CULTURE – SOCIETY – EDUCATION

KULTURA – SPOŁECZEŃSTWO – EDUKACJA

No. 1 (15) 2019

Table of contents

Articles

Jarema Drozdowicz
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Teaching to Transgress: Subjective Educational Experience in the Model of Engaged Pedagogy of Bell Hooks (Gloria Jean Watkins)

KEYWORDS

bell hooks, engaged pedagogy, critical pedagogy, feminism, subjective experience

ABSTRACT

The African-American scholar bell hooks is a well known figure in the Western academic milieu. This article makes an attempt at presenting the model of engaged pedagogy represented in hook's works and her public appearances. This is done by highlighting the issue of subjective experience in the educational setting. Hook's concept of race and gender is brought to attention to present the aforementioned issue within the broader context of her socio-cultural concepts she is known for. The outcome of this reconstruction shows us that the model of engaged pedagogy is developed by hooks into a wide set of postulates of structural change of the American schooling system, as well systems in other parts of the world. Therefore, it seems plausible to put her works within the tradition of critical pedagogy as found in the works of Paulo Freire and others.

1. Introduction

Today, the figure of bell hooks is known in the intellectual world primarily on account of her exceptional engagement in the political and social consequences of the American reality and the racial relations underlying this reality. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that hook's impact on the American public debate cannot be overestimated if we take into account the fact that the problems tackled by

her most often go beyond the racial discourse, also touching upon a number of other issues of equal importance for the American society. Located in the formula of a "public intellectual", hooks often performs a detailed analysis of racial relations resulting from social tension typical for the situation in the United States and transfers them to the area of the discussion on the role which the concept of race plays in the processes of reproducing specific social structures. A characteristic feature of these structures is appropriation of the field of the subject for the sake of progressing instrumentalisation of human acts, motivation and style, in which individuals usually express their subjective desires and identity. The place that the category of race occupies in these processes is, in the opinion of the American author, of key importance for understanding how subjects act in the social environment filled with mechanisms for solidifying and transmitting specific inequalities. This category is also supplemented by other significant social concepts such as, e.g., gender. This puts hooks in the position of a researcher located in the area of feminist criticism related to the third wave of intellectual evolution of this formation and, more specifically, among the authors from the realm of the so-called "black feminism."

Born in 1952 in Hopkinsville (Kentucky) as Gloria Jean Watkins, the researcher adopted the pseudonym bell hooks (intentionally written in lower-case letters for the purpose of conscious subversion of the principles of Western grammar) in reference to the context of her family history (her grandmother's name was Bell Hooks and she was notorious for openly expressing her uncompromising opinions). It was also meant to reflect her working origin by suggesting anonymity and universality of life experience of her own, as well as many other African-Americans from similar social backgrounds. Analogously to many other African-Americans, she experienced segregation in the school system, attending a facility dominated by pupils from the white middle class. The problem of inequalities between the white majority and minorities such as African-Americans affected the overall academic accomplishments of hooks. However, at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, this field was not well managed. Her research interest in the racial issues initially resulted from frustration caused by the fact that few white scientists where interested in this subject matter back then (hooks, 2000, p. 2). The special feeling of the necessity of filling the racial discourse with a perspective originating from the perspective of an African-American author pervaded, as hooks admits, her intellectual activity and affected her later steps and searches in the area of academic knowledge. It was also the time when her critical sense was shaped, along with the political stance, often expressed today. In this place, it must be noted that academic writing, political activism and life are, for hooks, inseparable aspects of the same

cultural reality. Hooks recollects after several years: "As a leftist cultural activist, I work to think and write critically in a manner that clearly indicates specific strategies for radical or revolutionary interventions that I apply in daily life to oppose the policy of domination" (hooks, 2000, p. 7). When starting her university career in 1976 at the University of Southern California, hooks initially taught English literature and ethnic studies. Since that moment, she has held a number of various academic positions, *inter alia* as part of Afro-American Studies and English Literature at the University of Yale, women's studies and American literature at Oberlin College in Ohio, as well as the Faculty of English Literature at City College in New York. Since 2004, she has been working at Berea College in Kentucky at the position of a professor in residence as part of the Faculty of Appalachian Studies[1]. She also continues her studies on relations between the categories of gender and socio-cultural factors, such as the various constructs of the term race. Social constructivism is characteristic for the theory of gender and the concept of race formulated by hooks, even though it is not the exclusive interpretation for the critical thought of the author.

2. Outline of Feminist Theory in Bell Hook's Approach

It is worth remembering that the feminist theory of hooks is not only related to the essentially understood category of womanhood and gender. In the text entitled "Theory as Liberatory Practice" of 1991, she expresses her interest in any kind of socio-cultural category whose effect of formulation would be a critical, in its nature, inspection of actual dependencies and relations of power relying on gender categories (hooks, 1991, p. 1). These dependencies may also entangle the academic practice and have their reflection in the manner in which the feminist thought and other critical forms clash with the hegemony of the patriarchal system or the situation of white domination, typical for the United States. The American thinker looks for the cause of this state of affairs in the durable rooting of certain rhetorical conventions in the academic world. These conventions are generated as part of specific orders, where models designed by the dominant majority (in the American practice, white) are predominant. Language, as well as the feminist rhetoric, is frequently appropriated, in her belief, by groups not representing interests or not sharing the same experience of marginalisation as ethnic minorities, women or other groups affected by hegemonic and more or less oppressive, power. The

---

[1] http://www.theheroinecollective.com/bell-hooks/

American feminism of the 1980s did not represent the voice of African-American women in a significant degree. Giving them voice and a change in the discourse seemed, from this perspective, not only a necessary step towards the transformation of the feminist theory, but also a political necessity. This change also affected the rhetoric and the linguistic area producing the conceptual base for the theory of gender. Hooks notes: "Critical reflection on contemporary production of feminist theory makes it apparent that the shift from early conceptualisations of feminist theory (which insisted that it was most vital when it encouraged and enabled feminist practice) begins to occur or at least becomes most obvious with the segregation and institutionalisation of the feminist theorising process in the academy, with the privileging of written feminist thought/ theory over oral narratives" (hooks, 1991, p. 3). Therefore, the manifestation of postulates of African-American feminism (or rather feminism not proper to white women) requires a look at other forms of speech, linguistic practice and rhetoric than exclusively characteristic for the academic discourse. Such intention explains to a significant degree why the language used by hooks both in her works and in public appearances is far from intellectual elitism, and much closer to the modes of expression typical for lower social classes. Her version of feminist theory is an "experienced" theory, close to life.

In her canonical text with respect to the bases of feminist theory of 1984 entitled "Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center", hooks voices a conviction that "feminism in the United States has never emerged from the women who are most victimised by sexist oppression" (hooks, 1984, p. 1). This means that, in fact, the feminist theory missed its object of reference in the social sense. This state of affairs has been solidified by a significant portion of early literature on the subject, including the works of Betty Friedan and Leah Fritz. Hooks negatively assesses the possibilities of impact of theoretical proposals of this type. This results from the fact that these are primarily non-white women who constitute, in her opinion, the "silent majority", representing the most blatantly visible social, political and economic symptoms of actual marginalisation. Therefore, shifting the point of balance in the discussion about inequalities towards particular contexts greatly diversifying the problem of discrimination allows for precise specification of the status aspect and enables a closer look at various forms of marginalisation of women from different social and ethnic groups in a given social system. Opening of new areas of theoretical and subject-related searches is the task of feminist thought. Hooks clearly expresses this idea by saying that: "We resist hegemonic domination of feminist thought by insisting that it is a theory in the making, that we must necessarily criticise, question, re-examine and explore new possibilities" (hooks, 1984a, p. 10). Such presentation of the issue allows for showing the situation of women not only

in the light of their dependency on the dominant patriarchal *status quo*, but also as a part of a broader social movement focused on challenging and healing the relations relying on the concept of gender or race. A highly postulative dimension of ideas presented by hooks may slightly overshadow her overall theoretical intention. Therefore, the theoretical foundation should be specified in detail here.

In another place, hooks presents a clear interpretation of feminism. In her opinion, it is a movement opposing the phenomenon of sexism (hooks, 1984b, p. 24). This step towards emphasising the performative nature of feminist theory, important from the definition-based point of view, specifies further consequences of its utilisation in the social realm. Nevertheless, application of postulates of feminist movement encounters significant problems. First of all, as noted by hooks, the movement is neither a uniform or a formalised phenomenon in the sense of political activism. Thus, it is devoid of a sensible form, and the feminist postulates frequently differ among one another apart from one basic premise: equality of women and men. In hooks' belief, this postulate is the most problematic. Its explication assumes that even though inequalities exist between the status of women and men, yet they are based on similar initial conditions as far as the inferior role of women with respect to men is concerned. Obviously, this is an unjustified generalisation and a basic error of the second wave feminism. According to hooks, these relations are not only much more complex, but they overshadow the core of the problem, i.e. the conviction rooted in the social order that categories of gender do not overlap with racial categories. For hooks, the position of black women in the American context is radically different than the position of women from white middle or working class. This quite evident difference in status results from durably rooted socio-cultural discourses, where the African-American population is usually placed at the bottom of the social ladder. Representations of being black (blackness) remain rooted in the structures of power and are continually subjected to the mechanisms of marginalisation of black culture. Therefore, oppression by the white majority reveals its power in the construction and perpetuation of cultural notions thanks to which black subjects are objectified, whereas the black culture is instrumentally used (the phenomenon of the so-called cultural appropriation). Hence, it seems even more necessary to invoke social protest and movement against racism and chauvinism. In this case, the feminist theory moves closer to the political activism, yet it does not lose its epistemological nature, which is important for the formulation of the concept of gender and race. It rather suggests the necessity of building a certain formula of common identity, meeting any types of oppression.

In this place, attention should be paid to the sisterhood concept constructed by hooks. She notices that "the utopian vision of sisterhood evoked in a feminist

movement that initially did not take racial difference or anti-racist struggle seriously did not capture the imagination of most black women/women of colour" (hooks, 2000b, p. 56). Hence, sisterhood in this approach is a bond among women from various social groups, beyond class divisions, yet at the same time aware of the fact how different the subordinate position of women with respect to men may be from the point of view of women who originate from various groups. Such an impression of a transgressive relation between women must be, in hooks' conviction, deep and reject any false forms of common identity (hooks, 1984, p. 45). It must also contribute to the reformulation of the feminist theory and lead to the establishment of a new, more visionary feminism. Its fundamental goal is to work out a strategy of change of the entire mass of women and to solidify their personal power (hooks, 200b, p. 111). Sisterly identity allows for combining the actions and goals into more sensible and more efficient, with respect to social and political aspects, postulates for transformation of structures of power and abolishing the tools of oppression, both on the side of men, as well as class and racial oppression. Visionary feminism postulated by hooks is not only limited to women. It refers to any inequalities and thus may be also be referred to the situation of subordination of men in specific social contexts. And thus, the alliance of women and men who are in the same status position may not only be actually established, but also seems to be socially indispensable in the world where the problem of inequality is alarmingly growing. Hooks emphasises this in an interview with Cornel West by saying that the partnership of women and men in the 1990s may result in an extension of the feeling of rooting and also solidify the mechanisms which, actually, abolish the power of structures marginalising either African-Americans or other minority groups (hooks, bell, 1990, p. 214). In other words, the alliance is meant to guarantee the possibility of giving voice to those whom Frantz Fanon calls the "cursed people of the earth." Subjectivisation is conditioned by the educational effort for the sake of proliferation of subjective awareness and critical stances. Thanks to them, it is possible to change the social formula of understanding the relation between gender and race and, in a further perspective, also abolish the structural oppression.

3. Towards Transgressive and Engaged Pedagogy

Hooks identifies the role of education in the process of liberating an entity with an effect accomplished via educational practice. In her work "Teaching to Transgress. Education as the Practice of Freedom" from 1994, we find a systemic interpreta-

tion of the theory of a subject, kept in the spirit of a critical reflection on the condition of modern education and the American society. Hooks indicates the fact that the book is, in her conviction, primarily a collection of testimonies for the sake of education as a mode of practising freedom, due to the fact that education as such is, in the first place, a performative act (hooks, 1994, p. 11). School reality provides numerous pieces of evidence for such statement. Complex relations along the line students – teachers require application of the model of engaged pedagogy, whose transformative potential with respect to the systems of education lies in it fostering the subjective experience. In any case, hooks is not alone in her conviction.

The formula of engaged pedagogy is related to the problem of subjective experience of the system of education, and thus forces us to take a look at the strategies of acting that are adopted by individuals when clashing with the school institution. Kris D. Guttiérez and Barbara Rogoff believe that the key for the understanding of the subject's acts in the educational reality is the issue of cultural ways of learning. This is a relatively new theoretical perspective and "the cultural styles approach arose from these efforts as researchers attempted to leave behind deficit-model thinking, in which cultural ways that differ from the practices of dominant groups are judged to be less adequate without examining them from the perspective of the community's participants" (Guttiérez, Rogoff, 2010, p.184). Revealing a great variety of the above-mentioned styles in the school space does not pose greater problems, in particular in contexts of multi-cultural societies, such as the American society. School, as an institution, is pervaded with multiple learning and teaching strategies. Nevertheless, individual and subjective approach of the teacher towards students is neither a common nor acceptable principle on the systemic level. Hence, the attempts at breaking the petrified and institutional standards seem even more precious; they not only excite interest in students, but also personally empower them and lead to formation of certain intellectual maturity. Cultural differences that become visible during the teaching processes cannot be examined as individual subjective features, because – as suggested by Guttiérez and Rogoff – this leads most often to the formulation of unauthorised generalisations and, in turn, they contribute to the formation of classification and categorisation systems, "yielding explanations and expectations of individual skills and behaviours on the basis of category membership" (Guttiérez, Rogoff, 2010, p. 187).

Taking the social and cultural differences into account in the process of learning is a task set directly before the engaged pedagogy. It is meant to contribute to such a change in the system of teaching and educational practice to make the subjective educational experience consistent both with the horizon designated by the individual and group identity (if we speak about, e.g., self-identification in a cul-

tural sense). Such approach allows for much better and fuller use of the individual's educational potential and reinforces the feeling of purpose, internal integration on the level of self-awareness and desire for social engagement. This task is, by no means, easy; hooks is convinced that "progressive, comprehensive education, engaged pedagogy" is more demanding than a conventional critical thought or feminist pedagogy. As opposed to these two practices of teaching, she emphasises the problem of "well-being" (hooks, 1994, p. 15). Therefore, the pedagogical goal is such relational feedback which does not disrupt the subjective feeling of causality and fosters creative development. This means that the teachers must be authentically engaged in the sense of actual practice in the process of self-determination of the subject of teaching. This process should promote the well-being of individuals, i.e. linearly harmonise with their internally recognised condition of psychical, social and cultural homoeostasis. Hooks compares efficient pedagogical activities to therapeutic sessions (hooks, 1994, p. 15). In the engaged perspective, the moment of acknowledging a subject determines its positioning in a multi-dimensional reality, where every dimension (psychological, political or cultural) gives the subject the possibility of articulating needs or specific ontological statements resulting from the world-view represented by such subject. Recognizing a subject in the pedagogical practice is, therefore, tantamount to the subject's co-participation in the educational process. What is more, it also does away with the traditional division of acting in a public and private sphere, wholly pervading the area of social relations and interactions. In the perspective of engaged pedagogy, a school becomes a field where diverse learning styles and living styles clash, providing ethnographic exemplifications for the fact of cultural diversity, even in systems considered relatively homogeneous.

4. Subjective Educational Experience and Process of Transgressive Community Construction

A subjective educational experience in the model of bell hook's engaged pedagogy is a problem with central significance for the concept of race and theory of teaching performed in a multi-cultural reality, represented by this author. Discrimination experiences of many African-Americans in the American system of education still constitute a significant factor in the structural marginalisation of this group within the structures of American society. As evidenced by recent racial unrest, the situation in the USA with respect to the relation of power between the white majority and the minorities is characterised, to a great extent, by maintenance of the *status*

quo. The system of education, similarly to many other dimensions of the American public sphere, requires an in-depth transformation for the sake of education liberating through empathy and action, affective in their nature. As noted by Michael J. Monahan, education for hooks is not identical with the process of information accumulation (Monahan, 2011, p. 107). It is rather a set of practices that either may enslave the subject or thrust the subject into a pre-defined framework, which results in its' instrumentalisation and spreading of violence, or such practice may emancipate the subject and contribute to an increase in the level of the above-mentioned well-being. In this perspective, the systemic change depends on the grassroots activities undertaken by teachers in reference to students. In particular, such activities should be focused on students who originate from these groups that are underprivileged in a given educational and social system, or even marginalised and subjected to various forms of discrimination. However, the vision of education as emancipatory struggle is a picture full of axiological challenges for hooks.

In "Teaching to Transgress", hooks postulates initiation of a revolution in the sphere of values (hooks, 1994, p. 28). Such revolution, in the intention of the American author, is meant to enable such life where differences are not only perceived in the political sense, but also in a dimension of moral recognition of the rights of others to self-determination. Such a procedure of axiological diversification creates a possibility of actual cultural differentiation in the educational space. It allows for inclusive teaching, i.e. including the subjects in the process of education, not only in the sense of their presence in the system of teaching, but together with the knowledge, meanings and modes of communication contributed by them. This makes the school reality democratic, where hooks sees an important pedagogical value. This means that it is necessary to "[make] the classroom a democratic setting where everyone feels a responsibility to contribute," and this "is a central goal of transformative pedagogy" (hooks, 1994, p. 39). The presence of a subject marked with racial, gender or cultural differences contributes not so much to the dynamisation of the system of education, but more to the initiation of a vital reform in it. Thanks to it, inclusion in the educational narrative of various visions and world views becomes possible and, through this, also learning styles and styles of acquiring new competence. By opening to the subjective educational experience, the process of education acquires a shape that allows for modelling the system of education in a material manner, along with the trajectory of the changing reality. The tool forming this approach is the engaged pedagogy and a critical approach.

In her pedagogical model, hooks not only uses, but also openly refers to earlier attempts at applying the complex postulates tackled by Paulo Freire. The Brazilian teacher is an inspiration and, at the same time, an ideological source for hooks.

Opinions voiced by Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren are also close to her. However, it cannot be stated straightforwardly that all of these authors create a uniform concept formation and share, together with hooks, her ideas about race and gender. Nevertheless, hooks shows a number of convergences with the American critical pedagogy represented by them. She concludes that issues tackled by all critical teachers must primarily focus on the problems of permeation of power, action and struggle (hooks, 1994, p. 129). Tackling the problem of infiltration of these aspects also requires raising the need of internal dialogue and critical reflection on the hitherto applied solutions, existing socio-cultural, economic and political conditions in the teaching milieus. The process of building a "teaching community" is close to her sisterhood concept. The transgressive community also encompasses entities experiencing various systems of education, not only educational decision-makers and teachers. The model of engaged pedagogy represented by bell hooks clearly indicates the huge value carried by education that includes the subjective experience in the official educational and social discourse. Thanks to such conceptual measure, working out new and much more efficient models of education becomes possible.

Bibliography

Freire Paulo, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York, London 2010, Continuum Press.

hooks bell, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, New York, London 1994, Routledge.

hooks bell, *Feminism is for Everybody. Passionate Politics*, Cambridge 2000, South End Press.

hooks bell, *Theory as Liberatory Practice*, [in:] Yale Journal of Law and Feminism, vol. 4, Issue 1, 1991, pp. 1-12.

hooks bell, *Feminist Theory – From Margin to Center*, Boston 1984, South End Press.

hooks bell, *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*, Boston 1989, South End Press.

hooks bell, *Where We Stand: Class Matters*, New York, London 2000, Routledge.

bell hooks, Black Looks: Race and Representation, Boston 1992, South End Press.

Monahan Michael J., *Emancipatory Effect: bell hooks on Love and Liberation*, [in:] CRL James Journal, Vol. 17, No. 1, 2011, pp. 102-111.

Sevilla Anton Louis, The Ethics of Engaged Pedagogy: A Comparative Study of Watsuji Tetsuro and bell hooks, [in:] Kritike, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2016, pp. 124-145.

Sławomir Futyma, Zbigniew Rudnicki
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

On education in the perspective of tragedy

KEYWORDS

education, humanism, education philosophy, tragedy, existence, development

ABSTRACT

Man experiences their existence constantly experiencing tension that emerges between that which is and that which could be, between the actual, known, and the unknown that barely shines in the horizon. In this uncomfortable experience, one can find potential for development, hidden behind a facade of pretence and camouflage, which, when disclosed and uncovered can be the "fuel" of satisfactory change. As a result, education can be in service of man once again. This process, as a fundamental experience, will assume the acceptance of truth about the human condition and the circumstances of its emergence in the course of life. Education not abandoning man must rediscover and re-evaluate such categories as fate, uncertainty, fragility, unforeseeability.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8495-9176
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5238-0100

> *„Progress is moving from words to experiences,*
> *from fiction to realism"*
> Y. Congar

Introduction

It seems as though there were never too few „prophets" voicing their views on how tragic the situation is in which humanity, and accordingly, the world, has found themselves. There were never too few of those who believed that it is so bad, at the same time saying that they have a wonderful antidote against all evil. They also preached that when their ideas come to life, a „miracle" will happen, we will be liberated from the darkness we were in. And it is here where those emerge that believe that this

wonderful addition influencing the quality of the modern world is economy, and still others, to whom we are most likely closer, believing that in order to begin to act in any way, one would need to reach down to the fundamentals of humanism giving us the basic concepts of the rules of activity of man in the world. The knowledge of these rules translates into understanding of what is around us. However, one must always remember that which Janusz Korczak wrote about:

> „The more one sees and the longer they live, the less certain they are of themselves. Life is great and strong, they are weak and small"[1].

On the practice and theory of action

Many sensitive scientists construct tools in order for humanity not to get to „the bottom" in difficult times, sharing the fate of civilisations long gone. The establishment of foundations of human activity is among others formulating responses to periodically stated questions about the shape of knowledge, education, its humanist dimension, objective and strategy, as professor Zbigniew Kwieciński wrote, entailing finding answers to the questions:

> „what and how should humanistic education be, what are its limitations over here, and what are the constitutive components enabling a chance to achieve it. Is a return to these questions reasonable… not from the standpoint of a dreamer, reformer, rebel, priest, dogma follower, madman or cold player pursuing own interests?"[2]

These are fundamental questions that perhaps for some may seem to mundane. However, using the words of Jose Antonio Marina, Spanish paedagogue and philosopher, which were included in his work entitled „The Failed Intelligence, or Stupidity in Theory and Practice":

> „the case concerns very urgent preventive work, as stupidity is an illness that any one of us can get infected by"[3] because: „Human intelligence fails if it is unable to adapt itself to reality, to understand what is happening (or what is happening with us if we are unable to solve emotional, social or political problems; if it regularly makes mistakes when it assumes absurd objectives or steadfastly remains using ineffective means; when it wastes the opportunities that arise; when it poisons our lives; when it succumbs to cruelty and violence"[4].

