensitivity and diverse needs as compared to opportunities of satisfying them by institutionalised educational environment.

The family is the first and the most important social environment in the acquisition of norms and making contacts with others by the child. Its special role with relation to a little child is a fact established in social sciences.[6]

Social and emotional development of the child at pre-school age

Emotions in pre-school-age children are instable, they appear easily, last briefly and change very quickly. However, their aspects are richer. Apart from movements and mimics, children involve their verbal reactions to express their feelings. Observations and impressions become an emotional factor. Emotional reactions towards other people get more complex, too. Children begin to formulate their moral and aesthetic judgements. At an initial stage, they are still accidental and naïve, but at pre-school age the child's feelings become stabilised and deepened. Admittedly, both emotional lability and clear expression of feelings linger on, but more and more often the child's emotional reactions are adequate to the type and force of emotional stimuli.

A six-year-old is characterised by a considerable emotional balance as compared to younger kids. They are usually cheerful, with a positive attitude towards the environment, lack of moodiness and big emotional involvement in what happens around them. A six-year-old is capable of harmonising their feelings, recognising emotional conditions of others and adjusting to them. Appearance of higher feelings is observed: aesthetic, humanistic and patriotic ones. Despite a certain emotional stabilization, however, six-year-olds show big touchiness and sensitivity at being evaluated. In the child's general development, the emotional sphere is the most delicate of all, and at the same time difficult to form.[7] What is substantial for the correct emotional development of a child at pre-school age is an authentic interest in their feelings and satisfac-

[6] L. Lubowiecka, *Przystosowanie psychospołeczne dziecka do przedszkola*, Warszawa 2000, p. 28.

[7] A. Klim-Klimaszewska, *Pedagogika przedszkolna*, Warszawa 2005, p. 38.

tion of their fundamental mental needs: security, relationship and cooperation with relatives, love and emotional stability, as well as acceptance and appreciation.

To a great extent, the development of the emotional sphere depends on social contacts of the child. They usually have more opportunities to make such contacts than younger children. Not only do those opportunities encompass the family home, but also the nearest vicinity. At kindergarten, the scope and quality of these contacts grows bigger. The child is gradually introduced to observe the principles of group coexistence, learns how to behave in various kindergarten situations and is provided with the possibility of taking on different social roles. All this creates favourable conditions for pre-school children to develop complex behaviour and social feelings.[8] At a younger pre-school age, children's actions are to a large extent still distinguished by subjectivism and egocentrism. In contacts with other people, they primarily account for their own point of view, and their personal desires and endeavours. What makes for them an obstacle in establishing mutual relations is the difficulty in sharing toys and weak maturity in actions that expresses itself in a lack of planning skills. When older than five, children become more socialised, they can cooperate better, but aggressiveness, negativism and stubbornness occurs in their behaviour. There are often misunderstandings between children and conflicts with adults. However, they are susceptible to adult influence, and adults who provide them with social patterns of behaviour. Without problems, children accept any directives that are clearly determined and consistently implemented in their lives. They can subject their conduct to the requirements of both discipline and moral norms. However, these children yield to the influences of the environment just as easily as to the positive ones.[9]

Significance of social contacts for the state of being of the child

What plays an important role in forming and sustaining a certain image of the world is the peer group in which situation definitions are created as well as convictions about what is a norm and what deviates from it are shaped.[10]

According to the Concise Dictionary of the Polish Language, the state of being means "someone's own feeling: physical state of being, mental state of being. Good, bad state of being".[11]

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[8] J. Strelau, A. Jurkowski, Z. Putkiewicz, *Podstawy psychologii dla nauczycieli*, Warszawa 1981, p. 228.

[9] *Pedagogika przedszkolna*, ed. M. Kwiatkowska, Z. Topińska, Warszawa 1978, p. 15.

[10] B. Łaciak, *Świat społeczny dziecka*, Warszawa 1998, p. 118.

[11] *Mały słownik języka polskiego*, ed. S. Skorupka, H. Auderska, Z. Łempicka, Warszawa 1969, p. 733.

I asked several six-year-old kindergarten children to find out how contacts with a kindergarten group influence their state of being. I asked some dozen children the following questions: "Do you like going to kindergarten?", "Why?", "How do you feel in the kindergarten?" Also, I suggested two sentences to finish: "What I like most in the kindergarten is …", "What I don't like in the kindergarten is …".

In analysing the results of such a research formula, I made a reference to the idea of qualitative research. Qualitative researchers think that one should not assume that techniques used in quantitative research are the only ones that allow to draw accurate conclusions from qualitative or field research. That means that a number of research practices derived from quantitative research may be inappropriate for qualitative research. This concerns as well the assumption that research conducted as part of the social sciences is accurate only when using data obtained from experiments, official statistics and research carried out on random samples, and that only calculable data is the sole data type that is accurate and able to be generalised.

Critics of quantitative research point out that these assumptions have many defects. In addition, they remark that experiments, statistics and opinion poll data may simply be inadequate in relation to the tasks the social sciences assign themselves. They exclude, among others, observations of behaviour in everyday situations. Therefore, although countability may sometimes be useful, it may also both hide and reveal basic social processes.[12]

Questions and answers were the following:

"Do you like going to kindergarten?", "Why?". Answers: it is nice, I can play with children, I can colour, draw; I learn new things; I like doing puzzles and using a sewing machine; because there are toys; because I can learn and play nicely; there are nice toys; we do fine art stuff; there are fine tasks; because I like playing; because I have friends.

What results from the answers is that the children like going to kindergarten as they can do many things there that they are interested in. Plays and games mentioned by the children help them learn and develop apart from being fun.

The child needs to move despite not being clearly aware of that. This need motivates movements and doing them leads to a certain proficiency, so it carries in itself a "pedagogical" aspect, and is "self-instructing" in its nature.[13]

Piaget strictly relates the development of play with that of intelligence, and states that one can partially assess the level of the child development based on observations of their plays. Bruner in turn puts large emphasis on the oppor-

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[12] D. Silverman*, Interpretacja danych jakościowych*, Warszawa 2007, p. 59.

[13] S. Baley, *Psychologia wychowawcza w zarysie*, Warszawa 1958, p. 35.

tunity of learning that play gives. He sees play as a means of achieving locomotive and cognitive skills. Play allows the child to experiment in more simple activities that can later be combined into more complex higher category skills[14]. Vygotsky presents play as the main general development factor. He puts special stress on the principles of play. A child that faces a problem unconsciously turns it into a play situation to cope with it more easily.[15]

Another question was the following: "How do you feel in the kindergarten?" Some of the children feel good, and some bad – answers: when somebody hits me or when he tells me that I cannot play with him; when Matthew beats me; when I have a stomach-ache; when somebody destroys my building blocks.

Undoubtedly, what results from the answers is that the children feel bad when hit, pushed away or rejected by peers. It is a natural way of reacting to harm.

By taking part in plays, the child is often exposed to difficulties, failures and offence that may cause socialisation disturbances. To prevent them, adults should maintain control over the course of plays and intervene when a child gets exposed to particularly numerous frustrations. These can be an outcome of failures at play, omission during the distribution of attractive toys, malicious remarks or mockery from peers.[16]

The next question was the following: "What I like most in the kindergarten is?" Answers: doing different art stuff; toys; doll cubby, play, cooker; when I draw; puzzles; blocks; because it is time for play; when I can colour; my room; the whole kindergarten; prams.

In their answers, the children mentioned mainly different kinds of toys as it is important to them with what and with whom they play. By choosing plays of interest, they learn social roles and among others develop their interests.

Play is a natural type of activity which excellently illustrates a famous definition of childhood as formulated by Claparede: childhood serves for play.

Play activity appears long before the third year of life, but it only flourishes in the following years. Functional plays of the small child become richer with resourceful plays of the older child.[17] They satisfy the needs of self-creation and expression that are so deep in that period. Around the fifth year of life the range of plays is very wide, particularly with girls: intellectual plays, affective plays, motional plays and social plays, which sometimes change irrespective of the sex, but first of all of the environment and specific personality.[18]

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[14] A. Birch, T. Malim, *Psychologia rozwojowa w zarysie. Od niemowlęctwa do dorosłości*, Warszawa 1997, p. 30–31.

[15] Ibidem, p. 31.

[16] Z. Skorny, *Proces socjalizacji dzieci i młodzieży*, Warszawa 1987, p. 127–128.

[17] M. Debesse, *Etapy wychowania*, Warszawa 1996, p. 46–47.

[18] Ibidem, p. 47.

The last question was the following: "What I don't like in the kindergarten is?". Answers: when Matthew beats me; I don't like playing with Matthew, because he shouts at me; when I quarrel with somebody; when somebody hits me or beats me; when children fight; I like everything; when somebody calls me names; I don't like Matthew because he arrests me; when some children play bad with me; when somebody interrupts as I speak; puzzles, beats; boy things; doing shoe laces.

What results from the answers is that the children do not like it when their friends shout at them, beat them or do not allow them to join the play. These issues are important to the children as they influence, among others, their state of being.

The comments show that children's state of being at kindergarten greatly depends on their relationships with peers. Their shape is influenced by many essential factors, like for instance whether the child likes going to the kindergarten, whether they fell good there or whether they like their friends. Surely, these issues have an impact on their physical and mental condition as well as their self-assessment, which is very important in life.

The questions asked were an attempt to respond to very important issues concerning contacts of six-year-old children with their peers. By holding such conversations, I intended to illustrate in what way children receive social relations, in what way they think, and if they are important to them. My task was to make an analysis from the perspective of the child and their point of view. To this end I took advantage of one of the qualitative idioms called emotionalism.

"Methods used by qualitative researchers express a common belief in that they can provide a "deeper" understanding of social phenomena than one could acquire from purely quantitative data. However, just like quantitative researchers would reject an accusation that all of them are "positivists", there is not a single determined doctrine that would underlie any qualitative social research".[19]

I think that these short, but meaningful observations may be helpful in creating research concerning not only social contacts of children, but also factors influencing their state of being in pre-school environment.

Conclusions

Contacts with peers strongly influence the way the child functions and how they feel in a pre-school group, which is confirmed by what the children say. Social relations are essential for every man, both the child and the adult.

[19] D. Silverman, op. cit., p. 59.

The research I have pursued and presented in this article testifies to a necessity of using and carrying out techniques and tools that will be appreciable from the point of view of the child. The statements of the children presented in this article may only be referred to the group under examination. It seems that such model of research would enable the teacher to create favourable conditions for correct socialisation.

Like every adult, every child depends on other people. This dependence is a condition of their existence.[20] It is complete at the moment of birth as well as during early years of childhood. As the child grows up, they become more and more dependent on the social group, but they need the group and cannot live without contacts with others. During every following year the child's relationships with others become more and more complicated, therefore the child needs to contact more and more people, and different kind of them. Usually, others are not personally interested in the child as much as the parents, so they do not try to make it easy on the child to associate with them as household members usually do.[21]

The child's interpersonal contacts are a carrier of many important interpersonal experiences that constitute a foundation of the child's entire future intellectual, emotional and social growth. These relationships filled primarily with play at pre-school age, as they concern peers, that is those of equal social status who present the same or similar skills, make it possible for the children to enter equivalent relationships providing them with unique experiences which they would not acquire in contacts with the adults, that is those who have greater knowledge and power than the child. Symmetrical relationships relating to equal persons are usually more reciprocal than complementary and concern both cooperation and competition.[22]

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[20] E.B. Hurlock, *Rozwój dziecka*, ed. cit., p. 351.

[21] Ibidem, p. 351.

[22] M. Cywińska, *Konflikty interpersonalne w świecie dzieci*. "Studia Edukacyjne", 2008, no. 7, p. 135–136.

"Being lost" in a selection of illusion. A child in "an encounter" with others

Julita Orzelska

An awareness of the present crisis of humanity and an attempt at understanding the mechanisms which lead to the existing state of affairs as well as reflecting upon the possibilities of changing the direction in which a society heads have become the basis of this analysis.

The disintegration compared to 'melting' or simply 'dissolving'[1] of social functioning, which has a reflection in the weakening of moral system, decides about a new role of a contemporary human being, who often deprived of abilities of critical judgement, acts according to the social expectations and does not make an effort to revise the present or to assess the future human fate. The social promise of happiness according to community conditions can, in fact, condemn to un(expressed) suffering which shatters the hope for being a Different one with a painful awareness of a threat to one's identity, which governed by an anxiety[2], does not care about objectivity in assessing the real needs, abilities and consequences. As Zygmunt Bauman writes, ''our socially created communities and identities are becoming more and more uncertain and elusive, being overtaken by changing identities, which dominate the world of an inevitable collapse of a state. (…). Liquid times have their contribution to the creation of a new language, in which the culture of citizens' rights (traditionally associated with a welfare state and a modern discourse) has come down to the culture of charity, humiliation and stigmatism''.[3] The current culture, affirming

[1] Z. Bauman, *Żyjąc w czasie pożyczonym*, Kraków 2010.

[2] If not for human fear – Bauman notes – "it would be difficult to explain to one's self the need for the existence of the state. The state is a factory, which governs the fear, distributes the fear and processes it for its needs" (Z. Bauman, op. cit., p. 18). "Managing the fear is the card, which today is played by the state, […] and understanding the rules of this entertainment is essential to achieve a proper perspective in an examination of the contemporary society (ibidem, p. 24).

[3] Ibidem, p. 67.

greed by a promotion of 'consumerist's lifestyle', relegates the human being, who is unavoidably aiming at loosing their identity. Thus, we may admit that the sources of any social evil are the underlying causes of practised lifestyle pattern which, condemning the human to suffering, abolishes the category of distinctness and the right to be individual. The consequence of adults's choice is taken over by the child who, being in the discourse made by them, copies the way of life according to the concept of assimilation, which does not allow them to be a different one. The feeling of being lost is accompanied by the lack of knowledge of life's guideposts because socially created attitudes contradict the measures of explicitness causing so-called 'collateral damage' – responsible for the feeling of loneliness, and resulting from it suffering which makes happiness impossible. Happiness, desired by us so much, is not a commodity easy to obtain for a reasonable price. Gaining happiness is possible neither in the ambiguity, contradiction of references nor in a poor substitute, considered to be an obvious truth. As a result of being adult hostages of the culture of appearance, children experience the ambiguity of meanings and while choosing illusionary solutions, they lose their competences to discover really important elements in life, which are crucial for the real humanity. A received pattern of life's consumer goes to nowhere because as Lech Witkowski states, “it is governed by a trinket not by a flash of thoughts, by a superficiality instead of a depth, by a show rather than a reflection, by a haste instead of an accuracy, and guessing instead of consideration”.[4]

Fluid formula of parental love

Adults (parents) bear a considerable blame for the child's lack of knowledge about the contemporary world and for accepting an adaptive model of life as the most desired by them. Instead of preparing their children to the skill of organising their lives (in the feeling of ambivalence, incident, unpredictability and chance) through unconditional acceptance and inconvertibility of norms of human behaviour (being life's guideposts), they adopt the present culture of predacity and without reflection and vigilance lose the sense of difference and identity approving unsure social expectations without competences of creating new meanings. Since their early childhood, a young person acquires knowledge resulting from a social transformation of which balance of losses and gains does not do the latter ones good. The adults who are yearning for “a desire to experience thrills and are less interested in adjusting to the needs of others as well as

[4] The full conversation on the subject with Prof. L. Witkowski, *Szkoła lunatyków czy poławiaczy pereł. Nie niszczyć potencjału i szans kolejnych pokoleń*, “Nowe Horyzonty Edukacji”, 2013/2014, no. 4(7), p. 36–41.

less appreciate submissiveness and ability to resign (…) in the name of preserving freedom"[5] do not demonstrate a concern for the child which means: being with him, loving, supporting and forgetting about one's own comfort. The culture based on sacrifice has been displaced by the culture of convenience or even a comfort-loving nature, which have results in emotional mutilation and unhappy life of many young people. The commercialization of parent-child relations has currently become a quite universally accepted standard of education in which vigilance, the effort of forming bonds, commitment are overtaken by the predominance of 'parental morality substitutes'. A substantial role in this process plays the consumer market, offering material symbols of concern, solidarity, compassion, kindness, friendship and love which suppress moral impulses. As Zygmunt Bauman[6] writes "we all know this sense of guilt, when even for our dearest (…) we do not have enough time to listen to their problems with attention and empathy appropriate in such situations, to be always at their disposal, to be ready to abandon our current affairs to come to their aid or simply share their sorrows and comfort them. In our rushed life, events like these happen more often". A consumer's lifestyle quietens and even appeases our conscience. With the use of attractive and precious presents which tempt us from the shop windows and Internet websites we try to bring a smile on the faces of those who yearn for our love. We have learnt to expect that presents compensate for the time which should be spent with our children, experiencing their lives and building up their personality. Shopping therefore becomes a form of a moral deed where moral responsibility for another person begins to be associated with a sacrifice, not resulting from the act of offering yourself or rejecting your own pleasures for the sake of another human being, but resulting from the necessity of emptying your wallet or bank account reserves. We tend to forget that the sense of security is mostly based on emotional relations and not relations with objects. It is much easier for adults to offer things rather than emotions. Breaking the bonds when they have just come into being, giving the poor substitute instead of truth, pain instead of joy we follow the strategy of doing evil despite the universally understood good. The consumer market masterfully appeases one's conscience and any deeper reflection. However, in the end it cannot be blamed for commercializing human bonds, because it is a thinking being (in principle) who gives priorities. For this reason in no way can I question Bauman's approach when he writes: "(…) I am personally convinced that each human being can differentiate between good and evil in his conscience. However, it is sometimes difficult to recognise good, but evil unfolds its characteristic bad aura. Each child knows what the pain is. For this reason, each time we hurt another person, we

[5] Z. Bauman, *Sztuka życia*, Kraków 2009, p. 76.

[6] Idem, *Straty uboczne. Nierówności społeczne w epoce globalizacji*, Kraków 2012, p. 89.

are aware of what we do. We do evil".[7] Moral acts are results of our free choice and it is us who decide what should be chosen. In the period of 'fluid modernity', in which the previous moral standards (human ones) are being devalued more than any ever before, we feel the need of closeness, friendship, loyalty or fidelity. What if we ourselves cannot build up such relations upholding the rule of one's own interest, which contradicts the rule of good for somebody's sake, affirming an individualism with opposition to community. 'The great transformation' as Z. Bauman[8] writes does not do good to the present family, which is characterised by: instability, changeability and fragility of bonds which do not serve the community. Additionally, the lack of community models, which are measured by love and commitment, leaves the child "in axiological, moral and social emptiness"[9] without the possibility of changing their fate. The first 'the Other' the child meets is Mother from whom they draw the first lessons of loving and being loved. The lessons remain in them for the rest of their life, shape the net of their future human relations, generating pro-social behaviour tinged with empathy or emotional coolness and the lack of thinking of the second person, not supporting the community solidarity. "The child needs adult's attention. They want to be in the centre of the world, created by the group of people they stay in constant contact with. In such space the child seems to be almighty"[10], and the need of presence lets them recognise their own world and develop in a harmonious way. The child deprived of an emotional relationship becomes 'an isolated particle' (V. Andreoli), which lacks its 'primal trust' (E.M. Erikson). The lack of feelings and the fundamental bonds makes it difficult to experience the outside world and to emotionally identify with others with whom we are not willing to form closer relations. "Parents are not perfect and we are surely facing a certain crisis; yet they are not allowed to question their emotional relation with their children and they should do everything to prove that this relation has not been disturbed".[11]

The degeneration of interactive skills

A meeting with another person requires interactive skills, which a contemporary man may lack. Bringing up in the culture which favours individualism and one's own comfort brings to life a new generation for which the superficiality of

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[7] Z. Bauman, *Sztuka życia*, ed. cit., p. 170.

[8] Idem, *Żyjąc w czasie…*, ed. cit., p. 265.

[9] D. Waloszek, *Meandry ochrony dziecka i dzieciństwa. Kilka refleksji nauczyciela akademickiego*, [in:] *Edukacja przedszkolna i wczesnoszkolna. Obszary sporów, poszukiwań, wyzwań i doświadczeń w kontekście zmian oświatowych*, ed. eadem, Kraków 2010, p. 197.

[10] V. Andreoli, *Zrozumieć cierpienie. Aby ból ustąpił radości*, Kraków 2009, p. 103.

[11] Ibidem, p. 110.

relations and reduced commitment give the promise of fulfilling one's own life project based on pleasure and (self)satisfaction. The 'Y Generation' (Z. Bauman) does not find time for a dialogue, which requires attentive listening, empathic experiencing of the second person and a personal involvement in a word play. As Lech Witkowski emphasizes, in a dialogue "we must speak the language which inspires our imagination, generates the feelings and constitutes an encounter with something real and important". The illusion of truthfulness of the never-ending word stream often constitutes an escape from closeness with others and oneself. Uttered words often mean nothing, they drown the heart of the matter rather than share people's attention and demonstrate responsibility for each other. 'Great efforts' do not become a part of the present culture, which promotes unstressed lifestyle. Each acting, which requires 'sacrifice and effort', is subject to negative social judgement, which young representatives do not intend to justify.

Neo-tribes[12] – a new quality of social bonds

In a modern lifestyle, governed by changeability, uncertainty, predictability or non-transparency, preferable attitudes of competitiveness have become a received norm applied to the market on which one's own life comfort has become an obvious form of functioning. This rule – which has started penetrating almost all life areas – revokes the possibility of bonds creation, which, in principle, exclude competitiveness and competition, caring not for single, but mutual emotions let the man change at the same time not depriving them of human dignity. The current culture, upholding the 'fast' experiencing, (un)consciously favours the loss of interactive skills and condemns the man to: appearance, contingency or the lack of identity. The ability of coexistence, cooperation and dialogue, respecting at the same time the ideas of difference and identity, which constitute the basis of a society and a community culture, have been exchanged by a flatness, a lack of a stable system of references and ''an offer of thousands masks to put on during the day''.[13] The change which has taken place as a result of social transformation makes us look for other rescue activities, which will 'rescue human bonds from oblivion'. Such alarming examples of acting to protect the bonds are the new forms of community of so-called neo-tribes[14],, which

[12] The category taken from the book of E. Czykwin, *Wstyd*, Kraków 2013.

[13] Z. Kwieciński, *Między patosem a dekadencją. Studia i szkice socjopedagogiczne*, Wrocław 2007, p. 157.

[14] E. Czykwin (op. cit., p. 185) writes about neo-tribes that "they constitute ephemeral beings, accidental, usually not very numerous, closed for the other, competitive tribes, since they develop their own language and in this way standardise the basics of their own members".

although temporarily unstable, without a deeper closeness contribution, by their existence they express the search for an emotional identification with another man. The most common examples of neo-tribes are the one that can be found in the virtual world (social portals, discussion fora or web games), but also the ones gathering people around activities of a social character that are important for them. Online meetings are currently the most popular and expected form of a meeting, without the necessity of leaving home. The computer screen creates the contact, at the same time reducing closeness, coexistence and sensitivity to another person's reactions. 'Meeting alive person' requires time, attention, which are naturally too difficult to break off at any time. Online meetings enable to avoid troublesome explanations, negotiations or compromises as you can always hold up or put off the conversation – perhaps even for good – without the necessity of becoming involved and analysing other person's arguments. A direct dialogue in a way exposes a person to the unknown, forcing them to react to the most unexpected words, something which we avoid hiding behind multimedia, where we can express ourselves without being identified. As Elżbieta Czykwin[15] writes, neo-tribes ''have most of all emotional-aesthetic character, which emphasises the underestimated meaning of emotions. Thus, 'emotional muddle' constitutes the being of neo-tribes, which confirm the shaping of a new quality social bond and – unfortunately – losing the most of interactive abilities''.[16] Functioning online creates some kind of illusive close relationships, which as a substitute offer to eliminate the need to react to difficult situations, which on the other hand, are a constitutive element of real-life relationships. The style of the current functioning, promoting life's comfort and satisfaction, without resigning from one's own individualism and a desire derived from it to realize own needs is the opposite of devotion, solidarity, unconditioned responsibility, effort in the name of (not) one's own happiness and properly understood relation 'me-you'. The new concept of bonds, which *in fact* fulfils the need of identification, in reality strengthens an escape attitude and supports 'here and now' acting covering the meaning of social community, which is based on thinking in the category of 'we'. In the virtual world the boundaries of closeness are determined by the measure of 'similar interests', which separate a definite group of people from the rest of web-users. Bauman underlines that the belonging to virtual communities comes down to ''superficial contacts, circulating around the affairs which (at this very moment) are the subject of mutual interests. The ups and downs appearing in virtual communities are dependent on fluctuations of diversified interests, as a rule, changeable

[15] Ibidem, p. 189.

[16] Z. Bauman, *Konsumowanie życia*, Kraków 2009, p. 22.

and short-lived, and on concomitant inflows and outflows of potential website users''.[17] Analysing the specificity of neotribal relationships against the background of the current social transformation, Elżbieta Czykwin writes: ''we are not able to overestimate the meaning of the bonds. Without them we are not capable of developing the image of one's own person. It is the others who act as a mirror, in which we may perceive the nuances of our Self. Breaking off the bonds, essential for socially and individually satisfying functioning''.[18] Choosing easy and unproblematic solutions (giving in to attractive moral indifference) forces us to anxiously forecast the future of the young generation. The present culture revokes the true 'meeting', a solid effort and a creative acting. It does not favour building a healthy society but rather condemning it to dysfunction.

The culture of silence against the culture of noise

In the area of popularized interpersonal relationships, language has become a symbol of communication. With its help the people, in a way more or less comprehensible to others, can express their thoughts, feelings, experiences or desires. Language favours the building of constructive, more advanced interpersonal relationships, which allow to get to know and understand another person. No-one can question its gravity in mixing with other people. The paradox of unquestionable nature of the source of expressing oneself comes from a powerful force of an evil releasing, and so co-deciding about suffering of others, because apart from creating, the language can hurt as well. The tyranny of noise (being released, among other things, by the multitude of words uttered in the human surrounding, independently of its opposition to word-forming and irrespective of its will to listen), has become the domain of our times, preventing from acquainting the value of silence, which can be a powerful form of communication, carrying an alive and authentic presence. We talk a lot without taking responsibility for the articulated words, which we cannot reverse from the space. We easily utter a stream of words drowning the silence as well as ourselves. As a result, it is impossible to separate the nature of message from pointless drivelling, which does not bring anything valuable but violates the sensitivity space of another person. The present culture of noise and enslavement with its intensity prevents us from being with another human and taking their fate seriously.

At present the most common, better controlled option of using language is message transfer from behind the computer screen, which allows avoiding the

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[17] Idem, *Żyjąc w czasie…*, ed. cit., p. 278–279.

[18] E. Czykwin, op. cit., p. 194.

risk and unpredictability of personal contacts. It is also a form of comfort, which does not complicate organising the young person's time, as the thoughts transfer can be broken at any time not taking responsibility for it. It also does not risk one's personal contact as it itself begins to have less and less value. Clearly, indirect relations minimizing the costs of 'one's own input' in their quality become the symbol of the present culture of comfort. The virtual world, in which young web surfers 'meet' as well as the real world, in which they spend the rest of their lives resembles, as Zygmunt Bauman[19] writes, ''more and more the mosaic of criss-crossing diaspora, though the internet diaspora do not have their territorial residences''. It is some kind of an illusion of communication, which fills up with the ability of stating a multitude of words, of which danger may come from 'insincere promise' or hidden intentions. The reading of such intentions is impossible to expose, because of the lack of possibility of being 'face to face'. Dissembling 'the real life' is like a mystification, which limits or even makes chances to experience the truth, not the one controlled by the computer's mouse, impossible.

Teaching the culture of silence can perhaps constitute a preventive measure against the dominance of a meaningless stream of words, which reveals the human void, but also against the violence of these words, for which one does not take responsibility, often not being aware of their meaning to another person. The silence may be sensitive to other people and by the means of its symbolic meaning can reduce suffering caused by the language, the silence thus, may be life-giving, but not through the realization of a formula of isolation. ''People sometimes make noise on purpose. Frustrated people meet and make noise, which gives others suffering while they themselves do not suffer. It is one of the ways of 'getting even' by a frustrated person. Making noise is the most unfair: the noise started by one person forces another to listen''.[20] Nowadays words do not particularly impress other people. One may articulate a stream of words not taking responsibility for them. The word can be a 'dangerous tool' in an unpredictable or well-thought-out human conduct, serving widely understood manipulation, causing unwanted suffering. The area which approves of (un)thoughtful hurting of the other person is the virtual space, in which violating the borders of decency and crossing the borders of 'restricted areas', take place easier than in the real world. For this reason we should learn to preserve situations which give a consent for silence. One should restore the forgotten value of the silence, which in a domination of acute stimuli of present times (determined by the lack of 'silent' functioning skills, but with the right to express oneself without the decent borders) is considered at least as savagery.

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[19] Z. Bauman, *Żyjąc w czasie…*, ed. cit., p. 278.

[20] Th. Merton, *Źródła kontemplacji*, Poznań 1998, p. 19.

The silence should not, by any means, be reduced to not-hearing or to muteness, the silence can be polyphonic. The right to hear a man does not govern the right to utter words by another person. But can people be silent nowadays, listening to one another? We cannot obviously confuse the mute indifference with the truthfulness of mutual experiencing. Thomas Merton writes that ''the silence is the fruit of maturity (…), it is a form of presence, which includes the concepts of distance, dignity and temperance. (…) We must preserve some distance not to lose identity. The true person is characterised by a certain self-restraint, sticking to the borders which is beneficial. Self-restraint or privacy can be described as a subtle mental emptiness around a person. It is not an ordinary shyness or an escape, not even hostility, hiding itself or an introversion. The terms such as: dignity, privacy, self-restraint, respect for oneself, stateliness, cohesive personality or not imposing oneself on somebody, are the qualities of internally mature individual, whose mentality cannot be easily upset. What is more, a positive meaning of such phrases indicates that people recognize the necessity and value of a certain distance between themselves, and that they accept this distance in the spirit of calm self-confidence''.[21] One should learn to be silent anew in order to hear what cannot be expressed in the stream of words. One should learn to be silent and to know the borders of verbal communication to protect another person from one's own tactlessness, protecting, at the same time, from being expelled, loneliness and suffering, which against all the efforts to be avoided persecute young people – wandering through subsequent social web portals with the hope for (non)committal and (not)time consuming contacts – which have become hostages of new life offers proposed by the present times.

The present culture of appearance and superficiality, affirming extreme individualism and aspirations to a comfortable life, excludes the real 'meeting' with another man, creating completely new interactive situations, free from assumption about 'absolute commitment', to an every day's presence of another man, in fact, promotes life strategy deprived of anxiety about another person, leading to losing the category of 'we' for the benefit of 'me' cult, which we acknowledge as the victim of modern time transformation. An individual business excludes the common good, which deprived of moral power, acts of concern and sacrifice testify of a dominant meaning of 'being for one's self ', opposed to 'being for the Other'. As Z. Bauman[22] writes, ''separating <morality> from the whole of human thoughts, feelings, acting and treating it as a separate aspect, concerning the differentiation between <good> and <evil>, is in princi-

[21] Ibidem, p. 21–22.

[22] Z. Bauman, *Etyka ponowoczesna*, Warszawa 2012, p. 9.

ple, the achievement of modern times''. Request for developing sensitivity to: ambiguity, respect for human feelings, acting, without expecting the benefits, is an expressed cry of disagreement to the present culture of vacuousness, sanctioning, in a silent way, (emotional) emptiness and 'internal world's backwardness' of a man – which contradicts reflectiveness and 'openness' to the authentic bonds with another man. A tendency to one-sided judgement of individualism and direct relations makes a man an (un)conscious sleepwalker, deprived of the depth of experiences, generating a change and a possibility of valuable realisation of life project, without the traps of fiction considered to be true, but in a sense of moral responsibility for one's own or someone else's fate. ''Moral responsibility is the most personal and indispensable of human liberties and the most precious of human rights. It cannot be taken away from a man, cannot be shared with another man, cannot be handed over, pledged or kept safe. Moral responsibility is unconditional and infinite and it manifests itself in a constant anxiety that it appears insufficiently. Moral responsibility does not look for a safeguard, does not need assurances of its rightness or justification for the fact that, it is as it is, (…), and will exist long, even after the producers of excuses will have pensioned it off''.[23] Modern fascination with the freedom of acting, accepting the rights of gain 'here and now' as a symbol of contemporary life, excludes co-presence, protecting the man from an (un)visible drama of existence.

[23] Ibidem, p. 388.

How could Aladdin start a new life without a magic lamp? The functioning of orphanages for street children in India

Beata Pietkiewicz-Pareek

ccording to UNICEF, a street child is defined as a child for whom the street has become his or her habitual source of livelihood; and also who is inadequately protected, supervised, as well as directed by responsible adults. In previous researches on street children, the street child definition applied to any child that worked on the street. However, based on more diverse global research, different categories of kids living on the streets have been distinguished, while it is still difficult to categorize the recognition of children's complex experiences.[1]

Mark W. Lusk[2] developed four categories of children found in the street. Each group has its own psychological characteristics. First, there are poor working kids returning to their families at night. They are likely to attend school and not be delinquent. Second, there are independent street workers. Their family ties are beginning to break down, their school attendance is decreasing, and their delinquency is on the increase. Third, there are children of street families who live and work with their families in the street. Their conditions are related to poverty. In India, they are referred to as pavement dwellers. Finally, there are children who have broken off contact with their families. They reside in the street full time and are the "real" street kids.[3]

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[1] T.S. de Benítez, *State of the world's street children, Consortium for Street Children*, 2007, http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/_uploads/publications/state_of_the_world_-_violence.pdf [access: 26.04.2014], p. 37.

[2] M. Lusk, I. Razzini, *Children in the Streets: Latin America`s Lost Generation*, "Children and Youth Services Review", 1995, vol. 17, no. 3, p. 391–400.

[3] L. Aptekar, *Are Colombian Street Children Neglected?*, "The Contributions of Ethnographic and Ethnohistorical Approaches to the Study of Children Anthropology and Education Quarterly", 1992, no. 22(4), p. 196, http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/laptekar/download/anthroanded.pdf [access: 26.04.2014].

The term "street children" refers to kids for whom the street has become their real home more than their family. It includes children who might not necessarily be homeless or without families, but who live in situations where there is no protection, supervision, or direction from responsible adults.[4] It is difficult to count the number of street kids living in India because of their floating nature. Their lack of permanent address, their wandering lifestyles, and their changing workplaces make them a difficult group to locate.[5] Over one third of children in urban areas go unregistered at birth, they have no birth certificate or an official identity card.[6] In India, 18 million children work on the streets and only 5-20% of them are truly homeless and disconnected from their families. According to UNICEF, about 72% of the street children were aged 6-12 years and 13% were aged below 6 years. In general, the majority of street children in India are boys with little or no education.[7] In 2007, the Study on Child Abuse in India reported that 51.8% of street children slept on the footpath, 17.5% slept in night shelters and 30.7% in other places including sleeping under flyovers and bridges, railway platforms, bus stops, parks, market places, cinema theatres etc. They did not seem to have much access to sanitary places for defecation as a result of which the majority of children (70.6%) were defecating on railway lines or road side ditches. Bathing is not a priority for most street children; they do not bathe at all.[8] "Sadak Chap" is a term by which children refer to themselves. "Chap" means stamp and "sadak" is street. The simplest definition is one the children have developed themselves: without a roof, and without roots, roofless and rootless.[9]

In the case of street children, their living conditions (including residential and working locations) and their links with their families also become determinant factors. Street children in India choose to leave their families and homes for strategic reasons. After interviewing 1,000 children on the Patel, it turned out that the major reason for street children to live in the street was not poverty but family violence. Another Indian study by Subrahmanyarn & Sondhi in 1990, this one of child porters (children under age 14 working and living without family support), showed that although poverty was a significant aspect of

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[4] *Study on Child Abuse: India 2007*, http://wcd.nic.in/childabuse.pdf [access: 26.04.2014], p. 60.

[5] S. Patel, *Street Children, hotel boys and children of pavement dwellers and construction workers in Bombay – how they meet their daily needs*, "Environment and Urbanization", 1990, no. 2(2), p. 11, http://eau.sagepub.com/content/2/2/9.full.pdf+html [access: 26.04.2014].

[6] UNICEF, *The State of The World`s Children 2011*, 2012, http://www.unicef.org/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report_EN_02092011.pdf [access: 26.04.2014], p. 13.

[7] F.A. Kombarakaran, *Street children of Bombay: their stresses and strategies of coping*, "Children and Youth Services Review", 2004, no. 26, p. 853.

[8] A. Chatterjee, *India: The forgotten children of the cities*, Florence 1992, p. 9.

[9] S. Patel, op. cit.

the children being on the streets, family discord was the major problem.[10] Many street children say that they ended up in the street due to violence in the home/family.[11] The most common family problems of street children are the death of a parent, strained relationships with step-parents, parent separation, alcoholism of father, insufficient food, abuse and family violence. Most children who leave home to live on the streets come from slums or low cost housing, both of which are areas of high illiteracy, drug use, and unemployment.[12] Children usually adopted their lives to the streets through a gradual process, for example: they may have at first started only to stay on the street for a night or two, followed by gradually spending more time away from home until they do not return at all.[13] In some cases, children sometimes find that their living conditions and physical and mental health is better on the streets than at home; especially because of the poor conditions of their homes rather than favourable and child-friendly conditions in the street.[14] Once they leave home, many street children move around often because of the fear that their relatives will find them and force them to return home.[15] In addition to risking their lives on the street, children work in an environment of street culture. This environment is difficult to imagine; it is one without privacy, comfort, nurturance, or supervision. Within, one encounters prostitutes, drug dealers, professional thieves – a "school" that socializes the children in counterproductive ways. Surprisingly, street children are often tenacious and positive. Aptekar[16] has noted predictable negative effects on intellectual and emotional maturity and adjustment. He has observed that street youth demonstrate hostility, suspicion, low self-esteem and feelings of rage. Lusk has commented on the entrepreneurial energy of street children and noted that their aspirations for the future are only somewhat more muted than for their counterparts in conventional family settings.[17]

India's Census office defines child labour as participation of a child less than 17 years of age in any economically productive activity with or without compensation, wages or profit. UNICEF defines child labour: it occurs if between 5

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[10] L. Aptekar, op. cit., p. 199.

[11] UNICEF, *Regional Consultation on Violence Against Children in South Asia*, 2005, http://www.unicef.org/rosa/VAC.pdf [access: 26.04.2014], p. 60.

[12] M. Mathur, M. Monika, *Incidence, type and intensity of abuse in street children in India*, "Child Abuse & Neglect", 2009, no. 33, p. 908.

[13] L. Aptekar, op. cit., p. 199.

[14] Idem, *Street children in the developing world: a review of their condition*, "Cross-Cultural Resources", 1994, no. 28, p. 196, 200, http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/laptekar/download/crosscul turalresearch.pdf [access: 26.04.2014].

[15] F.A. Kombarakaran, op. cit., p. 867.

[16] L. Aptekar, op. cit., p. 200.