---

[1] J. Korczak, Pedagogika żartobliwa, Warszawa 1939, p. 101.
[2] Z. Kwieciński, Dylematy Inicjatywy Przebudzenia, Wrocław 2011, p. 109.
[3] J. A. Marina, Porażka inteligencji czyli głupota w teorii i praktyce, Kraków 2010, p. 7.
[4] Ibidem, p. 9.

The tragedy of education, or between the inexistent past and the uncertain future

Tragedy in human history gained strength when the education process did not fulfil the hopes laid in it, and when people started putting their „dirty fingers" where they weren't supposed to. Human intervention in everything, meaning: disturbing cycles of nature, transgressing educational reason related to experimenting by modifying all that can be modified, rejecting everything that could be linked to the experience of generations past, all of this became the daily bread. Such a condition of things brought about the paradox that uncovered the reasonability and „greatness" of all that passed. We came to realise that not long ago the majority of people:

> „woke when the sun rose, went to bed when the sun set, ate home-grown meals, and worked close to home. People spoke of moments as fleeting, memories as lasting, and admonished their children with such phrases as "haste makes waste." Stories began with "Once upon a time," and we actually had a sense of what that meant. Days were based more on light than hours and years more on seasons than calendars"[5].

Perhaps we need to wait until a lot of time has passed in order to then long for what is gone to save what still can be saved. Such nostalgia is most probably an educational experience that every man had experienced, experiences or will experience. As we can read in the *Different dictionary of the Polish language* (*Inny słownik języka polskiego*)" published in 2000 by the PWN publishing house and edited by M. Bańko, nostalgia is a very valuable feeling of regret due to the loss of something or the unavailability of the world past[6]. Nostalgia seems to be a natural instinct against what is imposing, what pretends to be certain. As Hegel once noted, perhaps one should rather wait until that which is aggressive, intense, persistently intrusive and loud comes to pass, indeed:

> „When philosophy paints its grey in grey, one form of life has become old, and by means of grey it cannot be rejuvenated, but only known. The owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering."[7].

---

[5] J. Naisbitt, N. Naisbitt, D. Philips, High Tech. High Touch, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, London, 2001, p. 32.

[6] Conf. M. Bańko, (ed.), Inny słownik języka polskiego, Warszawa 2000.

[7] G.W.F. Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, transl. by T. M. Knox, 1952, from Wikiquote: https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Hegel#Elements_of_the_Philosophy_of_Right_(1820).

One would love to say, however, that man is not an owl, active when the day is gone. Most probably the owl does not experience longing for that what was, but a „longing" for activity. We, people, however, at least a part of us, do not hold longing to be alien. Perhaps there could be people around us, for whom longing for that which was is something alien, an abhorrent feeling that must be avoided and shamed. However, many people understand that it is a feeling that cannot be let go, as the lack of reflection on what we left behind can bring about unforeseeable consequences upon us. Most probably, however, one could also find a large group of people who will mock us that we are not modern enough, or we will just be referred to as *weirdos* or madmen, heretics or plainly romantic idiots, only longing for that which is gone. The latter are favoured by a biblical quote on the relation with that which is no more, in that man should:

„Let the dead bury their dead"[8].

However, anybody who acquired at least a little bit of humanist knowledge will respond that this is tragedy of those dead in spirit. The case concerns those who do not see the inner strength, the inspiration, they lack internal motives to undertake any actions or a little bit of unquestioning pride of the achievements or the output of ancestors. Indeed, M. Scheler noted:

„The cradle of tragedy – the art, in which it may arise – are not exclusively relations between values nor the relations between cause and effect or the forces that destroy them, but the particular relation between the relations of value and the relations of causality"[9]

Hence, one must go back to the past that actually bears within itself the educational power of inspiration, to these valuable experiences that have in the past fruited with their own, valuable solutions. However, one must remember that one cannot face the challenges of a new era proclaiming the illusionary return to historic behaviour patterns, but one must really reestablish the condition of the prior era and, for instance, in the words of prof. Aleksander Nalaskowski, treat:

„oneself seriously, irrespective of what Europe might think about it"[10].

---

[8] King James Bible, Luke 9, 60.

[9] M. Scheler, O zjawisku tragiczności, (w:) Arystoteles, D. Hume, M.Scheler, O tragedii i tragiczności, Kraków 1976, pp. 51-75 [retranslated into English by the translator of the present paper into English].

[10] A. Nalaskowski, Edukacyjny show, Kraków 1998, p. 11.

Tragedy, or education as a „Gordian knot"

An interesting and significant term category has emerged here that may serve as a component significant for our reflection concerning education in the concept of contemporaneity, that is: tragic, or tragedy. For instance, what will the Polish literary concept dictionary tell us about tragedy? Well, tragedy is:

> „the unsolvable conflict between values and necessities determining the life of a hero devoid of the possibility of making any advantageous choice for themselves between them. Indeed, all actions shall lead them to the same unavoidable catastrophe: death or ultimate life failure. The hero themselves – unconsciously or consciously – brings upon themselves peril and, irrespective of the force of character, the tension of feeling and will, uniqueness of their deeds and virtue of their intentions, they also become the victim and the perpetrator. The futility of their actions is determined either by higher forces governing the human world, fate, destiny, doom, God's will, blind laws of nature, or by oppositions between moral, social and historic rights that are equally independent of them (…) Tragedy can shine in several literary forms, but its domain is primarily tragedy in the area, where it is the key rule of construction of the fate of the hero, and the fundamental factor shaping reactions and experiences of the recipient. Due to the aesthetic, among others, effect of tragedy, in particular cooperating with pathos, it is considered to be one of the aesthetic categories"[11].

The above description of a literary phenomenon, not requiring modification, shows the situation of education in many „modern countries", which assuming a similar perspective had concluded that its constitutive component shall become the condition of the unresolvable conflict between the values and the necessities that determine life.

And actually, analysing contemporary education systems in the world, one could get such a notion. But we aim for education that gives rise to an elevation above intellectual mediocrity characteristic of primitive individuals subordinate to their own instinct of self-preservation. We seek education that will reduce to a minimum the plane, where the above described unresolvable conflict between values and necessities determining human life shall be reduced to a minimum.

Educational scepticism as part of everyday tragedy

No period of history, and even more so, no period of history from the perspective of what transpired, the achievements of science, can be summarised in one simplified system or diagram. Every period of history contains within itself diverse, fre-

---

[11] J. Sławiński (ed.), *Słownik terminów literackich*, Wrocław 1976 p. 467

quently opposing streams and tendencies, various less or better crystallised ideals, diverse visions of the future. Any one of the most frequently emerging notions in history is believed to be the best representation of a specific period, however, not infrequently these dominant streams stem from the ignorance of their supporters. The result of this is the emergence of fundamentally different opinions on the past or on the educational process of creation of the image of contemporaneity and the future. Hence, we cannot imagine achieving anything in the world of man without comparing that which is and that which is to be with that which was. However, as one of the most interesting contemporary thinkers, Amin Maalouf, a Lebanese writer, philosopher, anthropologist and ethnologist living in France since 1976, a Christian with Arab roots, chosen member of the Académie française in the year 2011, replacing the deceased Claude Lévi-Strauss, put it:

> „historical civilisations have achieved the end of their development; that they experience moral bankruptcy, similarly anyway to all other individual civilisations that divide mankind"[12].

The case concerns, among others, the view preaching the end of development of humanity that stems from its powerlessness in the context of the scenario of everyday reality that was written and that is implemented by it. In this scenario, tragedy seems to describe the facts of our day, meaning – the uncertainty or bankruptcy of all of humanity's resources overhanging the world.

Indeed, perhaps today we do not share the sometimes naive optimism of our 'romantic' predecessors, as we are more sceptical, and, to our peril, we look to the past ever less frequently, as we fear stumbling over the present that fleets so quickly. As a result, we often make doors that in the future would have remained wide open. Hence, many people experience particular enlightenment, in course of which they are ready to accept many historic statements literally, believing that this was the output of modern times. And so, the same ideas continue to emerge over and over again that we describe as the characteristic properties of our time. In this manner, components continue to return such as, among others[13]: perception of the subject, the rule of unhindered development of freedom, the uncovering of truth as inevitable lie or the negation of the tradition of rationalism.

What do we need to unconditionally remember, then?

---

[12] A. Maalouf, Rozregulowany świat, Warszawa 2011, p. 22 [retranslated into English by the translator of the present paper into English].

[13] See Bogdan Barn, Postmodernizm, Kraków 1992, p. 57.

First of all, the „rule of subjectiveness" returning like a boomerang in the writings of contemporary scientists – *cogito, ergo sum* – as pointed out by Descartes, who preached all around that he lets go of worthless tradition pronouncing the priority of will over everything else. Second of all, we cannot forget the rule of unhindered development of subjective freedom, which as a consequence leads to Hegel's finality of the Absolute Spirit, being beauty incarnate, meaning, the synthesis of reality with thought, form with content, or idea with phenomenon.

And a note for those who would term themselves humanists. We are still left with critique of rationalism (e. g. like Husserl's), under the banner of „back to things", leading to the fusion of the mind with the experience. As J. Tischner wrote:

> „the point was for the mind, as rationality – to be able to pick the means to fit the ends, but also – as a rule of wisdom – for it to be able to set the objectives of man"[14].

This image of recurring components is a great simplification. The perspective that appeared before us is the tragedy of the abandoned man in society, the tragedy of their ignorance, the tragedy of ambiguity, the tragedy of the multitude of existing solutions, with a simultaneous reduction, necessity to choose, lack of clear answers to the questions that have been put forward, inability to pick means on the way to one's goal. Thanks to these properties human existence seems to be „genetically" burdened by tragedy or tragic. Were we, however, to domesticate the above presented perspective of understanding of the thought category that is „tragedy", and to put it to harness it to do useful educational work, it could appear that, as Aristotle put it, the objective of educational tragedy understood as such would have been:

> „the awakening of the feelings of fear and mercy to bring about blissful liberation for those feelings"[15].

In this context, tragedy appears as a space of creative inspiration stemming from the level of emotional sensitivity built on top of the mind. And all this to dominate over nature.

---

[14] J. Tischner, Katolicyzm a Nowoczesny Świat, Krakw 1995, p. 15 [in:] U. Altermatt, Katolicyzm a Nowoczesny Świat, Kraków 1995.

[15] W. Tatarkiewicz (ed.) – Arystoteles, David Hume, Max Scheler. O tragedii i tragiczności, Kraków 1976, p. 8.

Educational tragedy as a consequence of the pessimism embedded in existence

Pessimism in the context of the of the conceptual category of „tragedy" can be sought in the writings of contemporary thinkers. Władysław Tatarkiewicz noticed this concept of tragedy, when he wrote:

> „In life, fate can sometimes be as tragic as it is for Oedipus or Phaedra on the stage. We are talking about actual people that found themselves in tragic circumstances. Anyone who would ask what it means can be told: these people have found themselves in a position without a way out. More precisely: without a good way out. This exactly is a tragic situation"[16].

However, certain commonalities can be found between these very different perspectives of understanding of tragedy. Events are intertwined into the human existence that are constitutive of it and that cannot be foreseen. They break meticulously woven plans and objectives. They put man in a situation of complete „uncovering", and, hence, helplessness. It is impossible to „play" someone else with respect to them. They are the deepest experience during which, the sole thing that remains is to face them engaging all one's possible power (values). So, hence, this is not a perspective „without a way out", even though this approach may be related to the the relentlessly emerging „unpredictability" of what awaits us. The paedagogy of experience, in the sense of discovering that which we do not know, that which is unpredictable, and what we must cope with, is a perspective that renowned Polish sociologist J. Szczepański wrote about:

> „(…) unforeseen possibilities, such as placing man in the presence of forces, phenomena to which man is exposed and with which man has to cope, on which they have no influence, which are completely independent of them and which aren't necessarily written in one's genes and the social structures, in the nature of the order of culture. It was fate as a trial of one's value, of their power, when one is exposed to trials that they cannot influence and the existence of which they were not aware about until they suddenly came to light as an evil force"[17].

The education perspective – fear and being"

Tragedy such as face expose the phenomenon described as *katharsis*. The situation of being stripped from pretence and pretend lives establishes – paradoxically – the

---

[16] W. Tatarkiewicz, Parerga, Warszawa 1976, p. 122.
[17] J. Szczepański, Sprawy ludzkie, Warszawa 1984, p. 322.

possibility of the deepest possible experience of oneself. The experience of tragedy in situations of dominance of fate uncovers the weakness of perception of man as in total control of their life. The visions of a „*no problem*" person who is happy, carefree, going trough life „like a torpedo" are turned to dust. Tragedy discloses the complexity of human existence, constantly exposed to the influence of forces independent of it, having at the same time the power to make radical changes. Nikolai Berdyaev goes so far as to believe that it is specifically these unforeseen events in which we experience tragedy and dilemma that have the most importance as they expose the human condition fully

> „(…) in one's existence, the most important is fate bringing with itself pain, the antinomious fusion of freedom and fate, the irreversibility of fate (…). A person is a living opposition, an opposition between the personal and social, between form and content, between finiteness and infinity, between freedom and fate. For this reason, a person cannot be considered completed, it is not given as an item, but created, they create themselves, are dynamic (…). When changing, a person still remains the same as well, is identical to themselves, is true to themselves. Such a connection of changes and permanence, persistent novelty and identity comes most strongly to shine in the awareness of one's destiny and fate (…)"[18].

In „The Unbearable Lightness of Being", Milan Kundera expresses their astonishment at the „incomplete closure" of man and the related experience of tragedy. In a world that loves procedures, standards, set pattens of success, for uncertainty to be considered true cannot be acknowledged. The consciousness of singularity of life in concert with the observation of proof of its passing makes life exposed to the experience of its irreversible loss.

> „We can never know what to want, because, living only one life, we can neither compare it with our previous lives… a sketch for nothing"[19].

Such existential tragedy, being an educational platform, sometimes reminds us of the dance of the straw-wrap dance, in which the unreduced problem of the choice of the partner emerges, between political connections and the will to cross this enchanted circle, through the acquisition of ideas contained in the intellectual heritage of mankind.

---

[18] M. Bierdiajew, Rozważania o egzystencji, Warszawa 2002, p. 95 [*Truth and Revelation*; retranslated into English by the translator of the present paper into English].

[19] M. Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2009, p. 5.

Tragedy politicised, or on educational intertwining

Tragedy as a politicised conceptual category can be found, among others, in Hannah Arendt, who indicates the chasm that emerged in Western culture in about the 4th century BC in Greece. At that time it seemed that, politically, society is standing at a chasm. It was the chasm that emerged between thinking and action. As Hannah Arendt put it:

> „In truth, intellectual activity not constituting mere counting of resources for assumed or desired objectives but caring, in the general sense, about the sense, started playing the role of „reflection", or something that emerges only when activity had already decided on the shape and character of reality. Action in itself, in turn, was banished to remain in the senseless realm of accident and blind fate"[20]

An interesting educational perspective that Arendt noted is the one, where thinking is secondary, preceded by activity, and only applies to those actions related to drawing up a balance of the damage that had arisen.

As Hannah Arendt stresses, tragedy is also the moment, when the moment Socrates dies as a result of catastrophe due to the weakness of persuasion he used with respect to the judge and his friends, Plato lost the faith in the views he preached earlier. This refers to the convictions that applied to *polis* and the basics of the concept of truth that he constructed, and for which he found no alternative, acceptable view[21]. This tragedy of the situation, in which the philosopher found himself, is the „tragedy of hopeless alternatives"[22]. Hence, substantiated may seem the attitude represented by Jose Ortega y Gasset, in his work „*Por qué se vuelve a la filosofía*" [*Why return to philosophy?*], here he wrote, among others:

> „a given period is a collection of positive and negative tendencies; a quick wit and the ability to plan ahead walk hand in hand with stupidity and blindness. The period is characterised not only by the desire of certain things, but also decisive dislike of others"[23].

One could risk saying that this dislike is related to the awareness of, among others: temporariness, departure of certain ideas together with a specific genera-

---

[20] H. Arendt, Polityka jako obietnica, Warszawa 2005, p. 40 [translated into English by the translator of the present paper into English].

[21] Ibidem, p. 41.

[22] The phrase „tragedy of hopeless alternatives" was popularised by Marian Brandys.

[23] Jose Ortega y Gasset, Po co wracamy do filozofii, Warszawa 1992, p. 95 [translated into English by the translator of the present paper into English].

tion that carries them, incidentality of circumstances facilitating their emergence, finally – the tragedy of the situation that constantly requires making choices[24]. These situations describe the paths of human „intertwining". In this manner, the next generation refers to those departing as victims of their time. Oe could quite Z. Kwieciński here, that, for instance, in the Polish situation:

> „we are … dealing with people of different orientations, the pre-modern and the post--modern, the waiting and the active representing the old order from before the Transformation of 1989 (with employment for everyone, social security and religious refuge) and the new order, with democracy, the free market, private ownership and tolerance as its pillars"[25].

Intertwining or dependence are phenomena that have their internal as well as external educational values. On the one hand, they touch directly upon certain individuals, on the other hand, indirectly, they touch upon the environment and observers – spectators. These phenomena seem to a certain extent to be a natural consequence of the evolving world. Amin Maalouf, a Lebanese writer, philosopher, anthropologist and ethnologist living in France since 1976, a Christian with Arab roots, chosen member of the Académie française in the year 2011, replacing the deceased Claude Lévi-Strauss, noted:

> „Both yes and no. The fact that human communities, unavoidably, but conflicts as well, become ever more open, is significantly a normal result of the development of the phenomenon of communication. And the fact in turn that we may deplore, what we should banish, is that this technological progress is not accompanied by heightened awareness enabling the protection of humanity banished against its will in the maelstrom of history"[26].

This gives rise to a question. Whether a „tragedy" may be treated only as an educational phenomenon or a set of predetermined events, „belonging" only to specific individuals or social groups? Such treatment of the phenomenon of tragedy would lead to the reduction of the multidimensional phenomenon of education to specific cases. Hence, one would love to say that nobody is exclusively permitted to treat their experience as exclusive, as their actions stem from functioning within a community that is the co-creator of the entire context.

---

[24] Conf. M. Janion, *Czyn i klęska. Rzecz o tragizmie* [in:] M. Janion, *Gorączka romantyczna*, Warszawa 1975

[25] Z. Kwieciński, *Nieuniknione? Funkcje alfabetyzacji w dorosłości*, Toruń – Olsztyn 2002, p. 74.

[26] A. Maalouf, *Rozregulowany świat*, Warszawa 2011, p. 57 [retranslated into English by the translator of the present paper into English].

The educational turn towards the original experience

As we look on the phenomenon of education as the celebration of the mystery of knowledge, based on dialogue between the educator-guide and the choir, there emerges a fusion of this dimension with tragedy of the antiquity, which was composed of the following stages that follow each other: the prologue, the parode, the episode, the stasimon, the kommos and the exode. In this context, tragedy becomes for us a model of initiation, understood as a gateway through which the chosen enter the „interior of the world", the world of education constituting the core of humanity. There is only one difference in that the Greek tragedy ends in catastrophe. Thanks to the listing in the table below, it is easier to see the mechanisms and rules characterising the individual stages of tragedy.

Table. Diagram of the antique tragedy from the point of view of its educational rules

Stages of the tragedy	Educational scenario	Tragedy educational rules
Prologue	Appearance of a guide announcing the topic	Rule of decorum – responsibility for content and form
Parodos/ Parode	Appearance of the choir, with songs	Rule of unity – of the time, of the place, of the events – specific number of actors (no group scenes, individualisation
Episode	Development of events – acting by actors	Rule of necessity – Emergence of conflict
Stasimon	Appearance of the choir	Rule of mimesis – recreation (reflection of reality)
Kommos	Lament of the individual	Rule of arrangement in order
Exode	Ultimate song of the choir, exit from the stage	Rule of comparison, summary

Source: Own work

Tragedy in this area was an action fusing sensual experiences with intellectual reflection on them. In this ancient action, there can be observed the construction of a single image of knowledge. This was also noted by literature Nobel Prize laureate of 1946 Herman Hesse, who wrote:

> „It is felt by all children, but not by all with the same intensity and subtlety, and in many this vanishes as they take in the first letters of the alphabet. Others retain the mystery of childhood for a long time, and the traces and echoes remain in them until the days of grey hair and old age"[27]

---

[27] H. Hesse, Iris i inne opowiadania inicjacyjne, Kraków 1991, p. 10.

The significance of experience became the basis for the formulation of one of the main cognitive directives of the scientific world, by Martin Heidegger, who believed that „in order to get to know, one must let be"[28]. What does it mean for the educator „to let be"? And using at this stage a different, renowned German philosopher, Max Scheler, let us attempt to respond to the question put forward as follows: ***„to let be" means to acknow**le**dge, accept*** that the sheer existence of another that is a value functioning within the scope of the freedom due to them. It seems that the paedagogical rule of „letting be", would includes the conceptual category of „tolerance" in its original meaning, very often omitted. Tolerance stems from the Latin word *tolerantia* „patient endurance"; and the Latin verb *tolerare* – „to endure", „suffer in pain". Endure, meaning, to accept one's powerlessness to change the world as one would see fit, or to tame one's egotism, negotiating it, and with a different egotism that functions within the reasonable freedom that is due to it, and, hence, banishing both egotisms to forced coexistence, forced limitation.

What of this „being" then, if man is limited in the space of freedom that is their right? Can such an individual „be"? Antoni Kępiński, renowned medical doctor and humanist, known, among others, as the creator of the concept of axiological psychiatry, researching former concentration camp prisoners noticed in their behaviour a certain significant rule, valuable in particular for contemporary paedagogical theory, stemming from the fact that:

> „the biological imperative is exceedingly strong, and much effort must be put into not thinking only about bread when one is hungry, about water when one is thirsty, or the painful spot, when one feels pain. This effort, however, was necessary to maintain inner freedom – a free space where one can freely think, dream, plan, make decisions, release oneself from the nightmare of the present. If prison life, this anus mundi saw as much devotion, then specifically thanks to inner freedom"[29].

This inner freedom that prof. Kępiński thought about, is the autonomy of the mature individual, the mature „I", or the ability to shape in the educational process, to refer, through a mature, competence-developed sensitivity, to a different „I". Such attitudes towards paedagogy fir instance as a particular *competence sensitivity,* can be found in the scientific work of, among others, prof. Zbigniew Kwieciński, the creator of the Polish school of education sociology, who defines education as:

---

[28] See. M. Heidegger, Bycie i Czas, Warszawa 2008.
[29] A. Kępiński, Rytm życia, Warszawa 1972, p. 3.

„the sum total of influences upon an individual and groups, facilitating such development
that to the greatest extent they would become aware and creative members of the social,
cultural and national community, and that they would haven the ability of active self-rea-
lisation of their own identity and of development of their own I by taking supra-personal
tasks, through the maintenance of own continuity in course of fulfilment of tasks removed
in time"[30].

Conclusion

In the logic that shapes education systems in the world, a common rule can be
found. This common rule is the rejection of all that seems not needed or unnec-
essary in the activity strategy of state policy. Many educational visionaries even
announced the end of paedagogy as a science. One of these was Ricardo Massa,
a former and already deceased head of the Institute of Paedagogy at the Faculty of
Humanities of the University of Milan in Italy.

„The end of paedagogy, with certainty, but also the inability of philosophy, didactics and
education sciences to become aware of this, hence, to fulfil the task of replacing it, to effec-
tively contribute to the solution of theoretical and practical problems of education. A space
opens up here in the broad field of discourse and everyday practice against teaching and
education, to non-fictional and clear transformation of paedagogy. It is a space for new
paedagogy as the „clinic of education" aimed at finding the symbolic and material structure
of the educational experience, in opposition to the deceit of all identification of the area
of paedagogy with philosophy, the theory of vocational education or adulthood, experi-
mental research or a specific epistemology, all of which was again suggested in a course of
consideration. To achieve this, however, at least three other questions must be taken on (in
paedagogy), the failure to acknowledge which meant the end of its own image in contem-
porary culture. What is the place, what is the public and, hence, what is the language of the
new capacities of paedagogy?"[31].

Education seems to force diverse artificial, unnatural reactions from its recipi-
ents, bringing its activity solely down to the aesthetisation of the world, hence, strip-
ping the listeners from the ability to react on their own to that which is happening
around them. Two educational dimensions of aesthetisation summarise our mus-
ings on tragedy. This means sterilisation and particularisation. The first approach to
the educational space containing specific content or message form are related to the
„purification" of common beliefs, where the omnipresent mechanism is the over-
growth of form over content, causing education to be pushed [aside] to a „pop" form.

---

30   Z. Kwieciński, Edukacja jako wartość odzyskiwana wspólnie. Edukacja 1991, no. 1, p. 89.
31   R. Massa (ed.) La fine della pedagogia cultura contemporanea, Unicopli Milano 1988, p. 199.

The second model of educational aesthetisation in turn is characterised by a demand approach to exclusivity of content and methods. In this particularisational approach, the quite weak method of scientifisation and indication of unique scientific values is used, with these values useful only to those who present them.

The aesthetisational tragedy of education

TYPES OF EDUCATION AESTHETISATION	TYPICAL BEHAVIOUR	RESULTS
STERILISATION	„Purification" of common beliefs (Form over function, push towards a „pop" form „Via non-specialised, commonly available, modes of communication"	**U – TURNING INTO KITSCH** „POPULISM"
PARTICULARISATION	Stripping „concepts" of COMMON ACCESS to them – COMMONALITY	**USURPATION – (takeover)** Claiming exclusivity through scientification and indication of unique scientific values

Source: Own work

Hence the emerging need to look at education as a plane of creating of the spirit of internal freedom, as Kazimierz Dąbrowski, psychologist, psychiatrist, philosopher and paedagogue, creator of the theory of positive disintegration, wrote, which becomes the basis of the process of upbringing, with no place left for creating, of reining and almost omnipotently violent competition in contemporary society, where:

> „lies and primitive egotism are officially accepted in politics, in course of creation of extensive yet clear for insightful people facades of justice for the masses who have no time and no power of intelligence to become aware of these issues due to their nearsightedness, and nearsightedness based on the achievement of their own, limited interests".[32]

Hence, the educational situation described by us as „letting be", being the result of work of paedagogues as part of *competence sensitivity,* then using inspiration that may be provided by the scientific theory developed by Kazimierz Dąbrowski, is the synthesis of individual properties of an individual, their talents and feelings as well as of the social properties of the individual that are, among others, autonomy, empathy or responsibility. Dąbrowski himself described these two planes as the individual

---

[32] K. Dąbrowski, Moralność w polityce. Wielopoziomowość funkcji uczuciowych i popędowych w życiu społecznym i politycznym oraz w instytucjach („bis"), Warszawa 1991, p. 18.

essence and the social essence. Hence, competence sensitivity itself, will be a struggle towards a specific, empirical idea of society. Dąbrowski believed that the consequence of disappearance of the essence will be worse than death or non-existence.

Bibliography

Altermatt U., Katolicyzm a Nowoczesny Świat, Kraków 1995

Bańko M. (ed.), Inny słownik języka polskiego, Warszawa 2000

Barn B., Postmodernizm, Kraków 1992

Bauman Z., Nowoczesność i zagłada, Warszawa 1992

Bielik – Robson A., Kłopoty z przyjemnością. O tak zwanym kryzysie wartości w świecie konsump-
cyjnym, Tygodnik Powszechny 1997, no. 42

Bierdiajew M., Rozważania o egzystencji, Warszawa 2002

Dąbrowski K., Moralność w polityce. Wielopoziomowość funkcji uczuciowych i popędowych w ży-
ciu społecznym i politycznym oraz w instytucjach („bis"), Warszawa 1991,

Gasset J. O., Po co wracamy do filozofii, Warszawa 1992

Heidegger M., Bycie i Czas, Warszawa 2008.

Hesse H., Iris i inne opowiadania inicjacyjne, Kraków 1991

Horkcheimer M., Adorno T., Dialektik der Aufklärung, Frankfurt 1989.

Janion M., Czyn i klęska. Rzecz o tragizmie [in:] M. Janion, Gorączka romantyczna, Warszawa 1975.

Kępiński A., Rytm życia, Warszawa 1972, p. 3.

Kwieciński Z., Edukacja jako wartość odzyskiwana wspólnie. Edukacja 1991, no. 1, p. 89.

Kwieciński Z., Nieuniknione? Funkcje alfabetyzacji w dorosłości, Toruń – Olsztyn 2002

Kundera M., *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2009.

Marina J. A., Porażka inteligencji czyli głupota w teorii i praktyce, Kraków 2010

Massa R., ed.) La fine della pedagogia cultura contemporanea, Unicopli Milano 1988

Nalaskowski A., Edukacyjny show, Kraków 1998.

Nietzsche F., O prawdzie i kłamstwie w pozamoralnym sensie, [in:] Pisma pozostałe 1862-1875, Kra-
ków 2004

Scheler M., O zjawisku tragiczności, [in:] Arystoteles, D. Hume, M. Scheler, O tragedii i tragiczności,
Kraków 1976.

Sławiński J. (ed.), Słownik terminów literackich, Wrocław 1976 p. 467

Sugiera M. (ed.), W stronę rytuału. Od Yeatsa do Węgajt, Kraków 1999

Szczepański J., Sprawy ludzkie, Warszawa 1984

Tatarkiewicz W., Parerga, Warszawa 1976

Tatarkiewicz W., (ed.) – Arystoteles, David Hume, Max Scheler. O tragedii i tragiczności, Kraków
1976, p. 8

The King James Bible, available online at www.kingjamesbibleonline.org.

Witkowski L., Śmiech jako opór i wyzwolenie (pogranicze wiedzy, wiary i władzy) [in:] Z. Kwieciński
(ed.), Nieobecne dyskursy, part 1, pp. 94-95

Witkowski L., Uniwersalizm pogranicza. O semiotyce kultury Michała Bachtina w kontekście edu-
kacji, Toruń 2000

Dmitry Leontiev*

Moscow State University and Institute of Existential Psychology and Life Enhancement

The phenomenon of responsibility: between incontinence and hypercontrol

KEYWORDS

responsibility, hypercontrol, freedom, impulses

ABSTRACT

The paper contains a phenomenological and theoretical analysis of responsibility treated as the capacity of personal causation (taking the role of the cause of one's actions) based upon conscious awareness and self-detachment from the immediate stream of one's living. The manifestations of the lack of responsibility are the failure to manage one's actions in the face of multiple *forces majeures*, incontinence of immediate wishes and impulses, or rigid hypercontrol over these impulses. Special sections are devoted to interrelations between responsibility and freedom, especially in the developmental aspect, and responsibility for another person.

The phenomenon of responsibility is key for the existential interpretation of man. These issues, however, were not sufficiently or fully studied and developed, mostly with respect to the issue of freedom. Let us recall the example suggested by Viktor Emil Frankl[1]: as an analogy to the Statue of Liberty erected on the eastern shore of the United States of America, it would be necessary to construct a Statue of Responsibility on its western shore.

---

* Dmitry Leontiev, doctor of psychology, head of the International Laboratory of Positive Psychology of Personality and Motivation, professor of the Faculty of Psychology of the Moscow Lomonosov State University (МГУ – Московский государственный университет), Moscow, Russia, dleon@mail.ru. The original translation from Russian into Polish is based on: *Теория личности А. Ф. Лазурского: от наклонностей к отношениям //* „Методология и история психологии", vol. 3, № 4, 2008, pp. 7–20.

[1] V. E. Frankl, *Człowiek w poszukiwaniu sensu*, transl. by Aleksandra Wolnicka, Wydawnictwo Czarna Owca, Warszawa 2009.

The issue of responsibility was described by German psychoanalyst Erich Fromm[2], who analysed the phenomenon of escape from freedom as being tied to the burden of responsibility. Psychology quite frequently uses the concept of „responsibility", to assign specific responsibility to a specific person[3]. Studies conducted during the recent decades (mainly by representatives of the psychology of personality) show that responsibility is a certain subjective causality. The assignment of responsibility is the assignment of the status of being the cause to a specific factor, in relation to emerging changes. In psychotherapy and clinical psychology, the indicated assignment describes the level and limits of responsibility of the psychotherapist or consultant[4] in the therapeutic relation with the client[5] (or patient), thereby describing the relations between the psychotherapist and the patient. The scope of responsibility is too subtle, but calls for special attention here. The case is similar with family relations.

Commonly, the concept of responsibility is correlated to the feeling of guilt. Responsibility hides within itself connotations of this term, for instance, one can chance upon penal or administrative responsibility. Responsibility applies to actions that took place in the past. It emerges when a situation arises, for which an individual bears specific consequences. However, the moment these negative circumstances do not emerge, responsibility does not arise. When we hear the words: „you will be held responsible for this", they are related to the future aspect. When something does take place, it shall be our role to clarify the effects, and, primarily, to bear responsibility. A breakthrough in the common understanding of responsibility takes place when we speak of responsibility for someone or something: for close ones, for the family, an issue to be taken care of or a social group. If we are able to get to the core of the concept of responsibility, then it will actually mean „presenting oneself in another's name, responding for others when they are called to bear responsibility". The moment I am responsible for my family, for the group I direct, for my country, then as a chosen leader – I am responsible. This encompasses a real sense. Let us also not forget the „responsible employee", taking upon themselves the responsibility of another. Is it at all possible to respond for another

---

[2] E. Fromm, *Ucieczka od wolności*, transl. by Olga i Andrzej Ziemilscy, Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, Warszawa 1978.

[3] B. Weiner, *Judgments of Responsibility*, New York, Guilford, 1995.

[4] In humanistic psychology, the psychotherapist is also considered the facilitator, meaning that they support the development of the person being analysed, however, they do not influence the result of therapy. In the learning process, the facilitator plays the role of a teacher who attempts to solve a specific dispute between parties [note by A. K.]

[5] In humanistic psychotherapy the term „client" is used frequently, whereas existential psychotherapy stresses the use of the term „patient" in the therapeutic process [note by A. K.]

person (be responsible for them), and to what extent? We will come back to this question later. Right now we must respond to the question, what in essence is the phenomenon of responsibility?[6]

The three modes of flying a plane

Unlike animals, man can fragment, subdivide themselves. An individual knows what is happening with them (what takes place outside of their identity). They stress: I exist, and my life takes place, my actions, my behaviour, what arises between me and the world. The relationship between the fact that I consider myself as „me", and that which takes place between me and the world, may refer to one of the following statements: „I am to no extent aware of what is happening with me, I do not separate myself from the present reality, my consciousness is not sufficiently reflective. I am completely fused with the process of life, an example of which are infants. I perform all activities on autopilot (without reflection and automatically). I am controlled by causal mechanisms: internal impulses, external stimuli, conditional relations and stereotypes. Accordingly, the entire mechanic of such autopilot behaviour, without a moment of reflection, awareness of changes, is described by behaviourism as described by Robert Cialdini[7]: „click-whirr"[8]. We face diverse programmes, algorithms and cause and effect chains necessary to effect the mentioned activities, they operate on their own, and the „I" has nothing to do with it.

I reflect on the process taking place inside me, when I am able to discern my „I" from the flow of my life. To continue the autopilot metaphor, let us imagine that a pilot appears in the plane cabin, taking place beside the autopilot and not looking to hold the yoke. They watch, however, how the autopilot functions, mean-

---

[6] See J. Filek, *Filozofia odpowiedzialności XX wieku*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2003. [note by A. K.]

[7] R. Cialdini, *Wywieranie wpływu na ludzi. Teoria i praktyka*, przeł. Bogdan Wojciszke, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2014.

[8] „Ethologists, studying animal behaviour in their natural environment, have noted that in many species, certain fixed, mechanically repeated behaviour patterns emerge. These solidified behaviour patterns are noteworthy due to their similarity to the automatic reaction patterns in people (as *click, whirr...*). Both in people as well as in animals, the tendency is seen to release an entire system of such mechanical behaviour only upon emergence of a single, specific property in the vicinity. The capacity to react to such a property, meaning, the trigger, usually turns out to be very advantageous to the organism, as it enables the immediate execution of an action that is adequate to the situation, without any detailed and time-consuming analysis of all the available information". Ibidem, p. 30. [note by A. K., translated from Polish into English by the translator from Polish into English]

ing, they control the entire process that takes place. The situation remains under control of causal effects and relations. However, I myself analyse the plane of the processes that arise, hence we may refer to the concept of the „victim" here. The signs of neurosis are generally related to good reflection upon and reception of the processes that emerge, but it seems impossible to make the decision to keep hold of the yoke. Everything that is happening to me, can cause fright, panic, but my efforts are worth nothing. Could it be any different? I am not able to change anything, the situation progresses on its own. Being dependent on systems of relations, seeing the multitude of sources that influence me, I turn numb as a rabbit before a constrictor.

The indicated situations include the known phenomenon of escape from freedom, described in the classic monograph by Erich Fromm[9]: People fear thinking about independently describing the trajectories of fate and modes of action. Ernest Nieznany stressed that nobody can force another not to become a slave in a free society. This is a fre choice. Let us recall the thesis of Andrei Voznesensky: „Unbearable is not the fact that I am forced to something, but that I act of my own will". Rollo May, writing about the causes of popularity of the famed book by Burrhus Frederic Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, noted that man is quite close to the thought that liberty is a figment of imagination, and all human behaviour is conditioned[10]. These words were written decades after Fromm, but presently the situation is not radically different. The tendency to „escape from freedom" and „escape from responsibility" looking to become the cause of future events, existed in the past, but remains presently, perhaps not dominant, but enticing in many respects. Iosif Brodsky warned graduates of a US university against this state of affairs: „Make all effort to avoid subscribing to the status of victims. Of all your body parts, most closely observe your index finger, as it is the one looking to unmask, to come out. The index finger is the sign of the victim, as opposed to the victory sign, and it becomes the synonym of surrender. Regardless of how hopeless your situation would be, do not blame external forces: history, the state, the government, race, parents, phases of the moon, your childhood or that you were taught how to use a chamberpot, etc."[11].

In fact, we have gotten used to the fact that we refer to numerous determining factors that influence us: Outside forces, laws of nature, other people, social norms, cravings, customs, own internal impulses. We say: „I could not relent, I craved it so

---

[9] E. Fromm, *Ucieczka od wolności*, transl. by Olga and Andrzej Ziemilscy, Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, Warszawa 1978.

[10] R. May, *Freedom and destiny*, Norton, New York 1981, p. 137.

[11] И. Бродский, *Речь на стадионе //* Сочинения Иосифа Бродского: в 8 тт. Санкт-Петербург, Пушкинский фонд. Т. 6. 2000, pp. 116–117.

much". When we refer to difficulties in controlling internal impulses, we conclude: „I am what I am, what can I do", „this is the thug I am, this is how bad I am", „this is my structure, these are my relations, needs, impulses". As time passes, however, this seems quite convincing. When we remind ourselves that at quite a young age, practically everyone, perhaps not without difficulty, yet efficiently, learns such complicated activities as peeing and defecating, a reference to the fact that certain impulses and drives attract us in a specific direction and we are unable to handle them does not look so enticing after all. It was proven that asocial psychopaths who showed uncontrollable aggression, however, were able to control it by way of a new drug, pure *placebo*. In other words, we prefer to think in categories of advantages about the fact that there is something within us that we are not able to control, and hence we drift along the current of will. Let us consider the classic study by Walter Mischel[12], who stressed that the ability to delay satisfaction, characterising human capacity to influence what is happening to them, correlates with personal development, turning out to be a significant parameter of maturity[13].

Hence, the pilot stops using the autopilot and shifts to manual control. The „I" itself does not only reflectively separate itself from the flow of life, from what is happening to me, but I can also gradually halt the operation of causes, factors that influence me. Reflection is a necessary condition for this type of activity, but it is not a sufficient condition. We are dependent on many forces and factors, they are not, however, the cause of human activities. The following question can be put forward: Why am I speaking at a specific moment, why don't I take a break, go to the buffet and have a coffee or a beer? Many different reasons can be given: I perceive the expectations of the public, hence it is so important to do them justice and maintain my professional reputation, because I receive remuneration, and may lose it if I violate my obligations, etc. All these explanations do have a point, but neither can be a principle that is clarifying and provides the ultimate answer to the question, why, despite everything, don't I go somewhere else? I shall stay. To the end, as if chained, I shall speak in this very hall. There is no causal relation here. The sole correct reply is reflecting on both the possibility of making a choice and leaving the hall as well as the possibility of remaining and continuing with

---

[12] A similar situation is noted by Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd in their book *The Time Paradox*. In this publication, we find out that when we delay gratification and are filled by the feeling of control, stability, thought and primarily patience in the temporal sense, our actions aimed at the future may give rise to constructive consequences [note by A. K.].

[13] W. Mischel, *Objective and subjective rules for delay of gratification* // Cognition in Human Motivation and Learning /ed. by G.d'Idewalle, W. Lens. Leuven: Leuven University Press; Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1981, pp. 33–58. See W. Mischel, *Test Marshmallow. O pożytkach płynących z samokontroli*, transl. by Agnieszka Nowak-Młynikowska, Smak Słowa, Sopot 2015.

one's obligation. I choose this second option, and I keep confirming this choice. Of course, these possibilities as well as all other potential options that we are faced with, are asymmetrical: Some possibilities are more appealing than others. Others are riskier, however we know full well that one does not always pick what is most appealing and optimal. Knowing the structure of the situation and the variants emerging for people in a given situation, they can shine through when we get to know the motivation, attractiveness, the values, probability of emergence of these or other results, we can determine, which behaviour variant would be best for one. People often act improperly. Moreover, the indicated statement permits the estimation of one's behaviour, however in the beginning we analyse their reflective consciousness – they operate „on autopilot". When we turn on the reflective consciousness, all expectations fail: If a given situation would for instance have six alternatives, there are none that could not be chosen independent of their level of attractiveness. I can think of a seventh one the psychologist would never get to know if they were to describe my situation from the outside.

I personally interfere in the factors describing my situation. „We could stop being loudmouth consequences in the great cause-and-effect chain of events and try to take over the role of causes"[14]. *In such a case, I simply enter my own life as a causal factor*. One of the components explaining this state of affairs is the pause that already Rollo May[15] wrote about. It is found in the area of human freedom: The nature of freedom is found in the pause (interruption) between the stimulus and the reaction[16]. When instead of reacting immediately, we make a pause, the chain is interrupted. The „click-whirr" mechanism instantly becomes out of tune and diverse possibilities arise. Through the effect of the pause, I interrupt the influence of external and internal factors (in the traditional sense). The pause permits the disconnection of the „autopilot" and grab the „steering wheel". At this point, one's behaviour regains its freedom and responsibility.

The genetic aspect of freedom and responsibility

Freedom is a form of activity, controlled in each of its facet. Responsibility constitutes an individual becoming aware of the ability to be the cause of changes taking place both within them as well as in the world, and the conscious control of this

---

[14] И. Бродский, *Состояние, которое мы называем изгнанием, или Попутного ретро* // Сочинения Иосифа Бродского: в 8 тт. Санкт-Петербург.: Пушкинский фонд. Т. 6. 2000, p. 36.

[15] Representative of existential psychology from the United States.

[16] R. May, *Freedom and Destiny*, Norton, New York 1981.

disposition[17]. Freedom and responsibility are similar states of affairs, and at first glance, the feeling even emerges of their identicality. Some authors stress the fact that responsibility and freedom are two sides of the same coin, and that they are inseparable. However convincing the data mmay be, freedom and responsibility become alike only at a certain stage, but they flow out of two different sources. Freedom gradually develops in course of various forms of activity, thanks to an individual regaining the right to their own activity and the value of its substantiation. Responsibility develops in the process of shaping of forms of self-control, in the moment of gradual takeover of control of various aspects of action and behaviour that were initially taken over by our parents when we were minors. In the beginning, we were characterised by limited ability to move about, we required care. Step by step, motorically, we control our behaviour, we move by ourselves, then we learn diverse modes of action, and later we define the objectives that until that point remained outside of us. One by one, self-sufficient meanings emerge that are different from the senses and the values of our family environment (and this frequently makes the parents wonder, when did the child learn that); it is a process of progressive emancipation, in course of which that component develops gradually that at a mature age takes the form of responsibility. Freedom and responsibility, not fully formed yet, may create various constellations. In course of two empirical studies youths were subjected to,[18] it was shown that there are different relations between freedom and responsibility:

- the *independent* variant, as the most advanced, is found when freedom and responsibility actually become one;
- the *impulsive quasi-freedom* variant arises when there is no responsibility;
- the *symbiotic quasi-responsibility* variant is found with respect to external objectives and values as a result of lack of freedom;
- the *conformal* variant emerges when neither the former nor the latter mechanisms emerge[19].

The difference between freedom and responsibility can also be seen in a situation of imprisonment, however, I am aware that I am starting to become the cause of these actions. I can understand that a certain situation is forcing me to act in

---

[17] Д. А. Леонтьев, *Очерк психологии личности*, Смысл, Москва 1997.

[18] E. Kaliteyevskaya, D. Leontiev, *When Freedom Meets Responsibility: Adolescence As The Critical Point Of Positive Personality Development* // A. Delle Fave (ed.) Positive Psychology. Special issue of Ricerche di Psicologia, 2004, anno XXVII, N 1, pp. 103–115. E. Kaliteyevskaya, I. Borodkina, D. Leontiev, E. Osin, *Meaning, adjustment, and autodetermination in adolescence* // Proceedings of the 2nd European Conference on Positive Psychology (in press).

[19] Д. А., Леонтьев, *Очерк психологии личности*, Смысл, Москва 1997.

a specific manner, but I face two options: I either act in the way the situation is forcing me to act, but I do not perceive these activities as mine and I seek the guilty party, or externally I act the same, in a sense (from the point of view of an observer – a behaviourist), but I accept the necessity of these actions, I understand their unavoidability. Perhaps this is due to religious approval or something else, hence I accept these actions as mine. This is responsible activity. An example of an act that is externally forced yet internally approved is the story of Hamlet as interpreted by Merab Mamardashvili[20]. Mamardashvili sees the core of the Shakespearean tragedy in the fact that Hamlet is found within similar circumstances. If seemingly at first it would seem understandable what he should do, who is to be killed and in what order: the term of the „wheel of fate" emerges, as Mamardashvili says, using the ancient metaphor. Hamlet is uncertain, he does not want to become a part of this automatic fusion of events, he tries to find a different way out, he problematises his entire journey and does not want to make it. In the final scene, he perishes, performing in the fifth act that which he did not want to do in the first. It is a very instructive event, a heroic demise that demonstrates the struggle against mechanical fusion of circumstances, against autopilots and causal chains, from which one does not alwayss emerge victorious. Hamlet's demise was never to be his fate.