[17] M. Lusk, I. Razzini, op. cit., p. 395.

to 11 years of age, he or she did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work in a week, and in case of children between 12 to 14 years of age, he or she did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 42 hours of economic activity and domestic work per week. In another report, UNICEF suggests: "Children's work needs to be seen as happening along a continuum, with destructive or exploitative work at one end and beneficial work – promoting or enhancing children's development without interfering with their schooling, recreation and rest – at the other. And between these two poles are vast areas of work that need not negatively affect a child's development".[18]

Understanding the educational levels of street children is critical for providing them appropriate basic education and skill training. According to a recent survey report of situational analysis of young children in Delhi, done by the Samajik Suvidha Sangam Society, New Delhi has 242,000 children out of school. Only 71% of Delhi's children attend school against the national figure of 94.5%. The survey also found that among the people surveyed 25.4% were illiterate. The educational disparity between the rich and the poor in Delhi can be judged from another finding of the survey conducted on 12,000 households in 22 slums clusters which found that only 4.7% of the people were graduates. Only 20% were found to have completed elementary education, 15.2% primary and only 7.9% higher secondary.[19] According to Yuko survey in Delhi, a primary school attendance rate is 54.5% among children living in slums in 2004-2005, compared with 90% for the city as a whole.[20] In general, street children dislike to attend school, for instance, a study of Kombarakaran[21] on street children in Bombay revealed that 60% of the children had never attended school, approximately 65% were illiterate, and 30% had been to elementary school, while only 10% had been to middle or high school. A census of street children in Delhi, conducted in 2010 by Save the Children, a non-governmental organization working for children's rights and the Institute for Human Development, revealed that 50.5% of the street children in Delhi were not literate. 23 per cent of the children had received some form of non-formal education while almost 20% had received some form of formal education. The various initiatives discussed here largely refer to informal interventions such as those by NGOs, mobile schools, better-off people in the neighbourhood teaching them, and night schools.[22]

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[18] UNICEF, *The State of The World`s Children 2011*, 2012, http://www.unicef.org/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report_EN_02092011.pdf [access: 26.04.2014], p. 23.

[19] www.azadindia.org/social-issues/index.html.

[20] T. Yuko, *Deprivation of Education: A study of slum children in Delhi, India*, Chiba 2010, p. 4, http://ir.ide.go.jp/dspace/bitstream/2344/841/1/199_tsujita.pdf [access: 26.04.2014].

[21] F.A. Kombarakaran, op. cit., p. 860.

[22] http:/resourcecentre.savethechildren.se.

The research goals and methodology context

There are two main obstacles to counting street children: definitional difficulties and children's fluid circumstances. Reliability of data is also highly problematic. Qualitative research which seeks to understand street children's experiences and circumstances depends heavily on the children themselves as central informants. But street children have a host of good reasons for providing misleading, false or no information for self-protection, even when innovative, nonthreatening, participatory research methods are used. Cross-checking (triangulating) interview information with other sources produces more reliable data but is also problematic: street informants can be transitory; families may be far away, unknown to the researcher, or guarded in supplying data about their children; service providers may have children registered under different names and are also heavily reliant on children's own accounts. Meanwhile, fluid lifestyles make observation and maintaining contact with individual respondents over time complex undertakings.

The methodology used in this research is that of a case study. The case study approach is a "detailed examination of a single person, group, institution, social movement or event".[23] According to Stake, a case study is not generalization but particularization.[24]

During my practice in India, I had a chance to participate in an orphanage in New Delhi – Salaam Baalak Trust, which gathered more than 100 boys with about 5 adults taking care of them. I spent a day with a group of boys who lived in a SBT's shelter near a railway station; I was also in a contact point at the main railway station in New Delhi. I was in the slums area with Max alias Sanjay, who works at SBT (an ex-street child). A review of SBT policy documents and pedagogical documentation was carried out at the beginning of the research. I carried out observations; all that I was able to observe I wrote in my journal in the form of detailed field notes. Observation was used to understand the true state of SBT and to verify the problems that the interviewees discussed. I also used photography as another technique to collect data.

I also participated in Ladli in Jaipur. I spent a week with girls who learn and work there. I lived in a shelter with them.

Besides observation, my main tool were interviews – all that I led were similar to regular conversation rather than to prepared questionnaires. I carried out informal and formal interviews with administrators and teachers. The interviews allowed me to hear the children's voices, to know their opinions and stories. I talked to the children and listened to them during their regular daily activities. I asked them about their dreams, about their future.

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[23] R. Thomas, D. Brubaker, *Doing theses and dissertations*, Granby 2000, p. 103.

[24] R. Stake, *The art of case study research*, Thousand Oaks 1995, p. 19.

Public approaches to street children

Recently, the paradigms have shifted from considering individual children as the site of problems, either as victims or as delinquents, to the conception of children interacting with a variety of environments. Research has moved away from a focus on dysfunctioning, pathology and psychological breakdown to understanding the characteristics of children's street lives as changing in space, over time and embedded in multidimensional contexts.

There are four approaches to addressing street children in India: correctional model, rehabilitative model, outreach strategies, and preventive approach. Each strategy is based on different assumptions about the group.

The correctional model is primarily used by governments and the police. They view children as a public nuisance and risk to the security of the general public. The objective of this model would be to protect the public and help keep the kids away from the life of crime. The methods this model uses to keep the children away from the life of crime are the juvenile justice system and specific institutions. Thousands of street children are locked up in prisons and other similar establishments. Often the conditions of such institutions are unsafe, unsanitary, violent and abusive.[25]

The rehabilitative model is supported by churches and NGOs. The view of this model is that street children are damaged and in need of help. The objective of this model is to rehabilitate children into the mainstream society. The methods used to keep children from going back to the streets are education, drug detoxification programmes, and providing children with a safe family-like environment. As most social workers in the region observe, rehabilitation fails to get to the heart of the problem.

The outreach strategy is supported by street teachers, NGOs, and church organizations. It is based on Paulo Freire's model of education that emphasizes meeting students on their own turf and providing them with a combination of practical and political skills. This strategy views street children as oppressed individuals in need of support from their communities. The objective of the outreach strategy is to empower the street children by providing outreach education and training to support children.

The preventive approach is supported by NGOs, the coalition of street children, and lobbying governments. Preventive approaches articulated by UNICEF[26] emphasize that an understanding of the issue of street children is not to be found in the children themselves, but in the larger social and economic forces which shape their destiny. In order to help street children, this approach

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[25] T. Saraiva, *The environment and the marginalization of children and adolescents*, Rio de Janeiro 1984, p. 245.

[26] UNICEF, *The State of The World's Children 2011*, 2012, p. 109.

focuses on the problems that cause children to leave their homes by targeting parents' unemployment, poor housing, and campaigning for children's rights.[27]

While some governments have implemented programmes to deal with street children, the general solution involves placing the children in orphanages, juvenile homes, or correctional institutions. India has a very large number of orphans as well as destitute child population. Orphanages operated by the state are generally known as juvenile homes. In addition, there is a vast number of privately run orphanages spread across the country. These are run by various trusts, religious groups, individual citizens, citizens groups, NGO's etc. While some of these places endeavour to place the children for adoption, a vast majority just care and educate them till they are of legal age and help them to stand on their own two feet. Prominent organizations in this field include BOYS TOWN, SOS children's villages etc. Some scandals have occurred every now and then especially with regard to Adoption. Also, since government rules restrict funds unless a certain number of inmates are there, some orphanages make sure the resident numbers remain high at the cost of adoption.

Street children are often removed from the street or encouraged to leave public spaces ostensibly for 'reform', 'rehabilitation' or 'protection'. But their reports of abuse and neglect in detention centres and welfare shelters are received from countries across the world. Accounts of violence against street children in residential centres are commonly recorded in juvenile detention centres and adult prisons. Physical, sexual and psychological abuses are perpetrated by guards, adult detainees and other child detainees. Violence in governmental institutions reflects, at best, continuing stigmatization and neglect of street children and, at worst, state encouragement of violence against children.

Poor physical conditions and inadequate staffing reflect the low priority awarded by policy-makers to improving street children's future life chances. Abuse in institutions normalizes violence for street children and can exacerbate the effects of previous violence in street children, whether as victims or perpetrators. NGO shelters and other residential services for street children can perpetuate abuse, if only by concentrating children accustomed to violence in overcrowded, poorly conditioned, under-managed and under-staffed conditions. Researchers have also questioned whether NGOs unwittingly reproduce stereotypes and inferior opportunities for street children and it has been argued in the USA that the existence of governmental and NGO shelters for street children may be an incentive to neglect development of other options for street children and youth. Child protection policies are in force in many NGOs; for example, they are compulsory for membership of the Consortium for Street Children, but on their own they are not enough and systems to protect children

[27] N. Ansell, *Children, Youth and Development*, New York 2005, p. 205.

from abuse by staff or other residents are sometimes flimsy and unregulated. Violence in detention centres and welfare shelters is an unacceptable reality, in extreme cases denying street children their fundamental right to protection and validating the use of violence. Protected children are, however, able to build long-term supportive relationships.

Salaam Baalak Trust

In 2012, I had the opportunity to travel to New Delhi in order to conduct research on street children. What I could visit was the orphanage for street children in New Delhi – Salaam Baalak Trust, an NGO that offers a broad range of services to children who live or work on the street.

Salaam Baalak Trust (SBT) grew out of Nukkad – a street-based intervention programme that began working with street children in the New Delhi Railway Station in 1987. Salaam Baalak Trust is dedicated to the care and protection of neglected street children, regardless of caste, colour, creed or religion. SBT works in areas that are the raw, harsh underbelly of the city – on railway platforms, at crowded bus stops, and in the by-lanes around temples. Comprehensive services include five long-term, full-care residential facilities, fifteen on-going contact point programmes, and an emergency telephone help line for children in distress. Contact points are identified at crucial stations around the city to establish direct contact with children. The contact points steer the way of children towards other centres enabling development.[28]

This 22-year-old organization has already supported more than 50,000 children from all over the country and abroad. Children from early batches have returned to work and have joined the organization as employees. Children who have left SBT and gone on to establish meaningful lives for themselves embrace a wide variety of jobs and vocations. SBT's roots in performing arts have enabled some to become highly regarded freelance photographers, dancers, choreographers, film makers, actors, puppeteers, and theatre directors. Others have been absorbed into steady jobs with companies such as Matrix, Café Coffee Day, Benetton, Pizza Hut, Miditech, DS Constructions (Toll Plaza), Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and Teamwork Productions.[29]

Salaam Baalak Trust has five full-care residential programmes. Aasra, Apna Ghar and DMRC are home for boys and ROSE HOME and Arushi for girls. A sense of security – be it a safe sleeping place, a small cupboard to store their personal belongings, a somewhat set pattern to life (e.g. regulated timings for food, study, play, roll call and going to bed etc.) gives the children an environ-

[28] *Salaam Baalak Trust Annual Report 2012*, New Delhi 2012, p. 3.

[29] Ibidem, p. 5.

ment to be creative and grow naturally, yet instils in them the idea of discipline and hard work to achieve their dreams. Only when the sheer struggle for survival is over, can they begin to articulate and work towards their future.

S. No.	Particulars	Number of children	Remarks
1	Total beneficiaries	4527 children Girls: 1,256 Boys: 3,271	**2011-2012**
2	Shelter provided	1076 children Girls: 138 Boys: 938	
3	Restored back to families	876 children Girls: 107 Boys: 769	
4	Placed to another NGO	178 children	
5	Education 1. Children in a formal school 2. Received non-formal education 3. Received education through NIOS 4. Received education through the Delhi University and IGNOU	 512 children SBT homes: 129 Contact points: 221 Chalta firta school: 76 Project on the removal of child labour: 86 3,288 children 67 children 9 children	
6	Admitted to a vocational training course	119 children	
7	Placed in different jobs	29 children	
8	1. Medical check-ups 2. Referred to hospital 3. Hospitalization 4. Operated on 5. Hepatitis 'B' injection 6. Tetanus injection 7. Medical investigation 8. STI/UTI case 9. Eye check-up 10. Dental check-up 11. Long-term treatment 12. HIV test	3,827 children 1,397 children 61 children 3 children 79 children 808 children 563 children 15 children 93 children 114 children 28 children 99 children	HIV prevention and drug de-addiction also formed an integral component of the awareness programme.

Source: Salaam Baalak Trust Annual Report 2012, New Delhi 2012, p. 8

As suggested by the name, contact points are the first meeting place for children who have 'landed' in the city which is alien and often hostile to them. Contact points are located at railway stations and crowded places in the city, and are run as day-care programmes. The first objective is to send children back to their families. Where repatriation is not feasible, children are encouraged to join shelter homes for full-time care. One important feature in most contact points is the peer education programme, in which children who have a long association with SBT reach out to new arrivals, sharing their own stories, building trust, sharing information about SBT, and encouraging them to visit the contact points. SBT currently have fifteen contact points including Chalta Firta School and the project on the removal of child labour in Garment Industry in Delhi. The contact point at Saket behind the PVR Anupam Cinema catered to 307 children in 2011. The project on the removal of child labour in garment industry, Delhi has been a promising initiative to meet its objective. The organization has selected the following contact points to carry out its functioning: Pratap Nagar contact point, Akansha Kishalaya, Hanuman Mandir, GRP, New Delhi Railway Station, Old Delhi Railway Station. The main activities in each contact point are:

- Reaching out to new children,
- Counselling children to return to their families and helping trace them,
- Providing nutrition, clothing and toilet facilities,
- Education: non-formal, formal and open school,
- Comprehensive medical support,
- Counselling and referral to drug de-addiction programmes,
- Recreational facilities: art and craft, music, out-door indoor games, local excursions, and annual holidays in the hills,
- Creating awareness on child rights and adherence,
- Fostering a sense of communal harmony and an awareness of other religions, through observance of all major festivals,
- Creating an enabling environment for children through sensitization of stakeholders,
- Networking with authorities such as law enforcement agencies, local civic bodies, and railways,
- Sensitization of adults who live on the streets with their children,
- Restoring children back to their families.[30]

The Chalta Firta School is a mobile bus programme reaching out to communities towards the fulfilment of Sarva Shikha Abhiyan. It is an initiative conceived and supported by the Government of NCT of Delhi and the UEE (Universalization of Elementary Education) Mission. The customized mobile van is equipped with the basic infrastructure of a classroom and a variety of teaching

[30] Ibidem, p. 10–11.

and learning aids. It focuses on children who are out of school and ensures that they receive non-formal education and subsequently attend a regular school. At each of its four stops, the van spends two hours in activities such as television screening, games, non-formal education, group discussions, and counselling on health, hygiene, social skills, and child rights. At the end of each session, supplementary nutrition is also provided, and first aid is made available. On Saturdays, the staff organizes sessions on drug de-addiction, the problems of girl children, and HIV/AIDS.

Education at SBT is not confined to school curriculum, but includes training in life skills, performing arts, computer literacy, and exposure to tourist-sights and the outdoors. Great emphasis is laid on formal schooling i.e. admitting children to regular private or public schools. Apart from this, some children also go through non-formal schooling and National Open School systems of education. Children are assisted in their homework and are provided with extra tuition/remedial classes. The teacher-pupil ratio is 1:25. Teachers facilitate each child's learning through small groups of interaction. The non-formal education is conducted through a systematic module and interesting pedagogies.

National Open School (distance mode of learning): The open school system is a blessing for street children, since many of them start schooling very late, and find it difficult to adapt to the formal and rigorous syllabus of school teaching. Open Basic Education (OBE) is a distance mode of learning by NOS that covers up to standard 8.

Regular School Enrolment (Formal Education): There is no substitute to school education. It enables children to mix with other children from family-oriented backgrounds. In 2012, 162 children went to regular schools.

Elementary education (Non-Formal Education): An elementary education programme aims to stimulate an interest in education, as well as mainstream children into formal education. Virtually all children coming in contact with the trust are initially put into elementary education and later into other streams. Flexible non-formal education modules provide basic education and literacy, and cover child rights, computer literacy, general information, reading and recitation, health and hygiene, social skills, moral values, basic mathematics, and money management.

Bridge courses & remedial education: Bridge education helps children to make up for breaks in their education. When children flee their homes, education is a major casualty. Children find it difficult to get an admission, especially in higher classes after a break. Bridge courses enable them to cover the missed portions of the syllabus and make up for the lost time with intensive study and concise courses.[31]

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[31] Ibidem, p. 17.

Life skill education: has two aims – enhancing the day-to-day decision-taking ability of children; and providing them with livelihood options through vocational training, and job placement. Life skills education aims to develop the ability of an individual to deal with the variety of situations that life throws up. The modules that SBT follow are developed jointly by the Family Health International and HIV/AIDS Alliance, and include subjects such as: knowing myself, communication, relationships, decision making, coping with emotions, growing up, preventing and living with HIV, substance abuse and reaching one's goals. These modules are facilitated through discussions, stories, drama, puppets and role play, songs and poems, indoor and outdoor games and question box. The modules have been modified to suit the needs of street children. Last year, SBT conducted 231 life skills sessions, and can now emphatically state that they have had a huge positive impact, which is tangible in increased self-awareness, less risky behaviour, greater ability to deal with peer pressure, and a greater commitment to their future and their careers.

Vocational Training: becomes a critical link for street children to enter the mainstream of society. In order to qualify for vocational training, SBT children have to be 16, or clear their 10th standard board exam. Children choose a vocation according to their interests, but the assessment of a career counsellor and staff is available to help them match their ability with the training they want to undergo. The popular choices were Master Desk Top Publishing, web and graphic designing, multimedia animation, film editing, C++ software, care-giving, house-keeping, puppetry, karate, theatre, macramé and photography. Some of the institutes which provided training were ITI- Pusa Road, NIIT, MAAC, Arena Multimedia, Crown Plaza, Taj Mahal Hotel-Mansingh Road, Vivek Sahni's Design House, The Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust, YMCA, Triveni Kala Sangam & Ramakrishna Institute of Computers.[32]

I-India Organization

I-India is a fully registered, non-profit, non-governmental organization. It was established in 1993 and employs a staff of 80 dedicated local people. I-India's main activities are the provision of: an information/advice help line for children in need, repatriation of children to their families, temporary and permanent homes, medical care and sanitation, nutrition, emotional support from trained staff, education, vocational training, awareness and advocacy.[33]

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[32] Ibidem, p. 19.

[33] http://www.i-indiaonline.com/abt_ii_mission.htm [access: 26.04.2014].

Prabhakar and Abha Goswami, a professor and teacher at the University of Rajasthan, were asked to conduct research into street children and children of prostitutes. Initially, the emphasis was on research, but it soon shifted to practical care for the children. I-India was founded as an NGO (non-governmental organisation) by the Goswamis. With a staff of three and a tiny budget, the organization worked full-time for the well-being of street children.

Child Inn is a home for runaway and orphaned boys found living on the streets of Jaipur. The home aims at rehabilitating boys from exploitation, begging and child labour by giving them protection, love and development possibilities. It was established in 1999 and houses about 44 children. Many of the boys have run away from home because of violence or abuse, others have lost their parents or are exploited as child labourers. They typically come to I-India through Child Line, or through the outreach staff at the railway station. When possible, and in the best interests of the child, they will be repatriated to their family, otherwise they will be allowed to make Child Inn their home for as long as they choose. Child Inn provides love, shelter, security, nutrition and medical care. The children go to a local school and obtain skills training at Ladli, I-India's vocational centre. They also learn social values and get emotional support by trained staff. Resident staff live and work at Child Inn where they give the boys the focused care and attention that every growing child needs. The home is located in the DCM suburb of Jaipur. Child Line is situated on its premises and I-India's office is nearby. The staff includes full-time wardens, cooks, teachers, hobby-teachers and a nurse. The building was donated by the Jaipur Foundation in the Netherlands, and its maintenance has been funded by the Government of India in addition to local and foreign individuals.

Ganga is a home for abused, runaway and orphaned girls found living on the streets of Jaipur. The home aims to rehabilitate the girls away from begging, child labour and prostitution by giving them protection, love and development possibilities. It was founded in 2003 and houses about 34 girls. Ganga replaced the first girls home called Ladli, which is the name now given to the new vocational centre. Many of the girls are sexually abused or have been sold into prostitution. Others have lost their parents, beg or are exploited in child labour, such as garbage-sifting. They typically come to I-India through Child Line, or through the outreach staff at the railway station. Ganga was designed specifically for girls' needs. The building and its maintenance have been funded by UNICEF and then by the Embassy of Finland. At present, the home is exclusively supported by I-Aid, Finland. In January 2006 I-India opened a Temporary Home for 25 girls (Ganga 2). In 2008, the organization opened one more temporary home for another 25 girls (Ganga 3). These homes operate in conjunction with

the permanent home, Ganga. The Temporary Homes now act as the first stop for homeless children rescued from the street.[34]

The School on Wheels brings education to children who do not go to a regular school. These children may be forced to work because of poverty, or there may be no nearby government school, or they and their parents may not understand the value of education. The School on Wheels reaches out to them by bringing a school to where they live. It provides informal schooling on sidewalks and in spare corners of slums. Even though the 'centres' usually consist of no more than a rug laid on the ground and a blackboard propped against a wall, they represent all the education some children will ever get. Two teachers travel by bus to a total of 6 centres a day. Each teacher visits the same three centres every day, six days a week, and teaches English, maths and Hindi for 2-3 hours at each of them. After class they distribute a nutritious meal and at least once a week an ambulance comes to check on the children and dispense medicines and treatment. The Shower Bus also visits each centre every day and provides the children with a shower and cleansing products. There are currently two School on Wheels buses and the programme reaches out to about 500 children every day.

The Integrated Programme for Street Children is a national programme operating in 56 cities in India. I-India operates 11 day 'centres' in Jaipur. The programme targets homeless children living alone, or with their families, on the street. It provides education, health care, nutrition and legal help. It also seeks to reunite runaway children with their families. The day centres are operated at street points such as sidewalks, slums and the railway station. They are usually no more than a rug on the ground or a wall-less, canvass area of shade, but they are the last line of care for children who have fallen through society's cracks. These children may be forced to work because of poverty, or there may be no nearby government school, or they and their parents may have not appreciated the value of education. The Integrated Programme for Street Children reaches out to them by bringing education to where they live. I-India's 11 centres help 700 children every day.[35]

About 60 girls attend Girls Ladli. They specialize in learning jewellery-making. The girls are taught various local techniques by trained staff and work mostly with semi-precious gemstones, copper and silver. Each teacher sits with a small group of children where they instruct and guide them. In addition to making jewellery, the girls are taught about stone identification and colour combinations. Many of Ladli's designs are created by the teachers and by volunteer foreign designers, but the girls are also encouraged to experiment and make their own designs: these are displayed for sale alongside the established work.[36]

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[34] http://www.i-indiaonline.com/ prog_temphome.htm [access: 26.04.2014].

[35] http://www.i-indiaonline.com/ prog_ISS.htm [access: 26.04.2014].

[36] http://www.ladli.org/girls%20ladli%20PAG1.htm [access: 26.04.2014].

Discussion

Based on the current state of the street children in India, there are some suggestions which can be made. The first requirement for all people is to improve the understanding of the scale and nature of urban poverty and exclusion affecting children. This will entail not only sound statistical work, a hallmark of which must be greater disaggregation of urban data, but also solid research, and evaluation of interventions. Any effort to remediate the living conditions and welfare of so many children must take cognizance of the heterogeneity of street children and the serious economic marginalization of their families. Approaches yet developed do not fully account for the complexity of the problem.

In addition to this, every child has the right to be registered immediately after birth but over one third of children in urban areas worldwide go unregistered at birth. The invisibility that results from the lack of a birth certificate or an official identity vastly increases children's vulnerability to exploitation of all kinds from being forced into child marriage to hazardous work. Children lacking birth certificate can be at particular risk of trafficking.[37]

Many poor people and marginalized groups live on the streets, in slums and informal settlements. Children from these communities are particularly vulnerable because of the stresses of their living conditions. Indian nation and government should improve their living conditions through investment in health systems (water and sanitation) and progressive taxation, sufficient living area, food security, education etc.

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[37] UNICEF, *The State of The World's Children 2011*, 2012, http://www.unicef.org/sowc2011/pdfs/SOWC-2011-Main-Report_EN_02092011.pdf [access: 26.04.2014], p. 32.

Part III

Discourses of Cyborgization

Transhumanism and the idea of education in the world of cyborgs[1]

Michał Klichowski

We are cyborgs. We are transhumans; transitory people that exist in a luminal phase[2], waiting for a transfer to the posthuman world.[3] Our children do not need education; it is cyborgization that ensures their development. This is the idea of transhumanistic philosophy, a thoroughly (non-/anti-)pedagogic idea.

In this paper, I will present basic transhumanism ideas and stress the criticism on education created within this philosophy. This text is neither a systematic study on transhumanism nor a pedagogical analysis. It is merely an attempt at showing teachers how education can be deprecated in modern philosophies that are technologically-oriented.

Basic theses of transhumanism

The transhumanism term was coined in 1957 by Julian Huxler, UNESCO's first Director-General.[4] According to the definition by the World Transhumanist Association, transhumanism is a philosophy whose essence is to use technology to overcome biological limitations of the man and improve the human condition. This overcoming and improvement are understood as freeing the man from illnesses, ageing processes, and achieving the state of full happiness, per-

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[1] Fragments of this article were published in Polish in the author's book: M. Klichowski, *Narodziny cyborgizacji. Nowa eugenika, transhumanizm i zmierzch edukacji*, Poznań 2014.

[2] S. Jaskulska, *"Rytuał przejścia" jako kategoria analityczna. Przyczynek do dyskusji nad badaniem rytualnego oblicza rzeczywistości szkolnej*, "Studia Edukacyjne", 2013, vol. 26, p. 88–89.

[3] S.L. Sorgner, *Nietzsche, the Overhuman, and Transhumanism*, "Journal of Evolution & Technology", 2008, vol. 20, no. 1, p. 36.

[4] G. Wolbring, *Why NBIC? Why human performance enhancement?*, "The European Journal of Social Sciences", 2008, vol. 21, no. 1, p. 31.

manent, top excitement, as well as replacing many organs (and the entire body at some point) with artificial elements (better than the original ones).[5] Transhumanism calls for maximum development and popularization of technology so that the above-mentioned full overcoming and human improvement could occur as soon as possible.[6]

Transhumanism is thus a philosophy of technology. Transhumanism seeks scientific ways of using technology to create posthuman beings. Transhumanism is not only an object of scientific research (as a certain phenomenon of the modern world), but many scientists claim that it is an important category of modern science, a significant current of research on the man[7], or even a new paradigm in thinking about the man, his development and future.[8]

However, transhumanism is not only some philosophy or social phenomenon. For many people, transhumanism is a way of living, it is a collection of ideas that constitute their each action (both towards themselves and others). For thousands of our contemporaries, transhumanism is a rationality that designs the way we should sleep, eat, work, bring up children, live, love or learn; in short, the way we should exist.[9] And everything in line with the "Get the most out of your potential" rule.[10]

The vision of the transhumanist philosophy is based on a quasi-Aristotelian understanding of nature according to which everything naturally aims at perfection.[11] It seems, however, that this perfection is quasi-perfectionist here. It is transhumanism that "adopts the methodology of engineering thoughtfulness where everything is designed and evaluated from the effectiveness perspective".[12] Being perfect thus means being effective (physically, psychologically, intellectually). It is difficult to claim that this combination is perfect (thus, quasi-perfection).

The core of the transhumanist idea of (quasi)perfection is the assumption that it is possible to use technology in a way that allows human biology to be

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[5] A. Bergsma, *Transhumanism and the Wisdom of Old Genes is Neurotechnology as Source of Future Happiness?*, "Journal of Happiness Studies", 2000, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 403–404.

[6] J.P. Bishop, *Transhumanism, Metaphysics, and the Posthuman God*, "Journal of Medicine & Philosophy", 2010, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 700.

[7] R. Campa, *Pure Science and the Posthuman Future*, "Journal of Evolution & Technology", 2008, vol. 19, no. 1, p. 1.

[8] B.M. Daly, *Transhumanism: toward a brave new world?*, "America", 2004, vol. 191, no. 12, p. 18.

[9] G. Dvorsky, *Better Living through Transhumanism*, "Journal of Evolution & Technology", 2008, vol. 19, no. 1, p. 1.

[10] J.P. Bishop, op. cit., p. 709.

[11] M. Hauskeller, *Reinventing Cockaigne. Utopian themes in transhumanist thought*, "Hastings Center Report", 2012, vol. 42, no. 2, p. 42.

[12] R. Ilnicki, *Bóg cyborgów. Technika i transcendencja*, Poznań 2011, p. 150.

radically changed, or even overcome. As a result, the man will enter an intellectual level (of intellectual effectiveness) that is yet unknown and unachievable for us, biological people. Transhumanism draws on the achievements in research into artificial intelligence. It does not, however, search for a method of creating an intelligent machine but a strategy for building a machine that will stimulate the growth of human intelligence and make it possible to transfer it from a body to a machine (robot) or to a certain system created by machines.[13]

Fighting with the limitations of human biology and proclaiming the concept of progress, transhumanists still call for the fight to be undertaken by a specific owner of a body (in order for the fight not to be imposed by the state, for example). Owning a body gives the right to manage one's body and get rid of it in the name of existing in a robot or a system. Everyone can thus decide on their own if, and what, transhumanist treatment they will undergo. This rule was named morphological freedom by transhumanists.[14]

The logics of transhumanism perception of a human can be compared to the logics of perceiving a computer file. The man can be (in the atmosphere of full freedom) modified (his biology can be transformed), his format can be changed (biology can be overcome), copied to a different device (transferred to a robot), or even uploaded to a different operating system (placed in a non-biological system). This logics of perceiving the man emerged under the influence of technological revolution (mainly the Internet revolution), which has introduced the order (called the logics of clicking[15]) of computer systems and nets to our cognitive system.[16]

Still, transhumanism is not a common project or a vision of modern technology. Transhumanism is a philosophy rooted in the postulates of the Enlightenment[17], and transhumanists perceive themselves as heirs of the philosophy of humanism.[18] Exactly like the philosophy of the Enlightenment, it is transhu-

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[13] A. Jaokar, *The Power of Transhumanist Meditation*, "Journal of the Society for Existential Analysis", 2012, vol. 23, no. 2, p. 242.

[14] F. Jotterand, *Human Dignity and Transhumanism: Do Anthro-Technological Devices Have Moral Status?*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 49.

[15] M. Klichowski, *Między linearnością a klikaniem. O społecznych konstrukcjach podejść do uczenia się*, Kraków 2012, p. 91–96; Z. Melosik, *Młodzież w kulturze współczesnej. Paradoksy poptożsamości*, [in:] *Pedagogika u progu trzeciego tysiąclecia. Materiały pokonferencyjne*, ed. K. Rubacha, A. Nalaskowski, Toruń 2001, p. 59–60; Z. Melosik, *Młodzież a przemiany kultury współczesnej*, [in:] *Młodzież wobec niegościnnej przyszłości*, ed. R. Leppert, Z. Melosik, B. Wojtasik, Wrocław 2005, p. 16–17; M. Klichowski, *Czy nadchodzi śmierć tekstu? Kilka refleksji na marginesie teorii technologicznego determinizmu*, "Studia Edukacyjne", 2012, vol. 23, p. 103–118.

[16] C. Doctorow, *Leaving Behind More Than a Knucklebone*, "Journal of Evolution & Technology", 2008, vol. 19, no. 1, p. 2.

[17] F. Jotterand, *At the Roots of Transhumanism: From the Enlightenment to a Post-Human Future*, "Journal of Medicine & Philosophy", 2010, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 617.

[18] J.P. Bishop, op. cit., p. 700.

manism that is based on the claim that human nature can be corrected.[19] Also, transhumanism promotes the Enlightenment supremacy of the mind and the idea of using science to overcome human limitations.[20] What is more – in the context of the inheritance mentioned above – the word transhumanism was deliberately coined to refer to the tradition of humanism, i.e. a secular image of the world were the man is the highest moral value. Yet, by not accepting the fundamental role of humanity in the development of a man, transhumanism goes beyond humanism. Transhumanism is a project of transgressing the man; it is thus not humanistically anthropocentric but progress-centric. The man is understood as the highest moral value in the sense that it is the progress that matters most; it is the road to the posthuman that is the centre of everything.[21] Transhumanism is thus often called evolutionary humanism, where evolution is perceived as a process from the man, to transhuman, to posthuman.[22]

Evolution humanism approaches evolution as a 2-stage process. In the first stage, which is already historical for us, evolution was "blind", which means that the man had no control over it. The other, transhumanistic, stage, is characterized with setting the man free from the oppression of biology, freeing him from random changes and adaptations, and moving humanity to another stage for the species.[23] In this context, transhumanism calls for erasing the human species both symbolically and genetically[24], in the course of the evolution of the second stage. If only people want to, the human species can go beyond the limitations of the species, can take the man towards the new type of being that is very different from ours but equally exciting. Thanks to transhumanism, we will finally be able to fulfil the real human destiny consciously[25]. This threshold of the new species (posthuman) is a moment when the transhuman becomes a postbiological being, i.e. an individual whose mind will be able to exist (in the body of a robot or in some techno-system) without biological processes.[26]

Without doubt, the transhumanistic progress is a dehumanizing process. With every stage of this progress, the man will become (or is already becoming) "less human". This process eliminates all human and natural flaws, and forms

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[19] J. Hughes, *Contradictions from the enlightenment roots of transhumanism*, "The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy", 2010, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 628.

[20] F. Jotterand, *At the Roots…*, ed. cit., p. 617.

[21] G. Rikowski, *Alien Life: Marx and the Future of the Human*, "Historical Materialism", 2003, vol. 11, no. 2, p. 131.

[22] N. Agar, *Where to Transhumanism? The Literature Reaches a Critical Mass*, "Hastings Center Report", 2007, vol. 37, no. 3, p. 13.

[23] F. Fukuyama, *Transhumanism*, "Foreign Policy", 2004, vol. 144, p. 42.

[24] R. Ilnicki, op. cit., p. 165.

[25] G. Wolbring, op. cit., p. 31–32.

[26] G. Rikowski, op. cit., p. 128.

overhuman, non-human, supernatural, unnatural traits.[27] What is more, dehumanization is a procedure that creates artificiality by replacing biology (natural human elements) with technical products (artificial elements).[28] According to transhumanists, however, the man should not be afraid of being dehumanized even if the result of this process means disconnecting him from the *homo sapiens* species. The loss of species affiliation is not a threat according to them; it is not linked to losing the status of existence. The post *homo sapiens* state is posthuman (non-human), but not post-existential.[29]

Transhumanism is thus a technical redefinition of the evolution of man. Transhumanism introduces the category of a cyborg, a man of the second stage of evolution, in the process of evolution. The archaic stage of blind evolution is therefore a human stage; the next one is a cyborg stage.[30] The transhuman and posthuman are some phases of the second stage of evolution – dehumanization/cyborgization, or some cyborg categories:

- transhuman – a transitional cyborg (the object of the dehumanization/cyborgization process),
- posthuman – a final cyborg (the result of the dehumanization/cyborgization – process).[31]

Transhumanists' attempts at crossing the point where the man finishes is nothing else but acting in line with the concept of the imperative to make the world a better place. The world of posthumans (quasi-perfect people) is a quasi-perfect world; it is a paradise where everyone lives like God.[32] The posthuman will achieve an intellectual state that incredibly exceeds the intellectual state of the geniuses that we know; he will be absolutely resistant to all illnesses, full of energy and forever young; he will be capable of controlling all his psychological processes to the full extent; he will never get tired, weary or irritated; and he will also achieve the permanent state of happiness, full love, peace, and states of conscience that are completely unknown for us now.[33] Furthermore, the posthuman will fulfil the cybernetic dream of the machine-man interface, as it will be possible to upload the final cyborg with everything that

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[27] D. Mills, *While We're At It*, "First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion & Public Life", 2012, vol. 228, p. 66.

[28] J.P. Bishop, op. cit., p. 701–702.

[29] I. Persson, J. Savulescu, *Moral Transhumanism*, "Journal of Medicine & Philosophy", 2010, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 660.

[30] G. Rikowski, op. cit., p. 121.

[31] M.J. McNamee, S.D. Edwards, *Transhumanism, medical technology and slippery slopes*, "Journal Of Medical Ethics", 2006, vol. 32, no. 9, p. 514.

[32] M. Hauskeller, op. cit., p. 40.

[33] J.P. Bishop, op. cit., p. 701.

is available in the memory of machines.[34] The posthuman world itself is maximized to the maximum. In the imagination of transhumanists, the life of a posthuman is a maximum experience that we have not known before. Michael Hauskeller claims that the monuments of the posthuman world will be maximally beautiful and majestic, music will penetrate the mind maximally with a maximally desired rhythm, sex will mean maximum and continuous ecstasy, each moment will be filled with divine happiness, each view will bring the experience of maximum charm, every element of the world will be understandable, and each system will be immediately learnable.[35]

Thus, transhumanism promises the man what has been promised by religion so far – a posthuman paradise.[36] Transhumanism also has a lot in common with the spiritual aspirations to achieve higher states of mind; yet transhumanism wants to achieve this aim not through spiritual practices but through implementing technological solutions in the man.[37] Such implementation is meant not only to enrich the man cognitively, but also morally and spiritually.[38] The posthuman is simply to be perfect in every way (although it may be quasi-perfection again).

It is worth adding that in this context Nick Bostrom made an assumption that the dignity of the cyborg (both the transitional and final ones) will be radically greater than the dignity of the man.[39] This announcement sparked off a considerable debate among bioethicists, philosophers, sociologists and futurologists, dividing researchers into transhumanism into two groups: those promoting the thesis of greater dignity of the cyborg, and those claiming that cyborgs are deprived of any dignity.[40]

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[34] M.N. Tennison, *Moral Transhumanism: The Next Step*, "Journal of Medicine & Philosophy", 2012, vol. 37, no. 4, p. 405.

[35] M. Hauskeller, op. cit., p. 41–42.

[36] R. Ilnicki, op. cit., p. 161.

[37] N. Bostrom, *Human vs. Posthuman*, "Hastings Center Report", 2007, vol. 37, no. 5, p. 4.

[38] F. Jotterand, *At the Roots…*, ed. cit., p. 618.

[39] N. Bostrom, *In Defense of Posthuman Dignity*, "Bioethics", 2005, vol. 19, no. 3, p. 202–214; A.R. Chapman, *Inconsistency of Human Rights Approaches to Human Dignity with Transhumanism*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 61–63; W. Evans, *Singularity Warfare: A Bibliometric Survey of Militarized Transhumanism*, "Journal of Evolution & Technology", 2007, vol. 16, no. 1, p. 161.

[40] I. de Melo-Martin, *Human Dignity, Transhuman Dignity, and All That Jazz*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 53–55; A.L. Bredenoord, R. van der Graaf, J.J.M. van Delden, *Toward a "Post-Posthuman Dignity Area" in Evaluating Emerging Enhancement Technologies*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 55–56; L.M. Henry, *Deciphering Dignity*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 59–61; L. MacDonald Glenn, G. Dvorsky, *Dignity and Agential Realism: Human, Posthuman, and Nonhuman*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 57–58; J.Z. Sadler, *Dignity, Arete, and Hubris in the Transhumanist Debate*,

Transhumanism and education

The transhumanist philosophy questions many of our cultural, philosophical and ethical assumptions on human life and the future of the human species.[41] An excellent exemplification of the transhumanist objection to the cultural standard is the case of Fereidoun M. Esfandiary, a transhumanist philosopher and writer, who in the 1970s replaced his name and surname with the following signs: FM-2030. Esfandiary claimed that man's name(s) and surname(s) cause a reconstruction of the cultural systems of his ancestors and mark us with the traits of our ancestors or social classes, thus consolidating cultural stereotypes and causing the man to be a prisoner of tradition. He called for getting rid of names and surnames, so that everyone could decide for themselves what signs would identify them.[42]

The transhumanist philosophy is thus meant to make us realise that human life should be rethought; it should be redefined in isolation from any ways of capturing[43] the life from a traditional, culturally widespread or justified from the point of the outlook on the world, and should be constituted with "new paradigmatic solutions".[44] Also, redefinition is needed for the strategies of acting that allow humanity to take care of making next human generations better[45]. Such actions have been undertaken by people for ages, and the milestones for the changes in these interactions were subsequent tools that were invented: from stone pebbles, to writing and print, to the Internet (for now).[46] Education has been the formal process of making people better. It is education that has to be redesigned in the transhumanist concept, too, taking into account the fact that changing the man through technology and education are ethically equal categories of action, and that technology is (and will always be!) more effective than education.[47] The sense of the education that is

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"American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 67–68; R. ter Meulen, *Dignity, Posthumanism, and the Community of Values*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 69–70.

[41] F. Jotterand, *Response to Open Peer Commentaries on "Human Dignity and Transhumanism: Do Anthro-Technological Devices Have Moral Status?"*, "American Journal of Bioethics", 2010, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 7.

[42] I. Bárd, *The Doubtful Chances of Choice*, "At the Interface/Probing the Boundaries", 2012, vol. 85, p. 9.

[43] G. Rikowski, op. cit., p. 126.

[44] A. Cybal-Michalska, *Młodzież akademicka a kariera zawodowa*, Kraków 2013, p. 13.

[45] M. Bess, *Enhanced Humans versus "Normal People": Elusive Definitions*, "Journal of Medicine & Philosophy", 2010, vol. 35, no. 6, p. 641– 642.

[46] M. Klichowski, M. Przybyła, *Cyborgizacja edukacji – próba konceptualizacji*, "Studia Edukacyjne", 2013, vol. 24, p. 143–144.

[47] H. Greely, B. Sahakian, J. Harris, R.C. Kessler, M. Gazzaniga, P. Campbell, M.J. Farah, *Towards responsible use of cognitive-enhancing drugs by the healthy*, "Nature", 2008, vol. 456, no. 7223, p. 702–705.

known to us is based not only rethinking, but also radical questioning. The effectiveness of the transhumanist philosophy is thus an element that constitutes the emergence of the concept of a world without education.

Transhumanism is a philosophy that can delight us and make us anxious. Woody Evans notices that for many people transhumanism is simply ridiculous, detached from the real world and resembling science fiction. Still, Evans underlines it that transhumanism is a collection of predictions that are not detached from reality but based on the state and dynamics of the modern world of technology. He claims that transhumanism is like satellite navigation in a smartphone; if someone had mentioned it 25 years ago, he would have been considered crazy, yet today everyone uses it.[48] Therefore today we say that the world of cyborgs is a utopian idea[49], but in 25 years we will become (or maybe we even are today) cyborgs ourselves.

This is also confirmed by Freeman Dyson, who claims that transhumanism describes what is possible today, cannot be achieved with the solutions of modern technology, but what will affect us soon, because transhumanism forecasts are based on the current state of technology and are linked to the directions of its development. Transhumanism is to be a dream-like, yet predictive, philosophy. In this context, Dyson says: "Science is my territory, but science fiction is the landscape of my dreams".[50]

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[48] W. Evans, *Singularity Terrorism: Military Meta-Strategy in Response to Terror and Technology*, "Journal of Evolution & Technology", 2013, vol. 23, no. 1, p. 15.

[49] M. Hauskeller, op. cit., p. 41.

[50] R. Campa, op. cit., p. 4.

Cyber-regular in real life, or schizophrenic dichotomy

Klaudia Sowińska

It does not happen
That a sunflower turns away from the sun.[1]

The space that we live in is constantly changing. New conditions of existence (permanently new... is it possible that technology produced one more invention: perpetuum mobile?) require constant changes. The man is not a static being. In any way, they cannot be like that if they want to fully participate in the society. Co-existing within the limits of one's self (subjectivity) seems to become a new definition of life due to the multiple interactions we are involved in (communication) and activities that we take up with the use of technology (influence of cyborgization). Without doubt, the completion of these aspects in a way defines the adjustment of the current requirements (or, in line with the future-oriented culture, it is far more appropriate to talk of the requirements of tomorrow). The resources that we have in these domains more and more often become a predicate of a potential success, or failures and adaptation difficulties. Going round in circles is not an option in times of liquid postmodernity which seems to take the plunge. On the one hand, the man who swims with the current arrives at a wider horizon. New possibilities and solutions appear. However, the necessity of "being with the current" requires constant attention and alert. Conscious and contemplative participation in the world is still highly valued, yet there is a difference in the fact that the time we can devote to the complex decision-taking process is often not longer than the sound of a shutter, of a digital camera, of course. We are immediately delivered with the photo – consequences. This entails subsequent challenges and forces us to take further

[1] H. Olechnowicz, *Jaskiniowcy zagubieni w XXI wieku. Praca terapeutyczna z małymi dziećmi*, Warszawa 1999, p. 13.

steps. Modernity requires constant redefinition of views and attitudes. Transformations include all areas of life. Also (especially?) education.

The condition, duties and challenges for the school of tomorrow are widely discussed. For the school that educates for the future. We ask about the place in it that is occupied by the teacher as opposed to what place they should occupy. We ask about pupils, their mental resources and quite frequently, their financial resources as well, which cannot be ignored. We centre, focus and zoom in our attention on the school classroom. We consider the legitimacy of its functioning. Or e-functioning more and more often? The e-world surrounds us everywhere, so we internalize it imperceptibly. Does this e- (e-schools, e-classrooms, e-textbooks, e-registers...) come from e- as in *electronic*, *easy*, *economical*, *effective* or maybe *engaging?* There are many benefits. Despite this fact, however, in the face of the global over-optimism it is worth adopting a critical attitude. Do we want teaching to be impressive? Or rather e-ffective?

School that is attractive for the pupil

It is understandable that in this situation we fix our gaze at children; they are the future. Frequently, being digital natives, they possess more competences, in a way natural and intuitive, as far as technology is concerned. They may be moving with the current (understood both metaphorically – as a current of a new trend, and quite literally). This ease often astonishes us, the adults. For them, cyber-reality is a subject from futuristic movies and it is still closer to fiction than science. More or less convinced, they follow the emerging trends with a healthy dose of scepticism. And it is the young generation that provides them with the e-know how. Social psychology uses the term of informational social influence. It refers to a situation when we are unsure about the decision that we have to take and thus we follow the example of people whom we consider more competent than we are.[2] When shaping the new school, we try to follow the pupil. This is what the big pedagogues taught us. In our eyes, this pupil is a cyber-regular. They are computer- and tablet-literate. They operate electronic devices without any trouble; they like spending their time surfing the Internet best. Therefore we follow their trace, in a bit chaotic way from endnote to endnote.

Achieving the higher levels of development is evolutionally conditioned; instinctively, timing at the better is thus completely understandable. However, the moment we are in seems to entail some danger. We live in a state of *con-*

[2] E. Aronson, T.D. Wilson, M.R. Akert, *Psychologia społeczna*, Poznań 2006, p. 211.

sumer anxiety.[3] This anxiety that is a part of the ideology of consumerism can also be noticed at school. We follow trends. Introducing solutions that are supposed to make the course of the lesson at schools more attractive (or even revolutionalise it!) resembles doing the shopping at a supermarket (the phenomenon of a supermarket is described by Gordon Mathews[4], among others). We put everything that is colourfully packed, appropriately advertised and commonly desired into our cart. We motivate our actions with the good of the pupil. Everything for them, obviously. A lesson without an interactive board is thought to be possibly unattractive. Pupils have to be equipped with tablets etc. School websites include information on the projects the school takes part in, took part in or wishes to take part in. The e-register is an incredibly comfortable and attractive novelty for parents. We focus all our attention on *being with the current*, keeping up, not missing something. Above all, we want to adjust, meet the requirements of tomorrow. Attractiveness is valuable. *To be desired* is an aim that is not only individual. All types of institutions, organizations and centres seek attention. Competitiveness is an inseparable element of functioning. At the same time, it is not important to be truly competent and valuable. Often the attractiveness itself is enough. Sufficiently colourful and suggestive, a nice packaging can work miracles. Advertising makes trade go round. Indeed – with this advertising we can achieve a lot. Such superficiality can also be encountered at school. It is believed that school, thoroughly armed with the latest e-achievements, is the best environment for pupils. The interactive board – for many teachers the summit of technological achievements – is supposed to be the key to optimum development. We do not spare effort or EU subsidies for that. However, the price that we finally pay for that seems to be considerably higher. Can we afford it?

A schizophrenic child at school

Let us adopt the right perspective. The eye of the camera would register the following picture: at the back of the classroom we can see the teacher, the e-board and Herbart's rows of desks with pupils that have long ceased to be of the Herbart's style. There are loudspeakers on the sides of the board; there is no class register on the teacher's desk. There is a laptop. A projector whirs from below the ceiling. It displays a page from an e-textbook. Pupils' pencil boxes are almost like those in *Plastusiowy pamiętnik*. Almost, because there are smartphones hidden among pencils, pens and filings from sharpened coloured

[3] Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna jako czynnik socjalizacji*, [in:] Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika. Podręcznik akademicki*, Warszawa 2004, vol. 2, p. 71.

[4] G. Mathews, *Supermarket kultury*, Warszawa 2005.

pencils. Portable consoles stick out from more than one pocket. There are headsets round the pupils' necks. Is this the new school? The description reflects the conceptions of education that moves with the times. Yet, there is an element that does not fit. Something destroys the calmness of perceiving the picture. The pupils' attitudes. Nobody shows much interest in the interactive task and the teacher who moves her finger on the screen chaotically (and a bit desperately). It is deadly boring. It is not about the B&F phenomenon of boredom and fear. Not any more. Fear is invisible. No lively emotions. Survival strategies vary. There are two common tendencies – those who do not lean forward to rest their heads on the desks drop freely on the backs of their chairs. The teacher is persistent in using the more and more attractive application. There is no engagement in the class. What is strange about it? The majority probably nods their heads with understanding. There are loads of critical opinions around. Such are the times we live in. Children are no longer interested in anything. Overstimulated nervous systems are incapable of unrestrained reactions. What can the teacher tell them that they could not google? What answer to the strangest question would they not find in *Wikipedia*? And when one would like to clutch their head and scream like the national poet did: *Without hearts, without spirit*[5]*,* an incredible oddity catches their eyes. Pupils' heads hang wistfully over the desks. Their absent stare wanders around the classroom, gazing without seeing. Yet, it is enough to slightly lean forward and... peek under the desks. A stark contrast is food for thought. There are no feet that would stamp out of impatience. The legs swing, go in circles, jiggle. Some shoes wander under the desk. One lifts their head surprised in order to make sure that these lively and fidgety shoes belong to the boy who is not falling asleep on the desk. This dichotomy is striking. And puzzling. The Greek *dichotomos* means *split in two.*[6] This is exactly what the classroom looks like when watched from a perspective. The desk tops split pupils in two. From their *ex catedra* position that they skilfully adopt all the time, the teacher can only see "skeleton peoples"*.* The entire "eagle-like power of flying" that Adam Mickiewicz (rightly) ascribed to youth is accumulated under the desk tops. More than twenty persons who are split in two. Are we facing an epidemic of schizophrenia?

Online / offline

Many schools make an effort to meet their pupils' needs. Often, the *FreeWifi* sign is Hung at the very front door to the building. As if they wanted to transmit

[5] A. Mickiewicz, *Oda do młodości*, [in:] *Wiersze i powieści poetyckie*, Warszawa 2004, p. 16.

[6] *Słownik wyrazów obcych*, ed. E. Sobol, Warszawa 1995, p. 252.

the following message for a start: you can feel really free here, nothing will limit you. There is no problem in setting up one's own device with the school network and enjoy constant access to the Internet. Nobody would like to separate the young minds from the mine of knowledge that the Internet provides. Especially in the temple of wisdom – at school. What is it worth, however, if the devices that can connect to this network have to be hidden in pencil boxes? It is the teacher who personifies the temple of wisdom, especially in grades 1-3. It is the teacher who is at school in order to know and enlighten. Rarely do they conclude (which, *nomen omen*, would mean great wisdom) *I don't know*. Equally rare is a situation when the teacher offers to search together for answers to the questions that are posed by their pupils. As if they were afraid of losing their authority, they try to solve all the problems themselves. And isn't it better to pass the fishing rod? Wouldn't the process of solving the problem together be more e-ffective? Obviously, this is a rhetoric question. The school does not equip pupils with fishing rods, even though it has more and more opportunities to do so. Why wouldn't it teach children to use the Internet constructively? Show the possibilities of search engines? Tell them how to define the multiple search words that they google in order to narrow the list of results? Many pupils have phones with access to the Internet. In the classroom they have to hide them in their backpacks or pencil boxes. This causes a feeling of discomfort. A similar situation happens with interactive boards. They are an incredibly interesting didactic tool. They create a plethora of possibilities. Unfortunately, in most cases it is only the teacher they activate, consuming their energy and time. The pupil can only give them a pitiful gaze. Sometimes they nod their heads with understanding. More often, tablets, game consoles and e-book readers appear in school corridors. They command attention and fill the time during breaks.

Seemingly, children are *in-* all the time. Seemingly, because it is possible to observe their disconnection from the course of the lesson, class and school life (the so-called *being off)* without any research tools. The schizophrenic nature of this environment is reflected in the fact that the cyber-regular is surrounded with technology everywhere and is also deprived of the chance to use it. On the one hand, they have the resources. On the other, they cannot use them. This in turn leads to cognitive dissonances and internal tensions. Pupils who nervously look into their pencil boxes, furtively reach for their backpacks and pockets, are a more and more common view. As a result, a lot of their energy is used for "living under the desk", which is detrimental to the material presented by the teacher. This does not mean that we have to get rid of the traditional ways of teaching and fully devote ourselves to cyber-education. There is, however, a need for this artificial division into *on-life* outside school and the *off* mode pupils switch to as soon as they enter the classroom.

Active researcher / Passive observer

When thinking about child's education and psychology, one cannot omit Jean Piaget. A large part of his long life was devoted to studying developmental regularities. The concept he created explains how knowledge and skills "appear" in the child's mind. According to Barry J. Wadsworth, understanding, or *constructing for* oneself, the theory of Jean Piaget, makes it possible for teachers and pedagogues to consciously plan their work in a way that guarantees the achievement of the best results possible.[7] It is not the aim of this article to present this theory; yet, I will summarize it. Exploration, exploration, exploration. The child gets to know the world actively. It learns through manipulating. Creating new notions and acquiring new skills is an effect of assimilation and accommodation that cannot occur detached from the outside world. The state of balance, or the lack of it, is an important element that constitutes the processes of "attaching" and "modifying" notions or new skills. The cognitive dissonance results in interest, curiosity and above all a natural need to solve a mystery. What message can be drawn from this for the teachers? Jacek Kielin expresses it in one sentence: *The role of the teacher is to (...) make children intrigued by leading them to a state of cognitive imbalance.*[8] Being intrigued, they will actively look for answers and solutions, because subconsciously they will be aiming at restoring homeostasis.

Aiming at development is natural. The feature of each living organism is the will to ensure the best possible conditions for growth. Sunflowers turn away searching for the sun, and the foetus is able to gain all the necessary nutrients even if it was detrimental to its mother. Nature aims at harmony. All the developmental processes consist in constantly interrupting the cyclical order and restoring the *status quo ante*. Why would anyone assume that this survival mechanism does not apply to children, too? Or that it disappears as the child grows up? They want to act, explore, get to know. They want to develop. They want to know. Even more, not only do they want it, they also need it! Meanwhile, e-boards, those technological achievements that proudly hang on school walls, are often unavailable for pupils. They are so valuable that one cannot risk having them destroyed. That is why pupils still sit by their desks. And it is only the chalk dust that is less frequent. Is it possible to devote oneself to completing exercises with passion? Despite the application of new solutions, the way of conducting a class remains in stagnation. The sequence that starts with "good

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[7] B.J. Wadsworth, *Teoria Piageta: poznawczy i emocjonalny rozwój dziecka*, Warszawa 1998, p. 172.

[8] J. Kielin, *Krok po kroku. Nauczanie i terapia dzieci z umiarkowaną, znaczną i głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, Sopot 2013, p. 112.

morning", to "take your books out", to "close the notebooks" forms the lesson course since time immemorial. What is there that can still surprise or amaze pupils?

The amount of time that children spend in front of the computer is often a topic for conversation. Many specialists warn against the bad consequences of this practice that we undoubtedly encounter. However, it is worth interrupting this chain of negative criticism and ponder. What makes children spend time on the Internet? What is it they find there that they do not receive from their teachers and tutors? Are these really only colourful pages? It seems that only by surfing the Internet can the child have a chance to discover something. The cognitive needs of a young, developing mind are huge. As are a number of new phenomena, mechanisms and objects that surround the child. In order to build mental representations and internalize the world, getting to know things in an active and engaging way is necessary. Schools create such conditions too rarely. Yet, each click on a new link is associated with surprise. It triggers particular emotions. The engagement brings emotions and these contribute to e-ffective learning. The net is an incredibly attractive place for a young explorer. A place full of opportunities. Multiple references and links on one page gives freedom of choice. I click on what I find interesting, and thus I satisfy my curiosity. I am driven by cognitive force. I act in line with nature. I learn what I want, what is interesting for me at the moment (the phenomenon of *polarization of attention* was described by Maria Montessori already at the beginning of the previous century[9]*).* The cognitive needs of each child on a given stage are different. The child is influenced by the educational environment where the pupil grows up, their personality, character and individual interests. The unified, standardized school material often narrows pupils' horizons. This statement is quite brave, but does a 7-year-old who can install a new game and connect the console to the TV set really want to read about the legendary little Alice and her cat? Clearly, we miss the zone of proximal development that was described by Lev Vygotsky.[10] Moving from reference to reference allows to explore the subject in multiple ways. The whole process is accompanied by a feeling of agency and control over the situation.

The popularity of the Internet or further electronic gadgets can be justified by the same innate drive of the organism at achieving the developmental optimum. I do not mean acquiring knowledge that is strictly theoretical or encyclopaedic. I perceive development holistically as a process of becoming a fully competent member of the environment. Modernity requires continuous assimi-

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[9] M. Miksza, *Zrozumieć Montessori, czyli Maria Montessori o wychowaniu dziecka*, Kraków 2004.

[10] H. Bee, *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, Poznań 1998, p. 48.

lation and accommodation. The ability to permanently learn and the readiness to continuously rebuild the structures are necessary in times of "ubiquitous liquidity". Activeness and internal motivation are indispensable in this respect. Children have to possess the ability of constant learning or, as Jean Piaget would like to see it, returning to the state of balance. Easiness in this respect is a valuable resource. The position of a passive observer that many pupils adopt does not contribute to the creation of a habit of spontaneous activity. The school does not introduce to independent work. We create schizophrenic conditions where the dissonance between the natural, even atavistic tendency to cognitive activity and the ready-made, systematic and effortlessly delivered system of knowledge deprives one of engagement and is discouraging.

Competent expert / Unsubordinated journeyman

Constructing knowledge in the course of cognitive action influences both its qualitative and quantitative development. Benefits go even further. Maybe into spheres that are much more important? That is the conclusion that comes to mind when we watch how the man functions from the point of view of another, equally known and common developmental concept which can be complementary to the one created by Jean Piaget. This refers to the theory of psychosocial development created by Erik Erikson. He divided the man's life into eight periods (from the moment of birth to the elderly age). At each stage the so-called *developmental crisis* is present. These conflicts result from the tasks that the society assigns to an individual in a given age group. When the conflict is solved positively, when the task is carried out on time, it predicts being successful at the next life period. A failure in any phase weakens the condition of the individual and leads to growing difficulties in surpassing next stages. Similarly to Jean Piaget's theory, stages of development are present here – resources gathered in the process of growing up will bring profits in the future.[11]

The crisis that has to be resolved at school age is particularly important. Both due to specific features of psychosocial functioning of children, their sensitivity and the specific features of the tasks that we set them. Starting to learn at school, new duties, becoming gradually independent require a range of skills. The ability for introspection becomes necessary. The awareness of one's own emotional states, thoughts and needs helps to understand one's own behaviour and direct it. The better the understanding of oneself, the better the level of interpersonal relations that one makes. Suddenly, out of the centre of attention in the family, the child enters a class team. They have to learn to function in

[11] R.J. Gerrig, P.G. Zimbardo, *Psychologia i życie*, Warszawa 2006, p. 329.

a group and follow its rules. Social psychology, a broad domain of psychology, tells a lot about how the man (*nomen omen* a social being) shapes themselves in reactions with the surrounding world. The school plays a crucial role here. The school classroom is one of the first social groups we enter and where we have to take our position. It is at school where first friendships are made, and where we experience first disappointments. We can meet tutors who will inspire us or quite to the contrary clip our wings. All this combined with the lack of fully shaped identity (that will form itself at the next developmental stage, i.e. the age of adolescence) plays an important role and determines the functioning of the individual for their entire life. Erikson himself underlined that *in the social sense, this phase is most important.*[12] The consequences of its incorrect course will leave their mark on the man's identity, personal and professional life. A failure impairs not only social functioning, significantly influencing the scope and quality of the interactions one makes, but also economic – the resources we possess will influence the success or failure in the demanding job market.

At the age of 6-12, we acquire the feeling of competence as compared with the feeling of inferiority. In case of an incorrectly solved crisis, the young man enters the period of adolescence with no self-esteem and with a conviction about their low value. *The child doubts their own resources both with regard to the world of tools, and the autonomy, and thinks itself doomed to mediocrity and mismatch.*[13] This conviction, in line with the rule of a *self-fulfilling prophecy*[14], either *a priori* stops the man from acting – any effort is doomed to failure in advance – or leads the individual to preventively lower their requirements, adjusting their aspirations to the alleged possibilities. As a result, the child starts from a much worse position than their peers who are self-assured and aware of their skills and abilities. Even though Erik Erikson underlined the importance of this developmental crisis as early as in mid 20th century, it seems that the feeling of competence, awareness of one's own value and abilities is particularly desired nowadays. The free market and large competitiveness trigger the mechanisms of the law of the jungle where it is the strongest and best adjusted ones whose chances for success are the greatest.

The schizophrenic character of the school environment from the point of view of Erik Erikson's concept and the conflict between competence and a feeling of inferiority is visible in to dimensions. The first one is related to the functioning of the school as an institution itself. The other views the pupil themselves and defines the position they take at school.

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[12] E.H. Erikson, *Dzieciństwo i społeczeństwo*, Poznań 2000.

[13] Ibidem.

[14] E. Aronson, T.D. Wilson, M.R. Akert, op. cit.

Being an institution that by definition is educational, the school's task is to educate. This education is understood not only as building strictly theoretical and encyclopaedic knowledge, but also (why not: above all) as shaping. Shaping of one's character, personality, identity etc. As far as the level and effectiveness of school education is concerned, there are many opinions. Debates and discussions are incessant. Steps are taken for the results of both individual pupils and whole schools to be higher and higher. Both undergo numerous tests and evaluations. It seems, however, that few (because claiming that "nobody" would be too bitter to write it down) monitor to what extent (or: if at all) the school helps the pupil to solve the crisis this pupil faces. Does the school contribute to building one's own self-esteem?

Rather not. Positive educational experience related to the course of learning itself and the functioning in the classroom is true for only few pupils. Most often, active participation is the domain of those who sit in the first rows, or, in other words, of those who know what they abilities ar. The teacher often looks and speaks towards them, checks their notebooks. From time to time they will borrow a pen or a pencil. They keep steady contact with these students. And even though the peripheral field of vision covers the rows by the walls and desks at the back, there is a completely different atmosphere there. Pupils feel as if exempted from active participation in the class. It seems they are allowed to be *offline*. Hierarchically, by taking further positions, they seem to assign themselves lower abilities by default. They withdraw themselves, give way to the better ones or to the more motivated ones. And if the teacher's attention is focused on them, most often this attention is evaluative in the pejorative way. They are reprimanded, hurried up and irritated with. It is the teacher who knows. Often one can have an impression that the teacher is the only competent person. In the knowledge that is transmitted there is no space for pupils' opinions, judgements or even questions! It is assumed that the pupil attends school "to get to know". This thought conditions a specific way of giving a class, where the teacher wants to transmit in the shortest possible time what the pupils have to know according to the syllabus. It is best when no unnecessary questions are asked. Tasks require giving one specific correct answer. All other answers are incorrect. There is no space for free thinking or creativity. Bright, young minds often go much more beyond schematic thinking of adults. Teachers ask their pupils: "that's easy, just think for a while" and aim at hearing the correct answer. And pupils do think, it is just that their thinking may be different! In order to solve tasks, they use the structures, patterns and notions available. The mental representation of the world that a child has is very much different from that of adults. It is absurd to require the same answer from a seven-year-old and from a person who is six times older. As a result, at school the child above all learns that they do not know anything.

Yet, when they turn on the computer it turns out that they do think and they do quite logically. Using electronic devices requires knowledge, systemic thinking and generalizing. Installing a new game, using a program, connecting equipment engage young minds and use their abilities fully. Suddenly, children become sought-after specialist. They can. They know how. They benefit from it. Each level up in a computer game means positive reinforcement. It gives a chance of being successful, of a feeling of "being capable of something". At the same time, there is usually not just one possibility. There are many ways to reach the solution. Mistakes are not as discrediting as they are at school. *Backspace* guarantees a quick "back" operation that is deprived of any consequences. It is enough to click and try again. This time more efficiently, better, wiser.

How do pupils spend their time during breaks? What do they talk about? They incredibly often share their impressions on computer games. Who is on what level. How many points they have managed to win and what the current record is. Interestingly, the problems they face in games quite often require more effort than solving a maths problem in their notebook! Much more time is needed to go one level up in a platform game than doing one's homework. Children are capable of repeating a given stage until they finally find the key to the puzzle or a gate to another land. Such perseverance is hardly possible to encounter while doing the homework. Where do they get this motivation from? And why is it focused on e-devices and the Internet?

Children's reactions are spontaneous. This reversal is natural. It serves to survive. Hanna Olechnowicz's paper title is telling in this case. *The child as their own therapist.*[15] When watching children from this point of view, we have a chance to understand them better. Get to know their needs. Human organism has self-regulating abilities. We are hungry – the stomach requires a meal. We have shivers when we are cold. We yawn when we need to get some fresh air. Olechnowicz writes*: children "knew" what tension-regulating strategies should be used to get closer to the developmental optimum that can be felt instinctively.*[16] Nowadays children also "know". They know that they need a feeling of being competent for their full psychosocial development. Each man searches for a domain or field where they are able of achieving success, where they feel good. The knowledge of individual skills is incredibly important! Without self-esteem, the man is not able of growing. Its lack considerably decreases social activity, makes the man withdraw and be hindered. It discourages from taking up challenges and effort. In extreme cases, it leads to depression. The mentality of school-age children is incredibly sensitive. Their identity is only being shaped. They do not possess a coherent self-image yet. In the process of build-

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[15] H. Olechnowicz, *Dziecko własnym terapeutą: jak wspomagać strategie autoterapeutyczne dzieci z dysfunkcjami więzi osobistych*, Warszawa 1995, p. 9.

[16] Ibidem, p. 9.

ing it, they get to know themselves through the feedback they receive from the environment. Like in a mirror, they watch themselves in the eyes of others. On the basis of the feedback, they confirm their conviction about their own abilities and potential, or quite the contrary, they reach a negative image of themselves.

Functioning at school is linked to many tensions. One has to build their self-image as a pupil. Obviously – a good pupil. A good pupil is such that is always prepared and active. They raise their hand to give answers, they are happy to approach the board. They do not ask too many questions and behaves impeccably. They write nicely, read well and count quickly. The list of conditions to fulfil is long. What is more, there are twenty or thirty other people in class who also want to be noticed and appreciated. On the other hand, one has to look after their position in class. Acceptance by one's classmates is an indispensable minimum. Everyone wants to be liked and popular. Building a positive self-image based on the functioning at school is incredibly difficult and challenging. And, what is probably most important, it is impossible to achieve by all pupils.

The effectiveness as far as using a computer, tablet or achieving next levels goes is a source for children to find the information they need to build their self-esteem. There is a domain or a field where they are competent. Achieving success is relatively easy. Reinforcements are frequent – even the tiniest step in the good direction is immediately approved of by the software and program. It is possible that the absence of other people contributes to the popularity of the e-world. The lack of the need to compete, no assessing glances, no risk of being ridiculed can be an additional advantage. Furthermore, the option of taking decisions on one's own and the feeling of agency are yet other attributes that make computer games and Internet surfing a source of satisfying developmental needs.

The schizophrenic images of the child's abilities and possibilities in this aspect causes particularly negative consequences. Having found no respect in class or even having experienced clear school failures, the child perceives themselves as a society member of little worth. Not performing well in the real world, the child escapes to the virtual one. In the net they satisfy their needs, build their positive image. When in touch with technology, they are reinforced many times, but they also expose themselves to fewer dangers. Apart from the threats that lurk on the Internet and in social portals, biopsychosocial damage that they undergo is also important. From isolation and lack of interpersonal skills, to sight defects and bad posture, to the shaping of diffused identity.

Sunflowers turn their heads away

The article underlines the natural drive of organisms at development. The world of flora and fauna is equipped with a series of specialized skills and reflexes whose aim is to ensure survival, which is a priority objective. The man

cannot be refused such skills and such tendency; even though the man climbed the evolution ladder much higher, they were, are and will be biological beings. Thus, all the actions they take are aimed at ensuring the most optimum conditions for development. In their behaviour, children (or maybe children above all? They are even closer to nature than adults who are fully socialized) are also driven by their own good. The actions they take can be interpreted within the limits of alloplastic adaptation. It is a psychological mechanism according to which the individual consciously chooses the environment that is most suitable for their development. Hanna Olechnowicz points to this ability of children with a rhetoric question: *Is a human child more stupid than a sunflower?*[17]

Thus the assumption that by rebelling against learning at school, children do not turn their backs on knowledge or negate their innate need to learn. They just take up self-therapeutic action. An environment where their needs are deprecated (probably against the good intentions and assumptions) is transformed into one where they are provided with appropriate conditions for development. The article motto clearly captures this statement. The faces of happy, satisfied children are like sunflowers. When searching for sunlight, they are in constant motion. They look for its source. They want to be as close as possible. They want to be connected to the source of energy all the time. They want to be online. This light means interesting, new, inspiring things. The world that children have only begun to discover is full of shining objects and phenomena that catch their attention and are worth getting familiar with. And development happens among them, they contribute to the development. Contact, interaction and manipulation are necessary (just like Jean Piaget used to point it out). The child has to be an active explorer. Healthy and strong sunflowers are those that used to develop in good conditions and were reinforced. This is the conclusion drawn by Erik Erikson when he talked of the need of building self-esteem and competence among children.

The hypothesis may be bitter, but the school slowly ceases to be the sun for pupils. The sequence of les sons that has not changed for years does not correspond to the natural rhythm and life of today. In times when everything is liquid and rushes making anyone spend five hours sitting still by the desk seems to be a form of limitation, if not degeneration. Nobody wants to be hindered and retarded. Even sunflowers. Children's natural behaviour is interpreted as maladjustment or hastily described as ADHD.

The world of progress and technology makes an effort to meet human needs. Further improvements and conveniences are supposed to serve the man. It is natural to use them. Using e-devices is a source of new experiences and broad possibilities. It gives a feeling of agency. Computer games tempt with

[17] H. Olechnowicz, *Jaskiniowcy zagubieni…*, ed. cit., p. 13.

a plurality of worlds to discover, often providing a feeling of omnipotence. It is not the best world possible. And we should not feel obliged to start a cyber-life.

The point is not to replace the sun with LED bulbs. The danger results from the dichotomy, a specific split that we exist in. One extreme is occupied by expert e-regulars who are online all the time; we live a fast, active and expansive life. The other extreme is occupied by ourselves – there is a feeling of misfit, lack of competences and abilities. A feeling of inadequacy. In many cases it leads to passivity and withdrawal. Going offline allows us to separate ourselves from factors that affect our mental and physical health and fitness. Schizophrenically, we follow the current, wanting to catch it and swim with it in order to undermine the legitimacy of efforts in a while. We start moving against the current. As a result, we are tired and we do not know where our place is. A human child is not more stupid than a sunflower. Just like the flower, they want to develop, grow and mature. Yet, it is difficult when one does not know which way the sunlight comes from.

Teen bloggers successful in show business and the identity of the young generation

Edyta Drzymała

A blog is a kind of a diary of the 21st century.[1] Its name comes from the English words: web and log[2]. Currently, blogs stop being just a personal journal; they are beginning to be used by artists, journalists, politicians or marketing experts[3]. Their contemporary topics are illustrated in a very interesting way by the quote: "Today blogs exist in all possible shapes – from those devoted to meticulous descriptions of the sufferings of the teenager's tormented soul to those which are focused on the adoration of the latest pop star. Including those, that deal with the informing and commentary of world events".[4] According to Jan M. Zając, a blog is the easiest way of coming into existence for an Internet individual, creating something on somebody's own, making self-presentation and sharing opinions.[5]

According to Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams, blogs can be compared to the world 's largest coffee shop because "they manage to capture the variable image of human thoughts and feelings about current events, and thus the network is converting from a set of statistical documents into a lively conversation".[6]

In the light of the results of the research, more than 300,000 Polish children aged 7 to 14 read blogs, whereas 180,000 children take or have taken up writ-

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[1] A. Zygmunt, J. Koźlak, *Analiza blogów internetowych przy użyciu metod sieci społecznych*, [in:] "Automatyka", 2009, vol. 13, no. 2, p. 673.

[2] A. McLeoyd, *Blog od a do... sławy i pieniędzy*, Gliwice 2006, p. 10.

[3] J.M. Zając, *Motywacje, zachowania i poglądy autorów i czytelników blogów: Raport z badania ankietowego przeprowadzonego przez firmę Gemius S.A. i serwis Blox.pl*, Warszawa 2008, p. 4.

[4] A. McLeoyd, op. cit., p. 11.

[5] J.M. Zając, op. cit., p. 4.

[6] D. Tapscott, A.D. Williams, *Wikinomia. O globalnej współpracy, która zmienia wszystko*, Warszawa 2008, p. 66.

ing a blog[7]. More than 92% of the surveyed bloggers enable their readers to write reviews through the corresponding function on the blog[8]. As Hanna Krauze-Sikorska points out, "the majority of young surfers choosing this form of communication assumes the existence of recipients and is focused on getting a positive message in return".[9]

Therefore, it is possible to define a blog as a medium popular with children and teenagers. Nowadays the online diary is used to create and promote the image of artists. What is more, there are bloggers who at a very young age, more or less consciously, took the advantage of the opportunities that the Internet gives to present and advertise their artistic activity. This is the reason why they have gained immense popularity especially among children and adolescents. In my article, I will try to analyze the blog activity in this field. I will focus on the relation between a popular blogger and a fan through the analysis of notes and comments written underneath the entries of young artists. Owing to this scrutiny, I am going to grasp the bonds between famous bloggers' activity and young pupils. I am fully aware that a matter field reconstructed in such a way does not pretend to be a representative analysis, but certainly it is likely to be an interesting conceptualization of the issue.

Profiles of selected Polish bloggers

Honorata Honey Skarbek: www.honorata-skarbek.com, www.photoblog.com/honeyyyy

Honorata Skarbek was born in 1992, and she started her online activity in April 2008 running a photoblog. Honorata has published a lot of private photos with brief descriptions. At the same time, on the photoblog she began posting links to songs placed on the MySpace music portal. Honorata has been publishing her poems, quotes, fragments of her own novel, links to music which inspires her, her own recordings and music presentations. The popularity of her photoblog has been growing like the display of tracks contained on YouTube and MySpace. After several years of the photoblog popularity, Honorata has established a new blog on Blogspot and thanks to it she could reap the first profits. The blog has become a multi-purpose blog – today it functions as an advertisement, a diary, a website with current information about the singer. With the help of the online

[7] http://badanieblogosfery.blox.pl/html [access: 7.03.2014].

[8] J.M. Zając, op. cit., p. 5.

[9] H. Krauze-Sikorska, M. Klichowski, *Świat Digital Natives. Młodzież w poszukiwaniu siebie i innych*, Poznań 2013, p. 133–134.

activity she signed a recording contract with one of the record labels. The singer's videos in the network have been viewed cumulatively 40 million times, the blog which she runs on her own has over 100 million views.[10] It can be concluded that the activity of the singer is a kind of a phenomenon. Her primary audience is children and schoolchildren. Colourful pictures, fashionable clothing and popular music attract and intrigue the viewers at such a young age. As Magdalena Kamińska explains: "Nowadays the efficient management of impression is considered as a particularly desirable social skill".[11] The artist's popularity also increases through the publication of information via the so-called 'e-tabloids'. An e-tabloid is defined as "a gossiping Internet portal, which seems to be more effective in the role of the gossip remittances diffuser than any other of its oral, written or visual prototype".[12] The information is often false, what is an intrinsic feature of the definition of a gossip. It can be understood as a social and communication act, and the texts have multiple meanings.[13]

Dawid Kwiatkowski
www.dawidkwiatkowskiofficial.blogspot.com

The first entry on the www.dawidkwiatkowskiofficial.blogspot.com blog was linked by the author on 6th June 2013, but as the blogger points out, previously he had been engaged in running a photoblog at www.photoblog.pl for about 5 years. On his official website we can get to know that his two biggest passions are music and blogging.[14] It would be nothing unusual, except for the fact that the singer is 18 years old, and the number of views of his music videos and video content which are available on YouTube have exceeded several million. As the singer points out, the posts on his blog are dedicated to his peers – other teenagers.[15] The texts published are rich in emoticons, acronyms and words belonging to the youth slang e.g. łaping wspomnień (memories catching), wbijać na Instagrama (enter the Instagram). Like Honorata Skarbek, the author puts a lot of pictures on the blog and the content of posts refers the reports from concerts, his musical activity and everyday life situations of the teenager.

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[10] www.honorata-skarbek.com/biografia [access: 11.03.2013].

[11] M. Kamińska, *Niecne memy. 12 wykładów o kulturze Internetu*, Poznań 2011, p. 123.

[12] Ibidem, p. 75.

[13] Ibidem, p. 103.

[14] www.dawidkwiatkowskiofficial.blogspot.com, o sobie [access: 12.03.2014].

[15] http://dawidkwiatkowskiofficial.blogspot.com/2013/12/2013-papa.html#comment-form [access: 12.03.2014].

The musician has already recorded his debut album, and currently he is working on the material for the next one and he is a competitor in the 'Dancing with the Stars' TV show.