Non-alibi, soundness of mind and forces majeures

The core of responsibility is to acknowledge my actions as my own, what I do myself and not what just happens to be, and, accordingly, to acknowledge myself as the cause of certain events. the formula of responsibility was expressed by Mikhail Zhvanetsky in the form of a proverb: „I only thank myself for everything". This proverb refers to words expressed by Mikhail Bakhtin in the wonderful phrase „non-alibi in being"[21]. Most probably, nobody among philosophers and psychologists was able to show better than Bakhtin, in the existential aspect, the analysis of the issue of responsibility. The legal concept of alibi means actually the lack of any proof concerning a specific crime. Suitable non-alibi is actual participation in an event and responsibility for it[22].

---

[20] М. К. Мамардашвили, *Необходимость себя*, Лабиринт, Москва 1996, p. 47.

[21] М. М. Бахтин, *К философии поступка* // Собр. Соч. Т.1. Москва: Русские словари; Языки славянской культуры, 2003, p. 39. See M. Bachtin, *W stronę filozofii czynu*, przeł. Bogusław Żyłko, Wydawnictwo słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 1997.

[22] „Responsibility is described by Bakhtin effectively as „my non-alibi in being". My responsibility, my irreplaceable responsibility – ireplaceable by even those closest of You that are most inti-

Jean Paul Sartre identified responsibility with being the author of one's actions. It was also presented by Irvin Yalom in the chapter of his *Existential Psychotherapy*[23] devoted to responsibility. One can agree with this, with one reservation: responsibility is identified with authorship and causation not in the sense that I sit over a piece of paper and can write anything that springs to my mind. The core of responsibility is contained in the conviction that when I have already written something, I cannot pretend that it was not me and that something (external) caused me to do this. If I am the author, I should acknowledge my own script, because I cannot question that fact. All external causes and pressure do not remove the problem of my responsibility. „I personally am not guilty of anything. It's how I was educated" is the justification of a character in „*The Dragon*" by Evgeny Schwartz. „Everyone was educated – replies the hero – but why did you have to end up the first student?"[24]. The concept of responsibility is tied to one other term that is significant from the legal point of view – namely, the concept of sanity. Sanity is the ability to sign contracts, the possibility of making independent decisions. One is responsible for themselves, accepts in own name certain responsibilities, assuming that they shall at a certain point be executed. This criterion omits children and the mentally ill. One can also distinguish limited sanity or functional insanity, related to affect. One of the fundamental issues of court psychological expertise is an attempt at determining, whether a disabled capacity of man exists to be responsible for their own actions due to affect. Farid Safuanov studied the problem of limited sanity as limitation of man's freedom of choice, analysing factors that may limit the freedom of choice. He tied them to legal categories in which limitation of sanity is classified as a reduction of responsibility for one's actions[25]. A comprehensive reduction of the issue of sanity to freedom of choice is incomplete if a higher level of behaviour control ensures is related to such a state that Arkady and Boris Strugatsky characterised as follows: Maximum freedom is when man is unable to choose. The core of things is not random, but imperative: When man reaches that

---

mately related ze to me – provides by I with a distinguished significance, however this significance is rather a burden than satisfaction. As may be seen, proper, responsible action of the I that is true to the surrounding world (hence, You as well) describes a sort of raw, „obligatory unity", at the same time it specifically is a condition of the most open, devoted, engaged, selfless, metaphysically charged reference of the I to the You. Without – so to speak – a „solid" I, the relation to You is threatened by fragility, accidentality, haste and exaltation. Bakhtin writes on this with quite founded pathos: „I life in a world of unavoidable reality, not accidental possibility". Ibidem, pp. 437–438. Conf. M. Bachtin, *W stronę filozofii czynu*, transl. by B. Żyłko, Gdańsk 1997, p. 70. [note by A. K.]

[23] I. Yalom, *Psychoterapia egzystencjalna*, Anna Tanalska-Dulęba, Instytut Psychologii Zdrowia, Warszawa 2008.

[24] Е. Шварц, *Дракон*, Пермское кн. Изд-во, Пермь 1988, p. 269

[25] Ф.С. Сафуанов, *Психология криминальной агрессии*, Смысл, Москва 2003.

understanding of the essence of things, whereby they have no choice, they become its guide and part of the objective order of the world. This does not necessary describe maximum freedom, but certainly maximum responsibility and maximum subjective causality. A reference must also be made to another legal term related to the concept of responsibility. This is the concept of „force majeure", describing circumstances that liberate one from responsibility for obligations to be fulfilled. In line with the translation from French, *force majeure* describes a „higher power" violating the capacity to plan things, to describe their effects and bear responsibility for undertaken obligations: for natural disasters or actions of state that could not be foreseen. One of the properties of responsibility is resistance to stress-causing factors, changes of unforeseen events, affective disturbances and shocks that could violate the capacity to follow one's chosen path. If one is not sufficiently ready to experience the possible faults, swings, then any occurring change of mood turns out to be exactly this higher power questioning my plans for the future. Only the cause of events can be responsible for their effects. The readiness to be the cause of certain activities and the readiness to respond for their effects are psychologically inseparable states.

Diagnosis of civilisation: The syndrome of uncontrollability

The diagnosis of our time, of our civilisation, is a chasm between the readiness to be the cause of activity and the readiness to bear responsibility for their effects. In this case, we remain between acts and responsibility. The dislike emerges of the takeover of the steering wheel, we shift responsibility to the autopilot. This diagnosis may be described as the „syndrome of uncontrollability" or by the names of its creators as the „Chernomyrdin-Duremar syndrome". Uncontrollability emerges when a specific process takes place inside of me beside my own will that is liberated in the external reality. I do not control this process, I do not hold myself to be a visible cause of it; the direct effect of this state of affairs is the alibi in being. Enuresis is a very good example of the uncontrollability of natural human instincts: The essence seems to be uncontrollability related to the libido, the struggle for power, the achievement of motivation, the maintenance of aggression. We spread our hands, saying: that's just how people are, how I am, that's the way I'm made. The most striking example of this syndrome is the chasm between actions and effects: „they tried their best, it came out as usual" (Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin). One of the final scenes of the film 'The Adventures of Pinocchio' shows the core of this syndrome precisely; as Carabas-Barabas suffers failure. Duremar

dances on the side, smiling as he hums the following words: „It's not my thing, it's entirely not my thing...".

The Chernomyrdin-Duremar syndrome describes the situation of „alibi in own life", the inability and unwillingness to take over responsibility. Responsibility is the third, higher level of relation between myself and what is happening with me, and ensures control over „natural" processes. People who would want to do their best, who honestly want to see a case to its happy end, however, who cannot quite achieve it. Merab Mamardashvilii believes that moral actions do not only assume longing; it is not enough to want good for it to come to pass. A small child may want to lift up a chest of drawers, but it doesn't have enough muscle and strength that would let it do this. It may hit the chest of drawers, but it won't accomplish anything. Mamardashvili puts it exactly the same way: In order to achieve a certain moral action, do good, it takes not so much the will of good, but it takes the „moral muscle". If this muscle is missing, then nothing can be accomplished.

In order to achieve every planned, purposeful and responsible activity with a specific, future-oriented result, a specific set of muscles is required. The illness of our time, of the entire Western civilisation (including Russia) is the syndrome of uncontrollability – the atrophy of moral muscle. Contemporary civilisation had created an enormous number of niches, in which life is possible on all kinds of autopilots, negating the development of higher forms of control of behaviour. Referring to terminology of the theory of Lev Vygotsky, contemporary Western civilisation in the face of mass media and its relevant economical, political mechanisms, is based on the cult of lower mental functions. The mechanisms become involuntary, automatic, basing on the „click-whirr" formula, submitting to manipulation. The delay of satisfaction and other forms of owning (oneself) cease to be necessary.

In this sense, the concept of illness is not so metaphorical any more: In the view of one author from the United States, the core of neurosis is reference to issues of responsibility. Each neurosis (and partly, psychosis) stands out by its inability to discern between situations and contexts, in which a specific choice and the takeover of responsibility are possible. hence, a Neurotic exerts a lot of energy to counter problems outside of their sphere of influence, and is unable to make decisions in the area of their own control zone[26].

---

[26] M. K. Temerlin, *On Choice and Responsibility in a Humanistic Psychotherapy* // Severin F. T. (ed.) Humanistic Viewpoints in Psychology: A Book of Readings, McGraw-Hill, New York 1965.

Control of control and a dialogue with impulses

It would be erroneous to oppose the failure to control and dampen impulses. Hypercontrol is the opposite of lack of control. If one desires to have control over everything, the inability to control the control itself arises. This phenomenon gains properties that make it involuntary, persistent, compulsive, outside of the scope of this control. An old, psychologically significant joke may be mentioned here, when a person came to find employment at a certain company. And so, they put to him questions about what they could do. The future employee says: „I can dig". „And what else can you do?" „I am also able to not dig". In reality, this does not feel so funny: We frequently come across people who are able to dig, but not digging would not be so easy for them. These two capacities are equally important. „Not-digging" concerns the ability to take a break, to refer to a situation, to become aware of just where one is at that point, to understand own desires. Hypercontrol turns out to be just as unhealthy as the phenomenon of „uncontrollability".

Both these extremes, these poles, concern the state of intense focus and control, maximum openness to the world: They are components of a unified cycle of human activity. Heinz Heckhausen developed together with his partners halfway through the 1980s the „Rubicon model", establishing that when a particular decision is being made, a certain point exists, in which the mode of functioning changes. A person totally open to information from the most diverse kinds of sources weighs the alternatives as they are not ultimately shapes, they exist in a state of maximum openness, variability, readiness to take the most diverse of directions. The moment one makes a final decision, their mode of functioning changes suddenly. Heckhausen speaks of a shift from the motivational state to the volitional state of consciousness. Will defines a person removed from all other options, save for the one they have just chosen. They cease comparing, searching information, to be focused exclusively on the path chosen[27].

In conquering both these extremes – uncontrollability and hypercontrol – it seems necessary to turn attention to the subtle mechanisms of inclusion of impulses, desires to the system of behaviour control. „Life is a dialogue with circumstances", as Andrei Donatovich Sinyavsky aptly put it. It is also necessary to conduct dialogue with one's cravings and impulses. Let us attempt to consider the modes of coping with one's own desires phenomenologically. We will analyse one of the most classic cases: desire that is sexual in nature. Let is say that there arises specif-

---

[27] Х. Хекхаузен, *Мотивация и деятельность*, 2., перераб. изд. Питер, Санкт-Петербург; Смысл, Москва 2003.

ically in me a desire aimed towards a specific woman. In this, two typical cases are usually analysed. The first arises when I begin to undertake any sort of action that should, in the end, lead to the fulfilment of the desire. The other, opposing variant, is when I turn indignant towards myself, then I experience guilt and shame: But I am a family man, and I should furthermore be thinking about the company I am running, and here, an uncontrolled desire „of the flesh" arises. I strive to stifle this desire, thanks to the formula of A. and B. Strugatsky, I attempt to „consider the unexplainable phenomenon to be irrational, transcendental, one that does not actually exist, and remove it from the nation's memory once and for all"[28].

In reality, the continuation of the intermediate relation seems much more plausible. I can maintain this desire, de-reflectify the task and subsequently, immediately or at a later time, realise it. Perhaps this desire opens up before me something significant, it discloses the world of my own relations with women, but primarily it is an opening towards myself. The described phenomenon has a specific value to me. Entering into mature dialogue with my desire, it provides me with a lot of information about myself: „Only through desire and pain I can get to know the world, others, as well as myself"[29]. Who could know when and in what form could it be able to merge with other streams and factors determining my actions.

Who for whom (takes responsibility)

The ultimate aspect of the issue of responsibility that must necessarily be considered are interpersonal relations. The aspect of responsibility for another is current for psychotherapists, a proper description of it even exists: The psychotherapist is responsible for the work process, but they are not responsible for the result of the therapeutic process. Still, the problem is clear also in family interactions, in the relation between the citizen and the state that is responsible for them. The basis of analysis of this situation should be amended by the existential rule of indivisibility of responsibility: *in a situation of cooperation, the measure of responsibility taken on by one person influences in no way the measure of responsibility that applies to another*. These are different forms of responsibility.

The original, primary responsibility that arises in every person, is responsibility for themselves. This is responsibility in the strictest sense of the word: orig-

---

[28] А. Н. Стругацкий, Б. Н. Стругацкий, *Понедельник начинается в субботу. Сказка о тройке*, Terra Fantastica, Санкт-Петербург 1992, p. 345.

[29] М. К. Мамардашвили, *Психологическая топология пути*, РХГИ, Санкт-Петербург 1997, p. 53.

inal, necessary and unavoidable. This responsibility means that man becomes the cause of their own actions. When a problem with responsibility would arise in me, I go to see a psychotherapist. I should follow the doctor's advice even if I sense the pressure of others (their reprehensible orders). In such a situation, the illusion of release from responsibility arises. If the commander bears full and absolute responsibility for the actions of their unit, how much of this responsibility remains with the soldiers themselves? The correct answer is: one hundred percent as well, because responsibility is not divisible. What is the commander or the mother in the family actually responsible for? What is the psychotherapist responsible for, the man who expands the frame of responsibility outside of themselves, and what is full and absolute responsibility for other participants of this cooperation? In relations between the state and citizens, the question is not about who is responsible for whom, but primarily, what the state is specifically responsible for, and what I myself am responsible for. What is manifested here is the removal between making a decision and the responsibility for actions, as described above, between one's entitlements and this specific *muscle* of action, without which it is impossible to effect the value of being the cause. The Chernomyrdin-Duremar Syndrome is experienced both by the state and by citizens: Everything happens for incomprehensible reasons, hence we spread our arms and say: „we tried our best".

Conclusions: Three sources and three components of responsibility

I would like to conclude this article with an attempt at bringing the above musings down to a simple schematic that might become a useful tool bringing diverse aspects of responsibility in order. In psychology, going back all the way to William McDougall, issues of responsibility were made use of in various contexts. We have achieved a tripartite diagram of psychological processes and dispositions: the cognitive, the emotional and the effective components. If we would like to translate this diagram into the phenomenon of responsibility, then the cognitive component would turn out to be subjective causality and mechanisms of attribution: Do I perceive myself or external factors, fixed or situation-based factors to be the fundamental cause of what is happening to me, of what I am doing. Subjective causality is not identical with responsibility, it is only its cognitive component.

The emotional component of responsibility is bravery. It constitutes the readiness to take on diverse unexpected turns of events without altering the general

orientation, own objectives, plans and the issue of why one chose to be the cause, the capacity not to give in to influences by diverse external forces, including force majeure. Man controls their own behaviour, is cognizant, capable and responsible for the actions they undertake. Any person, in whom this property is weakly expressed, remains under the constant influence of force majeure, which every external compulsion becomes.

An effective component of responsibility is the choice to act and the achievement of subjective causality. There are no right or wrong choices in one's life. Even from the perspective of time, knowing the consequences to which any one or another choice had led us, we cannot despite everything know whether that choice was best or worst if the consequences turned out to be bad or unwanted. Hence, from the existential point of view, the problem of choice turns out to be the following: a „good" choice is not a „correct" one, but a choice that is accepted as one's own responsible choice. Being aware that there can be no correct choice, one takes on the risk, accepting the lack of guarantee of results, and at the same time, bearing responsibility or running away from it, attempting to work as if this was the right choice and every other person would do the same. If at a later time something would turn out to be not the way it was supposed to be, I start searching for the guilty party: But I made the correct choice! The phenomenon of choice or escape from choice, meaning, the alibi, the phenomenon of responsibility or its avoidance finds its own, direct, effective expression. The issue of responsibility is understood to be an exit from the post-modern impasse of common relativity, a specific horizon and the loss of true and valuable indications or hints[30]. The path to the exit does not go through any objective, abstract truth, but through subjective reality thanks to the approval of senses and values, the action of a suitable personality that confirms its non-alibi in being. In the end, as the recently again popular ancient wisdom says: It is the awareness of the limits of one's own responsibility, the ability to discern between that, which we are able to change, from that, which we can only accept. Knowledge of the law liberates from irresponsibility.

Translated from Russian and edited by Aleksandra Kondrat
Nicolaus Copernicus University
moskwa.ros@gmail.com

---

[30] Г. Л. Тульчинский, *Постчеловеческая персонология. Новые перспективы свободы и рациональности*, Алетейя, Санкт-Петербург 2002.

Bibliography

M. Bachtin, „W stronę filozofii czynu", transl. by Bogusław Żyłko, Wydawnictwo słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 1997.

R. Cialdini, „Wywieranie wpływu na ludzi. Teoria i praktyka", transl. by Bogdan Wojciszke, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2014.

J. Filek, „Filozofia odpowiedzialności XX wieku", Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2003.

V. E. Frankl, „Człowiek w poszukiwaniu sensu", transl. by Aleksandra Wolnicka, Wydawnictwo Czarna Owca, Warszawa 2009.

E. Fromm, „Ucieczka od wolności", transl. by Olga and Andrzej Ziemilscy, Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, Warszawa 1978.

E. Kaliteyevskaya, D. Leontiev, *When Freedom Meets Responsibility: Adolescence As The Critical Point Of Positive Personality Development* // A. Delle Fave (ed.) Positive Psychology. Special issue of Ricerche di Psicologia, 2004, anno XXVII, N 1, pp. 103–115.

E. Kaliteyevskaya, I. Borodkina, D. Leontiev, E. Osin, *Meaning, adjustment, and autodetermination in adolescence* // Proceedings of the 2nd European Conference on Positive Psychology (in press).

R. May, „Freedom and destiny", Norton, New York 1981.

W. Mischel, *Objective and subjective rules for delay of gratification* // Cognition in Human Motivation and Learning /ed. by G.d'Idewalle, W. Lens. Leuven: Leuven University Press; Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1981, pp. 33–58.

W. Mischel, „Test Marshmallow. O pożytkach płynących z samokontroli", transl. by Agnieszka Nowak-Młynikowska, Smak Słowa, Sopot 2015.

M. K. Temerlin, *On Choice and Responsibility in a Humanistic Psychotherapy* // Severin F.T. (ed.) Humanistic Viewpoints in Psychology: A Book of Readings, McGraw-Hill, New York 1965.

B. Weiner, „Judgments of Responsibility", NewYork, Guilford, 1995.

I. Yalom, „Psychoterapia egzystencjalna", Anna Tanalska-Dulęba, Instytut Psychologii Zdrowia, Warszawa 2008.

М. М. Бахтин, „К философии поступка" // Собр. Соч. Т.1. Москва: Русские словари; Языки славянской культуры, 2003.

И. Бродский, „Речь на стадионе" // Сочинения Иосифа Бродского: в 8 тт. Санкт-Петербург, Пушкинский фонд. Т. 6. 2000.

И. Бродский, „Состояние, которое мы называем изгнанием, или Попутного ретро" // Сочинения Иосифа Бродского: в 8 тт. Санкт-Петербург.: Пушкинский фонд. Т. 6. 2000.

Ф.С. Сафуанов, „Психология криминальной агрессии", Смысл, Москва 2003.

А. Н. Стругацкий, Б. Н. Стругацкий, „Понедельник начинается в субботу. Сказка о тройке", Terra Fantastica, Санкт-Петербург 1992,

Х. Хекхаузен, „Мотивация и деятельность", 2., перераб. изд. Питер, Санкт-Петербург; Смысл, Москва 2003.

М. К. Мамардашвили, „Необходимость себя", Лабиринт, Москва 1996.

М. К. Мамардашвили, „Психологическая топология пути", РХГИ, Санкт-Петербург 1997.

Д. А. Леонтьев, „Очерк психологии личности", Смысл, Москва 1997.

Г. Л. Тульчинский, „Постчеловеческая персонология. Новые перспективы свободы и рациональности", Алетейя, Санкт-Петербург 2002.

Е. Шварц, „Дракон", Пермское кн. Изд-во, Пермь 1988.

Jolanta Suchodolska
University of Silesia in Katowice

Young Disabled Adults Facing Developmental Tasks and Life Choices – In Search of Daily Life Quality

KEYWORDS

young adult, disability, developmental tasks, quality of life

ABSTRACT

Emerging adulthood, in numerous individual biographies, also in the case of disabled people, is the time of permanent need for self-actualisation and time of verifying one's subjective vision of "being an adult," i.e. being responsible for one's own decisions, pursuing professional and economic independence. Due to developmental acceleration, sociological shift in terms of undertaken roles and realized developmental tasks as well as their moratorium-linked delays, it is also the time conducive to educational activity. This psychological time of a young person, its course and specificity depend, to a large extent, on numerous (micro-, mezo- and macro-) conditions of family life and social life in today's world which is more competitive and less predictable than it used to be for generation of the late 1990s. All of these factors contribute to the fact that maturing to adulthood seems to be a state which is harder to achieve nowadays. It is displayed in the form of delaying the moment of taking up a job or other important decisions in family and relationship contexts.

The study aims to present the selected aspects of daily life of disabled young adults, described in the context of developmental tasks of this period and considering the perspective of investment in relationships, development of one's own resources, pursuing education and entering the job market which are all, from a temporal perspective, a chance of complementing one's own identity.

> Success is not part of life, but
> the fullness of life..,
> not so much a state of satisfaction..,
> as a result of the achieved goal, but rather the ability
> to rejoice in the pursuitof the goal.[1]

In psychological literature, much attention is paid to discussing the stages of adolescence and entering adulthood which are important from the perspective of taking up social roles and, what is relevant, ideas on how to live one's life.[2] The period of turning into an adult, called adolescence in the literature on the subject[3], falls into the category of young age in the broad sense of the term, treated as a biological and age-related phenomenon, or a socio-cultural one.[4] It constitutes an important element of social culture[5] which, like gender, wisdom and beauty (all being social

---

[1] J. Madalińska-Michalak, *Uwarunkowania sukcesu zawodowego nauczycieli. Studium przypadków* (*Conditions for Teachers' Professional Success. Case studies*), Łódź 2007, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

[2] The stage of adulthood has received no less attention than other periods of human life development. Cf. e.g. B. Harwas-Napierała, J. Trempała (eds.), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka* (*Psychology of Human Development*), Vol. 2, Warszawa 2000; Idem, Vol. 3, Warszawa 2003; A. Gałdowa, *Powszechność i wyjątek. Rozwój osobowości człowieka dorosłego* (*Universality and Exception. Personality Development in Adults*), Kraków 2000, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

[3] In adolescence, cognitive processes are improved and autonomised, emotions – expressed by a tendency to labyrinth of behaviors, emotional instability, expressed in various forms of expression of varying intensity. Social personality matures, determined by the aspiration to report as well as to respect one's own and others' expectations and social needs (needs of contacts with peers, social groups). Moreover, as a result of searching for new world-view orientations and attractive points of reference, adolescents experience a crisis of family authority. All these phenomena dynamically, in a way reminiscent of pedagogical "waving of events" accompanies young people, determining the sense of meaning and quality of life. The problem of adolescence is discussed by many authors. This period of individual life became the subject of research only at the turn of the 19th century, which is indirectly connected with the development of industrialization, which contributed to the greater complexity of social phenomena. More about adolescence: L. Witkowski: Rozwój i tożsamość w cyklu życia. Stadium koncepcji E.H. Eriksona (Development and Identity in the Life Cycle. E.H. Erikson's Concept Stage), Łódź 2009, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Edukacji Zdrowotnej in Łódź; P. Szczukiewicz, Rozwój psychospołeczny a tożsamość (Psychosocial Development and Identity and Identity). Lublin 1998, UMCS, p.49-53; J. Basistowa, Istota i rozwój tożsamości w koncepcji E.H. Eriksona (The Essence and Development of Identity in E.H. Erikson's Concept). In: A. Gałdowa (ed.), Klasyczne i współczesne koncepcje osobowości (Classical and Contemporary Concepts of Personality). Kraków 1999, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, p.119.