A teen blogger successful in show business and a teen fan

The relentless chase for self-promotion

Teens often advertise their blogs leaving a short message in the comments on the pages of popular bloggers. As we can see from the examples mentioned, a fan's comment is not always directly associated with the blogger's utterance, but is a part of the imposed self-promotion. That is why the pressure of the young commentators to be as famous as their Web idols is so prominent.

a) "shine star"

Come over Bydgoszcz <3 I would go to your concert!
http://closertotheedgeblog.blogspot.com/

On the shine star's blog we can find out the reasons for creating the blog: "Inspired by the other blogs I decided to create my own one;) I often look at the world through the eyes of an artist. I believe in love, happiness and good people."[16]

b) "Mari$"

That's a great post and a video.
Take a look: http://mari-maari-blog.blogspot.com/)

From Mari$'s blog *we can learn the following: "I'm a* 12 year-old girl living in the vicinity of Cracow. I am interested in fashion, photography, music and blogging."[17]

The commercialization of the identity

According to Paulina Wierzba, "today's generation of youth is not able to separate what is real from what is fabricated."[18] As the author points out, "the virtu-

[16] http://closertotheedgeblog.blogspot.com/ [access: 12.03.2014].
[17] http://mari-maari-blog.blogspot.com/ [access: 12.03.2014].

al space provides children and young people the opportunity to produce consumer needs."[19] The youth, by conducting almost identical lifestyle, has therefore the same goals and fantasies[20]. As you can see in the comments from the popular blogs, teenagers are interested in the physical appearance of their young idol. Commentators are asking many questions about clothes or gadgets which a popular blogger presents and uses. It is possible they want to converge to
a celebrity of the Internet.

a) "paulina pikuła"

where have you found the shoes in this picture?
http://instagram.com/p/idzdVmQ_cs/ [21]

b) anonymous

What camera do you use for taking photos? :) They are of good quality: P[22]

c) carolineza.blogspot.com

a great belt :)
I invite you to www.carolineza.blogspot.com[23]

d) anonymous

Does this handbag cost 800 zł? Greetings Happy New Year!

A famous blogger – a peer or a star?

Children and young people commenting on posts of popular bloggers often ask them how colleagues and classmates treat them. Students often inquire about some private matters. It is like the relation: I-a teen; he/she – a peer from school /class/peer group. Fans in the comments repeatedly fight for the attention of the celebrity asking her or him questions and requiring the expression

[18] P. Wierzba, *To buy or die generation – zjawisko komercjalizacji tożsamości współczesnej młodzieży*, [in:] *Dylematy współczesnego wychowania i kształcenia*, ed. A. Augustyn, A. Bodanko, N. Niestolik, Łódź 2011, p. 2.

[19] Ibidem, p. 2–3.

[20] Ibidem, p. 2–3.

[21] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2013/12/back-to-warsaw.html#comment-form [access: 12.03.2014].

[22] Ibidem.

[23] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2013/05/lodz.html#comment-form [access: 12.03. 2014].

of opinion on a particular topic, including the topic of the star turn's blog. Although many teenagers treat the famous blogger as a peer, the rest of them tend to treat them like a master and a star. There are statements referring to the star (example d), congratulations on the numerous successes or other acts of paying tribute. Young commentators' statements express the fact that their teenage idol is their master; he or she is just perfect.

a) anonymous

Hey, I'm your big fan! January 8 I will finally fulfil my dream! You give a concert in Slupsk in CH.Jantar ! <3 I need to know if you will be giving out autographs (signing the CDs)?[24]

b) anonymous

Tell us how you were able to shed those pounds!
good luck in your future career :)[25]

c) anonymous

Hey Honey. You do not look like a 20 years-old girl XD...
As to the outfit, dress up something loose, it suits you more. : D
On the TV New Year's Eve I'd like you to greet "Kasia from Gliwice"
Thanks in advance :P:P[26]

d) Paulla Kulisza

Oooooh, David, thank you for being with us, I'm fulfilling my dreams, you're already a part of my life in some sense, and I'm sooo happy, visit Poznan more frequently! Waiting for the concert <3 I have a few pictures if you want to see: http://iglodzieci.blogspot.com/ YOU ARE IN MY HEART # NA_ZAWSZE[27]

Commentators-haters

On the blogs of famous bloggers there are a lot of comments that fit into the definition of "Internet hating", a type of cyberbullying. The problem of cyber-

[24] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2011/12/outfit_30.html#comment-form [access: 12.03.2014].

[25] Ibidem.

[26] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2012/12/honeys-20th-bday-party.html#comment-form [access: 12.03.2014].

[27] http://www.dawidkwiatkowskiofficial.blogspot.com/2013/11/chwila-oddechu-w-gorzowie-i-w-poznaniu.html [access: 16.03.2014].

bullying is that some users are unconscious. Children who read such comments succumb to the same socializing patterns. Young students may assume that such terms are normal. In this case we can cite the example "of the proof of justness."[28] Children and young people could think that vulgarity in the network does not involve any consequences. In the entire spectrum of the problem their belief in anonymity is significant and not thinking about the consequences of their behavior.[29] As P. Wallace notices, "anonymity (or its illusion) may provoke some violent behaviour."[30] Children often do not realize the fact that a fictitious username does not mean that they are unrecognizable. Every Internet user leaves traces and you can reach the owner of the data content[31]. 'Hating' on the successful bloggers' web pages may be the result of envy of the young students (below some examples of such comments).

a) anonymous

I envy you all you have : c It is sad when your dreams come true in someone else's life : <. but I keep my fingers crossed for you : D xdd . Take care![32]

Both Honorata Skarbek and Dawid Kwiatkowski frankly admit that they have already learnt to ignore the Internet hate. They also try to persuade their fans not to care about this type of situations in their website activity.

a) anonymous

no beauty, NO TALENT... TRASH![33]

b) anonymous

you are sooo pathetic and hide these ugly feet, put trousers on and stop putting us off[34]

c) anonymous

you have such an ugly face...[35]

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[28] R.B. Cialdini, *Wywieranie wpływu na ludzi*, Gdańsk 2003, p. 111–150.

[29] M. Kamińska, op. cit., p. 20.

[30] P. Wallace, *Psychologia Internetu*, Poznań 2005, p. 151.

[31] http://twojinternet.pl/anonimowosc-w-sieci/ [access: 7.12.2013].

[32] http://www.dawidkwiatkowskiofficial.blogspot.com/2013/07/po-maej-przerwie-teledysk.html#comment-form [access: 17.03.2014]

[33] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2014/03/wiosna.html#comment-form [access: 16.03.2014].

[34] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2012/02/after-party-viva-comet.html#comment-form [access: 17.03.2013].

[35] http://www.honorata-skarbek.com/2011/12/outfit_30.html#comment-form [access: 16.03.2014].

The concert of an idol-blogger as an emotional experience shaping identity

The identity of an individual forms based on particular events that have occurred in somebody's life. After analyzing the comments on the researched stars' blogs (example a) we can breezily encapsulate that a concert of the young star is a huge emotional experience of a fan. Artur Rawicz, a music journalist, asked Dawid Kwiatkowski if he had ever wondered how he affects his fans by creating texts. The singer realizes that "he takes responsibility for a great number of young people and that he has even a greater impact on them than their parents."[36] The young star knows that he can't write controversial lyrics, because the fans are very young and it could have a negative impact on their growth.[37]

a) "Bad Karma"

I hope that you will return to Cracow. But what am I saying? Everybody wants you to come back. And I really hope that there will be one more special day like 12/05/13.[38]

Summary

We live in a world of constant social, technological and political changes. Through the media, we are all inhabitants of the global village.[39] The new media have changed our reality. The generation of digital natives looks for its ideals and values – people admire, listen, watch and actively comment. Young people are active and strive for a career, but most of these activities are reflected on the computer screen.

The successful bloggers I have chosen are famous thanks to the activity on the Internet. At a very young age they became idols for the younger generation. They have published a large number of private images and shared their experiences related to the recording of covers and creating their first compositions. They have shown themselves; they have not been anonymous. These teenagers have made out a case to other young people, their peers, that they can achieve

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[36] Internet interview: http://youtu.be/6b6uCg4MVOM [access: 17.03.2014].

[37] Ibidem.

[38] Date in the comment – date of Dawid Kwiatkowski's concert in Kraków, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=km4QiA578kI [access: 17.03.2013].

[39] J. Izdebska, *Rodzinna edukacja medialna dziecka*, [in:] *Kompetencje medialne społeczeństwa wiedzy*, ed. W. Strykowski, Poznań 2004, p. 381–382.

even the most secret plans and dreams because of the hard work on their hobbies and publishing their results online. They have proved that an average teenager can sneak into his or her hit onto the charts. The viewers have believed that my chosen bloggers are authentic. Although they create commercial music, they are not marketing products but adolescents who believe in their dreams and pursue their goals. Bloggers show their everyday life on blogs, but, at the same time, the truth about themselves and their activity. This is a way of motivation for a large crowd of their young fans. Many blogs' observers point out that the selected characters are a huge inspiration for them. The tangible goods (clothes, gadgets) that are represented in the form of photos or videos can sometimes affect the commercialization of viewers' identity. Nevertheless, I strongly believe that these young stars are positive.

It is also important that commentators often write unflattering comments that are a type of hate. It has a negative impact on other young users who may act upon the illusion that the offensive name calling is something normal. They may also fall into jealousy, frustration caused by the fact that somebody else has succeeded in life.

In my article I have focused on the relation between a popular blogger and a fan with the help of the research on posts and comments placed underneath the entries of the young stars. Thanks to this analysis, I have been trying to capture the connection between the activity of a popular blogger and a young student. I am fully aware that such reconstructed field of a problem does not pretend to be a representative analysis, but certainly it is an interesting conceptualization of the issue. I think that my analysis may inspire some further research and quests.

The writer George Bernard Shaw said: "People who get on in life are the people seeking the appropriate circumstances. If they cannot find them, they create these conditions on their own." I think this quote perfectly fits the activities of the described teenagers who, despite their young age, have succeeded in life.

Media activity and the identity of adolescents in the society of consumption

Mateusz Marciniak

In this paper, I present the topic of relations between the media activity of adolescents and the phenomena that take place in consumer society. Researchers into current social reality diagnose, among others, the development of a society of consumption, and along with it consumer culture or consumerism. These phenomena are accompanied by significant changes in the area of building (social and individual) identity: the inability to complete it, fragmentation, hybridization etc. The process has a global character, and its causes also include media information. It is sometimes assessed as negative due to its subordination to market logics, popular culture or supporting the development of consumerist attitudes. To what extent are the hypotheses on the relation between these phenomena empirically confirmed? I shall discuss this issue on the example of my own results of research among university students.[1] I shall analyse and make an attempt at explaining the correlation between selected scopes of AMU students' (currently graduates') media activity and their consumer orientations towards themselves and towards values.

The disquisition is divided into three parts. First, in relation to Zygmunt Bauman's diagnoses on the society of consumption, I shall define the phenomena of "consuming" oneself and "consuming" values. They determine the attitude of a model consumer (overcome by a consumer syndrome) towards their own identity. On the basis of my own research results I shall also establish to what extent Bauman's diagnoses are exemplified among the Young generation of Poles. The second part contains an analysis of mutual relations between the shape of consumer orientations towards oneself and towards values of AMU

[1] I refer myself to research results that were the basis for a PhD dissertation (supervised by Prof. M. Dudzikowa), also published in print: M. Marciniak, *Orientacje konsumpcyjne młodzieży akademickiej*. *Perspektywa Baumanowska*, Kraków 2011.

students, and selected scopes (level and style) of their media activity. The last part shall be an attempt at explaining the research results gathered in the light of other researchers' analyses on the phenomena discussed.

Identity changes in the consumer society of the liquid modernity era

Many analysts of modernity underline that consumption is a considerable phenomenon in the current social and cultural context. Zygmunt Bauman indicates directly in what way a consumer society affects the mentality of its members, which is reflected in the consumerist syndrome category.

According to Bauman[2], the basic indicator of a consumer society is a specific set of social conditions where people adopt the consumerist culture. It is a society whose members are primarily formed and engaged in being consumers. They are expected to adopt consumerist behaviour in accordance with a certain pattern. From Bauman's perspective, a consumer society also means that a *consumerist syndrome* of "cognitive and evaluative attitudes" affects the way of perceiving and treating virtually all areas of reality and actions that they stimulate to.[3] Reconstructing this theory, I assumed that the syndrome is a set of varied but closely related attitudes and strategies, and a relatively coherent image of the rules that govern the world, a "life programme".[4] Thus, it indicates the characteristics typical of "model" members of a consumer society in the liquid modernity era.

The consumerist syndrome originates from department stores and together with the market logics, it penetrates all fields of life and transforms the attitude of consumers towards them into "tools and objects of consumption"; everything is or can become a commodity, or at least it should be treated this way.[5] On the basis of an analysis of Bauman's texts and my own research, I distinguished seven areas (dimensions) of reality that are affected by the consumerist syndrome. Using the author's names, I called the respective scopes of the syndrome the "consuming": 1) time, 2) space, 3) objects, 4) oneself, 5) others, 6) values and 7) society. The names are metaphorical, for example the "consuming time" means an attitude towards time that is typical of model consumers and coherent with the syndrome.

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[2] Z. Bauman, *Konsumowanie życia*, Kraków 2009, p. 61.

[3] Idem, *Konsumenci w społeczeństwie konsumentów*, Łódź 2007, p. 5.

[4] Ibidem, p. 6; idem, *Płynne życie*, Kraków 2007, p. 130–131; idem, *Konsumowanie życia*, ed. cit., p. 94.

[5] Idem, *Płynne życie*, ed. cit., p. 136–140.

Adolescents' identity in the consumer society of liquid modernity is also influence by the syndrome, which is reflected in the phenomena called "consuming" oneself and "consuming" values.

"Consuming" oneself and "consuming" values

In the society of consumers the consumer syndrome influences all elements of reality; it also leads to "consuming" oneself. In his papers, Zygmunt Bauman transmits the following idea many times: in the society of consumption everyone of us is on a consumer market, simultaneously as a purchaser and as commodity[6]. The prerequisite of a consumer life is the need to prove one's utility value[7]. In order to become a member of the society, the consumer is individually obliged to "make oneself a market commodity".[8] It is the engine for the consumer's activity that has to stand out as commodity from "a plethora of identical objects".[9] Any "tools and instruments" that serve "to produce oneself" are available on the consumer market even before the individual is supposed to use them.[10] Increasing one's market value boils down to taking care of the body that for the consumer is intrinsic, it is the aim and value of its own.[11] It has to be maintained in a good condition if it is supposed to transmit positive impressions and be a final "test and criterion of utility, usefulness and attractiveness for the rest of the human world".[12] As Zygmunt Bauman notices, it is far easier to dress the body than make it more perfect, and this is linked to shaping the personal identity of the consumer.[13]

Zygmunt Bauman points out that currently the areas of searching for the answer to the question of "who am I"[14] have changed considerably. Building "an identity for the entire life" based on work is impossible. What is more, nowadays identity has to be flexible – "prone to quick and sudden changes" and "open to all options".[15] Identity is not supposed to last for the entire life, but is a sort of identity "until further notice"; it is an attribute of the moment. In

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[6] Ibidem, p. 20; idem, *Szanse etyki w zglobalizowanym świecie*, Kraków 2007, p. 140–150; idem, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy z Benedetto Vecchim*, Gdańsk 2005, p. 85.

[7] Idem, *Płynne życie*, ed. cit., p. 20.

[8] Idem, *Szanse etyki…*, ed. cit., p. 140.

[9] Ibidem, p. 150.

[10] Ibidem, p. 140.

[11] Idem, *Płynne życie*, ed. cit., p. 140–160.

[12] Ibidem, p. 143.

[13] Ibidem, p. 136.

[14] Idem, *Płynna nowoczesność*, Kraków 2006, p. 129–132; idem, *Praca, konsumpcjonizm i nowi ubodzy*, Kraków 2006, p. 59–64; idem, *Szanse etyki…*, ed. cit., p. 206–218.

[15] Idem, *Praca, konsumpcjonizm…*, ed. cit., p. 61.

accordance with the consumer syndrome, identity becomes yet another object of consumption. Yet, the key feature of consumerism is not about gathering objects, but using and getting rid of them afterwards to make space for the next ones. The same happens to identity. Bauman[16] convinces that identity can be "purchased", "selected" and "used"; it can be tried on and rejected "as if it was a shirt", change it to a new one when the old one is used or "becomes unfashionable". By treating identity this way, one can "withdraw at the right moment and start everything anew; shed the old skin, (…) and but a new one".[17] It is caused above all by the fact that an individual expresses themselves through the goods they possess; in the consumer society, deeds of purchase and deeds of sale in fact mean acquiring "symbols that are used to construct identity".[18] Every day, the consumer can cancel their past and "be born again, gain a new >I<" through the devices and gadgets they buy at a shop.[19] They do not have to work hard in order to change themselves; with the shopping, they can immediately become whoever they want to be, or whoever they want to be perceived as.[20]

Changes within one's individual identity that happen in conditions of consumer culture are tightly linked to the way ideas and values are treated. Thus, let us have a closer look at the a phenomena called "consuming" values. When analysing the culture of liquid modernity[21], Bauman indicated that it is a culture of disengagement and oblivion. In the liquid modernity society, values, rules or ideals are not treated as patterns of conduct that we are loyal to all our lives.[22] Value accompany transitory experiences; they are values as long as they can be consumed immediately.[23] The only rule that is worth sticking to all the time is the rule of being "omnivorous" (ready to taste everything) – avoiding unchangeable convictions.[24] It seems thus that in line with the consumer syndrome values are transitory, ephemeral, and the consumer is attached to them as long as it is convenient.

Bauman[25] convinces that the basic value of a consumer society is happiness. In such a society, happiness is promised during one's life on Earth, it is "here

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[16] Idem, *Płynna nowoczesność*, ed. cit., p. 129; idem, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy…*, ed. cit., p. 16; idem, *Życie na przemiał*, Kraków 2004, p. 182.

[17] Idem, *Szanse etyki…*, ed. cit., p. 213.

[18] Ibidem, p. 152; idem, *Płynna nowoczesność*, ed. cit., p. 116.

[19] Idem, *Szanse etyki...*, ed. cit., p. 211.

[20] Idem, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy…*, ed. cit., p. 79.

[21] Idem, *Życie na przemiał*, ed. cit., p. 180–190.

[22] Ibidem, p. 182.

[23] Idem, *Szanse etyki…*, ed. cit., p. 280.

[24] Idem, *Życie na przemiał*, ed. cit., p. 183.

[25] Idem, *Szanse etyki…*, ed. cit., p. 183, 199.

and now", it is supposed to be "immediate and never-ending".[26] A happy life is such that allows one to "use numerous chances" and try and achieve them all, and it is also linked to freedom from inconvenience.[27] Instilling happiness in a moment lowers the value of eternity which ceases to be an object of desire. The consumer of the liquid modernity era prefers the *carpe diem* rule to seeking happiness in things that are bigger than life.[28] According to the consumptionist syndrome, aesthetics is also an important value, as well as gaining new intensive experiences. In the consumer society, the aesthetics of consumption has replaced the ethics of work.[29] The consumer perceives the world as "a huge matrix of opportunities and more and more intense experiences, deeper and deeper impressions".[30] From the point of view of the aesthetics of consumption, the world is assessed through the ability of bringing sensations and providing pleasant experiences.

Consumer orientations among university students

Do the identity changes described according to Bauman's theory also happen among the representatives of the young generation of Poles? In my reply, I shall refer myself to the results of my own research into consumer orientations of university students.

I refer myself to the results of my research whose aim was to test the concept of the consumerist syndrome.[31] I treated Bauman's category as an object

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[26] Idem, *Społeczeństwo w stanie oblężenia*, Warszawa 2007, p. 277.

[27] Idem, *Praca, konsumpcjonizm…*, ed. cit., p. 77; idem, *Płynny lęk*, Kraków 2008, p. 87.

[28] Idem, *Szanse etyki…*, ed. cit., p. 211; idem, *Tożsamość. Rozmowy…*, ed. cit., p. 71; idem, *Płynny lęk*, ed. cit., p. 17.

[29] Idem, *Praca, konsumpcjonizm…*, ed. cit., p. 53–84; idem, *Społeczeństwo w stanie…*, ed. cit., p. 173–174.

[30] Idem, *Praca, konsumpcjonizm…*, ed. cit., p. 68.

[31] The topic of my dissertation was compatible with team panel studies started in 2005 under Prof. Maria Dudzikowa's supervision in the Institute of School Pedagogy entitled *AMU students 2005/2006 – 2009/2010. School experiences of the first year of students who went through a reform in education and the changes in the resources of its social capital in the conditions of a university. Panel research* (grant by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education). There were three studies (2005/06; 2007/08 and 2009/10) conducted on the same students at 13 AMU Departments (all but the Branch Faculty in Kalisz) for randomly chosen student groups (Research results: M. Dudzikowa and others, *Kapitał społeczny w szkołach różnego szczebla. Diagnoza i uwarunkowania*, Kraków 2011; these, *Oblicza kapitału społecznego w uniwersytecie. Diagnoza – interpretacje – konteksty*, Kraków 2012). In the 2nd and 3rd stage questionnaires, I placed questions that were the basis of my own research. I took into account the data of the people who participated in all the studies (no. 446). Detailed description of the project is included in PhD dissertation and study published on its basis (M. Marciniak, op. cit.).

that can be researched and I applied the category of orientation to it. The structure of consumer orientations matches the scope of Bauman's syndrome. In the psychological sense, they are a type of mentality or an organisation of information shaped as a result of cognitive processes. In my study, I tried to define the extent to which the shape of consumer orientations of AMU students confirms the concept of the consumerist syndrome. My subjects completed a questionnaire including a Consumer Orientation Scale (COS) twice. It is a chart consisting of 14 statements presented as a "description (a set of features) of a modern man by a sociologist". The positions of the Scale are descriptions of the features of a model consumer "directed" by the consumerist syndrome (according to Bauman).

Two COS positions created the subscale of "Consuming" Oneself: CO1) *Believes that in the world of today the man is a "commodity on the market" and they have to prove their utility value (that they are the best) all the time*, CO2): *Is convinced that they can "try on and reject" new identities at any time. Believes they can become someone else if only they want to*. The subscale of "Consuming" Values consisted of the following positions: CV3) *Without embarrassment accepts new ideas and values if they are useful in a given moment/situation*; CV4) *Greedy for new experiences, uses the world and lives from one attraction to another, from one temptation to another, quickly becoming bored and escaping monotony and stagnation*. The subjects' attitude towards these statements was an indicator of how the consumer orientations are shaped towards oneself and towards values. The data referring to the answers on both COS subscales in question are presented in Table 1 (it includes the information on the number and percentage of people who indicated a particular level of similarity to the given features of a model consumer).

Table 1. Sample differentiation with regard to subjects' answers in the "Consuming" oneself and "Consuming" the society subscales

Model consumer's feature (no)	**Level of similarity to the features**											
	none		**very small**		**some**		**very big**		**no data**		**total**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
KS1	82	**18.4**	135	**30.3**	177	**39.7**	49	**11.0**	3	**0.7**	446	**100**
KS2	279	**62.6**	125	**28.0**	34	**7.6**	5	**1.1**	3	**0.7**	446	**100**
KW3	171	**38.3**	162	**36.3**	89	**20.0**	21	**4.7**	3	**0.7**	446	**100**
KW4	210	**47.1**	152	**34.1**	63	**14.1**	18	**4.0**	3	**0.7**	446	**100**

Source: Own research.

With regard to the three features (CO2, CV3, CV4) of the model consumer, most often the subjects indicated that they are not similar at all to their own ones (that they are not similar at all to the model consumer by Z. Bauman). If they indicated any level of similarity, most often it was very small. The first feature (KO1) that was analysed was claimed to be similar to their own ones by a straight majority. Generalising the results, we may claim that the first feature (CO1) was moist intensified, whereas the second (CO2) was least intensified.

The subjects also replied to other questions referring to the features of a model consumer. Their replies were consistent[32]; the subjects:

- would rather not like than like to pass them on to their offspring (reply ratio with regard to particular features was approximately between 5:2 and 8:1),
- indicated that in the future they would be rather distant than close (ratio between 5:2 and 7:1),
- thought them to be useless / to be a burden rather than useful nowadays (from 1:1 to 3:1).

The first feature (CO1) was an exception; the students considered it useful more often than useless (3:1) and they would rather think it would be close and not distant for them in the future (2:1), yet at the same time more subjects did not want to pass it on to their offspring (5:2).

I assigned points to student's replies so that it was possible to score from 0 to 100 points altogether on each subscale. The more the subjects' features were at variance with the features of Bauman's model consumer, the higher the level of shaping a given component of consumer orientation and the more points they scored. The subjects scored on average:

- on the "Consuming" Oneself subscale: average (M) = 39.31 points, standard differentiation (SD) = 18.01 points,
- on the "Consuming" Values subscale: M = 32.68 points, SD =18.44 points.

The results can also be interpreted in the following way: the features of the student subjects are rather at variance than compliant with Bauman's model consumer. The level of shaping consumer orientation towards oneself is slightly higher than that towards values. The identity changes of the members of consumer societies of today as described by Bauman can thus be observed (though to a small extent) among the representatives of university students. The level of shaping the consumer orientation towards oneself and towards values of AMU students can be still interpreted as relatively high. It is difficult to expect a full compliance with the model because it is an ideal image. As Bauman himself

[32] I present a detailed analysis of the attitude of university students towards other dimensions of consumer orientation in my published book (M. Marciniak, op. cit.).

claims, it refers to "mature", "the brightest" consumers of liquid modernity[33]. It is also worth remembering that the socialization of university students took place when the consumer society was created in Poland[34], so the syndrome did not have the conditions that would foster its full expression here. How can/could media (media coverage) influence the phenomenon in question?

Consuming identity and the media activity of AMU students

Researchers into consumption, society and consumer culture, as well as into media reality sometimes pose a thesis about strong mutual connections among these phenomena. By doing so, they refer to the observations on current changes in social reality, including changes within identity[35]. Media are often considered one of the factors that contribute to the development of consumption society, whereas media coverage is described as beneficial for the shaping of consumption culture and the ideology of consumerism, especially among children and adolescents. I shall try and verify the diagnoses quoted with regard to the results of my own research into consumer orientations of university students. Are there mutual relations between consumer orientations (towards oneself and towards values) of AMU students and their media activity? Which of the selected dimensions (level of intensity or dominating style) of media activity is linked to consumer orientations to the largest extent?

Researchers into media activity of adolescents (more broadly, media, e.g. information competences) sometimes limit their analyses to digital and electronic media, especially the use of the Internet. In my approach, I understand media as means and tools of information and communication transmission through words, images and sounds. In this sense, media include the press, television, radio (mass-media), as well as computers, Internet, mobile phones

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[33] Z. Bauman, *Konsumowanie życia*, ed. cit., p. 64, 95; idem, *Płynne życie*, ed. cit., p. 132.

[34] To read more about the development of consumer society in Poland, see for example: Y. Terada, *Rozwój społeczeństwa konsumpcyjnego i różne koncepcje wolności*, [in:] *W cywilizacji konsumpcyjnej*, ed. M. Golka, Poznań 2004; F. Bylok, *Konsumpcja w Polsce i jej przemiany w okresie transformacji*, Częstochowa 2005; T. Kowalik, *Kapitalizm niejedno ma imię*, [in:] *Zrozumieć nowoczesność. Księga Jubileuszowa Zygmunta Baumana*, Łódź 2010, p. 111–118.

[35] These issues are analysed in literature in detail, see for example: Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna i tożsamość młodzieży: w niewoli władzy i wolności*, Kraków 2013; D.C. McMillin, *Mediated Identities: Youth, Agency, and Globalization*, New York 2009; *Dzieci i młodzież w kręgu oddziaływań mediów i grup rówieśniczych – w i pomimo czasów ponowoczesnych*, ed. J. Aksman, J. Pułka, Kraków 2012; *Health and Well-Being In Adolescence, Part two: Media*, ed. M. Kaczmarek, Poznań 2011.

and other electronic means (new media).[36] I took into account "students'" activities in order to underline the subjective aspect of the process that is not a reflection of culture but a result of conscious search, choices and decisions etc.[37] On the one hand, I would like to define how the phenomena that give vent to "consuming" of identity are linked to the frequency of using media irrespective of their type. On the other hand, I was interested in the form and motivation to use the media („entertainment" or "information"). Therefore, I took into account the *level of intensity of media activity* and its *style* – a characteristic pattern of media practice.[38] In order to define them, I analysed the replies of student subjects to the question of "*Usually, how often*..." they used various types of media (Table 2).

Table 2. Sample differentiation with regard to the regularity of using the media

Type of media activity		Regularity of using the media					
		systematically		occasionally		never	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Reading daily newspapers		88	**19.7**	282	**63.3**	74	**16.6**
Reading social, political and cultural weeklies		112	**25.1**	246	**55.2**	85	**19.1**
Listening to music (CDs, MP3 etc.)		348	**78.3**	89	**19.9**	8	**1.8**
Watching films on video or DVD		284	**63.7**	147	**33.4**	12	**2.7**
Playing computer games		38	**8.5**	135	**30.3**	271	**60.7**
Watching TV programmes	feature	102	**22.9**	254	**56.9**	87	**19.5**
	entertainment	85	**19.1**	267	**59.9**	90	**20.2**
Listening to radio programmes	feature	75	**16.8**	208	**46.6**	160	**35.9**
	entertainment	108	**24.2**	210	**47.1**	122	**27.4**
Using the Internet	cognitive and academic aims	413	**82.6**	32	**7.2**	0	**0.0**
	recreation and social aims	386	**86.6**	53	**11.9**	6	**1.4**

Source: Own work.

[36] *Health and Well-Being In Adolescence, Part two: Media*, ed. cit.; P. Juszczyk, *Komunikacja człowieka z mediami*, Katowice 1998; M. Musioł, *Media w procesie wychowania*, Toruń 2007; A. Lepa, *Pedagogika mass mediów*, Łódź 2010.

[37] A. Krasnodębska, *Orientacje aksjologiczne młodzieży akademickiej. Studia i monografie*, Opole 1997, p. 101.

[38] Confer: *Health and Well-Being In Adolescence, Part two: Media*, ed. cit., p. 30.

According to the data in the table above, the Internet was the media that was most often pointed to by the subjects. Over 4 out of 5 subjects use it regularly, and there are no subjects who would not use it at all. A vast majority of adolescents also use devices for digital images and sound (they listen to music or watch films on DVD). Further positions with regard to regularity of using the media are taken by television and press (approximately only one out of five subjects declare that they do not use them). Adolescents listen to the radio relatively rarely, and they play computer games least frequently. If the data was the be viewed from the perspective of motivation to use the media, it can be assumed that subjects use it slightly more often for entertainment than feature (cognitive reasons).

Level of intensity of media activity

Based on the data presented in Table 2, I defined the level of intensity of media activity understood as the frequency with which the student takes up this activity irrespective of its type. I recoded the answers to the question about regularity of using various media by assigning them points. Subjects could score a maximum of 0 to 22 points, and the more often they used the media, the higher the level of intensity of media activity, and the more points. I divided the subjects (N=446) into three groups in regard to the level of intensity of media activity (trying to maintain the ratio of 25/50/25 per cent of relatively lowest/average/highest results):

– low (4-11 points) – 104 subjects; 23.3%,
– average (12-15 points) – 229 subjects; 51.3%,
– high (16-20 points) – 113 subjects; 25.4%.

It is worth noticing that there is statistically significant difference between men and women with regard to the level of intensity of media activity (result of the chi-square test χ^2=13.244; df=2; p=0.001). As compared to men, much more women belong to the group of average level of media activity (ratio 56:38), and almost twice as few to the group of high level (22:36). We can simplify and say that the level of intensity of media activity among men is statistically higher than among women.

Table 3 presents the results of an analysis with one-way ANOVA conducted in order to verify the hypotheses[39] on the relation between the level of intensity of media activity and consumer orientations towards oneself and towards values.

[39] I tested the statistical hypotheses on the significance level of α=0,05. For the statistical calculations, the SPSS package for Windows was used.

Table 3. Consumer orientations: towards oneself and towards values, and the level of intensity of media activity of university students (n=443)

Level of volume of media activity	Results on the "Consuming oneself" subscale				
	N	**M**	**SD**	**SD error**	**ANOVA result**
low	103	37.45	16.031	1.580	F = 2.949; *df* = 2; p = 0.096; η = 0.114
average	228	40.68	17.283	1.145	
high	112	38.41	17.332	1.638	
Total	443	38.65	17.135	0.814	
	Results on the "Consuming values" subscale				
low	103	30.01	18.367	1.810	F = 5.349; *df* = 2; p = 0.005; η = 0.154
average	228	31.55	18.238	1.208	
high	112	37.45	18.226	1.722	
Total	443	32.68	18.444	0.876	

Source: Own research.

It turned out that the level of intensity of media activity is not significantly related to the level of shaping consumer orientation towards oneself. However, the relation between the phenomenon with the consumer orientation towards values is significant, although its strength is not big (the value of the correlation coefficient does not exceed 0.2). According to the results of the analysis with Tukey's post-hoc tests statistically significant differences occur between the group of the high level of media activity and the other two groups. The differences in average scores between extreme groups are of over 7 points on a 100-point scale. The result achieved can be interpreted as a positive link between the phenomena; i.e. the higher the intensity of media activity of students, the higher the level of consumer orientation shaping towards values (and the other way round).

Styles of media activity

When analysing the ways of using the media by adolescents, I also took into account the styles of media activity. They do not refer to the quantitative approach to media activity, but to the subjects' motivation to use mass media (television, radio and the Internet). I decided about the affiliation to a group that represents a given style on the basis of answers presented in Table 2, which I decoded according to the rule mentioned above. I compared the number of points (from 0 to 6) received by subjects for: 1) answers that express "entertainment" motivation (using television and radio for entertainment purposes, and the Internet for leisure and socialising purposes); 2) answers that express

"information" motivation (using television and radio for feature reasons and/or the Internet for cognitive and academic reasons). I divided subjects into three groups according to their style of media activity. Sample differentiation (N=446) due to the style of media activity turned out to be the following:

- "Entertainment" (entertainment motivation exceeds information motivation) – 103 subjects; 23.1%,
- Mixed type – no difference in motivation – 232 subjects; 52.0%,
- "Information" (information motivation exceeds entertainment motivation) – 111 subjects; 24.9%.

It turned out that 5 out of 10 subjects belongs to a group of the mixed type of media activity style. The other two styles are equally represented in the sample (every fourth subject). In this respect, subjects do not show any statistical difference with respect to sex (chi-square test: χ^2=5.137; df=2; p=0.077). However, a tendency is visible: to every 3 men that represent the "entertainment" activity style 3 there are 2 men that represent the "information" style. The tendency is almost contrary among women.

To what extent are media activity styles of adolescents linked to their consumer orientations towards themselves and towards values? The results of these calculations are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Consumer orientations: towards oneself and towards values, and styles of media activity of university students (n=443)

Style of media activity	**Results on the "Consuming oneself" subscale**				
	N	**M**	**SD**	**SD error**	**ANOVA result**
entertainment	101	40.96	22.189	2.208	F = 1.749; *df* = 2; p = 0.167; η = 0.084
mixed	231	40.63	21.403	1.408	
informative	111	38.87	18.793	1.784	
Total	443	42.34	21.160	1.005	
	Results on the "Consuming values" subscale				
entertainment	101	36.34	20.364	2.026	F = 3.998; *df* = 2; p = 0.019; η = 0.134
mixed	231	32.75	18.219	1.199	
informative	111	29.22	16.477	1.564	
Total	443	32.68	18.444	0.876	

Source: Own research.

No statistically significant relation was found between the media activity style and consumer orientation towards oneself. Only the relation between the style and the consumer orientation towards values turned out to be significant.

The level of its shaping is statistically significantly higher (by about 7 points out of 100 that are possible to score) in the group of subjects of the "entertainment" media activity style as compared to the "information" style group. Post-hoc tests indicated that only the difference between these groups is statistically significant. One can thus assume that in the group with the "entertainment" style of media activity (as compared to the "information" style) the level of shaping consumer orientation towards values is relatively higher (closer to Bauman's model).

Media activity and adolescents' identity – an attempt at explaining the correlations

The results of my own research indicate that there are mutual links between consumer orientations of university students and selected scopes of their media activity (level of intensity and style). Significant differences refer only to consumer orientations towards values, and not to consumer orientations towards oneself. A possible interpretation is that adolescents' media activity is linked to a scope that is influenced by the consumer syndrome to a larger extent (students' consumer orientations towards values was shaped to a larger extent than towards oneself). In my attempt at explaining these results, I shall refer to the analyses and research results of other authors.

The relation between the phenomena analysed can be explained from the point of view of the role assigned to media nowadays. They are considered to be one of the basic forces that form reality, which results from their wide availability even when we do not want this access. Media influence our experience, shape our opinions and attitudes, provide information for decision processes.[40] How did the media activity of university subjects shape their experience? It turned out that the higher the level of using media by the students, the closer the level of shaping their consumer orientation towards values as compared with Bauman's consumer model. What is more, the difference with regard to media activity style is visible. Consumer orientation towards values among students who represent the "entertainment" media activity style (as compared to those who represent the "information" style) was relatively more compliant with the features of Bauman's model consumer. To put it simply, one can assume that they treat their values as commodity to a larger extent, it is easier for them to discard them or they search stronger experiences to escape monotony.

[40] T. Goban-Klas, *Media i komunikowanie masowe*, Warszawa 2005, p. 13 and further pages; A Giddens, *Socjologia*, Warszawa 2008, p. 486–489.

In order to explain the direction of the relation between consumer orientation towards values and the intensity of media activity I shall refer myself to understanding media as one of socialization institutions.[41] Media are treated as one of key socialization institutions (next to the family, school, peer environment, religion, politics etc.). If we treat media like that, then in the light of my own research results we can assume that they socialise us to be "model consumers" – they transmit human patterns that are close to the model consumer. Thus, my own research results support Zbyszko Melosik's diagnosis that media create lifestyles and identities of individuals.[42] This is exactly how current media are described by Bauman himself, underlining that even though they influence the image of the world in human minds and affect life strategies, they do not assume responsibility for it.[43]

Researchers into the issue of consumption (and the consumptionist lifestyle) agree that consumers are formed, among others, by media transmission that affects their convictions, desires and shapes their needs. Patterns of fashion, lifestyle and values permeate from the elite to the lower classes and media play an important role in this process. However, in the fragmentized society of today, these patterns can also be worked out outside the hierarchy, and radiate "towards the top of the structure", e.g. the meaning assigned to consumption often stems from subcultures (especially adolescents subcultures).[44] Consumption is reflected in the lifestyles of individuals and makes it possible to classify them; patterns of consumption are assigned to social categories. But it is consumption and not the affiliation with a social class that determines the lifestyle.[45] One of the basic features of the postmodern consumerist society is the plurality and changeability of transmission and orders referring to what and how shall be consumed.[46] Current quick changes in the world are in line with

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[41] A. Giddens, op. cit., p. 475–511; E. Babbie, *Istota socjologii*, Warszawa 2007; Z. Melosik, *Kultura "instant" – paradoksy pop-tożsamości*, "Teraźniejszość – Człowiek – Edukacja", 2000, special edition.

[42] Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna i tożsamość młodzieży…*, ed. cit.; idem, *Tożsamość, ciało i władza. Teksty kulturowe jako (kon)teksty pedagogiczne*, Poznań – Toruń 1996.

[43] Z. Bauman, J. Burszta, *Kultura do spożycia na miejscu. Z Zygmuntem Baumanem rozmawia Wojciech J. Burszta*, [in:] *Bauman o popkulturze. Wypisy, koncepcja i wybór*, ed. M. Halawa, P. Wróbel, Warszawa 2008, p. 321.

[44] R. Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture. History, Theory and Politics*, Los Angeles – London – New Delhi – Singapore 2007, p. 70–78.

[45] A. Aldridge, *Konsumpcja*, Warszawa 2006, p. 113; M. Featherstone, *Koncepcje kultury konsumenckiej*, [in:] *Zachowanie konsumenta. Koncepcje i badania europejskie*, ed. M. Lambkin, G. Foxall, F. van Raaij, B. Heilbrunn, Warszawa 2001, p. 309–310; A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. Ja i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności*, Warszawa 2010.