[4] For broader information on the subject see, among others: D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, Fenomen pokolenia młodzieży (The Phenomenon of the Youth Generation). In: D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, K. Kabacińska (eds.), *Młodzież i sukces życiowy* (*The Youth and Success in Life*), Kraków 2010, Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls," pp. 129-156.

[5] For broader information, cf.: E. Nycz, *Dorastanie w przestrzeni socio-culturowej miasta przemysłowych* (*Growing up in the Socio-cultural Space of an Industrial City*), Opole 2001, University of Opole, p. 94.

concepts) is a social value which is shaped by the structure and culture of society. This period is characterised by numerous biological, psychological and socio-cultural processes, which determine a specific way of thinking, feeling and acting.[6] A specific tendency to undermine self-confidence, disorientation (especially in the axiological-normative sphere as well as emotional dysregulation "up to the point of crisis of individual socialization process"[7] are the factors determining the social functioning of adolescent young person.

Young adults and who they are

Adulthood appears to be a natural consequence of adolescence and youth, manifesting itself when the state of biological, mental and social maturity is reached. Although it is indifferent to the phenomena of dysregulation accompanying the search for one's own individual and social Self,[8] present in the adolescence period as well as the search for authorities, new, only one's own goals and life paths, adulthood is characterized by an increase in the need for emotional control and awareness of numerous life choices. It is a path that every person follows individually, and its direction and level of autonomy is determined by many factors that are integrated with one another, as a consequence of what changes have taken place at each stage of development and what they have brought with them.

Maturity at the level of adulthood is expressed in the ability to take up new social roles responsibly – both in the emotional and social sphere (resulting in the ability to build partner relations, starting a family, bringing up children, caring for them) and in the professional sphere. A special feature of an adult is the ability to assume responsibility for one's own life and to manage it autonomously. There-

---

[6] In adolescence (according to E.H. Erikson) identity is formed in opposition to its disorders. During the process of establishing contacts, a young person may achieve communication success, which will make him or her perceive himself or herself as a person with specific characteristics and skills, which will strengthen his or her identity. When successes are sporadic or rare, his or her consciousness may be characterized by high instability and chaos. The way young people think about themselves determines how they live and act.

[7] Cf. J. H. Turner, *Socjologia. Koncepcje i ich zastosowanie* (*Sociology. Concepts and Their Application*). Poznań 1998, Wyd. Zysk i S-ka.

[8] A lot of attention is paid to both individual and social "Self" in psychological concepts. The experiences acquired by a child in the course of his or her own activity and subjective activities inspired by the environment become the basic source of knowledge as well as the basis for the formation of beliefs about reality and oneself. They carry the feeling of authenticity of emotional experiences, favouring the formation of the image of one's own self. For broader information, see e.g.: A. Brzezińska, *Społeczna psychologia rozwoju* (*Social Psychology of Development*), Volume 3, Warsaw 2000, Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar."

fore, it can be noted that adulthood also functions in a subjective dimension[9] – as a sense of being an adult, i.e. in situations when – being relatively independent of social status – a person meets the criteria of adulthood in a given society. Cultural systems refer to these criteria of adulthood in a highly individual way, formulating legal definitions of adulthood and pointing to their various functions. Therefore, objective criteria for treating a person as an adult are, to a large extent, dependent on taking up and fulfilling social roles, as well as on taking up developmental tasks[10] typical of adulthood (people of a similar age and living in a specific culture[11]).

It is thus essential for a young adult to have a sense of stability and continuity of his or her own "Self." What is also of utmost importance for a person at this developmental stage is the ability to make choices that are right from their perspective, especially when it comes to defining their own life goals, confrontation with authorities or distanced assessment of themselves.[12] This maturity of an individual also consists in a certain ideological polarization, i.e. the world view. The lack of stability in the development of social personality, the lack of a skillful insight into oneself and one's own needs, and finally the lack of a well-established worldview (or its collapse) count as only few examples of how an unresolved crisis may manifest itself, not only during the moratorium but also at every other stage of life. The moratorium period, however, is sometimes particularly sensitive, mainly because of the importance of the decisions made regarding one's own participatory future. Such a situation is conducive to potential problems that may arise through the self-actualisation of a young person. That is why – apart from personal potential – the

---

[9] K. Piotrowski, *Wkraczanie w dorosłość. Tożsamość i poczucie dorosłości młodych osób z ograniczeniami sprawności* (*Entering Adulthood. Identity and Sense of Maturity of Young People with Disabilities*). Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar", s. 9; za J.E. Cote, An empirical test of the identity capital model. Journal of Adolescence 1997/20, pp. 577-597.

[10] Development tasks are related to age, at each stage of development they are differentiated by new constitutive elements in response to the needs of the individual and the expectations of the social environment. This pyramidal system overlaps with complex forms of functioning in the environment. At each stage, developmental tasks appear as a response to the individual needs of the individual and the expectations and requirements of the upbringing/socializing environment. More on the developmental tasks in the theory of psychosocial development by E.H. Erikson, R.J. Havighurst and D.J. Levinson.

[11] A. Brzezińska: *Społeczna psychologia rozwoju* (*Social Psychology of Development*). op. cit.

[12] For more on this subject, see: M. Sękowska, Neopsychoanalityczna koncepcja rozwoju psychospołecznego Erika H. Eriksona (Neopsychoanalytical Concept of Psychosocial Development by Erik H. Erikson). In: P. Socha (ed.), *Duchowy rozwój człowieka. Fazy życia – osobowość – wiara – religijność. Stadialne koncepcje rozwoju w ciągu życia* (*Spiritual Development of a Human Being. Phases of Life – Personality – Faith – Religion. Stadial Concepts of Development During Lifetime*), Kraków 2000, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, p. 126.

support received from the upbringing environment is so important as the environment introduces into independent social roles and teaches maturity in performing these roles while providing protection in situations that are difficult for development or threatening to the sense of fulfilment and autonomy. Creating favourable conditions for development is a priority task for parents and other significant persons. It is good if they have managed to take care of the emotional and social needs of an adolescent child, providing him/her with a sense of existential and emotional security and the strength to meet the challenges of adulthood, which brings many surprises for which young people are not prepared.

Such understanding of adulthood, as a period of permanent adolescence, maturation – achieving adulthood by young people – seems to be taking these days more time than in the past. This is probably related to many factors that can delay, block or limit the implementation of individual life tasks. An example can be, among others – so often occurring in contemporary culture: by choice and under the influence of an individual strategic plan, and sometimes out of necessity – delays in taking up work or other important decisions, building lasting relationships or starting a family. Analysing situations of postponing important decisions by young adults, we look for the answers in the development acceleration, socialization shift and the related chaos of information, values or bonds. One can also – as many researchers do – analyse assuming roles and carrying out development tasks from the perspective of a development moratorium[13], the course of which depends largely on the specifics of the living environment and the development of young adolescents or adults, as well as the specifics of the modern times. Then the interpretation of what is happening to the young person and how it is related to their behaviour, and the actions taken, is made taking into account the category of developmental moratorium. Regardless of the reasons for these situations and events, it is noticed that growing up into adulthood seems more difficult to accomplish today. However, the question arises about other interpretations of this phenomenon.

In a n attempt at seeking numerus conditions present in the period of early adulthood is referring to the concept of J. Arnett[14]. Psychological research con-

---

[13] The author has described in detail the phenomenon and the phase of the development moratorium in the chapter concerning identity. It means the stage of "suspension between the childhood and the adult age", in which young people seek answer to the question "Who am I?" and "what is my place in this world?"

[14] A. Lipska, W. Zagórska, *Stająca się dorosłość w ujęciu Jeffreya J. Arnetta jako rozbudowana faza liminalna rytuału przejścia* (Emerging Adulthood According to Jeffrey J. Arnett As an Extended Liminal Phase of the Ritual of Passage), In: Psychologia Rozwojowa 2011, vol. 16, no. 1, 9-21. A. Kozłowska, *Antropologiczny kontekst nowego okresu rozwojowego stającej się dorosłości (Anthro-*

ducted on the grounds of the development of personality and taking up specific social roles are not indifferent to the category of an emerging adulthood[15] – the development phase occurring between adolescence and early adulthood. The adulthood phase is observed in particular in those countries and cultural areas where the 'knowledge-based economy' dominates. In such societies there is a system of acquiring qualifications and constantly raising them in the direction that is consistent with the expected standard of living and social position. Therefore, unlike late adolescence, the young man is obliged to devote many years to educating and gaining experience, postponing the tasks of adulthood until later, when he or she acquires a suitable professional and social position. Intensive exploration of own capabilities, work on individual resources, deepening knowledge and raising qualifications become the priority over readiness to enter into permanent partner relationships or to marry[16].

It is worth noting, however, that this assumption may apply only to selected groups of people, as well as socio-cultural conditions in which they live. Canadian and US research on this topic shows that in many cases, the comfort and well-being increase as the period of emerging adulthood extends. The self-esteem increases and the factor of risk of social functioning disorders decreases, including depressive symptoms, while people in the emerging adulthood period enjoy self-focused attention, freedom from obligations and restrictions associated with the social roles of adult life, which can cause them enjoying the path to self-sufficiency. Importantly, it is worth adding that the level of self-satisfaction depends on many extremely important, individual factors – related to both the formed approach to life, which is in a way inherited, and passed down by the upbringing by parents and other important people. It is therefore both inner-directed and – to a large extent – conditioned by external factors. This makes a young individual – when they see their capabilities in a social environment – feel more secure and motivated to act; however, in social sciences there are also other theories explaining the mechanisms of creation and development of life resourcefulness, indicating that the deficit of something important in life helps to activate one's internal

---

pological Context of the New Development Period of Emerging Adulthood). *Biuletyn Sekcji Psychologii Rozwojowej* PTP 2010, 8, 13-21.

[15] The emerging adulthood category appears as a new, previously absent phase in development between the period of adolescence (maturing) and the period of early adulthood, as a response to socio-cultural changes, especially in the developed and developing societies.

[16] More in, inter alia K. Piotrowski, *Wkraczanie w dorosłość. Tożsamość i poczucie dorosłości młodych dorosłych osób z ograniczeniami sprawności* (*Entering Adulthood. Identity and Sense of Maturity of Young People with Disabilities*), Warszawa 2010, Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Scholar".

layers of abilities and capacities[17] to selectively carry out important and priority development tasks. The process of finding oneself, feeling the satisfaction of finding good alternatives in love, work and other areas of life can cause anxiety, just like it happens in the key time of a young person's life – the period of adolescence, with the difference that they trigger a growing cognitive maturity, enabling them to understand themselves and others better than before, and they make use this ability. Attention will be given to these issues further in the study.

The above analysis allows making a statement that the level of reaching maturity and the mature recognition[18] – similarly to the earlier period of adolescence – is divided into stages related to the execution of the abovementioned developmental tasks. They belong to the three criteria aiming at the ordering of the time of maturity. Apart from the developmental tasks which are the essence of social roles undertaken by the entity in the life cycle, there are changes in personality and life structure related to typical events for specific maturity phases, as well as life crises, which adult people happen to face. These categories are certain criteria, according to which the life of the adult person goes on, including activities related to work and own family, which becomes the most important point of reference. The activity of people at this stage of development is accompanied by both pursuit to maintain and complement own identity, as well as the development of autonomy related to independent decision-making and taking responsibility for it.[19] Social and civic maturity in this period of individual development is made – in particular – by means of own work – mainly professional, which facilitates earning one's livelihood independently and is an important area of self-actualisation. The place gained by work in the hierarchy of values is clearly drawn – both in the case of young people starting employment and those who lose the opportunity of professional fulfilment and financial independence, which is a serious obstacle to achieve success and maintain the social progression and a specific barrier

---

[17] Compare inter alia T. Kocowski, *Potrzeby człowieka – koncepcja systemowa* (*Human Needs. A Systemic Concept*), Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1982, Ossolineum; T. Garczyński, *Potrzeby psychiczne. Niedosyt, zaspokojenie Mental Needs. Deficiency, Satisfaction*), Warszawa 1972, Nasza Księgarnia.

[18] According to T. Lewowicki, the recognition is related to the existence of some internal structure of human organism determined in a number of ways, but also affected by people; biomental and social particularity (individuality), own identity – person-specific, consciousness of relations with the environment; understanding the environment and situations which exist in it, the ability to formulate tasks and programmes of own and social action; hierarchy of values, goals and standards; activities somehow creative and aiming at personal self-actualisation. Cf., e.g. T. Lewowicki, *Przemiany oświaty* (*Transformations of education*), Warszawa 1994, Wydawnictwo „Żak", pp. 58-59.

[19] E. Gurba, Wczesna dorosłość (Early Maturity), in: B. Harwas-Napierała, J. Trempała (ed.), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka* (*Psychology of Human Development*), Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 229.

in everyday life. The very entry into the job market and finding one's place there is frequently stressful, particularly for those with weaker or more limited educational resources. Even the people with high educational rating are often forced to verify their ambitions, dreams, and high hopes related to their dream and expected future and they need to compromise. It proves, however, that majority of these people – in accordance with the growing satisfaction factors – adapt to the success-related situations. These choices, similarly to people growing up, are incredibly heterogeneous. Some of them experience serious problems mainly due to the fact that they play much fewer social roles than those they experienced in the period of adolescence and even earlier – when they controlled their everyday life, which was relatively structured by people close to them, thus ensuring the sense of safety. Some of these young people, therefore, experience the freedom and the sense of control over their own life, but some of them may feel lost and internally torn. Most surely, there are plenty of reasons for such diverse life situations, and one of them may be belonging to a group of some social or biological risk, of helpless, devoid of future prospects and limited opportunities. There are also many such groups of young people; these are members affected by the problem of social and/or economic marginalisation, sick people, suffering from mental diseases, or handicapped.

Young adult facing own disability and life goals

Approaching maturity is still a period of educational activity in many individual biographies, also in the case of disabled persons. It is a common belief that this moment of early maturity is more beneficial – since it is open for new experience – particularly in the case of healthy youth. The reality of social life in many situations confirms such observations; they refer to the dimension of building close interpersonal contacts with the opposite sex. Obviously, the possibility of continuation of education is a matter subject to several circumstances and it is related to the state of health, level of ability, social and economic status as well as the mental status of one's family. It also depends on the place of inhabitancy and macrosocial conditions. It proves, however, that an important criterion deciding about undertaking obligations related to further education is the need of achievement and financial autonomy, taking into account not the current moment, but the prospect of one's future. Results of research in the group of young adults indicate certain optimistic changes in the scope of performing social roles and taking care of autonomy among those young disabled people satisfying the criteria of mental health

and intellectual ability. Generally, education is undertaken by the people whose health condition allows planning the achievement of as high level of education as possible, which is supposed to help in taking up a satisfactory professional job. It has been proven that a large number of young disabled persons in Poland undertake further education in the period of approaching maturity, however only few of them work, even after completing a certain stage of education.[20] The similarity of these relations can be noticed also in the context of comparisons of the level of ability and independent inhabitancy of young adults away from their home. The criterion of self-reliance and everyday responsibility fits in the criterion of ability of these young people. A definitely bigger group of healthy peers has moved out of their family home and looks for at least a temporary job.[21] It can be noticed that healthy persons in this phase of life far more often and more intensively (with more conviction and involvement) look for the opportunity of autonomous life and self-actualisation. This fact is not surprising, since disability is a reason for a lot of objective problems in functioning, causing a significant barrier in entering maturity, visible in the area of self-esteem, self-assessment and self-confidence, the evaluation of one's abilities and realised need of close partner relations. These dimensions of self-esteem result from many factors with a direct social impact. They were created for years, since the early childhood, as well as from the moment of deteriorating health or the moment of diagnosing disability, defining risk factors as well as opportunities and prospects of receiving help. In this process of creating one's own self by the disabled people, active participants included also parents, caretakers, teachers and many other persons, whose messages, emotions, attitudes as well as the level of provided care, education, ability to diagnose and satisfy the needs of children with disability (or developmental disharmony) in a crucial way is decisive about these persons' self-esteem (be it a child, adolescent or young adult) and how these persons assess their life and what it offers. This assessment is subject to social perception, with a number of activators, but also de-motivators from other people, who become a mirror in which this other person can see himself or herself. In this process of development of a disabled person, therefore, there is a need of many specific interactions in order to help the ward come up with successful reme-

---

[20] These are the results obtained by K. Piotrowski. Cf. K. Piotrowski, *Wkraczanie w dorosłość. Tożsamość i poczucie dorosłości młodych osób z ograniczeniami sprawności* (*Entering Adulthood. Identity and Sense of Maturity of Young People with Disabilities*), op. cit.

[21] Temporary work provides young people with an equivalent of self-reliance. Its popular form is teleworking. I am referring here to studies conducted by author's student as part of Master's seminar in Gliwice School of Entrepreneurship in 2010. Cf. K. Krzywonos, *Rynek pracy osób niepełnosprawnych* (*Job Market of the Disabled*), Gliwice 2012 (unpublished MA thesis written under supervision of the author of the current study).

dial strategies helping to overcome own limitations, weaknesses and accompanying deformations of perceived reality. That is why, apart from specific institutional interactions, such as revalidation or education, undertaken in order to activate the person to realise their needs, an important mechanism of this reconstruction is weakening negative stereotypes and biases, which supports granting the disabled with rights and basics to lead the life, which is not fundamentally different from the life of people the society refers to as healthy or normal. The way leading to realisation in attempts to expected re-standardisation of life of the disabled should be their more and more common integration with the surrounding environment,[22] as well as activities to the benefit of social and professional activation, serving to maintain and realise these important life goals, making human existence worth living. The most significant among them are those realised in the area of widely understood social communication and professional activity. The kind, content and emotional saturation of social and cultural messages received by a disabled person and shaping relations in groups in which this person participates, become one of the factors modelling, and even shaping the level of this person's readiness and maturity to contact. These interactions prove to be indispensable due to the need or even necessity to develop lifelong communication competencies and – which is particularly important – incredibly flexible, according to objective abilities and needs – their understanding and ability to use them.

A prerequisite necessary at the threshold of undertaking developmental tasks of early maturity is a satisfactory condition of social readiness, at the level of positive emotions and motivation to act. In the case of persons whose mental and imaginational sphere as well as axiological and decision-making sphere develop properly, it is important to enhance this level of readiness in the direction of developing such a need of self-creation.[23] Entering into commitments leading a young

---

[22] A. Maciarz, *Trudne dzieciństwo i rodzicielstwo* (*Difficult childhood and parenthood*), Wydawnictwo Akademickie "Żak", 2009, p. 13.

[23] Self-creation – which is an element of personal development – is a process of exceptional difficulty, susceptible to external factors. Therefore, while searching for proper developmental processes in the area of social "I" concept, it seems helpful and justified to take into account contextual and dialectic mechanisms of development. It allows illustrating the social and cultural background of the person, who – along with the increasing interdependence between various cultural contexts in which this person participates – seeks own originality and uniqueness. Therefore, all developmental stimuli are of immense importance, as they regulate the social ability of adjustment, communicative skills, readiness to take part in dialogues with Others, to develop own individual cognitive skills as well as axiological competencies in further stages of life. This process consisting of various phases, its multiple conditions and characteristics, prove to be crucial for creating the final self-projection – the concept and condition of personal and social "I" at the threshold of adulthood.

adult to gain satisfaction from their maturity is very important in this respect. However, ideas of young people regarding their future should not be blocked by parents, which is equally important, since the latter are likely to do so in fear of disappointment, crisis, defeat, sometimes a "mishap" perceived by them; therefore they want to protect their disabled child. Then they do not increase their motivation but even block their activity, suppress their ideas for self-reliance and instead of delivering an instrumental support, they raise the level of insecurity and fear of the young person.

In many environments, persons with disability are exposed to alienation, the limitation of access to cultural goods, social capital and sometimes self-isolation. Many factors decide about the experience of these persons and how their self-esteem shapes them. It seems important, therefore, to take into account the individual situation of the disabled person and situating this person in the space of their own individual possibilities, both internal and external. It is a condition of adopting the right thinking about the life of the disabled in multi-faceted and varied society, in which striving towards knowledge and ability to use it in order to improve the quality of life becomes an important developmental criterion.

Young adults facing developmental tasks and life goals

Observations and conversations with young adults and social studies regarding this age group indicate they have a problem with self-identification, because they do not perceive themselves as either adolescents or adults. Most people in this period can specify the areas in which they declare the sense of maturity and such areas in which they expressly lack the sense of being adult. This is particularly the case of young people with disability. Identifying with own maturity is related with defining oneself as a person taking their own decisions, responsible for themselves, and financially independent. It illustrates the fact that the change from the adolescent to the adult takes place in one's own mirror – mental self-assessment along with the changes of self-perception.

Autonomy in the life of the disabled as an important developmental task

In the subject literature, a lot of space is occupied by the issue of person's autonomy, which becomes a key assessment criterion of development of one's recognition

in the life environment, as well as the key value in the life of every disabled person, acquired and educated way to accept oneself. Autonomy building is a process that has its beginning in overcoming developmental difficulties, adaptation problems, barriers and limitations, real, as well as psychological and mental. Important factors in creating the sense of autonomy are the abovementioned internal and external mechanisms of behaviour regulation, personality, situational (social and cultural) as well as task-related factors. The defined framework of the cultural system in which the disabled person lives is also of importance. They might become a factor generating social barriers, stereotypes of perception as well as the risk of marginalisation. The realised need of autonomy of functioning in any of these important areas of life activity provides the sense of self-confidence and satisfaction, compensating for the deficits in other areas.