[46] Z. Bauman, *Konsumowanie życia*, ed. cit.; K. Romaniszyn, *Rzecz o pracy i konsumpcji. Analiza antropologiczna*, Kraków 2007, p. 117–118; J. Baudrillard, *Społeczeństwo konsumpcyjne. Jego mity i struktury*, Warszawa 2006.

the speed of changes and impatience of individuals; they cause fashions to be ephemeral and temporary by default. A great role in this acceleration is played by media that are a pattern of consumption and provide ready-made lifestyles that, following Zbyszko Melosik's terminology, can be called instant styles[47]. It is thus not surprising that a higher level of media activity among university students turned out to be linked to the relatively higher tendency to search for new experiences and lower attachment to values.

In the light of studies carried out by culture experts, media activity can be treated as a form of participation in culture. It is an opportunity for expressing views, world outlook, ideas for changing social reality and getting to know cultural values.[48] What cultural values, world outlook and its changes are suggested to people of intensive media activity (using the media more often, especially for "entertainment" purposes)? It seems that instead of "legitimate taste" they would rather boil down to "popular taste" that is directed at pleasure.[49] Values are transmitted by both the culture that is traditionally described as "high", but also by popular culture that replaces the ludic tradition nowadays. Its creators in their works also transmit values. They are, however, "pop-style values".[50] The model of life of protagonists of film productions, current music idols etc. is rather closer to the consumer one[51]. Paweł Rudnicki's research results indicate that students themselves perceive pop culture icons as ones that serve the function of "a pattern of behaviour" and "personification of the myth on the bold and beautiful"[52]. Maybe the students who were my subjects – more active mediawise – adopted the consumer orientation towards values from their idols? People who use media mainly for entertainment purposes as compared with those who use them for information purposes turned out to be closer to Z. Bauman's model consumer with respect to their attitude towards values.

According to the interpretation of the results of my own research presented so far, adolescents are "moulded" by media. Yet, individuals play an active role in the process of socialization.[53] Maybe students of a higher level of shaping of their consumer orientation used media to a larger extent, because they looked

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[47] Z. Melosik *Tożsamość, ciało i władza…*, ed. cit.; T. Goban-Klas, op. cit., p. 271–273.

[48] G. Dziamski, *Sztuka u progu XXI wieku*, Poznań 2002, p. 69.

[49] P. Bourdieu, *Rozum praktyczny. O teorii działania*, Kraków 2009, p. 35.

[50] Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna i tożsamość młodzieży…*, ed. cit.; idem, T. Szkudlarek, *Kultura, tożsamość i edukacja – migotanie znaczeń*, Kraków 2009, p. 120–123.

[51] Z. Melosik, *Kultura popularna i tożsamość młodzieży…*, ed. cit.; idem, T. Szkudlarek, op. cit., p. 107–109.

[52] P. Rudnicki, *Ikony popkultury w świadomości studentów Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego*, Kraków 2004, p. 70–74.

[53] K.-J. Tillmann, *Teorie socjalizacji. Społeczność, instytucja, upodmiotowienie*, Warszawa 1996, p. 9.

for information on the patterns of consumption, current value of goods etc. What undergoes consumption is not only the product, but also the meanings that are related to it, because we purchase the goods together with an assurance of its usability, "power" to provide us with pleasure, aesthetic experiences, fulfilling dreams etc.[54] As many researchers indicate, the lifestyle expressed by consumption is only seemingly a matter of free choice, which is brought up by Giddens, for example, who wrote: "in conditions of high modernity, we all not only follow lifestyles, but in an important sense are forced to do so: we have no choice but to choose"[55]. Facing the necessity to make consumer choices, a rational solution seems to be to search for hints on these decisions in the media.

To sum up, the existence of mutual relations between the phenomena analysed can be interpreted both as the fact that media activity of adolescents (especially "entertainment") fosters consuming values, and the consumer orientation towards values that is more strongly shaped is a factor that favours a higher intensity of media activity. Irrespective of the way of explaining the results that may be adopted, it is worth underlining that the results of my own research confirm the observations of researchers into current culture according to whom media transmission is linked to the changes in the identity of adolescents that occur in the consumer society.

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[54] J. Baudrillard, op. cit., p. 63–64; A. Aldridge, op. cit., p. 104, 112; M. Featherstone, op. cit., p. 314.

[55] A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość…*, ed. cit., p. 113.

"THERAPEE" – behavioral cyber therapy for enuresis (bedwetting)

Tal Sagie

Nocturnal enuresis (bedwetting) is one of the most frequent and one of the most annoying disorders of childhood. Approximately 5–10% of seven year-olds frequently suffer from bedwetting, and the problem may carry on into adolescence.[1]

Bedwetting can affect a child's social life in the following ways: by preventing them from sleeping over at a friend's house; from making overnight trips; it compels them to take a shower in the middle of the night or before going to school; they may hide their pajamas from their siblings or parents, and feel that they are not in control of their own body.

In this paper, I will explain the different forms of enuresis, its prevalence, and the ways to treat it (both traditional and cyber methods). I will examine how Dr. Jacob Sagie's multimodality treatments for enuresis have been developed to incorporate a form of Cyber therapy that we call, "THERAPEE". I will then evaluate the benefits and disadvantages of this treatment in comparison with traditional methods of therapy.

Enuresis

Definition

Nocturnal enuresis (NE) is a common and upsetting experience for children and their parents.[2]

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[1] W.F. Bower, K.H. Moore, R.B. Shepherds, R.D. Adams, *The epidemiology of childhood enuresis in Australia*, "British Journal of Urology", 1996, no. 78, p. 602–606.

[2] R.J. Butler, *Nocturnal enuresis: Psychological perspectives*, Bristol 1987; J. Collier and others, *An investigation of the impact of nocturnal enuresis on children's self-concept*, "Scandinavian Journal of Urology and Nephrology", 2001, no. 36(3), p. 204–208.

The diagnostic and statistical manual for mental disorders[3], uses the term *enuresis* to describe the repeated emptying of urine into clothing, occurring at least twice a week, for at least three consecutive months in children over five years of age. This bedwetting is seen to occur in the absence of congenital or acquired defects of the central nervous system.

Categorization

Nocturnal enuresis (NE) is classified into two different groups. The first, **Monosymptomatic NE** (MNE), refers to bedwetting occurring without any incontinence during the day or urological symptoms[4]; it might be described as a normal void going on at an inappropriate and socially unacceptable time and place.[5] In contrast, **Non-monosymptomatic NE** is associated with daytime indicators of bladder dysfunction, such as urgency or toileting frequency.[6]

In addition, **nocturnal enuresis** is classified to **primary enuresis** and **secondary nnuresis**.

Primary enuresis is diagnosed when the child has never achieved bladder control for longer than six months.

Secondary enuresis is diagnosed when the child has had a relapse after being toilet-trained for more than six months.[7]

While trying to characterize **primary** and **secondary NE**, Fergusson[8] suggests that children with primary nocturnal enuresis may display minor maturational delay, while those with secondary nocturnal enuresis, are likely to be grounded in a psychogenic etiology.

Some researchers found that **primary enuresis** is frequently linked with a family history of bedwetting. One of the preferential models, suggests that

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[3] American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM IV* (4th ed.), ed. D. Baeyens, H. Roeyers, P. Hoebeke, S. Verte, Washington 1995, p. 118–119.

[4] R.J. Butler, op. cit.

[5] J.D. Van Gool, E. Nieuwenhuis, I.O. ten Doeschate, T.P. Messer, T.P. de Jong, *Subtypes in monosymptomatic nocturnal enuresis*, vol. II, "Scandinavian Journal of Urology", 1999, no. 202, p. 8–11.

[6] C.K. Yeung, H.N. Chiu, F.K. Sit, *Bladder dysfunction in children with refractory mono symptomatic primary nocturnal enuresis*, "Journal of Urology", 1999, no. 162, p. 1049–1054; these, L.K.C. To, J.D.Y. Sihoe, E. Lee, C. Wong, *Reduction in nocturnal functional bladder capacity is a common factor in the pathogenesis of refractory nocturnal enuresis*, "BJU International", 2002, no. 90(3), p. 302–307.

[7] *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM IV*, ed. cit., p. 118–119.

[8] D.M. Fergusson, L Perinat.J. Horwood, F.T. Shannon, *Secondary enuresis in a birth cohort of New Zealand children*, "Paediatric Epidemiology", 1990, no. 4(1), p. 5–63.

nocturnal enuresis is genetic.[9] Jarvelin et al.[10] has shown that enuresis runs in families, with a reported risk of 77% where both parents themselves were enuretic. **Secondary enuresis, however,** is more associated with social factors.[11]

Etiology

Psychosocial factors can also cause **nocturnal enuresis**. Disrupting experiences for a child in their early years appear to enhance their likelihood of developing **nocturnal enuresis**. Traumatic events that the child is exposed to, such as parental separation or divorce[12] during a sensitive phase in the development of bladder control (around the age two to three years), have been found to correlate to the later development of **nocturnal enuresis**. This has been referred to as the "interrupted learning theory''.[13]

Other contributing factors to **nocturnal enuresis** are inferior living conditions, emotional issues, separation from siblings, and adaptation to new family structures and possibly step-parents.[14]

From a physiological perspective, **nocturnal enuresis** is sometimes explained as bladder instability, a lack of arginine vasopressin release the inability to awake from sleep when the bladder is full, or a combination of these factors.[15]

The parents of enuretic children subjectively reported that deep sleep seemed to be a factor, finding it almost impossible to wake their childen.[16]

Epidemiology

Nocturnal enuresis is one of the most prevalent of all childhood problems.[17] It is estimated that there are between five to seven million children in the United

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[9] H. Bakwin, *Enuresis in twins*, "American Journal of Disease in Childhood", 1971, no. 121, p. 222–225.

[10] M.R. Jarvelin, L. Vikevainen-Tervonen, I. Moilanen, N.P. Huttunen, *Enuresis in seven year old children*, "Acta Paediatrica Scandinavica", 1988, no. 77, p. 148–153.

[11] D.M. Fergusson, L.J. Horwood, *Nocturnal Enuresis and behavioral-problems in adolescence – A 15 year longitudinal study*, "Pediatrics", 1994, no. 95(2), p. 243.

[12] M.R. Jarvelin, L. Vikevainen-Tervonen, I. Moilanen, N.P. Huttunen, op. cit., p. 148–153.

[13] R.J. Butler, *Night wetting in children: Psychological aspects*, "Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines", 1998, no. 39(4), p. 453–463.

[14] A.C. Houts, *Nocturnal enuresis as a biobehavioural problem*, "Behavior Therapy", 1991, no. 22, p. 133–151.

[15] T. Nevéus, *Nocturnal enuresis – theoretic background and practical guidelines*, "Pediatric Nephrology", 2011, no. 26(8), p. 1207–1214.

[16] Idem, J. Hetta, S. Cnattingius, T. Tuvemo, G. Läckgren, U. Olsson, A. Stenberg, *Depth of sleep and sleep habits among enuretic and incontinent children*, "Acta Paediatrica", 1999, no. 88, p. 748–752.

[17] T. Nevéus, op. cit., p. 1207–1214.

States suffering from the condition[18], and approximately three-quarters of a million enuretic children (over seven years of age) suffering in the United Kingdom.[19]

Different epidemiology studies show different figures regarding the distribution of **nocturnal enuresis**. In one report, the researchers found that approximately 15–22% of boys and 7–15% of girls, wet the bed at seven years of age, with nearly 3% wetting more than twice a week.[20] A survey of children in the United States, reported higher rates: 33% at 5 years, 18% at 8 years, 7% at 11 years, and 0.7% at 17 years.[21]

By now, we understand that **nocturnal enuresis** is a very common and distressing disorder among children. I will now focus on the relationship between social and emotional functioning and **nocturnal enuresis.**

The relationship between social and emotional functioning and nocturnal enuresis

The relationship between **nocturnal enuresis** and social and emotional functioning has been studied for several decades. In some of the studies, enuretic children found to be in the normal range, had no emotional, social or behavioral problems.[22] In other studies, enuretic children were found to have a significant increase in psychological difficulties compared with their non-enuretic peers.[23]

R.J. Butler[24] reports that many children who attend clinic give an impression of an outward indifference to their bedwetting. These children try to present themselves as normal, without a problem. Willie[25] argues that in general,

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[18] K. Miller, *Concomitant nonpharmacologic therapy in the treatment of primary nocturnal enuresis*, *Special Edition: Treatment of childhood enuresis*, "Clinical Pediatrics", 1993, no. 32, p. 32–37.

[19] R.J. Butler, *Nocturnal enuresis: The child 's experience*, Oxford 1994.

[20] Idem, J. Golding, K. Northstone, *Nocturnal enuresis at 7.5 years old: Prevalence and analysis of clinical signs*, "BJU International", 2005, no. 96, p. 404–410.

[21] R.S. Byrd, M. Weitzman, N.E. Lanphear, P. Auinger, *Bed-wetting in US children: epidemiology and related behaviour problems*, "Pediatrics", 1996, no. 98, p. 414–419.

[22] B.L. Baker, *Symptom treatment and symptom substitution in enuresis*, "Journal of Abnormal Psychology", 1969, no. 74, p. 42–49; S. Wille, *Nocturnal enuresis: sleep disturbance and behavioural patterns*, "Acta Paediatrica", 1994, no. 83, p. 772–774.

[23] R.J. Butler, P. Holland, *Impact of nocturnal enuresis on children and young people*, "Scandinavian Journal of Urology and Nephrology", 2001, no. 35(3), p. 169–176; C. Joinson, J. Heron, A. Emond, R.J. Butler, *Psychological problems in children with bedwetting and combined (day and night) wetting: A UK population-based study*, "Journal of Pediatric Psychology", 2007, no. 32(5), p. 605–616.

[24] R.J. Butler, P. Holland, op. cit., p. 169–176.

[25] S. Wille, op. cit., p. 772–774.

children with **nocturnal enuresis** view themselves equally to non-bedwetting children. However, for children constantly bedwetting, it is a real issue. Some of the enuretic children will deny the problem in the clinic, in the same way that they may seek to prevent their 'secret' being revealed outside Other enuretic children, specifically those suffering for years, underestimate the impact of the bedwetting in order to protect themselves from the possible disappointment of another failed treatment.[26]

There has been contrasting findings from different researchers. Four decades ago, Baker[27] found no difference in the psychological impact between children with **nocturnal enuresis** and a matched non-enuretic control group.

One decade later, some researchers found that children with **nocturnal enuresis** appear emotionally normal as a group, falling within the normal range of self-report measures of social and emotional adjustment.[28] On the anxiety scale, it was found that children with **nocturnal enuresis** were within the normal range.[29]

Later studies also found that psychological problems among children who wet the bed, do not differ significantly from non-enuretic children.[30]

While there are some researchers that have claimed that **nocturnal enuresis** has no effect on social and emotional functioning, there is also a growing body of literature investigating whether enuretic children experience more psychological issues compared with non-enuretic children. Some of these studies have found evidence for increased levels of psychological problems among the enuretic children, with more internalizing and externalizing problems.[31]

Qualitatively-based investigations have shown that **nocturnal enuresis** can prove a stressful and confusing problem for children, with social withdrawal, guilt, a sense of difference from others, and defenselessness to victimization.[32]

Fergusson[33] suggests that enuretic children may have an increased risk of psychiatric symptoms, and that the association between enuresis and anxiety may continue until the age of fifteen.

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[26] R.J. Butler, P. Holland, op. cit., p. 169–176.

[27] B.L. Baker, op. cit., p. 42–49.

[28] W. Wagner, S. Johnson, D. Walker, R. Earther, J. Wittner, *A controlled comparision of two treatments for nocturnal enuresis*, "Journal of Pediatrics", 1982, no. 101, p. 302–307; M.E.K. Moffatt, C. Kato, I.B. Pless, *Improvements in self-concept after treatment of Nocturnal Enuresis – Randomized controlled trial*, "Journal of Pediatrics", 1987, no. 110(4), p. 647–652.

[29] W. Wagner, S. Johnson, D. Walker, R. Earther, J. Wittner, op. cit., p. 302–307.

[30] J.C. Robinson, R.J. Butler, P. Holland, D. Doherty-Williams, *Self-construing in children with primary mono-symptomatic nocturnal enuresis: An investigation of three measures*, "Scandinavian Journal of Urology and Nephrology", 2003, no. 37, p. 124–128.

[31] C. Joinson, J. Heron, A. Emond, R.J. Butler, op. cit., p. 605–616.

[32] R.J. Butler, *Nocturnal enuresis: The child 's…*, ed. cit.

[33] D.M. Fergusson, L.J. Horwood, op. cit., p. 243.

I have discussed here the impacts of **nocturnal enuresis** on social and emotional functioning. Therefore, we can understand the importance of finding an appropriate solution for bedwetting in order to improve the lives of the children. In the next part, I will examine the most common and effective treatment for enuresis – behavioral treatment with an enuresis alarm.

The enuresis alarm – behavioral treatment for bedwetting

There are various types of bedwetting alarms. A common feature in these devices is that the alarm, as a result of a closed electrical circuit, sounds in reaction to the first drop of urine. The purpose of the alarm is to activate at the first hint of wetness, directing the parent to wake the child (in the event they do not wake up themselves) and send them to the bathroom.

By repeating this ritual every night, we work to condition the child's reflex system. The child learns to make a subconscious connection between the bedwetting incident, the sound of the alarm (even if they initially don't wake by themselves) and the unpleasant experience of waking up in the middle of the night to visit the bathroom.[34] The idea behind the alarm is to alert the child to quickly respond to a full bladder during sleep. As soon as they experience a wetting incident, the child needs to stop and wake.[35]

Studies found that the enuresis alarm, during a treatment period of 12 weeks, is about 70% effective. The relapse rate was found to be up to 30% after treatment.[36] Compared to other treatments, treatment with an enuresis alarm was found to be twice more likely to help children grow out of bedwetting. In addition, treatment with an alarm significantly lowers the relapse rate compared to treatments with medication.[37]

To enhance effectiveness and reduce relapse rates, the enuresis alarm has been combined with other behavioral procedures, such as retention control training, cleanliness training and over-learning or arousal training.[38]

In cases of severe bedwetting, where behavioral problems or family difficulties are contributing factors, combining medication (DDAVP) with the enuresis

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[34] www.bedwettingtherapy.com.

[35] R.J. Butler, *Nocturnal enuresis: Psychological perspectives*, ed. cit.

[36] Idem, W.I. Forsythe, *Fifty years of enuresis alarms*, "Archives of Disease in Childhood", 1989, no. 64, p. 879–885.

[37] A.C. Houts, J.S. Berman, H. Abramson, *Effectiveness of psychological and pharmacological treatments for nocturnal enuresis*, "Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology", 1994, no. 62, p. 737–745.

[38] R.J. Butler, J. Golding, K. Northstone, op. cit., p. 404–410.

alarm, was found to be more effective than using the alarm as a standalone treatment.[39]

Treatment has shown that positive outcomes of therapy with an enuresis alarm, improve the child's self-esteem.[40]

We have learned that the enuresis alarm is an effective way to deal with bedwetting, specifically when combined with other therapeutic techniques. I will now elaborate on our multimodality treatment for bedwetting, which is based on this approach.

Dr. Sagie's multimodality therapy for enuresis

The multimodality treatment that was developed by Dr. Jacob Sagie is unique and based on clinical and research experience over the last thirty years (since 1984). This research was carried out with more than 30,000 enuresis patients aged between four to thirty-five.

Dr. Sagie's treatment model takes into consideration many aspects of bedwetting. The model encompasses the behavioral therapy of enuresis, including use of an enuresis alarm, short- and mid-term positive reinforcements, modeling, and daily training to increase bladder capacity and strengthen sphincter muscles.

In the last four years, we have developed this multimodality enuresis treatment into an interactive cyber treatment called "THERAPEE".[41] Before elaborating on this cyber program, I will first summarize cyber therapy in general.

Cyber therapy

Internet psychotherapy (online therapy or e-therapy) has been available for over two decades. Online therapy can be conducted via e-mails between the therapist and their patient, and phone consultations can lead to the use of platforms that enable face-to-face communication via webcams, such as Skype.

Cyber therapy is widely spread and is used in treatments such as alcoholism, eating disorders, panic disorders, PTSD and smoking cessation.[42]

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[39] M. Bradbury, *Combination therapy for nocturnal enuresis with desmopressin and an alarm device*, "Scandinavian Journal of Urology and Nephrology", 1997, no. 31 (Suppl. 183), p. 61–63.

[40] M.E.K. Moffatt, *Nocturnal enuresis: Is there a rationale for treatment?*, "Scandinavian Journal of Urology and Nephrology" (Suppl.), 1994, no. 163, p. 55–66.

[41] www.bedwettingtherapy.com.

[42] A. Barak, J. Grohol, *Current and Future Trends in Internet – Supported Mental Health Interventions*, "Journal of Technology in Human Services", 2011, no. 29, p. 3, 155–196.

A meta-analysis by Barak, Hen, Boniel-Nissim and Shapira[43] examined data from 92 Internet-delivered therapy studies. The research discovered no significant difference between providing face-to-face therapy compared to online therapy, suggesting that online therapy is just as effective as a face-to-face provided psychotherapy.

However, some studies found traditional therapy superior to online therapy. Cook and Doyle[44] found that face-to-face therapy was rated higher by patients compared to e-mail or chat-based online therapy. This idea was supported by Mallen, Day and Green[45], who found that face-to-face treatment had higher ratings of satisfaction compared to online therapy. Furthermore, the interaction with the therapist in person predicted better results in the treatment process.[46]

Cyber therapy – categorization

Cyber therapy includes different types of interventions:

E-therapy – online-intervention method that includes human communication.

Web-based therapy – online intervention method that includes a self-help, website-based therapy.

Synchronous therapy – internet-intervention is delivered in "real-time".

A-synchronously therapy – internet-intervention is delayed.

These communications can be conducted by text, audio or video (webcam). The therapy can be delivered to an individual or to a group.[47]

> „In an effort to reproduce the benefits of spending time with a therapist on a larger scale, some researchers have argued that we need to create illusionary therapist-assisted systems – computer systems that mimic the interaction between therapist and client".[48]

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[43] A. Barak, L. Hen, M. Boniel-Nissim, N. Shapira, *A comprehensive review and a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of Internet-based psychotherapeutic interventions*, "Journal of Technology in Human Services", 2008, no. 26, p. 109–160.

[44] J.E. Cook, C. Doyle, *Working alliance in online therapy as compared to face-to-face therapy: Preliminary results*, "CyberPsychology & Behavior", 2002, no. 5, p. 95–105.

[45] M.J. Mallen, S.X. Day, M.A. Green, *Online versus face-to-face conversation: An examination of relational and discourse variables*, "Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training", 2003, no. 40, p. 155–163.

[46] P. Cuijpers, I.M. Marks, A. van Straten, K. Cavanagh, L. Gega, G. Andersson, *Computer-aided psychotherapy for anxiety disorders: A meta-analytic review*, "Cognitive Behaviour Therapy", 2009, no. 37, p. 66–82.

[47] A. Barak, L. Hen, M. Boniel-Nissim, N. Shapira, op. cit., p. 109–160.

[48] A. Barak, J. Grohol, op. cit., p. 155–196.

Now that we have a general idea of cyber treatments, I will directly focus on our unique cyber treatment for bedwetting – THERAPEE.

THERAPEE: The cyber treatment for bedwetting – The software is modeled on current "face-to-face" treatment. Utilizing the patient scenarios and profiles faced in our current treatment process, we developed numerous sophisticated algorithms that respond in a similar to our clinical solutions. A communication platform is established by using a virtual chart. Parents supply information regarding treatment on the chart. The system analyzes the provided data, and the algorithm chooses the right response. The response is given to the patient by a video clip or a sequence of video clips. In those clips, the "virtual therapist" will address patients and their parents and give them feedback concerning their progress.[49]

A comparison between the traditional bedwetting therapy and the cyber therapy will give us an understanding of some of the benefits and disadvantages of the two systems.

Comparison between traditional bedwetting therapy and cyber bedwetting therapy

Anonymity – In the traditional therapy, the child and parents need to attend a clinic. They might meet other patients in the waiting room, and the child might feel embarrassed. In relation to adolescents, they may feel reluctant to attend the program because of fear meeting someone they might know.

However, THERAPEE allows the patient and his parents to go through bedwetting treatment from the convenience of their home. By doing the treatment in their natural environment, this helps to remove any possible social barriers that may arise. Cyber treatments offer patients more privacy and anonymity.[50] Barak and Grohol[51] argue that people feel less inhibited when using the Internet, which may encourage more personal and emotional expression. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged, the patient might be less committed and obligated to fulfilling the program without a "real therapist" in the room.

Positive reinforcements – In most behavioral programs, the use of positive reinforcements is extremely common. In our bedwetting therapy, we reinforce the child by allowing him to use different stickers (in the traditional pro-

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[49] www.bedwettingtherapy.com.

[50] J. Changrani, M. Lieberman, M. Golant, P. Rios, J. Damman, F. Gany, *Online cancer support groups: Experiences with underserved immigrant Latinos*, "Primary Psychiatry", 2008, no. 15(10), p. 55–62.

[51] A. Barak, J. Grohol, op. cit., p. 155–196.

gram) or virtual stars (in the cyber program). The cyber therapy permits the usage of immediate reinforcements that could not be done in the traditional therapy. For example, if the child wakes up dry, he is asked to mark it with a sticker/ star. In the traditional therapy, the child will meet the therapist once every few weeks, and then will get the therapist's positive response to his progress. In the cyber **THERAPEE** program, the response is immediate. As soon as the child receives a star for a dry night, a "video pop up" is demonstrated, with the therapist addressing the child using positive reinforcements.

Dealing with treatment difficulties – In some cases the therapy is not successful and the child and parents find it difficult to progress. In the traditional program, the therapist will see these difficulties only in the face-to-face session that can be scheduled for weeks ahead. In the cyber therapy, such cases could be given an automatic response by the virtual therapist.

Modeling – One of the psychological elements used in our program is "modeling". We show the child in the first session "thank you letters" of other patients that managed to solve their bedwetting problem by completing the program. This process reinforces the patient's confidence in the program and their ability to achieve a cure. Due to time limitations in the traditional therapy, the child has limited time to view these letters. In the cyber therapy program, however, the child has unlimited time to read each letter, which can potentially bolster their resolve and assurance of finding a remedy.

Interactions – In the traditional program, a consistent interaction exists between the therapist and the child. The therapist asks questions, and the child responds. In the cyber treatment we managed to use an ongoing interactive process to keep the child alerted to the session. The virtual therapist asks a question, and optional answers are reflected on the screen. The child can choose an answer, and will get an immediate response from the virtual therapist. Barak, Proudfoot and Klei[52] found that interactive websites that require direct user participation, had a significantly greater impact than those where the websites passively informed static data to users. These treatments are usually tailor made to the user's specific needs. Most of these treatments are based on elements of cognitive behavioral treatments.[53]

Addressing the child – In the traditional program, the therapist would address the child according to their age, using an appropriate language that they can understand. The **THERAPEE** program replicates the therapist's distinction by using different video clips adapted to the patient's age.

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[52] A. Barak, J.G. Proudfoot, B. Klein, *Defining Internet-supported therapeutic interventions*, "Annals of Behavioral Medicine", 2009, no. 38, p. 4–17.

[53] A. Barak, J. Grohol, op. cit., p. 155–196.

Child's non-verbal behavior – In the traditional treatment the therapist can assess the child's condition from non-verbal cues. For instance, the child may demonstrate immaturity, a reluctance to the therapy, or show no interest in the session. The therapist can adapt his strategy according to these cues.

In the cyber therapy, there is no way to relate to these cues (expect communications conducted by webcam such as 'Skype'), which can make the treatment less effective in such cases. However, we managed to add a few features that can partly address this issue – for example, we keep asking the children if they are doing the taught exercises by sowing video clips of the "virtual therapist". If the answer is negative, we explain the importance of doing them and try to motivate them. In addition, if there is no data on the virtual chart, we tend to conclude that treatment is not being completed, and thus we ask the parents to be more involved.

In some modalities of cyber therapy, such as e-mail or chat, there are no non-verbal cues, which some patients and therapists might find uncomfortable, since they are ''important ingredients in the counseling process''.[54]

Geographical distance – In some cases of traditional therapy, the clinic could be extremely far from the patient's home. This might cause certain families to give up the option of therapy due to the distance, or the time and money of getting to the clinic. Furthermore, after a long drive to the clinic, young children tend to be very sleepy and not focused during the session. However, in the cyber treatment, the child could go through the sessions in their free time. They can also replay the last session to reinforce learning.

The cost of therapy – Seeing a therapist is a time-consuming process that makes traditional programs extremely expensive, which can cause a barrier for those without the financial ability to pay for a program. Cyber treatments are usually not time consuming, especially if they are fully automated, which makes them significantly cheaper and affordable.[55]

Dropout rate –The dropout rate is considered to be one of the main disadvantages of cyber treatments. For instance, only 37% of the people referred to one of the online programs for depression, actually completed it.[56] One might feel more obligated to a program while meeting a therapist face-to-face. In a cyber-environment, the parent and child have more opportunity to neglect the process and dropout, which we try to prevent through email notifications.

FAQ – In the traditional program, the parents and the child might deal with many new situations that would need to be answered by addressing their therapist. The therapist is not 100% available to resolve these issues. However, in

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[54] Ibidem, p. 155–196.

[55] J. Changrani, M. Lieberman, M. Golant, P. Rios, J. Damman, F. Gany, op. cit., p. 55–62.

[56] A. Barak, J. Grohol, op. cit., p. 155–196.

THERAPEE's cyber program, there are therapeutic FAQ, which means that parents and their children can resolve their issues by having them immediately answered by a virtual therapist.

To sum up, cyber therapy for bedwetting has some advantages for certain patients compared to traditional therapy. Cyber therapy is still in its infancy, and has not yet managed to supersede all of the benefits associated with the face-to-face experience of a therapist. However, as technology advances, there is every reason to expect that cyber therapy will soon adapt to reproduce the benefits of traditional therapy.

Children at-risk: Treating cyberbullying with psychodrama

Zivit Vaxberg

The concept of children at-risk describes the population of children who are found or may be found in physical, mental, or spiritual situations of risk. Dryfoos[1] maintains that about one half of all children and youths, aged ten to seventeen, are found at-risk, when about one-quarter of them are found at a high risk. In contrast, Glenn and Nelson[2] maintain that all children are found potentially in some situation of risk.

In actuality, the specific definition of a child as one who is at-risk and the evaluation of the level of this risk are performed today by experts from the different treatment professions.

Children at-risk in Israel

In Israel, in recent years, there are more than two million children. Of these children, approximately 350,000 children and youths are defined as found in situations of risk and distress, when 40% of them suffer from verbal violence, 18% from physical violence, and 5% suffered from sexual assault.[3] Children at-risk are defined by the welfare authorities as living in situations that endanger them in their family and in their environment, and as a result of these situations their ability to realize their rights is harmed in the areas of physical existence, health and development, belonging to the family, learning and acquisition of

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[1] J.G. Dryfoos, *Adolescents At Risk: Prevalence and Prevention*, New York 1990.

[2] H.S. Glenn, J. Nelson, *Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World: Seven Building Blocks For Developing Capable Young People*, Rocklin 1988.

[3] H. Shmidt, *The Prime Minister's Committee for Children and Youths At-Risk*, Report of the Public Committee for the Examination of the Situation of Children At-Risk and in Distress, 2006.

skills, welfare and emotional health, belonging and social participation, protection from others and from their own endangering behaviors.[4] The concept of children at-risk ranges on a continuum when levels of risk are expressed in the composition of a number of different areas in which the problem exists, in the severity of the problem in each field, and in the duration of time that the child suffers from the problem or problems. In general, it can be said that at one end are found those defined as low risk and at the other end are those defined as high risk.[5]

The treatment approach accepted in Israel divided the population of children at-risk into three primary groups:

1. Children and youths found in direct and immediate danger – these are children who are victims of abuse and neglect, children and youths with behavior problems, delinquent youths, youths who use drugs, and victims of abuse in the family.
2. Children and youths who live in an endangering environment and are found in indirect risk – these are children who witness violence between their parents, addiction, delinquency, children who live in poverty, and children who live in communities that endanger them.
3. Children and youths who live under circumstances that may create risk – these are children from families that are suffering a crisis because of divorce, single-parent families, families that suffer from unemployment, and immigrant families.

The results of this situation of risk may lead the children in terms of personality to have low self-esteem and behavior problems, to suffer from alienation and rebelliousness, deficient social skills, isolation, and social rejection, to have a tendency to evade dealing with situations and difficulty meeting social pressures, and sometimes even to have deviant and/or delinquent behavior.

The educational influences also are apparent. It was found that the educational achievements of these children are significantly lower than those of their classmates, and this situation frequently causes them to drop out of the studies.

Treatment of children at-risk in the formal and informal educational system

To treat and to provide a solution for children at-risk at all hours of the day, the educational system operates in two parallel and complementary dimensions.

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[4] Ibidem.

[5] D. Ben-Rabi, P. Kahan-Starvinsky, *Planning Services and Interventions for Children and Youths at the Edge of the Risk Continuum*, Jerusalem 2003.

First, the educational system works to strengthen the learners' perseverance and to increase their success in the normative frameworks. Second, the educational system strives to provide activities in the framework of informal education and other frameworks after the end of the studies, for example, clubs in which the children spend the afternoon hours, receive a hot meal, and are given mental support and help in the preparation of homework.[6]

Regarding the schools, programs for schools outline special organizational, pedagogical, social, and budgetary instruments to provide an answer to the needs of the population at-risk. In the framework of one program, some of the children defined at-risk participate in psychodrama group activity in.[7]

Psychodrama

Psychodrama, developed by Moreno[8], is a method in group psychotherapy that constitutes a part of the methods of art therapy. The word psychodrama is composed of two words in Greek: *psyche* (mind, soul) and *drama* (action). In other words, it means the mind in action. The work method in psychodrama is based on dramatic action and role play through which the participant presents problems, difficulties, and personal and interpersonal difficulties as well as solutions and ways of coping, so as to reveal the individual's inner world, understand his system of relations, and clarify patterns of behavior. Through psychodrama it is possible to change inadequate and/or undesired situations and responses and to act in new and more suited ways, such as the identification and release of emotional barriers so as to achieve mental balance.[9] Psychodrama enables the participant, through physical and verbal action, to reconstruct his experiences, in the framework of the group and with the help of the group members. In this way, psychodrama accompanies the participants into their inner world, which they describe and express in drama. Through the group activity in psychodrama, the participant has the possibility of experiencing a corrective experience of the original event, of changing his perspective on it, and of finding alternatives for coping with the loaded mental topics.[10]

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[6] S. Dovrat, *The National Plan for Education: Report of the national Task Force for the Promotion of Education in Israel*, Jerusalem 2005.

[7] M. Cohen-Navot, *School Intervention for Children and Youths At-Risk*, Special Report, Background Document for *Eshelim*, in the framework of the formation of a three-year work plan, 2004–2006, Jerusalem 2003.

[8] Z.T. Moreno, *Psychodrama, Surplus Reality and the Art of Healing*, London – Philadelphia 1921.

[9] Website of the Israeli Association for Psychodrama, http://www.iafp.org.il.

[10] H.A. Blatner, *Acting-in: Practical Applications of Psychodramatic Methods*, New York 1973, p. 27–30; E. Naharin, *A Stage instead of a Sofa*, Tel Aviv 1985.

Psychodrama enables the reconstruction of the participant's experiences in the group framework and with the help of the other group members. In psychodrama, through physical and verbal activity, the participant relives parts of his life, which he can investigate from the raising of feelings, observation, and coping. After the activity there is the possibility of changing the events, reorganizing them for clarification, and finding alternatives for dealing with the loaded topics.[11] Dayton[12] maintains that psychodrama is a method of treatment in which emotions that have been repressed in the past are released and surface in the present, all in an atmosphere that inculcates a sense of safety and holding.

Structure of psychodrama

There are three important stages in classic psychodrama[13]: warm-up, enactment, and sharing and closure.

Warm-up. The stage in which the group and instructor prepare themselves for action. This is a transition stage between the outside world and the internal world that occurs in the group, the preparation of the grounds. This is the stage in which the warm-up is sometimes the goal that achieves the entry into the group work. This stage is characterized by opening conversations between the participants, short games, movement exercises, and guided imagery. The goal of the warm-up is the creation of trust among the participants, the creation of a feeling of safety and closeness, while reducing the anxiety, before the participants' exposure. During the warm-up it is possible that a participant will stand out and/or the instructor will direct the exercise to a certain participant so that in the continuation, in the stage of action, his topic will be processed in psychodrama. This participant is called the protagonist.

Enactment. The beginning of the 'presentation' presented on a defined space, such as a stage. Some of the participants take part actively in the presentation and others serve as observers. First, the protagonist tells about himself and the problem that is taken from his life (in the past or in the present) or from the world of his fantasies and dreams.

Sharing and closure. Transition from the world of the group to the world of reality. In this stage the protagonist returns to the group circle and needs encouragement, protection, acceptance, and support. The group members are

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[11] H.A. Blatner, op. cit., E. Naharin, op. cit.

[12] T. Dayton, *The Drama Within: Psychodrama and Experiential Therapy*, Deerfield Beach 1994.

[13] E. Naharin, op. cit.

given the opportunity to share their emotions, ideas, and experiences with the protagonist and to share with one another the experience they experienced with him in particular and in the group as a whole.

Participants

Protagonist. According to the translation from the Greek, it means the 'first to the struggle'. Following the ancient tribal drama Greek classics defined the protagonist as the one whose story of suffering is told on the stage. The coping and the purification at the end of the drama represented a process experienced by each and every person in the tribe or community. Thus in the group it is possible to find a relation to this rationale, when the group chooses the protagonist as the representation of the group topic/voice. He goes after the maximal warm-up relative to the group, when he is ready and willing to research a problem, topic, or conflict. During the event he lives in his world, a world that he raised and revealed with great power through the different psychodrama techniques. He raises the true figures and experiences (even if he imagined them, their core is true), he acts his life. With the instructor's help, he guides the auxiliary ego and the action. Thus, through the activity of psychodrama the protagonist meets with the figures involved in his mental conflicts.

Instructor. According to Moreno[14], the instructor has different roles: he is a director, a therapist, and an analyst. Kellerman[15] adds a fourth role, the instructor of the group. He chooses the protagonist or helps him be chosen, and encourages him to expose himself, to overcome his objections, and to be at the center of the activity. He is attentive to absorb every hint that arises from the protagonist, verbal or nonverbal, and to convert it to a dramatic activity, through warm-up, presentation of the problem, experience of a variety of roles, and involvement of members in the group. The instructor leads the participants in the group to high reciprocal identification, and at the end the participants return to sit in a circle and share the feelings they experienced during the action and at its end (sharing closure).

Auxiliary Ego. This is any member of the group participating in psychodrama (aside from the instructor), who can help the protagonist work through his issue. The auxiliary ego is a member of the group who mustered to represent the protagonist's feelings and emotions as they arose in the session. Psychodrama enables this entire cosmos to be brought into the acting. The auxilia-

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[14] Z.T. Moreno, op. cit.