Persons with disability at the stage of early maturity generally find it harder to build a vision of themselves and consequently confirming their own projection as time goes by. Temporal perspective brings about many new occurrences, not only positive, which provide a person of weaker health with a life-giving force to act, but also those demonstrating objective difficulties in the implementation of life resolutions, plans and goals, constituting close and distant developmental tasks. Undoubtedly, such a developmental task for young adults is entering into new commitments in the sphere of interpersonal relations and gainful employment. In the period of fully conscious early adulthood – as experts at psychology of this period emphasise[24] – an important role in the adaptation to conditions of adult life is played by the system of values underlying young age ideals implemented in the specific social and cultural as well as economic reality. These ideals certainly include a happy life, great partnership, marriage, and family relations and – what is important – a good, satisfying work. Undertaken developmental tasks, such as the choice of spouse/life partner, learning how to live together, forming a family, commencing work, clear formulation of dreams and expectations about the future, finding kindred social group as well as integration of experience from various activity areas are mutually supplementing tasks, creating a set of developmental duties at a certain stage of life. In these areas, the young adults look for their identity and seek autonomous personality. Such manner of thinking is indicated by received results of tests conducted among the disabled young adults at the age of 22-26[25] (which is the phase of approaching adulthood) with mobility and sensory

---

[24] Psychological mechanisms of human development in the period of early maturity are described in particular by R. Havighust, E.H. Erikson and D.J. Levinson.

[25] Such studies were also conducted among the young disabled in the region of Silesia in the scope of studies to MA Thesis prepared under scientific supervision of the author of the current study. The

dysfunctions. Important goals for this group of young people include obtaining at least partial daily independence, development of satisfying relations with the opposite sex and gaining satisfaction this way. The means to realise this goal is financial independence and mature mutual relations in the social milieu. These expectations prove to be hardly realistic or very distant to achieve.

The experience of many young people with disabilities shows that there are still few decent job offers on the market for them. This is all the more true for the largest group of people with disabilities, which is made up of people with reduced mobility.[26] On a somewhat permanent basis, job offers that appear for such people often exclude them due to the nature of the positions available on the market, e.g. a cleaner, a business worker or a security guard. Not always (or even very rarely) can these people take up such a job. Despite having completed secondary school or even obtained a university degree, it is difficult to secure a better position in some cities. What constitutes an exception to this rule are those who are particularly talented in a particular field or those with outstanding educational and professional achievements. A large group of young adults with disabilities seeking employment report basic problems in getting a job. Such experiences, according to the surveyed disabled students/seminar-goers, trigger a mechanism of rejection, social depreciation and bring down the spirits. The surveyed mention that they have undertaken such jobs many times, mainly due to the need to "supplement their pensions in order to be able to live decently (...);"[27]however, these were low-income jobs with inadequate conditions. Still, in order to feel any improvement in their financial situation, sometimes in order to relieve their parents a little, they took up these low-paid jobs because, as they said, "it is always a possibility to subsidise their welfare benefits."[28]

Difficulties in getting a paid job have many personal consequences. One of them is the limited possibility of planning adult life, which includes engaging in serious partnerships or marriages, and even satisfying participation in culture. The awareness of being dependent on parents at an age that encourages, and in the case of an older group, even obliges them to at least partial taking care of their own needs and ideas for life, is a considerable burden and mental discomfort for most young disa-

---

abovementioned work: K. Krzywonos, *Rynek pracy osób niepełnosprawnych* (*Job Market of the Disabled*), Gliwice 2012 (unpublished MA thesis written under supervision of the author of the current study).

[26] A. Migas, Problemy integracji psychospołecznej osób z dysfunkcją narządu ruchu (Problems with Psychosocial Integration that People with Reduced Mobility), "Praca i Rehabilitacja Niepełnosprawnych," Warsaw 2006, No. 10 (102), KIGR.

[27] It is a fragment of the statement by one of the students graduating from one of the Silesian universities. The research was carried out as part of the Master's thesis prepared under my supervision in 2010.

[28] Ibidem.

bled people. It is worth realizing that in the sphere of dreams and plans related to their own future, able-bodied people and those with disabilities do not display special differences, because life goals in both groups are associated with continuing education, getting a profession, living together with a partner or getting married, gaining independence, and beginning independent life. The problem, however, is that there are real barriers to achieving these goals for people with disabilities.[29] Therefore, it seems possible that in the sphere of social behaviour there may be the objectively lowered bar of everyday possibilities and aspirations and consequently, lower achievements (especially educational ones) of people with disabilities. Completion of education and premature entry into the labour market with a simultaneous lack of independence from parents most frequently entails not only a lack of professional success, but also problems of maintaining the job. It also turns out that in the professional area, regardless of age, men and persons whose disability manifested itself later do better, and these data are additionally correlated with a higher level of education and social status of the family.[30] The family can more effectively help young people in raising the standard of their lives, and protect, which often has place, while pretending that they do not really help but only accompany to make it a bit easier. In fact, however, the accompanying of an adolescent child with disabilities by parents and other adults is an important, often a permanent element of a long process, and may not lead to a low motivation for him/her to raise his/her own bar of daily requirements, including those related to work. The occurrence of such a situation would be particularly unfavourable as it would indirectly reduce the needs related to the sense of quality of life. A career that gives financial independence is one of the correlates and even indicators of the sense of meaning and quality of experience, including life quality.

People with disabilities, in particular young people, perceive work as an area where they can demonstrate skills as well as pursue professional and social opportunities. Work is sometimes the content of their lives, frequently giving it meaning. It can even be seen that, according to the research, unemployed people often define lack of work as impoverishment of life, not only manifested by a deteriorating financial situation, but also by the level of life optimism.[31]

---

[29] See: K. Piotrowski, *Wkraczanie w dorosłość. Tożsamość i poczucie dorosłości młodych dorosłych z ograniczeniami* (*Entering Adulthood. Identity and Sense of Maturity of Young People with Disabilities*) op. cit.

[30] Similar socio-cultural conditions in Europe and beyond mean that such a relationship is also noticed (and perhaps even more) in Poland (see M. Wagner, L. Newnam, R. Cameto, P. Levine and N. Garza, An Overview of Findings From Wave 2 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) (NCSER 2006-3004). Menlo Park 2006, CA.

[31] See B. Szczupał, Wybrane aspekty poczucia jakości życia bezrobotnych osób niepełnosprawnych (Selected Aspects of the Sense of Quality of Life of Unemployed Disabled People), in:

It is an area of activity that helps adapt to both changed physical and mental capabilities as well as the changing labour market.[32] In addition, it is a value that sets the criteria for self-attractiveness and a social framework for acceptance and self-fulfilment. Professional work and the resulting awareness of belonging to a work community also increases a sense of connectedness of disabled persons with the rest of the society (both locally and globally).[33] In terms of starting a professional career, apart from the problems of obtaining it discussed above, there are also many other barriers that young disabled people face. They concern mainly the choice of profession or its change due to incomplete disability (frequently because of an acquired disability). They relate to preparation for and obtaining a profession, to professional adaptation and to remaining in work. Vocational rehabilitation is necessary to reduce these problems. It aims to make it easier for a disabled person, to obtain and maintain appropriate work and then get a promotion, by enabling them to use vocational counselling,[34] vocational training (preparedness for employment) [35] and job recruitment.[36] Indeed, many people especially, young

Z. Palak (ed.), *Jakość życia osób niepełnosprawnych i nieprzystosowanych społecznie* (Quality of Life of Disabled and Socially Maladjusted Persons), Lublin 2006, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.

[32] More on the labour market of people with disabilities, among others, J. Suchodolska, *Młodzi niepełnosprawni dorośli na rynku pracy – szanse i bariery samorealizacji* (Young Disabled Adults on the Labour Market. Opportunities and Barriers to Self-realization). In: S. Wrona, J. Rottermund (eds.), *Praca na rzecz osób z niepełnosprawnością* (Work for People with Disabilities), Sosnowiec 2013, Wyższa Szkoła „Humanitas", pp. 165-178.

[33] D. Kukla, *Poradnictwo zawodowe i praca zawodowa jako integralny proces rewalidacji zawodowej osób niepełnosprawnych* (Vocational Counseling and Profession as an Integral Process of Vocational Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities), „Edukacja Ustawiczna Dorosłych" 2004, No. 4, p. 69.

[34] Vocational counseling is used to assess a person's ability to work. This stage determines the success of the entire rehabilitation process. Vocational counseling is a process of helping people with limited work ability to make a professional decision. It should be preceded by learning about the professional capabilities of the disabled person and the requirements, depending on the profession and jobs available on the market. Such advice is provided on the basis of research carried out, the purpose of which is to learn the possibilities and professional limitations and to assess the suitability of a candidate for work. The analysis and recognition of a person's professional opportunities on the labour market are as important as knowledge and experience regarding the professional work of people with disabilities.

[35] It involves mastering by a disabled person of the necessary theoretical knowledge, practical skills and forms of functioning and behaviour in professional situations. The field of training or vocational education is determined on the basis of the results of the tests of work capacity and professional diagnosis. After completing this preparation, employment in the workplace corresponding to the psychophysical possibilities and acquired professional qualifications is offered.

[36] Assistance in professional adaptation in the workplace is particularly important in the first period of employment. Then, the adaptation is aimed at making it easier for a person with a disability to adapt to the performance of professional tasks, as well as to a new work environment, both phys-

ones, take advantage of these opportunities.[37] However, this does not change the fact that the modern labour market (especially for people with reduced ability) is difficult today, in particular for mentally healthy people but with physical, somatic, sensory and emotional and social deficits. They have the least normalized professional situation on the labour market; their start to financial independence is delayed or limited due to the existence of many barriers, depending on age, health (including the type of disability), family and material situation, education and vocational preparation,[38] as well as formal and administrative barriers. The types of limitations mentioned above, which constitute difficulties in accomplishing life goals related to taking up a job, can create a spectrum of emerging problems of mutual interaction.[39] However, at this stage of life, the most important factor that reduces the chance of people with disabilities on the labour market is their relatively low education. There is a lot of talk today about the chances of people with disabilities on the labour market which depend on their level of education. This is demonstrated by the increase in the economic activity rate and employment rate together with the level of education. People with considerable disabilities since early childhood have a relatively lower education. The implemented programmes taking into account special educational needs (also in the lifelong learning system) are very important for them. The State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People prepares and implements rehabilitation programmes that are aimed at increasing professional qualifications and employment opportunities for disabled people in sheltered workshops or on the open labour market. In addition, the rehabilitative

---

ical and social, in order to be able to fulfil the employee's tasks well, thereby meeting the employer's expectations. This assistance cycle determined by the stages of vocational rehabilitation is regulated by the Act of 27 August 1997 on vocational and social rehabilitation and employment of disabled people. (Journal of Laws of 2008, No. 14, item 92), Chapter 3, Art. 8.1

[37] Training and workshops on counselling for people with disabilities are most frequently conducted by employment offices. Many such projects are implemented in the Silesian Voivodeship. An example is a project co-financed from EU funds under the ESF. "Take the Challenge", addressed to disabled people with a disability certificate, the unemployed or inactive, living in the Silesian Voivodeship and being in the age range of 15-27 years. (www.bon.polsl.pl/bon/news/projekt-podejmij-wyzwanie-poradnictwo-warsztaty-szkolenia-staze)

[38] More in D. Becker-Pestka, Aktywizacja społeczna i zawodowa osób niepełnosprawnych – problemy i wyzwania (Social and Professional Activation of Disabled People. Problems and Challenges), „Colloquiom Wydziału Nauk Humanistycznych i Społecznych" Kwartanik 2012/4, p. 37;

[39] M. Chruściak, J. Michalczuk, K. Sijko, D. Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, D. Życzyńska-Ciołek, Bariery aktywności zawodowej oraz czynniki sprzyjające podejmowaniu i utrzymywaniu pracy (Barriers to Professional Activity and Factors Beneficial for Taking up and Maintaining a Job), in: W. Łukowski (ed.), Osoby z ograniczoną sprawnością na rynku pracy – portret środowiska (People with Limited Ability on the Labour Market. A Portrait of the Environment), Warszawa 2008, Wydawnictwo SWPS, p. 134.

function of work refers to the necessity of securing economic needs manifested by improving the disturbed functions and replacing them with non-disturbed ones; self-actualisation by confirming their ability and social utility, which includes relieving frustration as well as professional and social integration.[40] Despite numerous measurable effects, these activities are still insufficient, and subsequent reforms and amendments only mitigate the social and professional effects of disability. As indicated by the results of other studies concerning, among other things, professional and social activity, the professional activity of people with disabilities often satisfies the needs related to social activity, the need to "be needed" and therefore also to feel the need to reciprocate.[41]

In search of the meaning of effort and a sense of the quality of life specific problems of young people with disabilities

The biographical and social sense of adolescence phase is related to the time of preparation for fulfilling adult life roles. It would seem that today's young adults are experiencing problems that also their parents experienced. However, socio-economic and cultural conditions cause that these young people are exposed to many changes precisely in the area of employment. Among them one can enumerate the impact of factors caused by globalisation, rationalisation and labour market problems in connection with the reduction of employment. A derivative of these processes is, according to D. Hildebrandt-Wypych,[42] educational credential inflation. This situation causes "the erosion of the youth as preparation for professional life",[43] whose projection significantly forces the formation of a personality capable of independent life design, mobility, readiness for change and risk taking.

In these socio-economic and cultural circumstances, groups of young adults with disabilities are in a difficult position. On the one hand, this situation pro-

---

[40] See A. Nowak, Bezrobocie wśród niepełnosprawnych. Studium pedagogiczno-społeczne (Unemployment among Disabled People. Pedagogical and Social Study), Katowice 2002, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, p. 42.

[41] D. Wiszejko-Wierzbicka made such conclusions. See D. Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, Niewykorzystana sfera. Partycypacja społeczna i obywatelska osób z ograniczeniami sprawności (Unused Sphere. Social and Civic Participation of People with Disabilities), Warsaw 2010, Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar", p. 57.

[42] D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, Fenomen pokolenia młodzieży (The Phenomenon of the Youth Generation), in: D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, K. Kabacińska (eds.), *Młodzież i sukces życiowy* (*The Youth and Success in Life*). Op. cit., p. 133.

[43] Ibid., p. 133.

vokes making (sometimes even forces to) a greater effort, verifying one's potential and increasing it with the participation of various forms of social support in the environment. On the other hand, it generates/co-creates a new type of development moratorium in which young people experiment endlessly and diversely in terms of effectiveness. People with disabilities in the post-adolescence period are in a more unusual situation because as a result of disability (its type and scope) and its social and educational effects, they are generally more dependent on their parents, family or environmental caregivers/life advisers than healthy individuals. This status is often difficult to change and determines the choice of a lifestyle that is an average version of potential expectations or a substitute for dream goals related to their emotionally developed vision of the future. In the case of this micro-social group, it is particularly difficult to determine the moment when youth ends and adulthood begins, mainly because such goals as starting full professional activity or activity in the area of relationships and family-oriented relations are a matter largely determined by the influence of independent life factors related to health, forms of support, as well as a real opportunity to overcome social and professional barriers. They, to a large extent, set standards and conditions for the transition from adolescence to adulthood, from dependence (and semi-autonomy) to independence, facilitating self-fulfilment in life. It happens that despite their involvement in satisfying social relations in their environment, people with disabilities in the emerging adulthood are not satisfied, they do not feel happy, which also actually reduces their quality of life. That is why policies that support education, activation and social participation of disabled people, with particular emphasis on young adults, are so important.

Bibliography

Basistowa J., Istota i rozwój tożsamości w koncepcji E.H. Eriksona (The Essence and Development of Identity in E.H. Erikson's Concept). In: A. Gałdowa (ed.), Klasyczne i współczesne koncepcje osobowości (Classical and Contemporary Concepts of Personality). Kraków 1999, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Becker-Pestka D., Aktywizacja społeczna i zawodowa osób niepełnosprawnych – problemy i wyzwania (Social and Professional Activation of Disabled People. Problems and Challenges), "Colloquium Wydziału Nauk Humanistycznych i Społecznych" Quarterly 2012/4.

Brzezińska A., *Społeczna psychologia rozwoju* (*Social Psychology of Development*), Vol. 3, Warsaw 2000, Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar."

Chruściak M., Michalczuk J., Sijko K., Wiszejko-Wierzbicka D., Życzyńska-Ciołek D., Bariery aktywności zawodowej oraz czynniki sprzyjające podejmowaniu i utrzymywaniu pracy (Barriers to Professional Activity and Factors Beneficial for Taking up and Maintaining a Job), In: W. Łu-

kowski (ed.), Osoby z ograniczoną sprawnością na rynku pracy – portret środowiska (People with Limited Ability on the Labour Market. A Portrait of the Environment), Warszawa 2008, Wydawnictwo SWPS.

Gałdowa A., *Powszechność i wyjątek. Rozwój osobowości człowieka dorosłego* (*Universality and Exception. Personality Development in Adults*), Kraków 2000, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Garczyński T., *Potrzeby psychiczne. Niedosyt, zaspokojenie Mental Needs. Deficiency, Satisfaction*), Warsaw1972, Nasza Księgarnia.

Gurba E., Wczesna dorosłość (Early Maturity), In: B. Harwas-Napierała, J. Trempała (eds.), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka* (*Psychology of Human Development*), Vol. 2, Warsaw 2000, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN.

Harwas-Napierała B., Trempała J. (eds.), *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka* (*Psychology of Human Development*), Vol. 2, Warsaw 2000, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN.

Hildebrandt-Wypych D., Fenomen pokolenia młodzieży (The Phenomenon of the Youth Generation), In: D. Hildebrandt-Wypych, K. Kabacińska (eds.), Młodzież i sukces życiowy (*The Youth and Success in Life*). Kraków 2010, Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls".

Kocowski T., *Potrzeby człowieka – koncepcja systemowa* (*Human Needs. A Systemic Concept*), Wrocław-Warsaw-Kraków-Gdańsk 1982, Ossolineum.

Kozłowska A., *Antropologiczny kontekst nowego okresu rozwojowego stającej się dorosłości* (*Anthropological Context of the New Development Period of Emerging Adulthood*). Biuletyn Sekcji Psychologii Rozwojowej PTP 2010, No. 8.

Krzywonos K., *Rynek pracy osób niepełnosprawnych* (*Job Market of the Disabled*), Gliwice 2012 (unpublished MA thesis written under supervision of the author of the current study).

Kukla D., Poradnictwo zawodowe i praca zawodowa jako integralny proces rewalidacji zawodowej osób niepełnosprawnych (Vocational Counseling and Profession as an Integral Process of Vocational Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities), "Edukacja Ustawiczna Dorosłych" 2004, No. 4.

Lewowicki T., *Przemiany oświaty* (*Transformations of education*), Warsaw 1994, Wydawnictwo „Żak".

Lipska A., W. Zagórska: Stająca się dorosłość w ujęciu Jeffreya J. Arnetta jako rozbudowana faza liminalna rytuału przejścia (Emerging Adulthood According to Jeffrey J. Arnett As an Extended Liminal Phase of the Ritual of Passage), "Psychologia Rozwojowa" 2011, Vol. 16, No. 1.

Maciarz A., *Trudne dzieciństwo i rodzicielstwo* (*Difficult childhood and parenthood*), Wydawnictwo Akademickie "Żak", 2009.

Madalińska-Michalak J., *Uwarunkowania sukcesu zawodowego nauczycieli. Studium przypadków* (*Conditions for Teachers' Professional Success. Case studies*), Łódź 2007, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

Migas A., Problemy integracji psychospołecznej osób z dysfunkcją narządu ruchu (Problems with Psychosocial Integration that People with Reduced Mobility), "Praca i Rehabilitacja Niepełnosprawnych" Warsaw 2006, No. 10 (102), KIGR.

Nowak A., Bezrobocie wśród niepełnosprawnych. Studium pedagogiczno- społeczne (Unemployment among Disabled People. Pedagogical and Social Study), Katowice 2002, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

Nycz E., *Dorastanie w przestrzeni społeczno-kulturowej miasta przemysłowego* (*Growing up in the Socio-cultural Space of an Industrial City*), Opole 2001, Uniwersity of Opole.

Piotrowski K., Wkraczanie w dorosłość. Tożsamość i poczucie dorosłości młodych osób z ograniczeniami sprawności (*Entering Adulthood. Identity and Sense of Maturity of Young People with*

Disabilities). Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar", p. 9; after J.E. Cote, An empirical test of the identity capital model. Journal of Adolescence 1997/20.

Piotrowski K., *Wkraczanie w dorosłość. Tożsamość i poczucie dorosłości młodych dorosłych osób z ograniczeniami sprawności* (*Entering Adulthood. Identity and Sense of Maturity of Young People with Disabilities*), Warsaw 2010, Wydawnictwo Naukowe "Scholar".

Sękowska M., Neopsychoanalityczna koncepcja rozwoju psychospołecznego Erika H. Eriksona. (Neopsychoanalytical Concept of Psychosocial Development by Erik H. Erikson) In: P. Socha (ed.), *Duchowy rozwój człowieka. Fazy życia – osobowość – wiara – religijność. Stadialne koncepcje rozwoju w ciągu życia* (*Spiritual Development of a Human Being. Phases of Life – Personality – Faith – Religion. Stadial Concepts of Development During Lifetime*), Kraków 2000, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Suchodolska J.: Młodzi niepełnosprawni dorośli na rynku pracy – szanse i bariery samorealizacji (Young Disabled Adults on the Labour Market. Opportunities and Barriers to Self-realization). In: S. Wrona, J. Rottermund (eds.), Praca na rzecz osób z niepełnosprawnością (Work for People with Disabilities), Sosnowiec 2013, Wyższa Szkoła "Humanitas".

Szczukiewicz P., Rozwój psychospołeczny a tożsamość (Psychosocial Development and Identity and Identity). Lublin 1998, UMCS.

Szczupał B., Wybrane aspekty poczucia jakości życia bezrobotnych osób niepełnosprawnych (Selected Aspects of the Sense of Quality of Life of Unemployed Disabled People), In: Z. Palak (ed.), Jakość życia osób niepełnosprawnych i nieprzystosowanych społecznie (Quality of Life of Disabled and Socially Maladjusted Persons), Lublin 2006, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.

Turner J.H., *Socjologia. Koncepcje i ich zastosowanie* (*Sociology. Concepts and their Application*). Poznań 1998, Wyd. Zysk i S-ka.

Ustawa z dnia 27 sierpnia 1997 r. o rehabilitacji zawodowej i społecznej oraz zatrudnianiu osób niepełnosprawnych (The Act of 27 August 1997 on vocational and social rehabilitation and employment of disabled people). Dz. U. z 2008r. Nr 14, poz.92 (Journal of Laws of 2008, No. 14, item 92), Chapter 3, Art. 8.1

Wagner M., Newnam L., Cameto R., Levine P. and Garza N., An Overview of Findings From Wave 2 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) (NCSER 2006-3004). Menlo Park 2006, CA.

Wiszejko-Wierzbicka D., Niewykorzystana sfera. Partycypacja społeczna i obywatelska osób z ograniczeniami sprawności (Unused Sphere. Social and Civic Participation of People with Disabilities), Warsaw 2010, Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Scholar".

Witkowski L., Rozwój i tożsamość w cyklu życia. Stadium koncepcji E.H. Eriksona (Development and Identity in the Life Cycle. E.H. Erikson's Concept Stage), Łódź 2009, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Edukacji Zdrowotnej in Łódź.

www.bon.polsl.pl/bon/news/projekt-podejmij-wyzwanie-poradnictwo-warsztaty-szkolenia-staze)

Anna Mańkowska
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Learning and Teaching Opportunities of Ethnic Minorities in Multicultural China.
Unity, Diversity or Critical Pluralism?

KEYWORDS

minority education, China, school in China, religion, language, minzu

ABSTRACT

This article explores current issues of minority education in China, especially in the context of religion and language education. In the first part of the article, the author describes (1) cultural and political framework of Chinese education in general and (2) current educational conditions, also discussing differences in educational attainment for minority groups in China. The second part of the article presents the situation of minority religions, which is not really recognised in state schooling in China. The author shows educational examples from the Tibet region and from Muslim education. The third part of the article explores another major challenge related to ethnic minority schooling, which is language diversity. In the final part of the paper, the author tries to comment on Chinese minority education dilemmas and concludes with some social recommendations.

The case of multiculturalism of China is very specific and uneasy to explore. China has a rich, centuries-old and complex multicultural tradition, which currently additionally struggles with market forces. In the subject literature concerning education of ethnic minorities of the Middle Kingdom we may read that the country primarily promotes itself as a harmonious, multicultural mosaic, where as many as 56 distinct ethnic groups (in Chinese referred to as *minzu*[1]), officially approved

---

[1] In the text I am going to use this designation interchangeably, having in mind ethnic groups.

of and defined by the state apparatus in 1950s and 1960s,[2] strive towards shared, peaceful coexistence. James Leibold and Chen Yangbin (2014) note that the Chinese ethnic mosaic is exceptional in its structure, because as much as 92% of it belongs to Han people. The people of Han constitute the meta majority of China's population, and the common (official) characteristic feature connecting the group is the written language. The remaining 8% belongs to the defined and accepted ethnic minorities (Leibold, 2013).

It is worth noting that multiculturalism of China is two-faceted. On the one hand, the Middle Kingdom is an interesting, intriguing country, where theoretically the abovementioned minzu live in accordance with the assumptions of the state apparatus. On the other hand, through its century-long diversity, China is becoming a complicated country, sometimes even dangerous. Internal Chinese conflicts, or episodes of hatred, such as the outburst of aggression towards the ethnic minority in the town of Lhasa in 2008 or Shaoguan in 2009, constant quest for territorial and cultural separation of Mongols and Uyghurs, or persecutions of Christians (particularly in Guangdong and Junnan provinces), show that China struggles with similar problems as other multicultural countries, however their scale and frequency are proportionally bigger and more common. Additionally, the issue is hindered by the fact that ethnic relations in China are subject to regulations of policies and legal resolutions which aim at maintaining the autonomy of the abovementioned 56 groups, while simultaneously sustaining the national unity (in the social and cultural sense).

Gerard Postiglione (1998) claims that the educational system of China is one of the tools of supporting this goal. By its means, the Middle Kingdom tries to minimise the internal tensions and promote multicultural harmony. Implemented educational solutions aim at mitigating the effects of internal pluralism; therefore, Chinese schools face an exceptionally difficult task. On the one hand, the schools are to reproduce the national (Chinese) culture and constitute a "brand of national culture" (zhongua minzu wenhua) in China (Postiglione, 1998). Following the idea of the abovementioned author, it might be claimed that state apparati do their best to prevent school from using unbeneficial, adverse (unaccepted by the state) cultural influences, originating for instance in the Western culture. On the other hand, state schools are also responsible for the protection and propagation of culture, religion and language of minorities. The aim of this article is to de-

---

[2] In 1950s and 1960s, the Chinese government employed a team of scientists, mainly anthropologists, whose task was to describe the ethnic minorities in China. Initially, Chinese citizens reported as many as 400 various identities. The task of the scientists was to check these claims. Consequently, 56 minority groups were defined and approved.

scribe Chinese educational reality in the multicultural society. A question should be asked whether the contemporary system of Chinese education corresponds to the needs of multicultural society and what kind of practices and educational solutions are applied in the case of students from ethnic minorities, particularly in the case of teaching the language and religion and whether applied educational practices affect the school enrolment rate. In the text I am going to focus primarily on educational solutions applied from the early years of education until the end of the second-degree middle school.[3] Research materials to this work are taken from existing research on multicultural education in China, both of local (Chinese) and foreign (mainly American) authors. The analytical problems result from the scope and range of Chinese multiculturalism; therefore, the analysed issue can be considered as difficult to recognise.

Cultural Educational Framework

When writing about the education of minorities in China, it is necessary to mention complicated philosophical and religious Chinese cosmology, in which the applied educational solutions are deeply rooted. Baogang He (1998) assumes that the Confucian tradition best explains the rules of common life applicable in contemporary multicultural China. Confucian communitarianism, by means of paternalistic solutions used for harmonious coexistence of culturally adverse minorities, by assumption is to support and protect this minzu diversity (He, 1998). Other than, for instance, in Western liberalism, in Confucian tradition the phenomena of individualism, group distinctiveness or individual rights do not exist.

To show the paradox, it is also worthwhile to refer to Confucian culturalism, which in its nature assumes a certain hierarchy: the Chinese *Xia* (meaning orthodox, central, civic, Chinese) and *Yi* (peripheral, heterodox, non-Chinese) are put on opposing poles. *Xia* is responsible for upholding the order and stability, and defines also what is proper (applicable, desirable) for *Yi*. According to Chinese Confucianism, all inhabitants of the Chinese land should aim at adopting the *Xia* norms. Therefore, the members of minority groups, including students, according to Confucian assumptions, are expected to be faithful and loyal to the country. Furthermore, the existing social values and norms are regulated by a complicated

---

[3] In another article, A. Mańkowska *Linguistic educational reality in multicultural China. Unity or diversity?* (*Językowa rzeczywistość edukacyjna w wielokulturowych Chinach. Jedność czy różnorodność?*) "Pedagogika Szkoły Wyższej," 2018, 2/2017 (22), pp. 121-132, DOI: 10.18276/psw.2017.2-11, educational practices including higher education were described.

political system. After 1949, for instance, China changed the manner of perceiving minorities in the country. Using a descriptive language, it might be said that Confucian assumptions were additionally given a Marxist-Leninist framework. According to James Leibold (2013), ethnic policy in China has been since that time deeply rooted in this framework and despite social and political changes it still remains in it. For minorities, it means new social rules and principles. For instance, in Mao Zedong times (along with the Communist Party of China) several political actions were undertaken towards the minorities. First of all, the 56 groups of ethnic minorities mentioned before were officially defined. Territories of place of residence of the minorities were separated, and new, preferential rights (privileges) were established for education, employment and procreation, which were additionally strengthened in 1980s and are still applicable.

It is also interesting that the idea of community has always been present in the Chinese doctrine, and a specific cultural unity has been a dominating factor legitimising the Chinese political ideology. The traditional ideology of common harmony (datong), in other words "great community," was supposed to serve to maintain the Chinese social unity. In policy, also educational, there was a frequent reference to the cultural immunity of "Heavenly mandate" (dominance of Chinese culture and centralised system of control), however according to the data provided by Postiglione (1998), contemporary criteria of adjustment of educational practices and policy for the minorities depend on a number of factors. The most important of them include: the population of the minority, group identification character; size, place and location of the settled area; maintained relations with other ethnic groups; prevalence of rural or urban origin people; area population; whether the group has strong religious traditions or not; whether the group has the distinct written language apart from the spoken one; what is the dispersion of group members around the country and whether the group has its own traditions of establishing intercultural relations.

In order to treat all minzu equally, by assumption the educational system is constructed in such a way as to treat differently all particular minority groups. There are two types of education in China: for students from the Han minority (i.e. majority), the so-called standard education (zhenggui jiaoyu), and special education for the remaining groups, the so-called ethnic education (minzu jiaoyu) (Postiglione, 1998).

It is worthwhile to refer here to remarks of Catrion Bass, who claims that the Chinese educational system has always been far from coherent and its structure has been marked by social stratification. According to the researcher, Han people were educated in a way which was to provide the country with personnel necessary

to achieve the economic development, whereas the main educational goal for the remaining minzu was to maintain the political and cultural loyalty of students to the country (Bass, 1998). Warren Smith's conclusions are similar. He writes that the development of the Chinese state is characterised by dominance, and ideology of common harmony is frequently used in the political dialogue. Common harmony is maintained by means of the centralised system of control and ubiquitous dominance of Chinese culture, also by means of the educational system (Smith, 2009). It is contrary to one of the global phenomena intensifying recently among the minority groups, which is based on strengthening their own, ethnic identity, particularly in countries with rich multicultural tradition. In China, despite existing national and cultural framework, the aspirations to cultural independence are exceptionally strong, particularly in Tibet and Sinciang province, where local ethnic groups have for years been struggling to upkeep their own identity at two levels, of religion and language. Therefore, it is worth taking a look at what educational practices and solutions are applied to ethnic minorities, particularly in the matter of teaching language and religion.

Local, National or no Religion in the School System?

Postiglione (1998) claims that practicing religion is widespread among Chinese minorities, and the social changes taking place, the modernisation of the country and the moral crisis plaguing China additionally stimulate religious interest of citizens. A similar phenomenon can be observed in other countries, such as the USA. An example of China shows, too, that the intensified involvement in the matters of faith and religion of particular minority groups can be extremely diversified. Among all the minzu, Han people are the group demonstrating the least religious involvement (Postiglione, 1998).

The dominating religions in China include Islam, Buddhism, Lamaism and Taoism. Some groups practice shamanism, polytheism, totemism, as well as the veneration of the dead. Few Christians are present among the Korean people, Miao or Yi (Mackerras, 1999). The most up-to-date research, conducted by the organisation Freedom House (Albert, 2018), showed that in China there are 350 million of religious followers, mainly Chinese Buddhists, Protestants, Muslims, Falun Gong followers, Catholics and Tibetan monks. It needs to be added that the government officially accepts five religious groups: Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism. I would like to mention also that Chinese minorities are mostly characterised by rich religious traditions, which provide the abovementioned

groups with a strong sense of own identity. Religious beliefs and practices have never been banned in China and the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (2004) declares the guarantee of the freedom of faith. In the Middle Kingdom we can find, however, examples of uneven treatment in the religious context, such as, for instance, financial support of the chosen religious groups by the country, particularly in areas which are attractive for tourists. Currently, the Chinese government indirectly controls the religious situation in the country, among others by means of specific state subsidies for the development of registered religious associations, liquidation of unregistered religious associations and creating the system of "patriotic churches."[4] Nonetheless, official directives claim that the government does not interfere in the religious matters of minorities as long as they do not threat the matters of China (and mainly the Chinese unity) (Mackerras, 1999). Interestingly, the educational system by assumption should remain free of religious influences.

In accordance with the assumptions of the state school system in China, all students, also those from minorities (along with the autonomous regions), should follow the completely secularised system of education. Colin Mackerras (1999) claims that in formal school education in China, implemented in accordance with the national curriculum, there is no place for propagating any religious beliefs or practices. There are, however, certain exceptions. For instance, in language schools teachers can use Quran to teach Arabic, however the classes should not exceed the religious limits of learning. There are no formal counter indications for Tibetan monks and other priests to teach in state schools; however, their attire, behaviour or beliefs cannot demonstrate the religious context. According to Colin Mackerras (1999), while he was conducting research on religious practices in schools, he did not meet any clergyman working as a teacher. Most commonly, monks and clergymen work in monasteries, where they teach young boys (for instance in Tibet). Monasteries are not subjected to the school system, but they have an educational function: they are often referred to as "religious universities."[5] The conclusion of research of Dru C. Gladney (1996) is that mosques and monasteries functioning as such are a direct cause of lower school enrolment rate. Gladney (1996), in his ethnographic studies on Hui people (Muslims) demonstrated that some parents, particularly from rural areas, did not feel the need to educate children in the state school and had them educated in mosques only. Social understanding of religious

---

[4] These are churches or institutions approved of/accredited by the Chinese government, cooperating with it at various levels.

[5] The function Buddhist monasteries or Muslim mosques is very peculiar in China. Most of them function as centers of religious education.

education, acquisition of the Quran knowledge and learning Arabic was justified for them, and also culturally important to such a degree that they did not consider it necessary to educate children in state schools.

A similar situation occurred in Tibet in 1990s, where parents massively resigned from state education to the benefit of education in or at monasteries. The arguments in favour of education outside the state school system included better learning conditions in monasteries; learning written and spoken Tibetan (and consequently strengthening the sense of own identity); learning general human rules or general knowledge of science. Another cause of sending children to monasteries was poverty. Parents who could not secure decent life of their children (and bear the costs of traditional education), sent them to be taught at cheaper monasteries (also paid, but justified in spiritual sense). The child/student in a monastery means a social advancement for the family and better life for the offspring (Bass, 1998). It is reasonable to refer once again to the studies of Mackerras (1998) here, in which he notices that the rebirth of education in the religious spirit is related to dissemination of the state education. It is a kind of "social rebellion" of minzu against the total secularisation of schools.

The total ban on teaching religion in state schools has brought about negative social consequences in China. Gladney's studies (1999) regarding the level of knowledge about the religious dogmas of Islam among the Chinese demonstrated that the lack of religious education in schools results in very low social knowledge about Islam, particularly among the Han people. According to the researcher, majority of the society (i.e. the Han people), who never crossed the mosque door and does not have basic knowledge about Islam adheres to the common knowledge about Islam in China and Muslim identity (Gladney, 1999: 58). I would like to add that there are various representations of this religion; certainly different from its understanding in the popular culture, created to a large degree by the media. The Muslims in China have a very rich cultural, religious and school tradition, which affected the development of Chinese culture and society. Postiglione (1998) states that the state school additionally marginalises the school Muslim minority and puts it in an unfavourable light. It is a common practice to use low results of the Muslim minority learning and present them to prove their failure, particularly if the results are compared with the results of students from Tatar or Uzbek minority (Postiglione, 1998).

The examples above demonstrate that particularly the religious minorities, by means of organised religious centres, do their best to maintain the religious identity of minzu unchanged. It might be said that the abovementioned expansion of the totally secularised state education make the minority groups feel an even stronger

need to affirm their identity. It is worthwhile to refer here to the studies of Baden Nima (1997), who on the example of the Tibet society demonstrates that the cause to quit school by the minority might be psychological. Nima noticed that some children, who did not find references to their own religion, history and language in educational materials, irreversibly lost motivation to learning, and lost their interest in school as such (Nima, 1997). I would like to add that it is a characteristic feature of the Chinese school enrolment rate at the domestic level to give up school during subsequent phases of the educational process. Postiglione (1998) indicates that most students drop out of primary school, however it is much less frequent in first and second-degree middle education. The problem of dropping out of school exists in entire China, however it is the most serious issue in Tibet. The key importance for the level of education in China is the economy of this region. As Bass underlines, the level of education is higher in regions with well-developed industrial infrastructure and in places where financial outlays for education are higher (Bass, 1998). According to statistics, the investment of China in education is low; the lowest among intensively developing countries. Most countries spend approx. 5% of their GDP for education. In the last 10 years, China (except for Hong Kong), on average has spent approximately 2.23% of its GDP on education (cf. UNESCO reports).

How to say "school" in chinese in tibet?

Examples from all around the world demonstrate that each country creates its language policy in accordance with domestic conditions. In Switzerland we have a few official languages, in Finland there are two, in the USA one, whereas is India the system of *lingua franca* was worked out. In the recent decades, the minority rights, including the use of their own language, have been more emphasised, and the examples such as the Chinese one demonstrate that in a deeply diversified society it is hard to implement a solution according to its multicultural nature.

In China, the right of the minorities to use their own languages, not only in schools but also in everyday life, is a field of tension in many disputes and discussions concerning respecting the minority rights. In 1950s, following the decree of the Chinese government, the linguistic groups were divided and officially differentiated, but it needs to be emphasised that the range and nature of languages, and their dialectic diversity in areas populated by minzu has still not been fully discovered. It should also be mentioned that it is additionally complicated due to political, legal and administrative reasons.

Maria Kurpaska in the book *Chinese Language(s): A Look through the Prism of The Great Dictionary of Modern Chinese Dialects (Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs)* made a detailed analysis of the Chinese linguistic monolith. Referring to the researchers such as Zhou Qingsheng, Li Rong or Dao Bu she states that in China there are over 80 languages (dialects). A simplified analysis of the language situation in China needs to be presented in order to demonstrate the range of the problem. In China, then, three main language groups can be differentiated: (1) Mandarin Chinese [6](putonghua, guoyu) – dominating among the Han and Hui people as well as Manchus, (2) languages of minority groups, using their own written and spoken language, i.e. Mongols, Tibetans, Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Koreans, Russians, Yi, Lahu, Kachins, Xibe, (3) the remaining groups using only the spoken language, without the written one (Kurpaska, 2010). As Rui Yang and Mei Wu (2009) state, in accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Resolution on Education, the defined minorities are fully entitled to use and develop their own language.

According to Zhao Zhenzhou (2014), in China there are two types of language teaching for the minorities. In the first option the minzu students can follow the normal curriculum with the minority of Han (minkaohan): they go to the same class, where the language of instruction is the official language and all the students take the same exams. Additionally, there is a foreign language, as an extracurricular subject. The minzu students following this educational path are given additional points during the recruitment to the second-degree middle school. The second kind of language education for minzu consists of specially constructed teaching curricula for ethnic minorities (minkaomin), containing the curriculum in two languages (in the official national language and the language of minority) and optionally a foreign language. This kind of education differs from the bilingual European schooling. The Chinese bilingual schooling has been interpreted and adjusted to the political conditions and possibilities. In China, similarly to other multilingual countries, the bulk of the teaching personnel is subjected to the state education system and educational materials go through the system of official acceptance by the state. It is worth adding that educational and teaching materials in the minkaomin schooling are often translated from the official national language, therefore minzu students receive a Chinese handbook in a language of the minority. This type of education is available from the kindergarten to the middle school. The transition from one type of schooling

---

[6] The term "Mandarin" originates from the ancient European name of a Chinese bureaucrat-mandarin. In Chinese, Mandarin languages are referred to as guānhuà, which means "the speech of officials," and in popular language as běifānghuà "Northern dialect."

(minkaohan) to the other (minkaomin) is difficult and happens very rarely. The minzu students most frequently make a "rational" choice, which makes it more likely to be accepted to the middle school and opt for the first-type schooling, simultaneously sacrificing learning in the minzu language and culture (Zhenzhou, 2014).

In China there are also areas independent culturally, and to some degree also politically, such as Tibet, where students are offered as many as seven models of bilingual teaching in the minkaomin system. The models were described in detail by Zhang Tingfang[7], and according to the annual studies, despite so many solutions, 95% of primary school students follow the model in which the official language is the language of instruction in all subjects, apart from the lessons of Tibetan (Rong, 2014). A certain trend is visible here: the teaching model is shifting away from the model in Tibetan towards the official language, particularly when the student intends to continue learning in the second-degree middle school. This way the choice becomes illusive and becomes a necessity for students who want to continue learning, for instance in the second-degree middle school. Regie Stites, quoting Xing Gongwan (1999), directly characterises teaching the Mandarin Chinese as the "system of dominance," directed against the minorities. The researcher straightforwardly claims that the linguistic Tower of Babel in China and the lack of applicable solutions is one of the barriers in popularising education as such (Stites, 1999).

Chinese researchers, however, state that learning in the official language is necessary and indispensable. Ma Rong (2014) writes that in the case of minzu students, learning Mandarin Chinese is as important as learning the minzu language and growing up in the minzu culture. The author writes, "Students from minorities should learn in their mother tongue in order to inherit their traditional culture. The knowledge of Mandarin Chinese is necessary to maintain internal communication and to participate in national, social and economic development. Simultaneously, Han students should have the opportunity to study the language and culture of minorities, which will help the national unity of China and will also allow maintaining and supporting cultural diversity" (Rong, 2014:84). The researcher notices the need of multicultural education and sees in it a cure for Chinese linguistic turmoil. Moreover, he underlines that in the light of the changing Chinese job market and mass internal migrations, there is the need of education in the national language, in order to allow the school graduates to function professionally.

---

[7] Ma Rong refers to the study by Zhang Tingfang titled *Situation and Studies of Putonghua Teaching among Minorities in Tibet*.

Therefore, the popularisation of Mandarin Chinese is also additionally enhanced by neoliberal market reforms. Two factors play a significant role here: free flow of workforce and mass internal migrations for professional purposes, which fuel the requirement for the national language.

The Chinese example demonstrates that bilingual education in further perspective could be an opportunity for minorities and it could affect positively the functioning of minzu. Nonetheless, an important question remains, which model of bilingual education should be chosen, how much place should be left for individual practices and how deeply the country can interfere in the contents of minority education. It might be claimed, therefore, that a significant issue for bilingual education in China is the pressure on learning Mandarin and simultaneous claims that minorities are fully entitled to develop and use their own languages. The applied educational practices are contrary to the multicultural model of teaching and a clear transition towards the assimilation model.

Conclusion

To conclude and summarise, interesting remarks of Iris Marion Young (1998) are worth reminding. The researcher finds out that the Chinese problem of minorities is a materialisation of the "dilemma of differences," based on the fact that disadvantaged and oppressed groups are forced to deny the existence of differences instead of inclusion in institutions (also educational). They also have to maintain differences to allow their compensation (Young, 1998). This dilemma is additionally complicated by the fact that China controls and manages these processes. Chinese authorities formally establish the differences between minzu and simultaneously allow the entities to deny the social unity. It might be said that this kind of communal approach to citizenship somehow forces minzu to protect their own culture and identity. Double affiliation, to the culture of minority and culture of the entire society, and resulting double duties are a source of conflicts and failures. To solve the problem, the state proposes, for instance, a "liberal" solution, where the minzu community can "enjoy" personal freedom while choosing the type of language education or allows existence of religious education in mosques and monasteries, where the choice is illusive, and common cultural dominance of Han people is very clear.

The Chinese problem results from the fact that the school system is highly centralised, culturally deeply immersed in Chinese, state framework and must face colossal regional differences, which are reflected in a diversified economic devel-

opment, in deeply adverse cultures and various languages and religions. In view of the above, China faces a serious challenge, in which it is necessary to study the educational curriculum and focus activities on the construction of open and fair society.

Bibliography

Albert E. (2018). *Religion in China*, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/religion-china, access on 29.04.2019.

Bass C. (1998). *Education in Tibet: Policy and Practice since 1950 (Politics in Contemporary Asia)*. London.

Gladney D.C. (1996). *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*. London and Cambridge.

Gladney D.C. (1999). *Making Muslim in China: Education, Islamization and Representation* [in:] G. A. Postiglione (eds.). *China's National Minority Education. Culture, schooling and development*. New York and London, pp. 55-94.

He B. (1998). *Can Kymlicka's Liberal Theory of Minority Rights be Applied in East Asia?* [in:] P. van der Velde and A.McKay (eds.). *New Developments in Asian Studies*. London and New York, pp. 20-44.

The Constitution of the People's Republic of China of 14 March 2004 (Chapter II, art. 36), http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Constitution/2007-11/15/content_1372964.htm, access on 01.08.2016.