[15] P.F. Kellerman, *Let's Face It: Mirror in Psychodrama*, [in:] *Psychodrama: Advances in Theory and Practice*, ed. C. Baim, J. Burmeister, M. Maciel, London 2007.

ry ego can act close figures, such as husband, wife, son, or daughter, parents, and siblings, or distant figures. The auxiliary ego can also represent figures who are absent or abstract, such as an absent father or mother, ideals, God or the devil, life or death. For the most part the protagonist chooses the auxiliary ego, the member who in his opinion can contribute to him in acting confidently one of the figures.[16]

Group. There are two references to it; the first when the group is at the center, in the group process, and the second when the protagonist stands at the center and the group members function as an auxiliary ego. In addition, it is possible to combine between the two. Since the protagonist is a person who acts his true life (unlike an actor), the scenes that are acted by the group members create the life story that constitutes together the story of the group as a whole.

Importance of the Group in the Dynamics of Psychodrama**:** It is possible to present the concept of "group" according to a continuum, when the "group" strength is determined according to the intensiveness of the relationship and the reciprocal dependence. This definition primarily emphasizes contacts among people.[17] Ziv and Baharav[18] and Rosenwasser[19] quote Lewin, who contributed greatly to the research of groups and defines the group as a dynamic whole, based on reciprocal dependence among the member parts. In addition, he argues that the group is more than the sum of all its components, namely the "we-ness" is greater than the sum of all the individual elements of the group. The reciprocal dependence among the group members is the hallmark of the group. This dependence exists when the individual's actions and their results are influenced by the actions of others and when the individual's actions influence the actions of others and the results of their actions.

Stage. The place where the psychodrama occurs.

Psychodrama techniques

There are many psychodrama techniques, including the use of the following.

Double. The double is another ego auxiliary, which helps the protagonist express his inner voices and thus promotes him for the encounter with repressed conflicts. The double speaks only in the first person: "I want… I am angry". The goal of the role is to express parts that the protagonist did not dare

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[16] Z.T. Moreno, op. cit.

[17] N. Rosenwasser, *Group Instruction – A Reader*, Jerusalem 1997.

[18] Y. Ziv, Y. Baharav, *Group Journey: The Guide for the Instructor of Groups*, Tel Aviv 2001.

[19] N. Rosenwasser, op. cit.

say aloud or is not aware of them. The double awakens the protagonist to be emotionally involved in his experience.[20]

Role reversal. In role reversal one of the members acts the figure of the protagonist as it is expressed. He switches chairs with the protagonist, sits in his place, and continues from where he stopped. The member can continue to directions different from that of the protagonist. However the ability to perform role reversal indicates trust and confidence in the boundaries and integrity of the self.

Empty chair. The instructor places an empty chair and invites the participants openly to sit in it and reveal at the center of the circle a person with whom he has to continue clarification, with whom he has unfinished business, etc. The chair can also symbolize an absent significant figure and it is then possible to turn to him with a request, with a plea, in anger. The participant can sit on two chairs that can serve as different parts of the self. One chair will be for the part that is submissive, scared, small, and powerless, while the other chair will be for the part that is angry, exploding, recognizing the value of the self, and returning war.

Psychodrama with children

For the most part, children find it difficult to say in words what they are thinking and feeling. Kramer[21] addresses children who do not often share their troubles but through art are willing to express a wide range of emotions.

Psychodrama, which constitutes one of the methods of art therapy, also provides children with a possibility of a different type of expression, though acting and creative expression. Piaget[22], in his reference to development of children, maintained that there is considerable importance to play, since play assimilates the reality so as to reconstruct it, control it, or compensate for it.

Singer et al.[23] speak of the humanistic model regarding therapy through play. The instructor provides an empathic response, respects the child, and responds to him through play and words. The therapist sets realistic boundaries and builds trust between him and the child. The therapist accepts the child as he is. The child can express every emotion freely, and the therapist reflects to him his emotions so that the child learns to understand himself better. Humanistic therapy uses traditional play techniques such as doll house, art materials,

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[20] E. Naharin, op. cit.

[21] E. Kramer, *Art as Therapy with Children*, New York 1971.

[22] J. Piaget, *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*, New York 1962.

[23] T. Singer, B. Seymour, J. O'Doherty and others, *Empathy for pain involves the affective but not the sensory components of pain*, "Science", 2004, no. 303, p. 1157–1161.

figures, and other play devices. It uses role play such as brother and sister and doctor and patient, and it also uses imagination techniques and positive reinforcements. For young boys and girls at-risk who experience difficulties at home the struggle they have when they experience the crisis of adolescence is doubled and redoubled.

Role of the instructor. The goal of the instructor in psychodrama is to allow the child to form a positive self-perception, to control conflicts and anxieties, and develop the ability to cope with events from life, for instance, to deal with fears. Children use symbols in their play. A child can imitate adults, invent scenarios, cope with them, or correct them.

Advantages of psychodrama work with children at-risk

According to Tomison[24], emotional and physical neglect prevents the essential conditions for the child's healthy emotional and physical development. Therefore, when the child is found at-risk, he will apparently search for his way to survive in his environment. This child will do everything possible to survive: he will fight, he will close up in himself and will attack to protect himself, and he will feel lack of trust and inability to create interpersonal relations. According to Kohut[25], since these children lack normal emotional structures that include essential patterns and skills through which they can connect with significant figures, the group provides a mirror through which the child's image, feelings, and emotions are reflected. This mirror, this reflection, of what is good and what is bad, is important for these children, since they do not receive direction for life and alternatives from the significant figures in their lives, as other children do. They need a mirror to create a separate and distinct identity. There is a tremendous advantage to work with children with psychodrama because of the fact that the acting is at the center of the psychodrama occurrence. Through shared acting with the instructor and the rest of the children the child externalizes the inner drama occurring in him. This externalization enables awareness, process, and change desired for the child who reveals his innerness through psychodrama.

Therefore, the treatment with psychodrama is very effective in work with children who experience distress, both with themselves and with society. It enables to present these distresses openly, to examine them together in an experiential manner, and to recruit the insights that arise from psychodrama for everyday life.

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[24] M.A. Tomison, *Neglect – The Neglected Field of Child Abuse*, Jerusalem 1996.

[25] A. Miller, *The Drama of the Gifted Child*, Tel Aviv 1992.

Love, trust, and interpersonal relations

Dayton[26] maintains that psychodrama releases emotions that were repressed in the past and flood in the present, when this flooding occurs in an atmosphere that instills a feeling of safety, holding, and protection.

1. The uniqueness of children at-risk is that they need to feel the love that they did not receive at home. They are suspicious, and because of the great vulnerability with which they come and with which they live, it is hard for them to rely on people and they are found in isolation. In the group the children cope through different techniques of psychodrama with the fear, frustration, and anxiety that exist in them all the time. Through the power of the group and the interaction with others the child learns not only about himself but also about his ability to be a part of the group. This experience that the child undergoes leads to a considerable improvement in his self-confidence and the increase of his self-worth.
2. The group has power, and belonging to it is the connection to the peer group, which is most important for children and especially for children at-risk. Children at-risk frequently have social problems, and therefore they are alone and rejected by their peers. In the group there is universal space to share the difficulties with others and to know that the others also have similar difficulties. This knowledge is calming, provides correct proportion on the personal situation, and increases the sense of normativity. In the group there is the opportunity to realize that everybody has conflicts and everybody experiences both difficult emotions and emotions considered undesirable (anger, anxiety). Thus, the group members are freed from feelings of fear, frustration, and guilt, and the self-acceptance increases. In addition, the encounter grants the children who participate in them tools for the development of their personal and social abilities, which lead them to build relations with children their age and to assess the true powers innate in them.

Psychodrama and the Internet

Another, relatively new area in which psychodrama has achieved considerable success is the preparation of children at-risk for activities on the Internet. The goal of the treatment is to teach the children how to achieve through online

[26] T. Dayton, op. cit.

activity belonging to their peer group, social support, and social acceptance. In addition, through the psychodrama group the children learn how to avoid the dangers entailed by this activity, including cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying

The number of children and teens who use the Internet at home is rapidly growing. Children can engage in numerous Internet-based activities such as playing games, seeking information, and talking with friends. The benefits of new technology are undeniable, but along with the advantages there is the potential for technology to be misused. Cyberbullying is one of the negative by-products of the digital age.

Cyberbullying has proven difficult to define. To date, a universal definition has not been agreed upon. Most researchers agree that it includes an aggressive act that is carried out through electronic devices. Smith et al.[27] define cyberbullying as: "An aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly or over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself". On the other hand, according to Willard[28], cyberbullying does not need to include intention to harm or repletion: "Sending or posting harmful or cruel texts or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices".

Types of intentional harm

Harassment. Repeated and ongoing action of a harassing nature, such as sending offensive messages and sending multiple emails from the harasser's email address and from other email addresses he opened, sending instant messages, or through repeated telephone calls.

Rumor-mongering, humiliation, mockery, denigration. Publication and dissemination of malicious, untrue, and demonizing rumors. Lies, stories inappropriate for publication, jokes or anecdotes intended to harm the victim's image and/or social relations. These can be done under a mask, or without the need to identify or to prove the believability of the harmful claims.

Masquerade. Sending and publishing information or announcements under a pseudonym, while 'stealing' the identity of the victim or another person, or registering to websites and leaving the victim's contact information without

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[27] H. Shmidt, op. cit., p. 376.

[28] N. Willard, *Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats*, Eugene 2006.

his knowledge. Masquerade is possible when the person masquerading has access to the victim's password and username and uses them.

Misleading. Fabricating the relation with the person or event so as to create a fictitious relation, which causes closeness, sharing (especially of intimate details), and encourages the performance of different actions (taking off clothing in front of the camera, personal confessions, sending photographs, etc.), with the purpose of using this information to disseminate it in a harmful manner.

Dissemination of personal information. Exposure of private, personal, intimate, or confidential information, which was not intended for everyone to know, such as personal correspondence, intimate photographs, and exposure of the author's identity on an anonymous blog. Removal, prevention, distancing the victim from online activity or social context, such as excluding the victim in an online social encounter or in cooperative games (such as sabotaging or killing the victim in a multi-participant online game).

Intimidation, blackmail. Communication with the victim in a variety of ways, identification of information about him, and follow-up after him in order to harm him, scare him, and/or blackmail him.

Threat. Threats are generally made in the personal context, threats to harm the victim or people close to him.

Flaming. Exchange of words while using harmful, crude, and insulting expressions and incitement of a combative atmosphere[29].

Main means of the harm

In essence, every means of publication, dissemination, and sharing on the Internet also serves in principle as a tool of online harm, for instance:

- Mobile phone or sending SMS,
- Email,
- Digital photography from gadgets accessible to all (mobile phone, palm gadgets, pen cameras, etc.) and posting photographs, video films, clips,
- Instant messages in synchronous online conversation – chat,
- Websites,
- Sharing online: blogs, social networks, microblogs (Twitter), etc.,
- Online games.[30]

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[29] R. Avni, A. Rotem, *Online Harm*, 2009, http://ianethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/cyberBullying_IA_oct_09.pdf.

[30] Ibidem.

The phenomenon is characterized by the ability to acquire a tremendous community to participate in the attack in a short period of time, the ability to perform the attack all hours of the day and at any place, and the ability to perform the attack in an anonymous manner.[31]

Frequency of the phenomenon and who may become a victim of cyberbullying

In a research study conducted in 2006 among youths in Israel, 18% of them reported that they had received harmful messages via the Internet. These findings are similar to findings from the Western world, in which the reported rate of cyberbullying ranges from 10% to 30%.[32]

The skill of computer use and the duration of time of online connection were found to be positively related with electronic victimization. As the respondents spent more time online and as they were more skilled in the use of computerized digital means, the likelihood increased that they would become victims of online violence.[33]

Variables of gender and age were also examined, and it was found that young children already fall victim to this bullying. For instance, although Facebook only permits people aged thirteen and above to be members, many children falsify their age and thus become members. Regarding the age of the offenders and the victims, contradicting findings were found in research studies, and today it is accepted to think that there are no significant differences between the sexes regarding cyberbullying.[34]

Influences of cyberbullying on its victims

Cyberbullying was found to be related to anger, poor self-esteem, depression, learning problems, and behavioral and social difficulties.[35] In addition, it was also found to be related to feelings of hopelessness and even suicidal attempts[36]. Regarding the behavioral influences, some victims report avoidance of social activity, use of dangerous materials such as drugs and alcohol, aggression and violence, and self-harm.

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[31] H. Shmidt, op. cit.

[32] J.W. Patchin, S. Hinduja, *Bullies Move beyond the Schoolyard: Preliminary Look at Cyberbullying*, "Youth Violence Justice", 2006, no. 4, p. 148–169.

[33] R. Avni, A. Rotem, op. cit.

[34] J.W. Patchin, S. Hinduja, op. cit., p. 148–169.

[35] Ibidem, p. 148–169.

[36] R. Avni, A. Rotem, op. cit.

It was found that social support could ease the victims' distress. For instance, Boniel-Nissim[37] found in his research study conducted in Israel that writing in a blog open to responses on topics of emotional and social difficulties led to a decline in the writers' psychological distress.

Cyberbullying and children at-risk

It was found that the profile of the cyberbullying victim is an introverted child, quiet, sensitive, lacking in confidence, with few friends and with feelings of loneliness and depression. From an educational perspective, he has poor grades and difficulties adjusting to the school system. In addition, it was found that the absence of family support constitutes a good predictor of cyberbullying victims. This profile is commensurate with the profile of children at-risk. These children are children who suffer from emotional problems and a lack of social support (family, friends). They tend to search for love and support on the Internet, and thus they are especially vulnerable to its dangers.[38]

Psychodrama, cyberbullying, and children at-risk

The treatment of cyberbullying through group work with psychodrama focuses on the participants in the bullying act: the victim, the attacker, and the bystanders.

There are three typical responses to situations of threat, as follows[39]:

1. Alloplastic response. When the person is threatened he goes to fight against the source of the threat so as to free himself of it (fight).
2. Flight response. When the person is in a situation of danger, he protects himself by fleeing to risk behaviors (flight).
3. Autoplastic response. When a person is threatened, he responds by change of the self, develops thinking ability, learning, and produces benefit from his different experiences. All these require human flexibility, self-development, and ability to reinvent different means to adjust to the new situations with which the person conflicts.

The goal of treatment with psychodrama on the part of the treatment factors comes to make things easier with children at-risk with the difficulties they experience and with the copings and responses to the difficulty. The goal is for

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[37] M. Boniel-Nisim, *Youth at risk and youth risking on the internet*. The annual scientific conference of Israeli society of adolescence medicine, Tel Aviv 2012.

[38] R. Avni, A. Rotem, op. cit.

[39] Lecture of R. Feuerstein about transitions in education (own materials from 1981).

the children at-risk not to choose alloplastic or flight responses; rather the goal is to encourage them to autoplastic responses of adjustment to the new conditions and change of the self through the use of previous experiences and identification with values and clear goals in life.

The victim – psychodrama work with the victim

The treatment of the victim using psychodrama is aimed at achieving the following two goals: (1) to avoid becoming a victim and (2) to teach the victim how to deal with the bullying act directed at him.

The first goal, to learn to avoid becoming a victim, is accomplished through the 'empty chair' technique, in which the victim child plays the role of the victim (the protagonist), turns to the empty chair that symbolizes the person who hurt him, and asks 'this person" why he hurt him. In this stage the child is asked to choose a participant from the group (auxiliary ego) to constitute for him this person and through role play, in which the child through the other child, the auxiliary ego, reflects the characteristics in his behavior that make him a victim. In this stage it is possible to add a third member of the group (who until now observed the occurrence), to act as a 'double' for the victim and to speak from the character he represents on the occurrence stage. At the end, the three children are asked by the instructor to return to their places and to share their experiences. The rest of the group members are asked to also share, as bystanders, the insights they obtained from the dynamics.

To accomplish the second goal, to teach the victim how to cope with the bullying act directed against him, it possible to use another technique, two empty chairs in the center of the circle, upon which the victim from the first session and the person who symbolizes the offender are asked to sit and then the same dynamics occurs. The participants and the group members achieve insights about what the victim should do to cope with this difficult situation.

The attacker – psychodrama work with the attacker

The treatment of the attacker focuses on the motives of the attack and how he can achieve the same satisfaction he obtains from the attack in other means, normative ones, which do not harm others. The treatment of the attacker was undertaken according to the perspectives of the offender, the victim, and the bystanders.

The bystanders – psychodrama work with the bystanders

Research studies of cyberbullying found that the bystander has considerable impact on and thus considerable responsibility for what occurs. Bystanders are passive or encourage further violence.[40]

The goal of psychodrama work with the bystanders is to examine why they do not act to prevent the bullying activity (both before and during) and why they do not help victim afterwards. The present work is undertaken with reference to the perspective of the bystanders, the victims, and the attackers.

Summary

The article addresses the population of children at-risk in Israel who are found at a high risk on the level of harm online and cyberbullying. The concept of children at-risk describes the population of children who are found or who may be found in physical, mental, or emotional situations of risk. Dryfoos[41] maintains that about one-half of all children and youths, aged ten to seventeen, are found at-risk, when about one-quarter of them are found at high risk. In contrast, Glenn and Nelson[42] assert that all children are found potentially in some situation of risk. Most come from families that are not functioning, from great poverty, and/or from a delinquent social environment. These children's problems are expressed primarily in the emotional, scholastic, social, and behavioral field and lead to the multiplicity of absences from the school, poor academic achievements, behavior problems, and social difficulties.

The article presents ways of intervention that are found in the formal and informal system and describes psychodrama as an intervention approach found to be most successful as an educational therapeutic tool. Psychodrama treats psychological and social problems through acting and provides the child with holding, safety, and protection. The participants act as characters related to the problems bothering them, when in this way they release distresses, drives, and tensions and learn to see and understand other people. Through psychodrama the children are also linked to the digital world and are taught how to succeed in achieving the positive qualities of online activity and to avoid the negative influences, such as cyberbullying. It was found that the profile of the cyberbullying victim is an introverted child, quiet, sensitive, lacking in confidence, with few friends and with feelings of loneliness and depression. From an educational

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[40] R. Avni, A. Rotem, op. cit.

[41] J.G. Dryfoos, op. cit.

[42] H.S. Glenn, J. Nelson, op. cit.

perspective, he has poor grades and difficulties adjusting to the school system. In addition, it was found that the absence of family support constitutes a good predictor of cyberbullying victims. This profile is commensurate with the profile and definition of children at-risk. These children are children who suffer from emotional problems and a lack of social support (family, friends). They tend to search for love and support on the Internet, and thus they are especially vulnerable to its dangers.[43]

The article reveals the different techniques existing in psychodrama and in the group dynamics for the treatment of cyberbullying, the need for a session held in reality, between the object and the subject, in the real world, not behind the monitor, which is the virtual world, but with human contact and relationship. These are undertaken through group work that focuses on the participants in the act of bullying, the victim, the attacker, and the bystanders, and in the work on the different characters as they are expressed in the harm online. The insights obtained on the stage of psychodramatic occurrence are insights that lead to learning and internalization of new and beneficial behaviors towards other people.

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[43] R. Avni, A. Rotem, op. cit.

A child in the face of Internet addiction in the family

Dominika Przybyszewska

Nowadays, the Internet and computer are tools for work, are applied in education and provide entertainment. Thanks to the global network, the life space of the man has become broader. The type and way of making contacts has changed. Methods of gaining information have also become different when compared to those a few years ago. The Internet can be used for many objectives. For this reason, there are various consequences of using this global network, depending on the type of action taken.

Modern media can affect various aspects of life. There is a threat of weakening the quality of relations with other people. Using the computer every day for a few hours can lead to having a disorganised day, which means that one is unable of using their leisure time creatively. The actions that one takes up do not lead to developing their interests; also, prosocial behaviour is hindered. Many hours in front of a computer screen causes decrease in physical activity. Very often the sitting position one adopts is incorrect, which leads to spinal curvature. Being addicted to the Internet does not leave all family members, small children included, unaffected.

Internet addiction: definition and possible consequences

In the academic world, Internet overuse still causes many controversies. According to some researchers, these can be classified as obsessive and compulsive disorders, but according to the majority, these can be claimed to be a sort of addiction.[1] Inter-

[1] D. Hinić, G. Mihajlović, Š. Željko, S. Đukić-Dejanović, M. Jovanocić, *Excessive Internet use – addiction disorder or not*, "Vojnosanitetski Pregled", 2008, vol. 65(10), p. 766; M.Z. Yao, Z. Zhong,

national classifications that embrace mental disorders: ICD – 10 (*International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems* – a classification of the World Health Organization) and DSM – IV (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* – a classification of mental disorders of the American Psychiatric Association) do not list Internet or computer addiction. However, literature on the subject matches the existing criteria on addictions to psychoactive substances to activities, including the use of new media. A Polish adaptation of a sort was made by B. T. Woronowicz, who made references to the DSM – IV classification:

Internet addiction can be diagnosed when in the last 12 months at least three of the following symptoms have occurred:

1. "Strong need or compulsion to use the Internet.
2. Subjective conviction on fewer possibilities to control one's behaviour related to the Internet, i.e. control impairment when it comes to refraining from using the Internet, and the amount of time devoted to surf the Internet.
3. Anxiety, irritation or feeling worse when trying to break or limit the use of the Internet, with these states subsiding once one returns to their computer.
4. Spending more and more time in the Internet in order to achieve satisfaction or feel good, which previously was achieved in a much shorter time.
5. Progressing neglect of alternative sources of pleasure or previous hobbies for the Internet.
6. Using the Internet irrespective of the damaging consequences (physical, mental and social) that are known to be related to spending time in the Internet".[2]

Loneliness, social contacts and Internet addiction: A cross-lagged panel study, "Computer in Human Behavior", 2014, vol. 30, p. 165.

[2] B.T. Woronowicz, *Bez tajemnic o uzależnieniach i ich leczeniu*, Warszawa 2001, p. 193; confer: D. Hinić, G. Mihajlović, Š. Željko, S. Đukić-Dejanović, M. Jovanocić, op. cit., p. 764.

Very similar criteria are listed by A. Augustynek in her publication:

"1. Strong desire or compulsion to use the Internet or computer.
2. Difficulties in self-control when it comes to logging in to the net or using the computer.
3. Occurrence of the abstinence syndrome caused by the lack of access to the Internet or computer.
4. Occurrence of tolerance, i.e. a situation when in order to achieve the effect planned it is necessary to use the Internet or computer more and more often and for more and more time.
5. Loss of interests and pleasures that existed before becoming addicted.
6. Excessive use of the Internet or computer despite indisputable evidence that it has destructive influence on health and social relations of the person addicted" (A. Augustynek, *Jak walczyć z uzależnieniami?*, Warszawa 2011, p. 76).

K. Young, a researcher into Internet addictions of many years' standing, created a questionnaire that allowed her to diagnose this disorder. It includes the following questions:

„1. Do you feel preoccupied with the Internet (think about previous online activity or anticipate next online session)?
2. Do you feel the need to use the Internet with increasing amounts of time in order to achieve satisfaction?
3. Have you repeatedly made unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop Internet use?
4. Do you feel restless, moody, depressed, or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop Internet use?
5. Do you stay online longer than originally intended?
6. Have you jeopardized or risked the loss of significant relationship, job, educational or career opportunity because of the Internet?
7. Have you lied to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with the Internet?
8. Do you use the Internet as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression)?"

In order to diagnose addiction, at least five positive answers to the questions by the subject are necessary. K. Young also created a more detailed tool, called the Internet Addiction Test, that includes 20 questions. Each of them contains a statement of one pathological aspect of using the Internet (its influence on the life of the subject), and the respondent is to choose the level these refer to themselves on a five-grade scale. In Poland, the test was adopted by P. Majchrzak and N. Ogińska-Bulik, and is called Test on the Use of the Internet (TUI).[3]

Other behaviour that is characteristic of an addicted person is also defined. The person is strongly engrossed with the Internet, which is reflected with obsessive thoughts about it even when it is not used; days are planned according to the possibility of using the Internet. Unsuccessful attempts at controlling the time spent in the Internet are repeated. Also, physical symptoms occur, such as: pain in the back of one's head, migraine, dry eyes, neglecting personal hygiene, irregular eating hours. Sleeping habits change. Withdrawal symptoms appear (abstinence syndrome) and are visible in the form of at least two of the following symptoms, occurring within a period of between a few days and 1 month after giving up or limiting the use of the Internet:

Yet, the Internet addiction criteria that refer to the ICD – 10 classification were adapted by I. Goldberg, see: K. Kaliszewska, *Nadmierne używanie Internetu. Charakterystyka psychologiczna*, Poznań 2007, p. 42–43.

[3] N. Ogińska-Bulik, *Uzależnienie od czynności. Mit czy rzeczywistość?*, Warszawa 2010, p. 71.

– Psychomotor agitation,
– Anxiety or fear,
– Noticeable depression,
– Obsessive thoughts about what is going on in the Internet,
– Fantasies and dreams about the Internet,
– Intentional or unintentional finger moving in a way that is typical of writing on a keyboard.[4]

The above-mentioned features show that the functioning of a man addicted to the Internet can substantially disrupt their functioning in their family. Further in this paper the aspect of functioning of the family system will be developed; the system where a small child lives with one of the main carers showing traits of addiction to this new medium. However, it is necessary to focus on the definition of a family and the functions it serves, as well as on the small child and the needs it has.

The family and its functions in the view of the widespread presence of the Internet

In literature on the subject there are many definitions of a family. It is considered the primal social group or the basic social group that is the basis of the society. The definition that embraces all the important aspects from the point of view of this article is the one proposed by F. Adamski, according to whom a family is "a group composed of people linked with one of two types of social relations: marriage relation and parent-child relation. (...) it is a group defined by lasting and legalised sexual relations of two people who give life to their children and make them dependable of them in their early stage of life, and at the same time accepting the task of introducing them into life".[5]

People who are joined in matrimony set up a family together. As a result, they take on the duty of creating suitable conditions for accepting and bringing up children. Spouses create a natural and elementary life environment for their offspring. Thanks to them, norms, values, rules and regulations that are valid in a given society are transmitted to another generation.[6] A family is not an isolated structure; it functions in a net of social links.

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[4] P. Chocholska, M. Osipczuk, *Uzależnienie od komputera i internetu u dzieci i młodzieży*, Warszawa 2009, p. 150–151; A. Jaszczak, *Poczucie uzależnienia od Internetu a poczucie kontroli u adolescentów*, [in:] *Psychologiczne konteksty Internetu*, ed. B. Szmigielska, Kraków 2009, p. 244–245; B. Pilecka, *Uzależnienie od Internetu*, [in:] *Komputer – Człowiek – Prawo. Księga pamiątkowa Wydziału Zarządzania i Komunikacji Społecznej UJ*, ed. W. Lubaszewski, Kraków 2007, p. 57.

[5] F. Adamski, *Rodzina. Wymiar społeczno-kulturowy*, Kraków 2002, p. 27.

[6] B.M. Nowak, *Rodzina w kryzysie. Studium resocjalizacyjne*, Warszawa 2012, p. 6.

A family has some characteristic features that distinguish it from other social groups. Among them, intimacy, fertility and spirituality are distinguished. Intimacy means familiarity that assumes the existence, understanding of a community of interests, actions, plans and expectations by all the family members. Fertility means full surrender of the spouses and the consequence of love. Finally, spirituality is a result of the rest of the features; a family creates an environment that allows its members for deeper spiritual experiences.[7]

Literature on pedagogy names functions that a family serves. Similarly to the above-mentioned features, these functions distinguish a family from other groups. However, they are also a basis for creating a definition of a family. Literature offers various classifications of functions.

F. Adamski divides the functions:

a) from the perspective of viewing a family as a social group and institution; the following functions can be enumerated:
   1. institutional functions – these refer to a family and matrimony as social institutions (reproductive, economic, protective, socialising, stratificational, integrative),
   2. personal functions – matrimonial, parental – satisfying the emotional needs of parents and children; brotherly.

b) from the perspective of durability and changeability of functions

1. essential (primary) functions – reproductive, socialising and the function of love,
2. accidental (secondary) functions – economic, protective, stratificational, recreational, religious, integrative.[8]

Yet other functions of a family are listed by Z. Tyszka. He enumerates as many as 11 of them:

1. Material and economic (subfunctions: productive, earning, economic, referring to services and consumption),
2. Protective and securing – looking after infants and small children,
3. Reproductive,
4. Sexual,
5. Legalising and controlling,
6. Stratificational,
7. Socialising,
8. Cultural,
9. Religious,
10. Recreational and social,
11. Emotional and expressive.[9]

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[7] F. Adamski, op. cit., p. 33.

[8] Ibidem, p. 36–37.

[9] Z. Tyszka, A. Wachowiak, *Podstawowe pojęcia i zagadnienia socjologii rodzin*, Poznań 1997, p. 47–53.

All the functions listed can be disturbed if one of the family members is addicted to the Internet. The level of the completion of a function depends on the type and phase of the addition, as well as on the duration of the disorder.

From the point of view of a small child, in a family where there is a problem of Internet addiction, some functions may not be fully completed, especially the material and economic, protective and securing, socialising, cultural, recreational and social, and emotional and expressive. The disorder in the material and economic function may be caused by neglecting work by the addicted family member. The person addicted will aim at being online in an unlimited extent, at the same time neglecting their professional duties. Lowered effectiveness may lead to losing their job, which will undoubtedly affect the material situation of their family. The protective and securing function is especially related to the situation of a small child. It is unable of fulfilling their needs on their own. It is thus necessary to provide them by other members of the family, which includes both hygiene care (changing, bathing), feeding, and satisfying basic emotional needs. The stratificational function is directly linked to the material and economic function discussed above. In a situation when the Internet-addicted family member loses their job, the family may lose their social position and previous life status. The recreational and social, and the emotional and expressive functions can be neglected by limiting social contacts, not caring about good atmosphere, not fulfilling needs and not expressing one's emotions by family members, especially by the addicted member. The rest of the enumerated functions may not be fully completed due to the existence of a process of modelling. With their attitude, the parent dealing with the addiction teaches pathological use of the Internet. With their behaviour, they do not show alternative ways of spending leisure time and developing their computer-unrelated interests. Spending time online is one of the main patterns a child may learn in the family in a situation when one of their parents is Internet-addicted. The aspect of spending time together in places such as cinema, museum or theatre is limited or completely ignored. Isolation of the family from the local community due to the addiction will also affect the completion of the socialising function. The child's contact with other peers, adults or even relatives may be completely limited.

A family can function well when all the functions are fulfilled. It is equally important for all the members to cooperate on satisfying both their common and individual needs.[10] It is necessary for strong bonds to exist among family members. It is worth remembering that a family is the group of reference, it

[10] B.M. Nowak, op. cit., p. 17.

allows to build identity, own I. It provides a place where the process of socialization occurs. For a small child, the family is extremely important. Only with the help of their main guardians can the child survive, and can their needs be satisfied.

Small child's needs and the ubiquity of the Internet

A small child cries, laughs, shouts; sometimes it is excited, sometimes it is sleepy. The child's behaviour is a message about their mental and physical state. In this way, the child expresses their request towards their parents to fulfil their needs. It is the adults' duty to organize the environment in such that will make the little one feel food and safe in it. However, often the main guardians cannot or are unable to fulfil it. This happens especially when they are addicted to the Internet.

The small man's needs can be divided into two groups: biological (physiological) and psychological (social). The first group consists of primal needs. They are related to quenching the thirst, hunger and regulating physiological needs. This group also contains the need of oxygen (fresh air), and the needs of thermal comfort and protection against climate changes. They are all related to the correct functioning of an organism (of all the biological processes happening in a human body).

The first group also includes the need of movement. It is often omitted and forgotten, despite the fact that satisfying it is indispensable for correct psychological and motor development.[11] It allows to discharge mental tension, and outdoor movement ensures that the brain is oxygenated. It also positively influences the skeleton that is built and the muscles that develop. A small child needs rest and sleep to the same extent. In the early period of life the human organism regulates the activity needed on its own. However, it is parents' duty to ensure both conditions for movement and moments of peace and quiet.

H. Olechnowicz[12] mentions yet another needs, i.e. the need of having experiences through many senses. Cutting a child off from the opportunity to build experiences on noticing their own movements, not providing them with tactile stimulation or the sense of balance can cause deprivation. Carrying the child in one's arms, talking to them, playing with them and organising an environment that is rich in sensory experiences allow the small man to get familiar with the surrounding world and also influences the development of each sense.

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[11] H. Olechnowicz, *Potrzeby psychiczne dzieci głębiej upośledzonych umysłowo*, [in:] *Wychowanie i nauczanie głębiej upośledzonych umysłowo*, ed. eadem, Warszawa 1979, p. 24.

[12] Ibidem, p. 25.

A small child has as many psychological needs as they have biological, or even more. They are called secondary.[13] They include, among others[14]:

- The need to feel safe – it is an elementary psychological need. The human organism is alert to any types of threat situations. In order for the child to feel safe all the biological needs have to be satisfied. It cannot feel hunger, cold or pain. Another component of this need is the ability to foresee the events that happen around the child. S. Tucholska and K. Tucholska distinguish the need of stability and the need of dependence.[15] For a small man, the repetitiveness and day rhythm are important. The child's contact with an important person (parent, guardian, grandparents etc.) is a guarantee for maintaining the feeling of security. The quality of the contact is also important – whether the guardian's behaviour is foreseeable. Only by positive experiences and repeating the distress-calm scheme can the child learn to self-regulate their tension and use extra sources of support in difficult situations. It can also use their own resourcefulness and self-reliance.
- The need of a close relationship (affirmation and love) – satisfying it guarantees the satisfaction of other needs. It is the adult who is in a close relationship with the child that tries to ensure it the best possible conditions for development. The lack of satisfying this need causes despair, and can even lead to the so-called separation anxiety disorder.
- The need of self-reliance in everyday life – this need manifests itself around the age of 2. The child gains more independence and autonomy then. This is because the child becomes sure that their parents love them even if they are not present. Also, the small man slowly becomes less emotionally dependent and their self-regulation processes are refined. For a child it is important to be able to make even small choices, such as the flavour of a yoghurt for elevenses or the choice of the T-shirt they wear.[16]
- The need of understanding and being understood – it is crucial for the parents to be able to correctly read their child's messages that are transmitted with a facial expression, gestures, sounds, and then words.[17]

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[13] S. Tucholska, K. Tucholska, *Psychologia potrzeb dziecka, czyli co dziecku trzeba do szczęścia?*, [in:] *Dziecko. Studium interdyscyplinarne*, ed. E. Sowińska, E. Szczurko, T. Guz, P. Marzec, Lublin 2008, p. 396.

[14] K. Appelt, *Wiek poniemowlęcy. Jak rozpoznać potencjał dziecka?*, [in:] *Psychologiczne portrety człowieka. Praktyczna psychologia*, ed. A. Brzezińska, Gdańsk 2005, p. 86–97; S. Tucholska, K. Tucholska, op. cit., p. 397; M. Ohme, *Rozwój i wychowanie dziecka w okresie wczesnego dzieciństwa*, [in:] *Zadania rodziny i szkoły: od samodzielności dziecka do efektywności pracownika*, ed. A. Brzezińska, Warszawa 2007, p. 52.

[15] S. Tucholska, K. Tucholska, op. cit., p. 398.

[16] H. Olechnowicz, *Dziecko własnym terapeutą. Jak wspomagać strategie autoterapeutyczne dzieci z dysfunkcjami więzi osobistych*, Warszawa 1995, p. 62–64.

[17] P. Holinger, *Co mówią dzieci, zanim nauczą się mówić. Dziewięć sygnałów używanych przez dzieci do wyrażania uczuć*, Poznań 2006, p. 30–63.

– The need of being noticed, also defined as the need of drawing others' attention to oneself – the child wants to be noticed.[18] Thanks to the attention it receives, the small man shapes their self-esteem and self-awareness (gains their identity).
– The need of being with other children – the need to contact peers gains meaning as the child grows up. The older the child, the more important the need becomes.
– The need of self-esteem – it is crucial in the context of taking up tasks and various types of challenges. A small child is ready to take up tasks that it expects to succeed in. The completion of this need allows them to get to know the world around, build their self-image and makes it possible to assess their abilities and skills correctly later on.
– The need of playing a particular social role – a child feels a need of being someone importnat, of serving a function. Initially, this need is satisfied in the family, where the small one plays a particular role (the child of their parents, the smallest family member). Then the little man plays more and more social roles. They become a group member at a nursery school or kindergarten, and then in the pupil group at school. They want to be appreciated and noticed.
– The need of social recognition (respect from others) – it is directly linked to the previous need. The child functions in a society. Not only does it want to be noticed and play a specific social role, but it also wants to be appreciated. The small man wants to receive feedback on their behaviour or the results of the actions they take. They want adults to acknowledge their effort, approve of their effort and praise them. It is particularly important for the small one to know the opinion of their important people. On the basis of their reactions, they assess themselves, their behaviour and skills.
– The need of learning and knowing new things – originally, it is linked to the instinct of self-preservation (gaining the skill in distinguishing edible fruit, finding the way or tracking down animals was influential for the chance to survive). The need to get to know the world becomes visible very early in life, among others though studying the surroundings. It gradually becomes bigger and bigger as the man reaches particular levels of development, just as cognitive abilities and forms of activity of the child change. Importantly, even small children show spontaneous cognitive activity. One should allow the small man to experiment or explore the surroundings. It is important to ensure children security and adjust the par-

[18] H. Olechnowicz, *Potrzeby psychiczne…*, ed. cit., p. 15.

ents' and guardians' expectations to the child's capabilities (they should appreciate the focus time and engagement).

– The need of helping to understand experiences – small children do not always understand the phenomenon in their environment. They perceive some situations from their own perspective and cannot view a given problem or situation from many angles. They need adults' help so that they explain them their own experiences. As a result, the little man can understand the world around, both the material world and the world of people (how they function, what they do, how they develop), more fully and better.
– The need of manifesting one's feelings – a small child informs their guardians both about their needs and desires from the very first hours of their life. They achieve it through signals that are innate. P. C. Holinger distinguished nine of them: interest, joy, surprise, dissatisfaction, anger, fear, shame, disgust and revulsion. The child expresses them in particular with their face expression (colour, look of their eyes, arrangement of eyebrows and lips).[19]

Apart from the above-mentioned, S. J. Greenspan and B. L. Benderly also underline the need of introducing rules and clear boundaries by the parents. With them, the child feels safe because it knows what it can expect and what others expect from it. Establishing what the child can do makes it easier for the kid to learn self-discipline. The author also stressed the necessity of ensuring the family a stable environment. At the early stages of the child's life, the family faces new challenges. It often needs support from their next of kin and friends. In this way S. J. Greenspan and B. L. Benderly distinguished the need of having rules and clear boundaries in behaviour, as well as a stable environment and local community.[20]

One can also notice that the small child has many diverse needs. Satisfying them is a difficult task the parents face. If one of them is addicted to the Internet, the child's needs may be unsatisfied. In extreme cases, it is also possible that deprivation of child's needs and drives will happen. Depending on the type and phase of the addiction, the parent may both read or reply to no needs of their offspring. All of the above-mentioned needs may be left unsatisfied, however due to the way of the functioning of a family where one member is addicted to the Internet, the following may undergo particular deprivation: the need to feel safe, the need of a close relationship, the need of understanding and being understood, the need of being noticed, the need of self-esteem and the need

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[19] P. Holinger, op. cit., p. 29–36.

[20] S.J. Greenspan, B.L. Benderly, *Rozwój umysłu. Emocjonalne podstawy inteligencji*, Poznań 2000, p. 255; M. Ohme, op. cit., p. 55.

of social recognition. This is the result of emotional unavailability of one of the parents that is too absorbed by the Internet. Undoubtedly, this can make the child feel like a person of little importance, unnoticed, that does not deserve interest from the parent.

Psychological and social consequences of Internet addiction for the addicted and their family[21]

Without doubt, excessive and compulsive use of the Internet affects the somatic, psychological and social functioning of the addicted, but also of their closest relatives, family included. Psychological consequences include unnatural satisfaction of needs (e.g. sexual needs with pornography or masturbation), weakening communication skills in the real world (mainly non-verbal) and disturbing the feeling of security (achieved only by being online).[22] Upsetting the daily cycle may cause irritation and anxiety, as well as lowering intellectual fitness. Also, attention disorders occur. It is also possible for identity disorders to occur.

The addicted may experience disorientation as a result of difficulties when selecting information. Other negative consequences can include proneness to aggression and violence or taking up activities that are criminal offences (piracy, hacking, cyberterrorism).[23]

As the addiction develops, the addicted becomes more and more isolated from their family – both their acquaintances and friends, but also their family. The emotional bond may disappear. Social phobia may occur and difficulties in making new friends may deepen. The person may feel fear of contacting other people.[24] They also perceive less social support. It stems from the fact that the Internet becomes a way of escaping everyday life problems. One can say that it is like a vicious circle: excessive use of the Internet causes isolation, loneliness,

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[21] Excessive use of the Internet leads to many negative consequences in each of the spheres: biological, mental and social. The resulting somatic disturbances do not directly influence the functioning of the family, thus in the article the author has focused on the other two spheres. Physiological and physical consequences were described in: E. Krzyżak-Szymańska, A. Szymański, *Profilaktyka nowych uzależnień wśród dzieci i młodzieży. Zarys problematyki*, Katowice 2013, p. 81; P. Majchrzak, N. Ogińska-Bulik, *Uzależnienie od internetu*, Łódź 2010, p. 30–32; C. Guerreschi, *Nowe uzależnienia*, Kraków 2005, p. 53–54.

[22] E. Krzyżak-Szymańska, A. Szymański, op. cit., p. 81–82.

[23] Ibidem, p. 82–83; N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 62–63.

[24] E. Krzyżak-Szymańska, A. Szymański, op. cit., p. 81–82; P. Majchrzak, N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 39.

depression, which in turn leads the person to take up compensation that consists in more intensive use of the Internet in order to make up for the emotional and social deficiencies.[25] The fact that the person addicted to the Internet often neglects personal hygiene also adds to this. The addiction is accompanied with problems in the emotional sphere, including depressive states. What is important, people who use the Internet pathologically, are known to feel less happy.[26] On the other hand, the feeling of loneliness is both a reason and a result of the addiction (as the excessive use of the Internet intensifies, it grows bigger).[27]

Another aspect of the addiction is a worsening financial situation – both of the addicted person and their family. It is a result of a lower salary or job loss, which often follow as a consequence of neglecting one's work duties. The person may experience problems in completing tasks at work successfully; they work hastily, make spelling and punctuation mistakes in texts, their statements are illogical. Frequently, they express irritation and dissatisfaction with their colleagues.[28]

Certainly, one can claim that addiction to the Internet disturbs family functioning. It leads to problems in everyday life and relations with others. The addicted person lies their nearest and dearest in order to conceal the time spent in the Internet and puts their important relationships with others at risk due to their excessive involvement in the Internet.[29] It results from the person disconnecting from current affairs and giving up on the values that have been important so far.[30] The addicted starts to neglect their home duties more and more. The amount of time they devote to real people – including their spouse and children – drops.[31] There have even been cases of a mother forgetting to pick up her child from the kindergarten or school.[32] As a result of the abovementioned consequences of the addiction, both the relationship with their spouse and the relations with their children are disturbed. A possible consequence is even a separation or divorce.[33]

The consequences of Internet addiction existing in a family may affect the child that is brought up in the family for a long time. In the future they may find

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[25] P. Majchrzak, N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 33.

[26] Ibidem, p. 34; N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 62.

[27] M.Z. Yao, Z. Zhong, op. cit., p. 168.

[28] B. Pilecka, op. cit., p. 57–59; P. Majchrzak, N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 31, 57–59.

[29] M. Golka, *Bariery w komunikowaniu i społeczeństwo (dez)informacyjne*, Warszawa 2008, p. 151; B. Pilecka, op. cit., p. 56.

[30] M. Michałowski, *Media a rodzina*, [in:] *Rodzina – Tożsamość – Pamięć*, ed. M. Kujawska, I. Skórzyńska, G. Teusz, Poznań 2009, p. 102.

[31] P. Majchrzak, N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 31–34; N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 60.

[32] C. Guerreschi, op. cit., p. 55.

[33] P. Majchrzak, N. Ogińska-Bulik, op. cit., p. 40.

it difficult to express their feelings and build satisfying interpersonal relations (among others, due to the lack of correct communication models and relations with other people). Further in life they may start to adopt avoidance strategies and find it difficult to satisfy their needs, including emotional ones.

Despite all these negative consequences of the addiction, the family very often act to conceal them. This is due to the willingness to maintain the functioning of the family, reluctance to admit that some difficulties exist and that one feels helpless in this respect. For this reason, it is necessary to make the closest environment, including teachers and psychologists, social workers, priests and doctors, alert to all the signals of the family homeostasis being disturbed.

Is a family with an addicted member a family in crisis?

A crisis due to one family member's addiction to the Internet can be viewed exclusively from the point of view of a threat (due to its character it cannot be discussed as a developmental change). This stems from the fact that strong negative emotions are released in family members who feel the inefficiency of the actions they take. The crisis is an obstacle in achieving life goals because it makes it impossible to control one's life consciously.[34]

Depending on the necessity of giving social support, several types of crisis can be distinguished: developmental, endogenous, incidental and chronic. The addiction to the Internet can cause incidental crises, also called traumatic, that accumulate, are slow and long-lasting. They can also cause an endogenous crisis that is created as a result of increasing difficult situations a family cannot deal with. Pathological use of the Internet can become a factor that leads to a substantially disturbed homeostasis, or the functional balance in the family. It is thus possible to unambiguously say that addiction to the Internet can be a set of circumstances of crisis creation.[35]

As a result of this type of addiction, the course of education and socialisation in a family is upset, and it is weakened as a community. The family structure is disorganised and its functioning is destabilized.[36] The elementary needs of each member are often unsatisfied. Excessive use of the Internet can cause conflicts, competition and rivalry among family members. The disorders in the system balance also originate from: threats to life, health, safety, value loss, loss of a social position. Task completion may be hindered. The family is internally

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[34] B.M. Nowak, op. cit., p. 37.

[35] Ibidem, p. 43–45.

[36] Ibidem, p. 46.

weakened and is unable / cannot create a favourable environment for the development of their children on their own. Consequently, it is unable to equip them with competences for independent life, including the fact of not transmitting correct patterns of dealing with stress, flexible adaptation of one's actions to the situation and creative thinking.[37]

Each family member, children included, can be physically and mentally exhausted due to the crisis they go through caused by the addiction to the Internet. An overload may happen due to playing particular roles. For a child, the family where interpersonal relations are pathological is not beneficial for correct growth. In extreme cases, it can also lead to various deviations.[38]

Help for families who try to tackle Internet addiction

It is necessary to provide help to a family that deals with the problem of Internet addiction. Support should cover all its members. Lack of social reaction or taking inadequate or insufficient steps towards the family that undergoes a crisis can start a process of decline beyond the main course of social life.[39] The assumption that the family will deal with its problems on its own is equivocal.

The forms of social support that are of a repair character. Social support includes, among others: crisis intervention and specialist counselling, including psychological therapy (individual, for families).[40] Activities organised by non-governmental organisations – associations and foundations, are also valuable. All the actions taken aim at restoring homeostasis. Only through a planned therapy can a family return to the effective fulfilling of its functions and satisfying various needs of its members.

Currently, different types of therapy are suggested to those addicted. Very often, a cognitive and behavioural therapy is used. Above all, it covers learning a time management strategy, acknowledging both the benefits and potential damage caused by the Internet, increasing self-awareness, developing the ability of understanding and expressing emotions, communication skills, dealing in periods of great emotional tension and developing alternative interests. Motivational chats are also often used. They assume that it is the addicted person that is responsible for the change. Another form of therapy is reality therapy,

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[37] Ibidem, p. 48–49.

[38] Ibidem, p. 50; J.A. Pielkowa, *Zmiany w pełnieniu funkcji socjalizacyjnej w rodzinie*, [in:] *Współczesne rodziny polskie – ich stan i kierunek przemian*, ed. Z. Tyszka, Poznań 2001, p. 260.

[39] B.M. Nowak, op. cit., p. 50.

[40] Ibidem, p. 121–122.

(RT in short) that is based on the theory of choice and theory of control. It is focused on current behaviour and attitudes. In the East, the cognitive psychotherapy called Naikan is used, which is a Japanese psychotherapeutic method that combines meditation methods such as body involvement. Group therapy is also suggested. It decreases the feeling of shame, fault, and above all isolation. It also ensures the support of other people in the process of giving up on the addiction. Often, the existing self-help groups use 12 Steps adapted to their needs from the Alcoholics Anonymous groups. Using pharmacological and electric nervous stimulation therapy through skin in treating Internet addiction cause controversies.[41]

One cannot forget about the therapy for the families. Psychological intervention is indispensable – both for the addicted person and for the rest of the family members. Counselling elements are important at this stage, as well as education on the addiction to the media, communication training and developing the skill of dealing with anger.[42] For family member of the addicted person, significant elements to be touched upon during therapy should be dealing with the loss of trust towards the close person, understanding the process of salvage and exercising the ability of setting and maintaining healthy boundaries.[43]

It is thus justified to provide multifaceted support to a family where the issue of Internet addiction occurs. It is necessary to satisfy the elementary needs and the therapy has to involve all the family members. The compulsory participation of the family and the application of an integrated approach increases the probability of achieving the success in the process of treating Internet addiction.[44] Combining both individual, group and family therapies can yield best results and thus help the family return to serving its functions. It is therefore necessary to recognize and identify the problem of inadequate Internet use, and apply remedial measures.

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[41] X. Huang, M. Li, R. Tao, *Treatment of Internet Addciciotn*, "Current Psychiatry Reports", 2010, vol. 12, p. 463–466; K. Young, *Internet Addiction: Diagnosis and Treatment Considerations*, "Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy", 2009, vol. 39, p. 244–245.

[42] Ö. Şenormanci, G. Şenormanci, O. Güçlü, R. Konkan, *Attachment and family functioning in patients with Internet addiction*, "General Hospital Psychiatry", 2013, vol. 36, p. 203.

[43] X. Huang, M. Li, R. Tao, op. cit., p. 468–465.

[44] Ö. Şenormanci, G. Şenormanci, O. Güçlü, R. Konkan, op. cit., p. 206.

Social-media contexts of a child's musical environment

Joanna Szczyrba

It is difficult to imagine contemporary everyday life without music, which due to technical progress permeates our lives. Starting from the prenatal period, childrenare particularly sensitive to acoustic stimuli present in everyday surroundings. The purpose of this article is therefore to describe the social environment (family) and media (access to television, the Internet, etc.) that shapes a child's musical sensibility and preferences, as well as to characterize the functions of music in multimedia and everyday environments of contemporary listeners. Considering these issues that take into account the multimedia nature of contemporary participation in culture allows to look reflexively at the tasks of musical education in kindergarten and the early grades of primary school.

The importance of social-media environment in developing child's musical sensitivity and preferences

Enculturation is commonly understood as a process of acquiring knowledge about the culture and its creations. It is done through social learning, thinking, and practical action. As a result of the internalisation of the acquis, "culture beyond me" becomes "culture in me", and an individual creates a subjective and unique system of knowledge and values about the world and about themselves.[1] To a great extent, the process of enculturation depends on parents: their musical preferences and forms of interactions with the music. This fact is confirmed not only by the definitions of culture, but also by research of educators and psychologists of music. An exemplification of such beliefs comes in the

[1] Confer: J. Kozielecki, *Transgresja i kultura*, Warszawa 2002, p. 19, 20, 23, 24.

form of Zofia Konaszkiewicz's research conducted among music lovers, fascinated by artistic music.[2] The analysis of their statements suggests that most of the mentioned persons (70%) were particularly interested in music when they were children, and their parents, who were music teachers, amateurs playing instruments and music lovers with a rich record collection were their main inspiration.[3] Similar conclusions were presented by Maria Manturzewska, who examined the biographies of more than 160 eminent Polish musicians, in order to determine the model of life phases of a musician. She stated that persons showing a high level of musical competence were born in homes where music was one of the forms of daily professional or amateur activities.[4]

According to psychological research, it is the child's mother and the forms of contact with music she represents as well as her musical preferences that is essential to the development of musical sensitivity of a child. As early as at 6 months of foetal age, the hearing mechanism operates as in an adult, while the source of the sounds are primarily the sounds reverberating in the body of the mother (voice and breath, the sound of steps while walking and heartbeat, the sound of flowing blood, activity of intestines and stomach).[5] In the third trimester of foetal development the phenomenon of auditory habituation can be observed: "through the repetition of certain sounds in the environment the foetus gets used to them and does not show stressful sensorimotor responses."[6] Many scientists emphasize that extremely favourable musical activities of a mother include: singing[7] and listening to certain types of musical works, e.g. using low-frequency (bassoon, cello, etc.) or composed by distinguished artists (Bach, Mozart, etc.). However, according to Anna Antonina Głuska, what is most stimulating for the child's development is not so much a particular type of music the mother listens to, but above all her preferences: "only listening by a woman to music she likes, the sound of which brings her pleasure, has a positive impact on her unborn child."[8]

It should be noted that the rich musical environment has a particularly stimulating effect on the sensitivity of the child and its musical competencies until its 18 months of age.[9] With time, the environmental impact becomes

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[2] Z. Konaszkiewicz, *Muzyka w życiu codziennym słuchaczy*, Warszawa 1994, p. 26.

[3] Ibidem, p. 52.

[4] A.A. Głuska, *Rozwój zmysłu słuchu i muzycznej wrażliwości od okresu prenatalnego do wieku przedszkolnego*, [in:] *Muzyka i my. O różnych przejawach wpływu muzyki na człowieka*, ed. E. Czerniawska, Warszawa 2012, p. 31.

[5] Ibidem, p. 28.

[6] Ibidem, p. 29.

[7] Ibidem, p. 30.

[8] Ibidem, p. 31.

[9] E.E. Gordon, *Umuzykalnianie niemowląt i małych dzieci*, Kraków 1997, p. 9.

weaker. According to Gordon, "the impact of the rich environment on musical talents decreases with time. In the period when the child approaches the age of nine, the level of its musical talent will no longer be conditioned by the environment, even if the environment is extremely favourable."[10]

Considering the great importance of parents as cultural models in early childhood, the following questions are raised: what forms of participation in culture are dominant in them? How often and how long do they listen to music? What kinds of music do they prefer?

Answers to these questions are provided by reports on the participation of the population in culture[11] and the musical preferences of the Poles.[12] According to them, "the most common form of cultural activity taking place at home is the use of audio-visual and multimedia devices."[13] The highest percentage of adult Poles is reported to listen to music several times a week (34.21%), many people listen to music every day: from two hours (28.44%) for 2-4 hours (14.37%), up to more than 4 hours (10.17%).[14] The music is mostly listened to by means of stationary equipment (97.30%)[15], while the least popular is participating in philharmonic concerts (4.0%).[16] Of the many types and genres of music the most popular are rock and pop (53.29%), followed by world music (35.24%), dance/house (26.65%). In contrast, classical music is preferred by 22.08% of respondents[17]. According to the reports, the Poles do not only love music, but believe that it lets them relax and awaken, facilitates working and learning, as well as establishing contact with other people.[18] Interesting data on music listening habits is presented in the diagram below.

The above-mentioned reports concern only the preferences and participation of adults (from 15 to 19 years of age) in culture. Research on musical preferences of children is much more modest. As pointed out by Wiesława Sacher and Anna Kamińska, the issue of musical preferences of children and adoles cents has not been thoroughly studied and is based largely on research from

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[10] Ibidem, p. 14.

[11] Main Statistical Office, *Uczestnictwo ludności w kulturze w 2009 r.*, Warszawa 2012.

[12] The survey was conducted by TNS OBOP at the order of the agency STX JAMBOREE. Data were provided from the face-to-face study of the omnibus type, carried out on a representative sample of 1005 Poles aged over 15 years of age, using PAPI (Paper and Pencil Interview) in the period November – December 2007, http://www.egospodarka.pl/art/galeria/30597,Gatunki-muzyczne-a-preferencje-Polakow,2,39,1.html [access: 10.03.2014], p. 38.

[13] Main Statistical Office, *Uczestnictwo ludności*..., ed. cit., p. 37.

[14] Ibidem, p. 290.

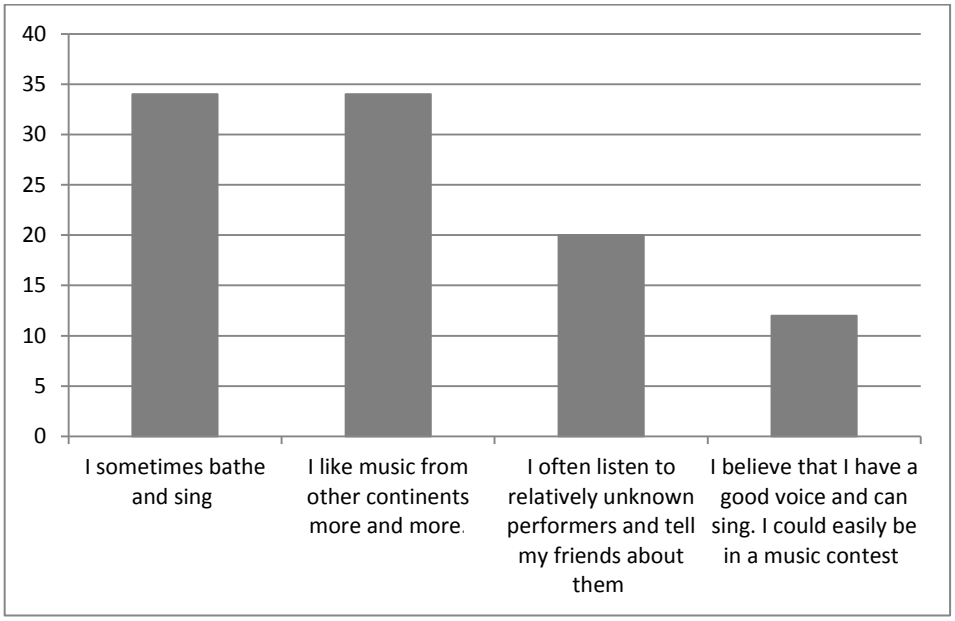
[15] Ibidem, p. 294.

[16] Ibidem, p. 310.

[17] Ibidem, p. 298.

[18] TNS OBOP, http://www.egospodarka.pl/art/galeria/30597,Gatunki-muzyczne-a-preferencje-Polakow,2,39,1.html [access: 10.03.2014], p. 38.

Selected habits related to listening to music. For a question with a list of answers, the responders could mark more than one answer. Answers in %, N=1.005



Source: www.egospodarka.pl/art/galeria/30597,Gatunki-muzyczne-a-preferencje-Polakow,2,39,1.html.

1970s and 1980s.[19] The knowledge of musical preferences of infants is provided by the research of psychologists. They argue that infants: prefer consonant to dissonant sounds[20], and after repeatedly listening to a musical piece of a peaceful nature and to another one which is lively, they prefer the peaceful one, experience greater satisfaction and joy when listening to cheerful music rather than sad.[21] As demonstrated by Moog's experiment, infants from among multiple recordings (children's songs, words spoken in a certain rhythm, rhythms performed on percussion instruments, an instrumental music piece, a consonant passage of a piece of music modified to a dissonant one, non-musical sounds), preferred songs and instrumental music.[22]

It is generally assumed that children and adolescents are mainly interested in popular music, and their musical preferences are shaped mainly by the mass

[19] W.A. Sacher, *Pedagogika muzyki. Teoretyczne podstawy powszechnego kształcenia muzycznego*, Kraków 2012, p. 116.

[20] A.A. Głuska, op. cit., p. 35.

[21] Ibidem, p. 36.

[22] J.A. Sloboda, *Umysł muzyczny: poznawcza psychologia muzyki*, Warszawa 2002, p. 241–242.

media and the entertainment industry.[23] It is not surprising, because according to reports an average child spends 60% of its time watching TV, spending time mostly watching fairy tales and cartoons, followed by educational programmes, movies, music programmes, series, entertainment programmes, sports programmes, and other programmes. Artistic and cultural programs are watched much less frequently (9.5%).[24] Children especially prefer TV channels (Mini Mini, Nickleodeon, Cartoon Network, Disney Channel, Zig Zap), cartoons (Tom and Jerry, Winnie the Pooh), series (Hannah Montana, High School Musical), and advertisements (to some extent they remember them and can describe them).[25]

The medium providing entertainment for more than 95 percent of Internet users aged 7 to 14 years is the Internet. According to research, Internet users between the ages of 7 to 14 use the network daily or almost daily (45 percent). Every third Internet surfer in the age from 7 to 14 years reads the online content several times a week (34 percent). Children stay at websites grouped in the "Culture and Entertainment" category for the longest time (6h 55 min.), exceeding the average for the whole population (5h 50 min.) almost by an hour. Among children, the most popular sites are those with online games, video and social networking sites (youtube.com, maxior.pl, fora.pl).[26]

The functions of music in multimedia and everyday lives of modern listeners

The growing transmission multimediality is considered to be the most important phenomenon in contemporary culture. It is understood as a combination of different technical means of expression, which usually over the centuries have been treated as separate disciplines of art.[27] An integrated understanding of art dates back to ancient sources, where it was united with dance, movement, and word. This state of affairs was interrupted in the era of Romanticism, where absolute music was particularly appreciated, i.e. music separated from

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[23] Ibidem, p. 116.

[24] *Czy telewizja jest dla dzieci. Prezentacja wyników raportu Da Vinci Learning*, http://www.audiowizualni.pl/index.php/aktualnosci/teksty-problemowe/teksty-problemowe-telewizja/5406-czy-telewizja-jest-dla-dzieci-raport-z-badan-da-vinci-learning [access: 19.03.2015].

[25] M. Lisowska-Magdziarz, A. Całek, *Upodobania i preferencje dzieci młodszych nastolatków w dziedzinie filmu i filmowej twórczości telewizyjnej. Raport z badań*, Kraków 2010, p. 17–25.

[26] Gemius SA, *Dzieci aktywne online*, http://www.gemius.pl/pl/raporty/2007-10/01 [access: 10.03.2014].

[27] M. Migut, B. Wrzałka, *Muzyka a inne rodzaje sztuki*, [in:] *Muzyka i my. O różnych przejawach wpływu muzyki na człowieka*, ed. cit., p. 45.

extra-musical meanings or medium characteristic of the other arts (e.g. words). Today, thanks to new media or devices we can see the return to synthetic art. The main features of contemporary media isolated by cultural theorists are: interactivity, individualization (anyone can find relevant information, as well as niche content, as well as spread it), asynchronism (contact in time between the sender and the recipient is postponed, deprived of simultaneity) and cumulativeness (media are complementary: they mutually support and supplement one another, affect the interpenetration of cultures).[28] A sign of contemporary culture in which modern technologies spread is thus not only the polymodal perception and "syndrome of audiovisuality" understood as the simultaneous experience of many media through multiple senses[29], but also the multitasking of media.[30] It involves performing several tasks simultaneously. For example, as shown by American research, among children who were doing their homework as much as 84% do it while listening to music, 47% watch television, and 21% perform several or more activities.[31]

Music, being a multimedia component, has many interesting features. For example, according to Topolski (2009), music performs the following functions: 1. illustrative, i.e. serves imaging, placing in space and time (the use of sounds specific for a given era and places), 2. expressive (excites specific emotions), 3. symbolic (reference to stereotypes, recipient's representations in order to convey certain content), 3. constructive (when the music is crucial to the work – the assembly, tempo, timbre are subjected to it).[32] On the other hand, according to Katarzyna Łopaciuk-Goc, music in commercials is one of the means of influence. It affects both our emotions, thinking and behaviour[33], attracts the attention of the audience, becomes memorable, emphasizes the most important content, stimulates the imagination, evokes memories, strengthens the impact of the message, facilitates reaching the target audience.[34] The sound can convey the message to people who do not look at the screen and attract their attention. The TV viewers on the basis of sounds only try subconsciously to assess whether the given commercial is addressed to them and how it can be of interest to them – in the case of a child, their attention is drawn by a voice of a child of the

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[28] Ibidem, p. 45–46.

[29] Ibidem, p. 46.

[30] M. Spitzer, *Cyfrowa demencja. W jaki sposób pozbawiamy rozumu siebie i swoje* dzieci, Słupsk 2013, p. 194.

[31] G. Small, G. Vorgan, *iMózg*. *Jak przetrwać technologiczną przemianę współczesnej umysłowości*, Poznań 2011, p. 58.

[32] M. Migut, B. Wrzałka, op. cit., p. 48.

[33] K. Łopaciuk-Goc, *W muzycznej sferze marketingu*, [in:] *Muzyka i my. O różnych przejawach wpływu muzyki na człowieka*, ed. cit., p. 106–107.

[34] Ibidem, p. 107.

same age.[35] The quintessence of modern audio-visual concept, according to Urszula Jarecka, is a video clip. Its main features are: "logic of a paradox (antinomy bonding, harmony of contrasts), permeation in terms of spheres, species, fashions or conventions, diversity and complexity (but also fragmented reality, multiplication (of images, themes, meanings), and above all – constant motion."[36]

Artistic music, which is a component of TV and online messages, is adapted to the new reality and new media. The price for its inclusion in the canon of contemporary culture is, among others, general functionalisation and its sounding in new, often unexpected circumstances. An interesting study of the transformation of the reception of music in the age of electronic means of communication is presented by Ewa Kofin. She notes that (...) since the media have become an inseparable attribute of home "furniture", the music entered into the realm of the everyday life, the commonplace, the ordinariness. "It has become a part of everyday life."[37]

According to reports, houses where no TV, or radio, or any other musical equipment is on are exceptions. Therefore, sounds of music fill the interior of apartments and houses.

With music in the house, a normal life is conducted, people perform a variety of household activities – thus it performs the function of the background of everyday life.

Michał Głowiński poses interesting questions about the function of music in contemporary surroundings:

"Has the music in our time not changed its status; does it not become something different than it was in previous centuries? [...] for most listeners [...] it ceases to be a collection of musical pieces; it becomes a kind of background of life, a kind of sound environment in which to live, even without being aware of it, taking these constantly overflowing sounds as a natural and obvious phenomenon. Thanks to modern technology, music came into our everyday life; even if we do not listen to it, at least we hear it."[38]

According to Kofin, music at home provides relax, pleasure, enjoyment of home atmosphere. It is listened to celebrate a special occasion, colour the dullness of everyday life, but also just to break the silence, make the house chores attractive, allow oneself to seclude.[39] Due to the above-mentioned tasks, Kofin

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[35] Ibidem, p. 110.

[36] M. Migut, B. Wrzałka, op. cit., p. 51.

[37] E. Kofin, *Muzyka wokół nas. Studium przeobrażeń recepcji muzyki w dobie elektronicznych środków jej przekazywania*, Wrocław 2012, p. 18.

[38] M. Głowiński, *Pytania zadawane muzyce*, "Ruch Muzyczny", 1993, no. 3, p. 6, [after:] E. Kofin, op. cit., p. 18.

[39] E. Kofin, op. cit., p. 30.

identifies five functions of music. As an antidote to silence and noise it performs the acoustical function. On the other hand, masking unwanted sounds by the music we like increases our non-musical activity and is associated with a hedonistic function. Emotional reactions independent of knowledge of the rules of music are combined with the emotive function, while eliciting the aesthetic experience through song perception corresponds with the aesthetic function.[40] Music coming through mobile devices such as headphones and iPods creates an acoustic barrier, thus playing an isolation function. It should be noted that on the one hand such a close sound reception in physical and acoustic terms favours the careful listening of music preferred by the recipient, on the other hand it paralyses contact with them and poses health risks (can lead to partial deafness).[41]

In the context of the child's frequent contact with the media, the last two functions – semiotic and popularising – are particularly important. Music can be a carrier of three types of meanings: 1. autonomous, related to components and structures of the form of a musical work; 2. extra-musical meanings given to the musical piece by the composer (e.g. *Swan* from the Carnival of the animals by Saint-Saens). Some titles suggest some connotative field, for example, *Spring* by Grieg, Debussy's *Moonlight*; 3. acquired in the social use of the musical piece.[42] In the opinion of Ewa Kofin, the contemporary recipient of mass media frequently observes and perceives the latter, which they define as "confusing" and "inherent".[43] These meanings were not given by the composer, but were adjusted as a consequence of a long-term social reception. Their genesis can be traced in the likeness of musical structures to external phenomena, a good exemplification of which is Chopin's *Revolutionary Etude* or *Rain Drops Prelude.*[44] Artistic music is often used in commercials, due to which, for example, Bizet's *Carmen* is associated with floor washing fluid, and Grieg's *In the Cave of the Mountain King* with a commercial advertising beer. As a result of using a simple mechanism involving maintaining the relationship of a musical piece with any object, "parts of classical music take in the social reception even absurd meanings, completely unpredictable for the composer."[45] Many listeners do not even suppose that every day on TV they are in contact with parts of the masterpieces of Mozart, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Bizet, Mahler, Prokofiev, etc. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of information about the music used in the media. Multiple repetitions of music during commercials, movies or cartoons are associated

[40] Confer: ibidem, p. 30–36.
[41] Confer: ibidem, p. 41–42.
[42] Ibidem, p. 36.
[43] Ibidem, p. 37.
[44] Ibidem, p. 37.
[45] Ibidem, p. 37–41.

with particularly important popularising function as seen from the point of view of musical education. Most musical pieces played, also from the circle of artistic music, to a large extent stay in memory, but most often without us being aware that they are part of the cultural heritage of the leading composers. An interesting proof of inspiring the interest in artistic music, which is a component of commercials and cartoons, is a contemporary online Ranking of Top 100 Musical Pieces (*Kickass Classical Top 100*).[46] It allowed many Internet users to identify excerpts of musical pieces functioning for a long time in their awareness (Enclosure). This is evidenced by the following Internet users' comments (original spelling):

- *I still remember the episode of Tom & Jerry about Strauss;) And it's been quite a few years. I did not even know then that it was one of the most important persons of classical music,*
- *48 Barber "Adagio For Strings"...*
  Honestly, I did not know, that was a classical music piece :)
  Most people know it from that remix-
  http://pl.youtube.com/watch?v=O666kGBEvF0&fmt=18,
- *But in general, I have heard somewhere the majority of them. I think that everyone has heard more than half of them – because they are very famous. Well, great;],*
- *I listened for now only a fragment of this collection, but so far I recognized in particular:*
  No. 98 appeared, I think, in the worst, in my opinion, computer sports game (if you can call it that) in the world – Harry Potter Quidditch World Cup.
  96 – twinkle, twinkle little star … :)
  92 – appears in RollerCoaster Tycoon;
  85 – in a movie, or a comedy... but which one?[47]

Conclusions

The contemporary musical environment of the child, which is influenced by parents and the mass media, is extremely rich and diverse. However, too many stimuli often result in ignoring the less important or less absorbing ones[48]. The contemporary task of musical education is therefore to sensitise children to artistic music, and in particular to the canon of these musical pieces which most often appear in the media. Thanks to the simple principle of starting from what is the most important for the child, it is possible to stimulate their interest in less known and more complex musical pieces. It seems that a particularly efficient means in this activity may be fragments of famous cartoons that children

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[46] *Ranking 100 najlepszych kawałków muzycznych*, http://www.wykop.pl/ramka/790169/ranking-100-najlepszych-kawalkow-muzyki-klasycznej/ [access: 10.03.2014].

[47] http://www.wykop.pl/ramka/790169/ranking-100-najlepszych-kawalkow-muzyki-klasycznej/ [access: 10.03.2014].

[48] M. Żylińska, *Neurodydaktyka. Nauczanie i uczenie się przyjazne mózgowi*, Toruń 2013, p. 17.

know and that use musical pieces such as e.g. *Tom & Jerry in the Hollywood Blow* (Johann Strauss – *Die Fledermaus*), *Barbie Of Swan Lake Movie* (Tchaikovsky – *Swan Lake*), *Courage the Cowardly Dog* (Tchaikovsky – *The Nutcracker*). Discovering the world of musical culture with particular emphasis on analytical listening during the educational process sensitises to the elements of music and to their relationships, to the sense of music. Getting to know musical pieces can also be the beginning of a fascinating adventure that will eliminate the consequences of the ubiquity of music, among which Kofin lists the fact that music becomes common, that sensitivity to it disappears, and that people "turn a deaf ear to the music".[49]

ANNEX

Contemporary online ranking the top 100 music pieces (*Kickass Classical Top 100*)

No.	Composer	Title	Keyword
1	Beethoven	Symphony No. 5: I	rousing
2	Tchaikovsky	1812 Overture	powerful
3	Mozart	Eine Kleine Nachtmusik: Allegro	formal
4	Bach	Toccata And Fugue In D Minor	scary
5	Rossini	William Tell Overture	horses
6	Pachelbel	Canon In D	wedding
7	Strauss	Blue Danube	cartoon
8	Orff	Carmina Burana: O Fortuna	scary
9	Strauss, R	Also Sprach Zarathustra	impending
10	Offenbach	Orpheus In The Underworld: Infernal Galop	cartoon
11	Handel	Messiah: Hallelujah Chorus	joyful
12	Bizet	Carmen: Les Toreadors	lively
13	Khachaturian	Gayane: Sabre Dance	circus
14	Beethoven	Symphony No. 9: Ode To Joy	joyful
15	Elgar	Pomp And Circumstance March No. 1	graduation
16	Grieg	Peer Gynt: In The Hall Of The Mountain King	scary
17	Ponchielli	La Gioconda: Dance Of The Hours	cartoon
18	Liszt	Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2	cartoon
19	Mendelssohn	Midsummer Night's Dream: Wedding March	wedding
20	Rimsky-Korsakov	Tale Of Tsar Saltan: Flight Of The Bumblebee	cartoon
21	Gershwin	Rhapsody In Blue	piano

[49] Confer: E. Kofin, op. cit., p. 20–22.

No.	Composer	Title	Keyword
22	Beethoven	Moonlight Sonata	sad
23	Ravel	Bolero	seductive
24	Tchaikovsky	Nutcracker: Dance Of The Sugar-Plum Fairy	Christmas
25	Rosas	Over The Waves	circus
26	Bach	Air On The G String	light
27	Mozart	Magic Flute: Queen Of The Night	opera
28	Beethoven	Für Elise	piano
29	Fucik	Entry Of The Gladiators	circus
30	Delibes	Lakmé: Flower Duet	opera
31	Dukas	Sorcerer's Apprentice	whimsical
32	Copland	Rodeo: Hoedown	adventure
33	Wagner	Die Walküre: Ride Of The Valkyries	powerful
34	Bach	Cantata 147: Jesu, Joy Of Man's Desiring	wedding
35	Tchaikovsky	Nutcracker: Waltz Of The Flowers	Christmas
36	Bizet	Carmen: Habanera	seductive
37	Debussy	Suite Bergamasque: Clair De Lune	light
38	Chopin	Funeral March	dark
39	Mozart	Piano Sonata No. 11: Rondo Alla Turca	piano
40	Mussorgsky	Night On Bald Mountain	scary
41	Boccherini	Minuet	formal
42	Grieg	Peer Gynt: Morning Mood	light
43	Mozart	Marriage Of Figaro Overture	lively
44	Sousa	Stars And Stripes Forever	march
45	Wagner	Lohengrin: Bridal Chorus	wedding
46	Vivaldi	Four Seasons: Spring	formal
47	Beethoven	Minuet In G	formal
48	Barber	Adagio For Strings	sad
49	Tchaikovsky	Nutcracker: Dance Of The Mirlitons (Reed Flutes)	Christmas
50	Williams	Imperial March	powerful
51	Arnaud	Bugler's Dream	fanfare
52	Bach	Cello Suite No. 1	orderly
53	Rossini	Barber Of Seville: Largo Al Factotum (Figaro)	opera
54	Tchaikovsky	Nutcracker: Trepak (Russian Dance)	Christmas
55	Mouret	Rondeau	fanfare
56	Brahms	Lullaby	child
57	Bach	Minuet In G	formal

No.	Composer	Title	Keyword
58	Rachmaninov	Rhapsody On A Theme Of Paganini, 18th Variation	romantic
59	Copland	Fanfare For The Common Man	fanfare
60	Tchaikovsky	Piano Concerto No. 1	piano
61	Rossini	Thieving Magpie Overture	whimsical
62	Beethoven	Symphony No. 9: II	powerful
63	Brahms	Hungarian Dance No. 5	adventure
64	Mozart	Piano Sonata No. 16	piano
65	Handel	Solomon: Arrival Of The Queen Of Sheba	lively
66	Tchaikovsky	Nutcracker: Tea (Chinese Dance)	Christmas
67	Bach	Brandenburg Concerto No. 3: I	formal
68	Prokofiev	Peter And The Wolf: The Story Begins	child
69	Tchaikovsky	Romeo And Juliet Fantasy Overture	romantic
70	Verdi	Rigoletto: La Donna È Mobile	opera
71	Jenkins	Palladio	orderly
72	Saint-Saëns	Carnival Of The Animals: Aquarium	mysterious
73	Grieg	Piano Concerto	piano
74	Tchaikovsky	Nutcracker: March	Christmas
75	Mozart	Requiem: Dies Irae	scary
76	Suppé	Light Cavalry Overture	horses
77	Bach	Bourrée In E Minor	guitar
78	Waldteufel	Skater's Waltz	ball
79	Vivaldi	Four Seasons: Winter	rousing
80	Saint-Saëns	Carnival Of The Animals: Finale	cartoon
81	Tchaikovsky	Swan Lake: Scene	mysterious
82	Mozart	Symphony No. 40: I	seductive
83	Rossini	Barber Of Seville Overture	cartoon
84	Holst	Planets: Mars, The Bringer Of War	powerful
85	Sousa	Washington Post	march
86	Verdi	Il Trovatore: Anvil Chorus	powerful
87	Mozart	Requiem: Lacrimosa	dark
88	Strauss	Tritsch-Tratsch Polka	cartoon
89	Handel	Water Music: Alla Hornpipe	formal
90	Prokofiev	Romeo And Juliet: Montagues And Capulets (Dance Of The Knights)	scary
91	Mozart	Piano Concerto No. 21	light
92	Beethoven	Symphony No. 7: II	dark

No.	Composer	Title	Keyword
93	Delibes	Sylvia: Pizzicato	whimsical
94	Ricketts	Colonel Bogey March	march
95	Liszt	Liebestraum No. 3	romantic
96	Puccini	Turandot: Nessun Dorma	opera
97	Mozart	Magic Flute Overture	rousing
98	Verdi	Requiem: Dies Irae	scary
99	Dvorák	Symphony No. 9 (New World): IV	powerful
100	Strauss Sr.	Radetzky March	march

Source: http://www.wykop.pl/ramka/790169/ranking-100-najlepszych-kawalkow-muzyki-klasycznej/.

E-documentation and e-communication in primary schools as seen by teachers who use electronic grade books

Anna Michniuk

The grade book – unquestionably, one of the most important school records. A real goldmine of information about the student. Thanks to this tool the school can archive data such as, *i.a*., students' personal details, grades, frequency of attendance, timetables, subjects of the delivered lessons, notes. Having archived the data, the teacher may prepare statistics and school reports vital at the end of the semester or school year. For many years all these activities have been performed manually. They were time-consuming and often made teachers work many overtime hours.

Another problem related to the use of paper grade books is the fact that each class has one grade book, and when one teacher is filling the grade book in or has to take it with him/her to the classes, other teachers have no access to this particular grade book at that time, which is especially troublesome before conferences with parents when the form tutor has to present them with grade report cards.

Traditional grade books also limit parents' access to the information on their children's learning outcomes to conferences and school open days. What is more, in this way parents can see not only grades of their children but also those of their peers, which might result in pointless comparisons.

The progress of the Internet has brought a solution to the above-mentioned dilemmas; since 2002 electronic grade books have appeared on the market. When in 2009 the Ministry of National Education promulgated a new law that allowed to replace paper grade books with electronic ones, the interest in this tool started rising. According to experts' forecasts, about 4,000 Polish schools of different educational levels will have used electronic grade books by 2014.

What is an electronic grade book?

Over the last years, due to the development of the Internet we have observed a transfer of many services from the real world into the virtual one. With use of a computer connected to the Internet we can do shopping, wire transfers, read books or newspapers, check how our child is doing at school and whether they got there in the first place. The last of the listed actions can be done with use of an electronic grade book, which was created to improve teachers' work. There are nearly 30 different electronic grade books available on the Polish market, operating as software or websites. Having performed an insightful analysis of the websites advertising electronic grade books, one may indicate at least several objectives they are intended to meet.

The first is to improve data archiving and data processing. Teachers can put various information into an electronic grade book, including grades, attendance, notes, achievements, etc. Moreover, they do not have to calculate average grades 'manually' for each student and each class, or the frequency of class attendance – this program does it all for the teacher.

Another objective is to improve the processing of the data collected. There is no need for the teacher to write grade report cards by hand for a parent conference, or to prepare school reports manually. A few clicks is all that it takes to have the documents printed.

Electronic grade books can be also helpful in regard to contacting parents; they can facilitate the process owing to the internal mailing system linking the school with the guardian. All these objectives are bound by three elements: speed, unlimited accessibility and ecology.

A good electronic grade book is characterised by: 1) compliance with the provisions of the Ministry of National Education; 2) ease-of-use – a highly subjective feeling, which often depends on our skills; 3) no need for installing additional software – the best option is to employ the most popular browsers; 4) easy data archiving – there is no possibility that a situation in which data from an electronic grade book disappear due to a system error would occur, the school has to take care of securing the data properly and saving the backup as often as possible; 5) easy introduction of data – if the school decides on the use of electronic grade books, yet cannot afford a PC in each classroom or equip each teacher with a tablet, the service provider ought to solve this dilemma by, for example, providing access to special cards on which one may scan the data after classes; 6) environmentally friendly form – keeping school records with the use of electronic grade books does not relieve the school from the requirement to keep printed annual summary reports. A good electronic grade book does not produce more sheets of paper than required; 7) SMS notifications – a convenience for parents who do not use the Internet often, yet still have a well-operating phone; 8) support provided to the school in

performing various tasks – the objective of an electronic grade book is not only to allow the user to enter data once, but also to create statistics, reviews, summaries, print school reports and maintain contact with students' guardians; 9) good technical support – the more complicated the tool, the higher the need for professional technical support that would allow the user to fully reap the benefits of an electronic grade book; 10) cost-effectiveness – an attractive price matching to the financial capabilities of the school.[1]

While discussing electronic grade books, I shall present three options: *e-Dziennik*, *IDziennik*, *Dziennik Ocen*. The first to be described is *e-Dziennik*. The owner and the creator of this program is the Librus company, which supports the functioning of education by organising various trainings for the teaching personnel and by publishing guides. At present, *e-Dziennik* is the most advanced electronic tool of this sort. It comprises several platforms designed for the parent, for the student and for the head teacher.

The parent may use *e-Dziennik* from any location in the world provided they can access the Internet. Having signed in, one can see all the information about the child. The parent may find information on: dates of tests and trips, home assignments, timetables (substitution classes), electronic materials and SMSInfo service. The SMSInfo service allows parents to control their children's progress in learning without signing into the system. On their mobile phone, the parent receives information about new entries that appeared in the e-grade book. Before the child comes back home, the parent already knows the child's school accomplishments. The service requires an additional pre-payment. For instance, 50 text messages cost 17.00 PLN and 150 messages – 43.00 PLN. An unquestionable advantage of the SMSInfo service is the fact that parents can add two telephone numbers to this service and pay only as much as for one. Obviously, text messages do not have to be sent from the *e-Dziennik* program with each and every change made in the e-grade book. The parent may freely customise the service and specify whether they receive reports once a day, once per three days or once a week. Parents have to pay for using the electronic grade book made by Librus.

The access to electronic grade books is also available for students, who can check their grades, their individual outcomes as compared to the class average, timetables (substitution classes) and other information.

The platform designed for teachers functions on the same basis as a paper grade book. The teacher can enter subjects, notes, frequency of attendance and other data. Grades and absences may be entered in two different ways. The first is signing in and entering the data online. The other method does not require

[1] A. Kwiecień, D. Kwiecień, *Elektroniczny dziennik szkolny*, "Meritum. Mazowiecki Kwartalnik Edukacyjny", 2010, no. 3/18.

a computer with Internet connection in each classroom and is based on the electronic scanning of data from formerly completed attendance sheets. Teachers are also provided with access to parent sign-in statistics, which may be indicative of the parents' engagement in their child's school issues.

The head teacher package facilitates workflow organisation at schools. It prepares statistics and reports related to the functioning of the school. As described by the producer, it is a free 'employee' who keeps the entire school documentation in order.

Additionally, there is a platform operating with the *e-Dziennik* program that allows the user to post auxiliary educational materials, which encourages teachers to deliver blended-learning classes (e-learning).

Another example is *IDziennik*. It has similar platforms to those offered in *e-Dziennik* program, that is, platforms designed for the teacher, for the student, for the parent and for the head teacher. Its objectives are identical, however, the program has less extensive functionalities in comparison with the Librus's product. As for the purchase, one may choose between the version for teachers (*IDziennik)*, for teachers and students *(IUczniowie)* or the *IUczniowie Premium* version, which is a full package with all possible options included. Payments for using the software are made annually. Parents can use it for free.

The third example is *Dziennik Ocen Online*. It is a web-portal created by teachers for teachers. It has been present on the market since 2007 (to be specific, since 13 December 2007). It was a free-of-charge tool for six years. In 2014 charges for use were introduced. The website became the winner of the Innovative Educator (*Innowacyjny nauczyciel)* program in 2008 organised by Microsoft Poland. In comparison to the above described e-grade books it is the poorest offer. Data can be entered by the form tutor only, unless other teachers sign in on the form tutor's account. This means that if the Science teacher teaches five classes, they have to know the logins and passwords of five form tutors, which significantly impedes the teacher's work. Just like in the above cases, *Dziennik Ocen Online* enables printing grades, calculating averages in no time and reading statistics. There is also an internal mailing system which facilitates communication with parents. The platform is available for use for form tutors, parents and head teachers.

When will it be possible to replace the paper grade book with the electronic grade book?

The last of the discussed e-grade books cannot replace the traditional paper grade book. However, *e-Dziennik* and *IDziennik* can. This issue is governed by the Act of the Ministry of National Education from 2002, as amended in 2009.

Article 20th states the school registers may be kept in the electronic form provided: 1) the selective access to the data that constitute the electronic grade book is preserved (which means the accessibility to the data varies depending on the position); 2) security measures for preventing unauthorised individuals from entering and exploring the data stored in the electronic grade book are applied; 3) the data stored in the electronic grade book are protected from destruction, damage or loss; 4) a register of changes introduced and their authors is kept. Moreover, this regulation indicates that electronic grade books ought to have an option of exporting the data to XML and preparing a printed copy of this information.[2]

A school can entirely opt out of paper grade books only if the head teacher gains approval of the school authority, as it requires spending certain funds on additional computers with Internet connection so that the teachers can check attendance in classrooms and record the data immediately in the electronic grade book instead of performing this task after classes on several computers in the teachers' room, or in the teacher's private apartment.

Do electronic grade books really meet the set objectives?

As it has been already stated, electronic grade books were supposed to meet certain objectives related to the improvement of:

1) Data archiving and processing,
2) Preparation of documents,
3) Communication between the school and the guardian.

The answer whether e-grade books really fulfil the objectives they were supposed to meet was sought among teachers from primary schools in Poznań who used electronic grade books. Primary schools in Poznań that use electronic grade books were invited to take part in the study. Unfortunately, only two institutions accepted the invitation. Nevertheless, it ought to be noted that only at one of those institutions all teachers participated in the study.

An interview with the head teacher of one of the institutions that refused to take part in the study turned out to be a significant element of the performed analysis. During the interview the head teacher presented reasons for such a decision, namely, he did not want the school to make a bad impression in the research. An electronic grade book had been used at that institution for a year, yet instead of helping, it rather caused problems to teachers who had to keep

[2] *Journal of Laws* 2009 no. 116 item 977; art. 20A4.

double records. According to the head teacher, e-grade books were helpful in terms of contacting students' guardians by making the process more efficient, improving consultations, as well as in cases when parents were unable to attend meetings.

The findings presented below were based on answers given at one of the primary schools in Poznań. The study included 20 teachers (15 females and 4 males). One person did not specify their sex in the survey. The average age of the respondents was 40 years. The youngest teacher who participated in the research was 25 years old and the oldest was 58 years old. Four participants did not specify their age. As for the professional title, the questionnaire was filled in by 3 probationary teachers and 3 nominated teachers, 5 contract teachers and 8 certified teachers. One respondent did not mark any answer. 14 participants had been using e-grade books for two years, one for three years and three for a year.

Data archiving and processing

The participants use the *e-Dziennik* program on a daily basis. Almost all the teachers who took part in the study described the e-grade book as easy-to-use and highly intuitive. The graphic design raised no objections as well. 90% of the participants stated the design of the electronic grade book satisfies their requirements entirely. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being best) the teachers evaluated the enter grade function as 4.15, whereas the enter subject function – 4.20. The participants praised the option to enter subjects into the e-grade book, because they use the copy-paste function when giving lessons on the same subject for different classes, which in their opinion speeds up their work significantly.

All the teachers subjected to the study claimed unanimously that the e-grade book improves their work in terms of data archiving and data processing. The remote access to documents allows teachers to enter test grades immediately upon grading. The work speeds up also due to statistics and statements being prepared by the program, which was listed by all the teachers as a major advantage.

In the teachers' opinion the electronic grade book is not free from disadvantages when it comes to data archiving and data processing. All participants reported problems with the e-grade book hanging up when saving data, there are also numerous problems related to the sign-in process. Four persons noted quick access to data. The traditional grade book provides instant access to data, whereas in case of electronic grade books checking data requires turning the computer on, connecting to the Internet and signing in at the proper website.

Preparation of documents

Some of the participants (18 persons, to be exact) act also as form tutors. Such persons unanimously replied that owing to the e-grade book they can prepare documents quickly. In just a few clicks the form tutor has a set of cards with current grades to be handed to students' parents during a meeting. The traditional way for filling such documents in was very time-consuming for teachers. Electronic grade books also facilitate the printing of statements. The teacher fills adequate forms in and the program fills in the remaining data. Next, the teacher confirms the template and prints out the documents. There is no need for writing statements manually, fearing possible mistakes and errors.

Communication between the school and the guardian

As for the communication between the school and the student's guardian, all the teachers who took part in the study stated the internal e-mailing system operating together with the electronic grade book meets their requirements. 100% participants use this method when communicating with parents. The open-ended questions in the questionnaire which pertain to e-communication between the school and parents have brought many interesting answers regarding this issue. Teachers employ this form of communication mainly for rendering urgent messages, sending reminders, praises and thanks, which are then given once again in the real world during meetings, naturally.

The respondents claim that electronic grade books are unquestionably a fast method for contacting students' guardians, still, it has some flaws. The teachers underlined that parents happen to use this way of communication without manners. The survey contained information about parents' highly demanding behaviour, which at times affects the contact between the teacher and the parent negatively when meeting face to face. The participants also pointed out that not all parents can be contacted via electronic means, because it happens that parents are not systematic in checking the data.

Conclusion

The results obtained in the study show that teachers are satisfied with the use of electronic grade books. Certainly, traditional paper grade books have their advantages, too, that is, quicker access to data of all students. However, this is changing as well. Two of the questioned teachers specified they were using electronic grade books on tablets/smartphones. It might be expected that if

each teacher who uses an electronic grade book had a tablet computer, the access to data in the electronic grade book would be nearly as fast as in case of the traditional grade book. The only problem that remains would be the Internet speed.

Electronic grade books are indisputably making work more efficient both in terms of data archiving and data processing. They free teachers from the obligation to calculate average grades and the frequency of attendance, create statistics and print documents.

As it turned out during the study, the use of electronic grade books is also a marketing trick applied by head teachers. Parents would gladly place their child at an institution that allows them to monitor their child's grades from every location in the world. A problem (particularly for teachers) appears when the 'marketing trick' that was to facilitate work starts hindering it. There is no point introducing electronic grade books when the teacher has no possibility to enter the current data on an ongoing basis (like in case of paper grade books). This fact has become clear to several head teachers who introduced electronic grade books to impress students' parents, still, teachers had to fill them after classes, since during the classes they were busy filling in traditional paper grade books.

Last of all, it should be emphasised that among the teachers who work solely with the use of electronic grade books certain objections were raised mainly due to sign-in problems and system hanging when entering the data. With these obstacles overcome to the maximum extent possible, the electronic grade book has the chance to become an almost ideal tool (as there is always someone displeased).

What do we need heroes for? The importance of fairy tale movies and fantasy movies in a child's life

Marta Gliniecka

The man has always had a need to watch "a starlit screen" (Stefan Themerson's term). The ancients gazed into the stars projecting the shapes of various creatures and mythical demigods onto them. Hence the names of numerous constellations: Perseus, Andromeda, the Great Bear. Wiesław Godzic points out that similarly the contemporary viewer during a picture show projects their fears, anxieties, desires onto the characters. Looking into "the mirror of the cinema" is "a kind of an active game which consists in building meaning".[1] Edgar Morin perceives experiencing the cinema "as a kind of a mythical ritual during which the viewer becomes the participant of a magical performance".[2] Today the film has a life of its own, "outside the cinema – on television, video tapes, compact discs"[3] or more frequently on the Internet and as a consequence it has become readily available and managed to attract mass audiences. Today's youth, defined as "the screen generation", is a first generation socialized with media participation; "they grew up in front of TV screens from the cradle and they are now reaching puberty with a mobile phone in their hands".[4] Young people are surrounded by pictures – from billboards in the streets to websites. To the contemporary viewer movies exist alongside video clips, computer games or cyberspace. Watching television or movies online are children and teenagers' daily rituals. It appears that the contemporary man has been deprived of firm conceptual frames, which used to be imposed by tradition. In tribal societies

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[1] K. Giedrys-Majkut, W. Godzic, http://www.kinoterapia.pl/2010/03/29/sami-jestesmy-kinem/ [access: 19.02.2014].

[2] W. Jakubowski, *Kultura jako przestrzeń edukacyjna*, Kraków 2013, p. 357.

[3] M. Hopfinger, *Zmiana kultury, zmiana spojrzenia*, [in:] *Kino według Alicji*, ed. W. Godzic, T. Lubelski, Kraków 1995, p. 130.

[4] T. Goban-Klas, *Nadchodzące społeczeństwo medialne*, "Chowanna", 2007, no. 2, vol. 29, p. 46.

tales around the fire played a significant role. Today rites of passage have lost their significance, hence the increased role of 'how-to TV shows, experts as well as various reality TV shows in which young people seek answers to all the problems that bother them.[5] Anthropologists and sociologists point out that symbolic media material including motion pictures is gaining significance in the process of shaping identity. This is how insert identity (Józef Burszta's term) is created. This type of identity can be characterized by its openness towards new offers and readiness to incorporate media materials into personal history.[6] Alasdair MacIntyre draws our attention to the fact that we are not the only characters of our narration. Other people who participate in it also shape it.[7] In the age of liquid modernity TV characters such as pop culture idols, movie characters, cartoon characters and TV series characters are becoming role models more and more often. It is of importance to the development of young people, who during their puberty often "imitate their favourite characters' clothes, lifestyle in emotional interactions and social attitudes. Sometimes a liking for a given character transforms into adoration. The viewer identifies himself or herself with a character to such an extent that they lose their own identity."[8] Elements of media-mediated experience (films, books, music, commercials, video clips) are becoming the horizon of imagination (Arjuna Appadurai's term).[9] Perhaps that is why more and more film experts and art theoreticians (Ewelina Nurczyńska-Fidelska, Anna Marzec) see the need to shape cultural competence within the scope of[10]:

- Ability to perceive motion pictures in depth and assess them in terms of ideology, ethics and aesthetics,
- Nurturing the awareness of code rules by means of which the audio-visual message reaches its recipient,
- Developing selective and evaluative attitude.

Interestingly, on its official website, The National Audiovisual Institute offers multimedia databases for teachers and students in a form of lesson plans, visual material to be used while teaching. However, the aforementioned teaching aids are aimed at teenagers. Some film experts believe that the process of film education should be commenced in grade 4 of primary school. It is at this

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[5] K. Rosner, *Narracja, tożsamość i czas*, Kraków 2003, p. 40.

[6] W.J. Burszta, *Tożsamość narracyjna w dobie ekranu*, [in:] *Narracja i tożsamość. Narracje w kulturze*, ed. W. Bolecki, R. Nycz, Warszawa 2004, p. 37.

[7] K. Rosner, op. cit., p. 29.

[8] J. Gajda, *Media w edukacji*, Kraków 2003, p. 128.

[9] K. Rosner, op. cit., p. 31.

[10] E. Konieczna, *Baśń w literaturze i filmie. Rola baśni filmowej w edukacji filmowej dzieci w wieku wczesnoszkolnym*, Kraków 2005, p. 216.

stage of child's development when first signs of moral autonomy start to occur. Children start to take into consideration not only actions but also the perpetrator's intentions. Ewelina Konieczna's[11] research into the perception of fairy tale films among first, second and third graders revealed that seven-year-olds were able to distinguish between negative and positive characters, however, they had difficulty in assessing their conduct as well as interpreting the symbolic dimension of the tale. When asked what the reason was for the Beast to turn into the Prince, they answered that it was because of Bell's kiss. In fact, it was Beauty's tears that came to her eyes at the sight of the dying Beast. In Ewelina Konieczna's opinion, children unknowingly referred to other well-known schematic movies and movie conventions in which true love's kiss would bring the protagonist back to life. It is necessary, therefore, to seek "spiritual awakening in small children. We must speak a language that inspires imagination, generates experiences and enables children to experience something true and significant."[12] It is worth selecting movies that facilitate the development of children's aesthetic sensitivity as well as provide them with an opportunity to "learn about the surrounding world and develop the ability to evaluate the world and the people."[13] Motion pictures create "a fictional world which may become reality, a trip beyond common experience".[14] As Stefania Wortman puts it, exposure to art "leads out from a tight circle of >>I<<, disconnects people from thinking about themselves".[15]

As a school librarian I arrived at a conclusion that children participate willingly in serious discussions about movies. That was also a case while I presented some scenes of the animation entitled *Happy Feet* (2006). The scenes were intentionally chosen to stimulate the discussion about being different. When I asked the students why Mambo the penguin stood out in his flock, they answered that unlike the other penguins he could not sing. Then seven-year-old Joachim stood up for the character saying that we are all different. On second thoughts he added that he liked reading and his friend found it difficult but she could play the guitar. He also pointed out that Mambo showed a talent for tap dancing but none of his teachers were able to recognize it. Janusz Gajda emphasises that it is worth focusing on the most beautiful and most cherished situations the characters find themselves in for these situations – or beautiful scenes – evoke deep feelings and, therefore, have an educational impact.[16]

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[11] Ibidem, p. 190.

[12] Z. Ratajek, *Rozmowa z Lechem Witkowskim*, "Nowe Horyzonty Edukacji", 2013–2014, vol. 4(7), p. 40.

[13] E. Konieczna, op. cit., p. 66.

[14] Ibidem, p. 64.

[15] Ibidem, p. 49.

[16] J. Gajda, op. cit., p. 130.

In Krystyna Pankowska's opinion, entering the world of fiction through our imagination is one of the vital conditions of human development.[17] As Jacek Sołtysiak points out, "in our everyday life we do not notice the wholeness of the cosmic drama we all participate in. It is the great fiction that reminds us about it." One must remember that the word fiction means "something created" which does not have to be false.[18] Each literary fiction or movie fiction, although "created by an author and populated with never-existing characters is often recognised as being 'close' to real experience as it provides us with some truth about the life of its recipients."[19] It does concern all narrative forms which try to embrace human experience and present it in a form of understandable structures – from fairy tales, myths and legends to motion pictures. Having followed Denis Suttons thinking, one may draw a conclusion that "basic elements of fiction are a product of fundamental, irremovable curiosity, which human beings demonstrate towards love, death, adventures, family, justice and adversity."[20] This could be the reason why there is a limited number of plots, which are just a transformation of already existing motifs and stories. Christopher Booker distinguishes seven basic plots, among them[21]:

1. Overcoming the Monster,
2. Rags to Riches,
3. The Quest,
4. Voyage and Return,
5. Rebirth,
6. Comedy,
7. Tragedy.

The aforementioned schemes are present in various genres of filmmaking. Take *Pretty Woman,* which is a contemporary version of Cinderella. The voyage motif can be found in a movie entitled *Chocolate* directed by Lasse Hallström (2000). The fairy tale motif is a mother/daughter journey in search of their identity and place among other people. Ewelina Konieczna draws our attention to the fact that the protagonist Vianne is carried by the northern wind; likewise, Mary Poppins with her bag full of magic medicines. "Fairy tales about people" – this is what Krzysztof Kieślowski called this kind of cinema – give people hope for a change in their fate and better future and symbolic meanings included in them reflect existential problems of every human being.[22] Witold Jakubowski

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[17] W. Jakubowski, op. cit., p. 356.

[18] Confer: K. Olechnicki, *Antropologia obrazu*. *Fotografia jako metoda, przedmiot i medium nauk społecznych*, Warszawa 2003, p. 17.

[19] C. Geertz, *The interpretations of cultures*, New York 1973, p. 15.

[20] J. Burgess, J. Green, *Youtube, video online a kultura uczestnictwa*, Warszawa 2011, p. 187.

[21] Ibidem, p. 185.

[22] E. Konieczna, op. cit., p. 59.

emphasises that stories told in the movies not only describe reality but also allow confronting our own experience with situations presented in the plots.[23] Interestingly, the Polish word *fabuła* (English "plot") derives from the Latin *fabula* – fable, *fabularis* – fabulous (English "fairy"). We are often unaware of how much the stories presented in the movies help us understand the meaning of the real-life experience.

It appears that every movie genre celebrates a specific type of value. Watching westerns refers to socially acceptable values such as justice, honour, solidarity, honesty; it also shows the consequences of revenge or cruelty (…). Melodrama celebrates love value, which according to Maria Janion allows the viewer to "experience the symbolic triumph over death seeing the supremacy of Eros over Thanatos".[24] The convention of a fairy tale offers the world order we dream of. As Jung wrote, fairy tale characters are the embodiment of archetypes and teaching to a large extent consists in passing on stories.[25] Fairy tale movie first and foremost preserves moral values praising justice, the triumph of good over evil, goodness, gentleness and the need for social bonds.[26] It appears to be particularly significant for the development of small children. According to Roger Caillois, "fabulousness is a world of wonderfulness, which connects with the real world without violating its integrity; a fantasy is a manifestation of scandal, dilemma and unusual or even unbearable intrusion into the real world. Fantasy works combine wonderfulness with horrifying aggression."[27] Beasts and demons become a symbolic representation of fears and dangers of a contemporary man. Perhaps that is why fantasy literature and movies with the aesthetics of horror movies are very popular among children and teenagers. The pilot studies that I conducted in 2012 among primary school, middle school and secondary school students indicated that films are used in schools mainly as didactic means.[28] However, the potential of feature movies remains unused. According to Lech Witkowski, "solicitude for what and who a young human being is exposed to while functioning in a school environment improves his potential, bravery in thinking, insubordination, independence as well as the space of their imagination".[29]

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[23] W. Jakubowski, op. cit., p. 351.

[24] M. Janion, *Kino i fantazmaty*, "Kino", 1975, vol. 4.

[25] C.G. Jung, *Archetypy i symbole. Pisma wybrane*, Warszawa 1993.

[26] A. Marzec, S. Rzęsikowski, *Edukacja teatralna, filmowa i radiowa na lekcjach języka polskiego w klasach IV–VIII*, Kielce 1994, p. 109.

[27] E. Konieczna, op. cit., p. 22.

[28] M. Gliniecka, *Edukacja filmowa jako wyzwanie dla współczesnych nauczycieli – bibliotekarzy*, [in:] *Szkoła w dyskursie teorii i praktyki. Wybrane konteksty*, ed. E. Murawska, Słupsk – Poznań 2013, p. 180.

[29] Z. Ratajek, op. cit., p. 40.

From a mythical hero to a culture hero

Only 15 years ago when I was still a student of primary school, Walt Disney animations were extremely popular. These were my heroes, then Simba the Lion, Lady and the Tramp, Princess Anastasia, Esmeralda – a gypsy girl who was brave enough to stand in for the Hunchback of Notre-Dame – Quasimodo. Classic characters were then replaced with ambiguous characters endowed with a sense of humour and ability not to take the world too seriously. One of them is Shrek, the noble-hearted ogre, and his companion the Donkey or the the *Madagascar* movie zebra that tends to say the grass is always greener on the other side. It has been ten years since then and the question arises – who are the heroes of today's children? Edward the noble vampire, Jacob the sensitive werewolf or perhaps a zombie in love? Movie viewers find mythical topoi in the stories about dead walking people, werewolves or vampires they know from popular culture. Postmodern games with conventions make the fairy-tale icons seen in a different light and the original meaning of mythical stories changes. Therefore, a werewolf is capable of expressing higher feelings even love. He is ready to sacrifice himself for his friends. A vampire is no longer a bloodsucking beast but starts to worry about the fact that he does not have a soul. Similarly other superheroes show their human face. According to Andrzej Kempiński, in the past "mythical heroes were the guardians of the world and protected it against the monsters of chaos, they were seen as primogenitors of human race."[30] Contemporary heroes have doubts whether or not they should still rescue the world (Batman), suffer from an obsessive-compulsive disorder (Ironman) or even give up the throne choosing the life of a mortal to be able to live with the beloved one (Thor). It can be said that they are going through a crisis of the 21st century, which does not change the fact that they still remain culture heroes. Eventually, they set out on a journey to fulfil their mission. They still struggle with adversity, which leads them to spiritual maturity, and social and cultural transformation. "Every journey of the hero – mythical or fantasy – is based on the initiation journey, which enables them, through various tasks and trials, to reach adulthood, to be worthy of the crown, a beloved woman or father's approval."[31] As Joseph Campbell wrote, "a hero sets out on a journey from the world of everyday life into the area of supernatural miracles, meets supernatural forces and wins a victory, (…) returns from this mysterious adventure with the ability to bestow blessings upon his brothers".[32] According to Elżbieta Żukowska[33], a culture hero must be created by means of appropriate patterns: be an

[30] A.M. Kempiński, *Encyklopedia mitologii ludów indoeuropejskich*, Warszawa 2001.

[31] E. Żukowska, *Mitologie Andrzeja Sapkowskiego*, Gdańsk 2011, p. 133.

[32] J. Burgess, J. Green, op. cit., p. 184.

[33] E. Żukowska, op. cit., p. 133.

ordinary yet extraordinary representative of their milieu and cope with problems in such a way so as to make the viewers believe in their definite victory. Strong heroines appear more and more frequently in both contemporary animations and feature movies. Take Tauriel from part two of the *Hobbit* film series. Peter Jackson introduced a female elf warrior who sets out on a journey with other male elves to fight with Orks against Tolkien's original literary concept. Female characters from the latest Walt Disney Animation Studios production *Frozen* are yet another example of heroines. Artur Zaborowski points out that the authors of this archetypal story "resort to images of heroes that are deeply rooted in our memory and manipulate them daringly". Sisters Anna and Elsa are depicted as strong and expressive women "who obstinately try to be braver than the bravest knight and most importantly they decide for themselves, their fate is in their hands, regardless of men's volition."[34] They are no longer princesses who await a kiss from a romantic prince. According to Godzic, it is a significant change in cinematography, as the viewers have not identified themselves with female characters before. The woman was "an object of glance, seen by a man with his eyes."[35] Female science fiction characters such as Ripley from *Alien*, Sarah Connor from *Terminator* or Trinity from *Matrix* do not match the aforementioned definition, as they were very expressive.

The question of the negative culture-hero also appears to be interesting. In 2003 the American Film Institute prepared a ranking list of 50 most popular villains, which includes villains such as Hannibal Lecter, Joker or Darth Vader from *Star Wars.* Interestingly, antiheroes often become viewers' favourite characters, penetrating into reality. Take James Holmes's case; this former PhD student from University of Colorado burst in the cinema during the first public performance of *The Dark Knight* and killed 12 people and then calmly surrendered himself to the police saying: "I'm the Joker". Interestingly, Paweł Żuchowski draws our attention to the fact this incident from Denver is similar to a scene from a comic book published in 1986 where a madman shoots people at the cinema with the media maintain that Batman provoked the incident.[36] It proves that fiction has a tremendous impact on our lives. In Krystyna Pankowska's opinion, "one of the most pedagogical tasks of our times is to develop the skill of differentiating fiction from reality."[37] It is equally important to reach the

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[34] A. Zaborowski, *Kraina lodu: Twardzielki Disneya*, http://film.interia.pl/recenzje/news/kraina-lodu-twardzielki-disneya-recenzja,1969333,6290#ipad?utm_source =paste&utm_medium =paste&utm_campaign=other [access: 23.01.2014].

[35] K. Giedrys-Majkut, W. Godzic, op. cit.

[36] P. Żuchowski, *Zamachowiec z Denver: To ja jestem Jokerem*, http://www.rmf24.pl/fakty/swiat/news-zamachowiec-z-denver-to-ja-jestem-jokerem,nId,623835 [access: 19.02.2014].

[37] K. Pankowska, *Rzeczywistość medialna jako problem pedagogiczny*, "Kultura Współczesna", 2000, vol. 1–2 (23–24).

symbolic meaning hidden in the plot: becoming acquainted with the pantheon of villains and heroes, evildoers and demigods and at the same time showing the complexity of human emotions.

Janusz Gajda sees a potential of an antihero for education. According to Janusz Gajda, negative characters "show the experiences of the contemporary man – anxiety, threats, entangled in everyday conflicts. Reflective approach to this type of hero, evaluation of his behaviour, the analysis of his motives might be a tremendous opportunity to think about our own lives and a way to shape our own view of the world."[38] When I asked students who their favourite character from *Games of Thrones* based on G. R. R. Martin's fantasy novel was, the majority of them chose the intelligent dwarf – Tyrion Lannister – who is an ambivalent hero. It confirms the words of Józef Burszta that today young people seek ambiguousness in books and movies.[39] Children need expressive characters and a clear way of presenting moral problems, unlike older viewers who expect stories that will confront them with the dark side of human nature.[40] Therefore, I decided to examine favourite movie characters of older primary school students. I was equally interested in role models and characters that fell to "the dark side of the Force" many a time returning from there.

Movie heroes from older primary school students' perspective: Analysis of research results

Pilot research, conducted in 2014 among randomly selected students of grades 5 and 6 both in a city and a village (Koszalin and Ogorzeliny) revealed that some students do not pay attention to the fact whether they have heroes or antiheroes. Among 94 students who participated in the research, 38% respondents answered that they did not have such a hero. More than a half of the respondents answered that they had their heroes that fall into the following categories: fairy tale movie, animation movie and fantasy movie. Animation movies were represented by characters from contemporary, postmodern productions such as: Shrek, Puss in Boots, or Sit from *Ice Age*. Children justified their choice by saying that the aforementioned characters are funny, sometimes clumsy but at the same time creative and pursuing their goals in a consistent way. It was also observed that girls liked charming Puss in Boots in particular (9.25%) whereas boys preferred Shrek (7.4 %). Only one girl chose the green

[38] J. Gajda, op. cit., p. 129.
[39] E. Ciapara, *Królewna Śnieżka*, "Film", 2012, vol. 3, p. 26.
[40] E. Konieczna, op. cit., p. 60.

ogre as her favourite character. As far as fairy tale princesses are concerned, Cinderella was chosen by 11% of the respondents, Little Red Riding Hood and The Little Mermaid by 5.5% and 3.7% respectively. The latter character was also perceived as a negative character due to the green tail. Rapunzel from fairy tale movie *Tangled*, referring to a story of a longhaired beauty locked in a tower, was also categorised as a negative character by one of the girls. The grade 5 female student wrote that the heroine annoys her with her behaviour because she is beautiful yet "untrained". Other girls perceived Rapunzel as a perfect beauty because of her long, blonde hair. Interestingly, Snow White was the most popular among fairy-tale characters. Nearly as many boys as girls chose her. It might have been caused by the new face of Snow White in the movie entitled *Mirror, mirror*. The character created by Lily Colins is no longer a delicate princess with porcelain complexion. Not only does she know quite a lot about fencing but she is also capable of locking the prince and dwarves up in the cottage and fighting the witch. She is both pretty and brave. The students were also asked about negative characters. It is surprising that 22% of students answered that they do not have such heroes or they have not spent any time choosing one. Single respondents indicated female villains from fairy tale movies such as: Cinderella's stepmother, White Witch from *The Chronicles of Narnia*, The Snow Queen or bad sorceress from the *Merlin* movie. It is surprising that only three male antiheroes were mentioned; immortal Joker, Gollum and Smaug the dragon. They were all listed due to their greed.

The answers regarding fantasy movies heroes appeared to be interesting. Some respondents, among important personality traits, listed the following traits: bravery, gallantry and loyalty towards their friends. Hobbits from Shire, that is, Frodo and Bilbo from *The Lord of the Rings* were among heroes that possessed the aforementioned traits. They were chosen by 9.25% of the respondents. There were also positive female characters such as: Tauriel the Elf warrior and Bella from *Twilight*. The girls chose male characters more often including Edward the vampire due to his personality traits. The students chose both mythical heroes (Thor, Percy Jackson) and superheroes from movie version of comic books (Batman, Ironman, Spiderman). One of the female respondents chose Percy Jackson because of his great ability to fight with swords, the fact that he is a demigod rescuing the world and his dyslexia and ADHD. It shows that the aforementioned crisis that the superheroes go through makes them more appealing to children. Two respondents chose culture heroes as anti-role models as they resort to violence too frequently. When asked to describe her antihero, one of the girls wrote that she hated Spiderman because "he shoots spider-web using his wrist". It made me wonder to what extent the look of the hero affect the assessment of their behaviour. Would there be a single person to choose The Hunchback of Notre Dame? The majority of the

respondents were fascinated with the physical ability of the movie heroes, that's why they chose the Rubber Man, who can stretch his body to an unbelievable length, Ironman – because of his amazing armour or Legolas the elf from *The Lord of the Rings* due to his archery skills. I was still more amazed that superheroes were beaten by Gandalf the Grey as he was chosen by 20% of the boys for whom wisdom, bravery, valour and dedication as well as experience were listed in the first place among other sorcerer's features. One might find it surprising that in the times of prefigurative culture, in which the way values are imparted has changed, younger generations can appreciate the character of an aged wizard. Gandalf the Grey lost the battle against a younger sorcerer in the person of Harry Potter who was chosen by 16% of boys and 23% of girls. Interestingly, none of the cult character's friends such as Ron Wesley or Hermione Granger has been selected. Severus Snape, who is known to be an ambiguous character, which makes him an interesting figure to interpret, was not chosen either. In contrast, two of the surveyed people featured antiheroes as favourite characters. In either case it was Anakin Skywalker, also known as Darth Vader, who was pointed out. Despite the lack of differentiation between the genres of fantasy and science fiction, the author found choosing Darth Vader peculiar for he is Luke Skywalker's father – one of the major characters of the *Star Wars* saga. Initially, Anakin is a Jedi knight. Unfortunately, being affected by Chancellor Palpatine, young Padawan turns to the Dark Side of the Force and takes the name of Darth Vader leading to the destruction of the Jedi Order. Yet before he dies, Darth Vader helps his son defeat the mastermind behind the greatest power-grab in the galactic history – Imperator, which makes him at the same time turn to the Light Side of the Force. Thus, it is even a more interesting protagonist. Sadly, such fictional book and movie characters are treated in an instrumental manner at schools. Positive characteristics are only exposed as desirable role models. Only in this way are such stories merely becoming another excuse for "managing" students' appropriate development by teachers. What is more, what schools lack is a reflection upon the change occurring within the character or upon the motivation the hero is driven by. In addition to that, there is no conscious choice of the film extract that could be subjected to analysis or discussion. It is the chosen scenes that enable one to emphasize particular ethical problems as well as dilemmas a protagonist must face. It should be outlined that not only moments of heroes' victory and triumph (the stage of dreaming and fantasizing) but also moments of the dramatic climax, defined by Booker[41] as the stage of nightmare and frustration, are important. Only when it appears that all hope is gone do main characters overcome their own weaknesses and unexpectedly find a solution to the problem that bothers them.

[41] J. Burgess, J. Green, op. cit., p. 188.

The author is firmly convinced that the film as a form of art, including music, theatre, can play one of education's important roles, that is the one of "awakening to life" and "awakening to experience" as well as "encouraging to partaking in culture, enhancing symbolic memory which gives new potential to expressing oneself, sensitivity of imagination and new understanding of oneself as well as of the world as a new way of existence."[42] Jurij Łotman points out that "the world of films that is divided into frames creates an opportunity to highlight any detail."[43] When the camera lens is directed at anything, one might pose a question what can be seen not only within the visual field but also outside it. It has been successfully captured in *Code inconnu: Récit incomplet de divers voyages* by Michael Haneke where the main heroine played by Juliette Binoche does the household chores such as: doing the ironing and watching TV. In the meantime, crying and screaming can be heard from behind the wall and although the viewer does not obtain directly any information about what is happening at the neighbours' apartment, the aforementioned scene turns out to be the crucial one for understanding what the director tries to convey for it is the details that determine the work's greatness. It can be compared to a feeling when one tries to recall a book that was read or a film that was watched long time ago. It is also when those seemingly unimportant details play the most important role and only carefully selected images, colours, melodies and especially heroes, to whom we consciously paid our attention to, remain behind the eyelid.

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[42] L. Witkowski, *Czytanie jako gruntowanie bycia w kulturze*, [in:] *Kolaż w myśleniu pedagogicznym. Inkantacje studenckie*, ed. M. Jaworska-Witkowska, M. Natanek, Toruń 2011, p. 41.

[43] J. Łotman, *Struktura tekstu artystycznego*, Warszawa 1984, p. 77–78.