Kurpaska M. (2010). *Chinese language(s): a look through the prism of The Great dictionary of modern Chinese dialects*. Berlin/New York.

Leibold J. (2013). *Ethnic Policy in China: Is Reform Inevitable?* "Policy Studies" East-West Center, no 68.

Leibold J., Yangbin Ch. (2014). *Introduction: Minority Education in China Minority Education in China: Balancing Unity and Diversity in an Era of Critical Pluralism* [in:] J. Leibold, Ch. Yangbin (eds.). *Minority Education in China, Balancing unity and diversity in era of critical pluralism*. Hong Kong, pp. 1-24.

Mackerras C. (1999). *Religion and the Education of China's Minorities* [in:] G. A. Postiglione (eds.). *China's National Minority Education. Culture, schooling and development*. New York and London, pp. 23-53.

Mańkowska A. (2018). *Linguistic educational reality in multicultural China. Unity or diversity?* (*Językowa rzeczywistość edukacyjna w wielokulturowych Chinach. Jedność czy różnorodność?*) "Pedagogika Szkoły Wyższej," 2018, 2/2017 (22), pp. 121-132, DOI: 10.18276/psw.2017.2-11

Nima B. (1997). *The way out for Tibetan education*. "Chinese Education & Society," 30 (4), pp. 7-20.

Postiglione G.A. (1998). *State Schooling and Ethnicity in China: The Rise or Demise of Multiculturalism?* http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED427100.pdf, access on 12.08.2015.

Rong M. (2014). *Bilingual education and language policy in Tibet* [in:] J. Leibold, Ch. Yangbin (eds.). *Minority Education in China, Balancing unity and diversity in era of critical pluralism*. Hong Kong, pp. 83-106.

Smith W. (2009). *China's Tibet? Autonomy or assimilation?* New York.

Stites R. (1999). *Writing cultural boundaries, National minority language policy, literacy planning and bilingual education* [in:] G. A. Postiglione (eds.). *China's national minority education: Culture, schooling, and development.* New York, pp. 95-130.

Unesco, *Expenditure on education as % of GDP (from government sources)*, http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT_DS&popupcustomise=true&lang=en, access on 01.08.2015.

Young I.M. (1998). *Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship* [in:] G. Shafir (eds.). *The Citizenship Debates: A Reader*. Minneapolis-Londyn. pp. 263-291.

Young R., Wu M. (2009). *Education for ethnic minorities in China: a policy critique.* "Special Edition on Education and Ethnicity," Volume 6, Number 2, pp. 117-131.

Zhenzhou Z. (2014). *The trilingual Trap* [in:] J. Leibold, Ch. Yangbin (eds.). *Minority Education in China, Balancing unity and diversity in era of critical pluralism*. Hong Kong, pp. 239-258.

Agnieszka Skowrońska-Pućka
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Educational potential of critical life events from the point of view of biographical learning

KEYWORDS

biography, critical life event, biographical learning, lifelong learning, suffering, education

ABSTRACT

The article contains deliberations on the subject of adult learning as a result of breaking points in people's lives. It is based on Fritz Schütze and Gerhard Riemann's concept of the trajectory, trying to show the educational potential of critical life events. The paper constitutes an illustration about learning and biography. The analysis concerns an individual who experienced domestic violence, was separated from her family of origin by being placed in a care and educational institution, whose life was additionally complicated by teenage pregnancy and motherhood. The analysis of the narrative makes it possible to see two dimensions of the relationship between learning and biography – learning from the experiences we face during life and biographical learning (or learning from a biography).

Introduction

A person's biography consists of a number of various types of events. Some of them are of little importance and do not affect the course of the individual's biography, but there are also those which constitute a kind of boundary between different stages of life or completely change its course. An event that diametrically changes human life is sometimes described by experts in the subject as a turning point in life, biography (e.g. Rokuszewska-Pawełek 2008), a biographical fracture (e.g. Malec 2008), or, as Helena Sęk terms it, a critical event (Sęk 1991). In order for an event to gain critical status, it should distinguish itself in the course of ordinary

events, be connected with values important for the individual experiencing it, be emotionally significant and touch the sphere of functioning that is crucial for a human being (cf. Sęk 2004, Skowrońska-Pućka 2016: 218, Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska 2010: 39, Stanisławiak 2012: 7).

In this article, an exemplification of such events will be provided by excerpts from an interview with a former pupil of a socialisation-type educational care institution, focused on the issues of critical life events, which for the narrator was, among others, separation from her family of origin and placement in an educational care institution. The focus will be on their educational potential because, as the experts on the subject indicate, human biographies can be a valuable source of knowledge "about the role of individual events and their functions in the process of education and socialisation. The educational dimension of the experiences contained in the life cycle is [...] the value in which a particular pedagogical significance is perceived. For it is to be a way of knowing how humans, on their individual paths of life, were shaped by factors [...] that [also] influenced their inner world" (quoted after Golonka-Legut 2015: 105).

A critical life event – terminological decisions

There is an entire range of definitions of a crisis or crisis situation that can be identified. Caplan points out that individuals "people are in a state of crisis when they face an obstacle to important life goals – an obstacle that is, for a time, insurmountable by the use of customary methods of problem solving. A period of disorganization ensues, a period of upset, during which many abortive attempts at a solution are made" (James and Gilliland 2004: 9). The crisis, in this perspective, is the result of difficulties in achieving important life goals and the obstacles that appear to people to be insurmountable with the use of customary choices and behaviours (James and Gilliland 2004: 9). According to another author, crises are a kind of personal difficulty or situation that hinders people's ability to act effectively and thus prevents them from controlling their own lives (Belkin 1984: 424).

It should be remembered that every person is different, just as every crisis is different. The literature on the subject distinguishes four domains of crisis: developmental crises (transformations); situation crises; existential crises; ecosystemic crises (cf. James and Gilliland, 2004: 28, Lipczyński 2007: 19, Stanisławiak 2012: 7). Situational crises are the result of uncommon, surprising, extraordinary events or circumstances that an individual cannot predict or control, and they can lead to a risk to life and health (cf. Stanisławiak 2012: 8). They can occur after such events

as a car accident, job joss, unexpected illness and sudden death. "The key to differentiating a situational crisis from other crises is that a situational crisis is random, sudden, shocking intense, and often catastrophic" (James and Gilliland 2004: 18). Next in the discussion is the existential crisis, which includes "inner conflicts and anxieties that accompany important human issues of purpose, responsibility, independence, freedom, and commitment" (James and Gilliland 2004: 18). This crisis may be the result of a negative or detrimental life balance, etc. "The mid-life crisis (the so-called shadow line) is existential in nature, as well as balance crises appearing in old age, related to the review and summary of one's past life (Stanisławiak 2012: 8). In turn, development crises (transformations) – "permanent companions of our lives – have a universal character" (Stanisławiak 2012: 7). They belong to the desired, expected events, occurring "in the normal flow of human growth and evolution whereby a dramatic change or shift occurs that produces abnormal responses". Such a crisis may be a reaction to the birth of a child at a mature age, graduation from university, ending of professional career and retirement (James and Gilliland 2004: 18). Development crises are generally considered to be normal phenomena, but it is worth noting and emphasising that "all persons and all developmental crises are unique and must be assessed and handled in unique ways" (James and Gilliland 2004: 18). What connects all the crises described above is the fact that each of them is connected with change and loss of what was the norm, routine, a constant feature in the life of an individual.

In this text, I would like to focus the reader's attention on the educational potential of non-normative critical events, and thus on adult learning in situations of life changes. It is worth remembering that, by definition, the occurrence of a critical life event and the experience of an emotional crisis may pose a threat to the affected individual, because "it can overwhelm the individual to the extent that serious pathology, including homicide and murder, may result" (James and Gilliland 2004: 26) but it can also become an important lesson in life.

Biographical trajectory and biographical learning

The concept of biographical trajectory developed by G. Riemann and F. Schütze (1992) is a kind of background for the above-mentioned critical biographical events connected with suffering. According to the authors mentioned, the notion of trajectory includes events, as a result of which the life of an individual ceases to progress in a predictable mode, and everything that was previously known, constant and ordered, changes into a sequence of situations leading to a sense of loss of

control and change. Elżbieta Zakrzewska-Manterys points out that the trajectory refers to chaotic and disordered processes and causes suffering and pain to the individuals who experience it (...)" (Zakrzewska-Manterys 1995: 41). Individual trajectories differ from each other, but as the authors of the above-mentioned concept point out, in each of them, it is possible to distinguish several characteristic elements and indicate a specific sequence. According to the authors, each trajectory runs according to a specific sequence:

– the gradual accumulation of trajectory potential,
– crossing the boundary of activation of the trajectory potential,
– the attempt to achieve and develop a fragile balance in dealing with everyday life,
– destabilisation of the unstable balance and dealing with everyday life,
– the breakdown of the organisation of everyday life and self-orientation,
– attempts to rationalise the trajectory and come to terms with it,
– practical work on the trajectory and gaining control over it and/or freeing oneself from its ties (quoted after Gutowska 2014: 206).

The German sociologist Peter Alheit made a huge contribution to the development of theoretical and empirical verification of the relationship between human biography and learning. The author understood biographical learning as "the self-creative actions of subjects, reflexively organising their experiences in a way that generates a coherent personality, identity, gives meaning to their life history and socially communicable vital perspective of the living world, directing their actions" (quoted after: Tedder, Biesta 2009: 21). The issue of biography, educational biography and biographical learning is the subject of many works by Elżbieta Dubas. From the author's point of view, biographical learning means "a specific process of learning, carried out by a person who reflects on their biography and recognises and changes themselves and their living world as a result of this reflection. It is based on the life experiences of an individual, it has an emotional, cognitive and social dimension, as well as axiological and existential one. It is purposeful and conducive to the modernisation of identity. It has a practical dimension in that it contributes to a more efficient functioning in a changing and difficult world" (Dubas 2015: 27).

The author this article perceives the components of the trajectory and biographical learning outlined in this text in the different experiences of the individual, such as the suffering of the pupils of a care and educational institution due to the separation from their family of origin, a teenager having a child, marriage with the consent of the court at the age of sixteen, the course of childhood and adolescence in a problematic family, educational and professional difficulties of

the former pupil of the care and educational institution. Therefore, these concepts served to analyse biographical critical events, the suffering associated with them and to indicate their educational potential.

Short description of the person participating in the study[1]

One of the respondents was Renata, who was 27 years old at the time of the empirical verifications. The woman grew up in a multi-problem family with both parents suffering from alcoholism, physical and psychological violence, unemployment and an extremely difficult financial situation, which led to dependence on the support of aid institutions. The family functioned on the margins of social life, not being able to count on the help of even the closest family. Aid received from the family was only occasional and incidental, and over time it was no longer provided. For some time, the family was characterised by a full structure, later the father was sent to prison, and the mother (several times) stayed in lock down rehabilitation facilities. Renata has two younger brothers, who later, like he, would be sent to various care and educational institutions as a result of the limitation of parental authority of their parents, who were deemed incapable of raising them. The narrative of the woman, who took part in only fragmentary empirical verifications presented here, shows that she always felt responsible for the fate of her siblings and tried to satisfy the needs of the younger brothers by any means. During her childhood and adolescence, she earned money by stealing and then selling stolen goods. Parenting, i.e. caring for her siblings and taking over the tasks of her parents, made it difficult for her to fulfil her schooling obligation. She did not have much difficulty in primary school and managed to complete it. However, she repeated the first grade twice in middle school, but as she emphasises, it was only due to low attendance and later the negative influence of her peer group.

> [**Renata**] *The school experiences were both positive and negative. Because on the one hand, at school I had a little rest from things at home, and on the other hand, I was worried about what was going on at home. I didn't think about what I had*

---

[1] The fragmentary excerpts of the research presented here were conducted in the years 2013-2015, using a qualitative method of conducting empirical verifications. The biographical method made it possible to learn about a specific life trajectory of girls, former pupils of care and educational institutions, whose common experience was teenage pregnancy and time spent in the institutional foster care system. The technique I used to conduct empirical verifications was the in-depth interview. Thanks to another meeting, which in this case took place 2019, it was possible to draw conclusions which are the subject of this text.

to write down in class or anything... I was more focused on what was happening at home, but it was fine. I know that the teachers were always fair to me because I was fair to them. And they liked me, so I got along well with them, so I was okay. I had no problems at school. Because in fact, if I went to school normally, I wouldn't have any problems. My problems were related to my absences. [...] And I didn't go because I had to take care of my brothers. Sometimes I wouldn't go because I had to go and make some money.

At the age of fifteen, the narrator met a boy and after ten months of acquaintance, she got pregnant. When she was placed in a care and educational facility while pregnant, she was assigned an individual learning plan and, as she herself points out, she achieved very high educational results. The woman did not accept her stay in the facility. It was an extremely traumatic experience for her and an unexpected situation, first associated with a huge shock at the news of being placed in the facility, then depression as a result of separation from her siblings and giving birth while still a teenager herself, as well as rebellion and anger due to the prolonged, in her opinion, stay. The woman could not bear to be separated from her siblings and boyfriend, the father of her child and, at the instigation of her social worker, despite the opposition of the institution staff, she began to seek the court's permission to marry at the age of sixteen. The staff, as she pointed out during the interview, did not accept the girl's idea, they took measures to dissuade her from the decision, because her boyfriend – her future husband – abused alcohol and used physical violence against her. Despite the objections of the pedagogical group, the received the court's consent to marry, and after the marriage she left the institution together with her child. After a few months of living in her in-laws' home, problems arose. The marriage, as she says, lasted four years.

[**Renata**] *The truth is, I thought about it earlier, but I didn't have an opportunity to escape. I had no place to go, so, you know, sorry. I lived with my in-laws, in the end, there were such fights... I moved out from Mirek's, because there were eternal fights, because he always beat for any small thing. We have a blue card[2] in place. I even had a case about limiting his parental authority. About domestic violence.*

---

[2] The Blue Card System is a record-keeping system that is used by law enforcement and social service personnel in domestic violence interventions. It serves to standardise the procedure for police interaction with families experiencing domestic violence. The aims of the system are to identify the existence of alcohol-related and domestic violence problems within a family as well as to collect data, to generate a plan of assistance to affected family members, and to monitor the family situation.

I don't even know how this case ended, because I didn't get any notification – on any case... nothing. Although the MOPR and the police know where I live now, but Mirek doesn't know...

The woman now lives with her father and son in a modest, small subsidised social flat in a big city. She maintains regular contact with her brothers. She has good relations with her neighbours and friends. She graduated middle school. Despite the difficulties, she is continuing her education and working. As she assesses herself, her situation is starting to stabilise. She describes her health as very good.

Trajectory of institutional upbringing and teenage motherhood

1. The collapse of expectations – an independent attempt to maintain the family status quo, by taking over the tasks of parents and satisfying the needs of younger siblings, failed. As a result of the court's interference in the sphere of parental authority, a forced separation from parents and siblings, unexpected for the narrator, took place, and the woman was placed in a care and educational institution, which caused her enormous suffering, pain and severe stress. As a result of mutually conditional events, the hope of remaining in her family home was abandoned.

2. Subordination to external forces – the woman, trying to act as a parent to her siblings for many years (taking her brothers to school and picking them up, helping with lessons, satisfying the nutritional needs of her brothers, earning a living), started to lose control over her own position in life. She closed herself off to her own needs, which made it difficult for her to fulfil her schooling obligation and became a direct reason for being placed in a care and educational institution. The lack of security, acceptance and love made her satisfy these needs outside the home.

3. Confrontation with something unknown and inevitable – in the woman's opinion, this was her placement in the institutional foster care system and separation from her siblings and her boyfriend, the father of her unborn child. The narrator's attention was focused on activities aimed at helping her to leave the facility as soon as possible. At the same time, her child was born. Thus, one can speak of a co-existence of strongly debilitating, non-normative critical events. On the one hand, the woman intensified efforts that favoured her leaving the institution, and on the other hand, she was completely closed off to the help offered by the staff of the facility and by her peers, the other pupils. Without paying attention to the possible consequences postponed in time, she once again disregarded her own needs and failed to see the benefits of staying in the care and educational institution.

These included, for example, safe shelter, having all her needs and those of her child met, pedagogical and psychological support, and the possibility of continuing her education, while at the same time providing professional pedagogical and medical care for her newborn child.

4. Individual disorientation – resulting in the mental isolation from the institution's educators, peers in the institution and schoolmates. The woman spent time in her room, depreciated the other children and the legitimacy of staying in the facility, did not notice the concern of pedagogues, her social worker, educators and other employees of the facility in which she was staying.

5. Biographical caretakers – one of them was undoubtedly the grandmother whom the narrator often mentioned during the conversation. The grandmother appeared as a caring and concerned person, interested in the fate of her three grandchildren, although due to her advanced age and difficult financial situation, she was not able to protect the narrator and her brothers from being placed in the institutionalised foster care system.

6. The cumulative process of disorder build-up – this process began the moment the study participant left the care and educational institution. This event, which has great consequences to this day, cut her off from the institutional, formal assistance which she could have received as a minor if she had stayed in the institution. In addition, it resulted in dependence on her violent, alcoholic husband and his family, which intensified and destabilised the already difficult living situation of the narrator. At the same time, it is worth noting that this was also a breakthrough moment, as a result of which the narrator decided to take action to change her situation – she left her husband, obtained a subsidised social flat, which she shares with the grandfather of the child, and thus can continue her education and take up employment.

At present, it should be pointed out that the situation, although according to the woman stabilised, is threatened with the possibility of launching a new trajectory, which may be influenced by narrator's father's alcoholism.

Educational potential of critical life events. Biographical perspective

According to G. Riemann and F. Schütz, the authors of the already mentioned concept of the biographical trajectory, there are three ways to change a situation linked with suffering. They point to "escape, systematic familiarisation with the

trajectory of suffering and inclusion of the trajectory into life experience as a developmental biographical component" (quoted after Gutowska 2014: 209). In my opinion, in the case of the woman participating in the fragmentary empirical verifications presented here, one can talk about the inclusion of the trajectory into life experience in the case of the event that was her adolescence in a family with parental ineptitude and escape in the context of her stay in the care and educational institution. It is not only about her eagerness to leave quickly, but also the fact that she closed herself off what it offered and was unable to take advantage of her stay as pro-development potential and failed to notice its potential even in retrospect. A long-term stay in the institution could have contributed to stabilising the social and educational situation of the young woman and her child, as well as to restoring and maintaining internal homeostasis, which the woman does not see to this day. It can be said that during her stay in the institution, the narrator was characterised (in hindsight) by non-adaptive ways of functioning, which resulted in a significant worsening of the already difficult situation of both her and her newborn child.

> [**Renata**] *The facility... frankly, no offence, was there any support or help? I didn't feel any help at all... it was a place for... waiting until my parents stopped drinking, wasn't it? A waiting room. I didn't want my baby to grow up there. I wanted something better for him.*

In the case of the adult, mature woman, the birth of a child can be interpreted through the prism of a developmental crisis. This event in her life should then be regarded as a natural next stage, which increases the chance for a positive solution to the crisis, which becomes a bridge between successive stages of development. It is worth stressing, however, that the birth of a child while a teenager may contribute to the occurrence of a situational crisis – unexpected and not developmental. This is the case if the event occurs at an inappropriate time and is accompanied by unfavourable circumstances, as it was undoubtedly the case here. This is because we are dealing with the extremely difficult situation of the girl's family of origin, her placement in an institution, etc. However, it was the teenage pregnancy and motherhood, which should be treated as a socially unpunctual and emotionally critical life event, that in hindsight became a contribution to deeper reflection and motivation, which resulted in taking measures aimed at improving her situation.

> [**Renata**] *If I hadn't been pregnant, I wouldn't have married him. This wedding was only for my child to be brought up in better conditions than I had, because let's be honest with ourselves, an institution is not a good place for a child, right?*

I chose, so to speak, the lesser of two evils. If that's what you can call it... Sometimes you have to take such steps. I preferred my child to grow up in a home, normally, to have his own space, to have peace... I suspect that if it weren't for the child, I wouldn't have finished school, or I would only be doing middle school now. [...] Maybe it was a good thing that it worked out this way, because the lifestyle I led before my pregnancy, I suspect I would end up in a bad way... And here it saved me a little bit.

It is also worth noting that the difficulties of her own childhood and the necessity of fulfilling a parental role to her younger brothers were conducive to and facilitated the narrator's functioning in the role of a teenage mother, and thus another example of the educational potential of critical life events.

[Renata] *This may sound a little weird, but.... I somehow do not feel anything, there's no joy or sadness, or anything like that* **(upon learning about her pregnancy – A.S.P.).** *I approached it more – well, it's hard, if it's gonna happen, it's gonna happen, it's done, now I have to deal with it, raise the kid. [...] I didn't have to imagine anything, because the truth is that you can say I raised two children before my son, right? So I didn't really imagine anything, but I was shocked more by the fact that I felt so peaceful. [...] My son was a very good baby. I don't remember him crying very much. He didn't cry. If he wanted something, I would come, take him in my arms, feed him, massage his tummy, and he would go to sleep. In fact, there was no great tragedy there. What annoyed me the most was that my mother-in-law didn't realise that I already knew my way around children, and she tried to* **[obscene word redacted – A. S-P.]** *into everything***.** *It was so annoying!*

What is significant and worth stressing, in the context of the presented text, which I tried to illustrate with selected fragments of the statements of the woman participating in the study, the experience of a crisis may become a kind of opportunity because the inherent suffering and pain force the individual to reflect on the situation in which they have found themselves, to (re)interpret it, to seek support and assistance, and to try new ways of acting and coping (Sęk, 2004: 51), and thus enrich their biography. In this understanding, both critical biographical experiences, as well as consideration and deeper reflection on them can have a huge educational potential, and the interpretation and reinterpretation of the course of life is a learning space (cf. Golonka-Legut 2015:115). As Joanna Golonka-Legut points out, "[...] individual life experiences can be perceived as a source of the learning process, but also as a resource (means) of educational activity (learning)" (Golonka 2012: 45-62).

Summary – two dimensions of the learning–biography relationship

The analysis of the narrative allows us to see two dimensions of the relationship between learning and biography. The first is learning from the experiences we deal with during the course of life. The second, which Elżbieta Dubas points out, is biographical learning (or learning from biography). As the author points out, "learning from experience" is learning in the course of life, which often has a random and incidental character, but is also implemented in a planned and purposeful way. "It is learning from experience directly, i.e. in the course of events, in direct spatio-temporal contact with the Self and the Other. Learning from experience is learning in (co)presence, (co)participation and (co)action: in events, in life situations, through contact and interaction in the same time and space, through meetings, conversations, dialogues, observations, actions. It is learning in relationships in which experiences arise" (Dubas 2011: 7). In the case of the woman participating in the study, it took place while carrying out parental duties towards her younger siblings and made it easier to find her place and to cope with the difficult role of a teenage mother. In turn, the second meeting with the author of this text became an opportunity to learn from her biography, which means "learning from one's own experiences, contained in one's own autobiographical memory, as a result of reflection on one's own biography (autobiography). It can take place in a biographical interview situation as well as in educational and therapeutic classes [...]" (Dubas 2011: 7). This type of reflection can be exemplified by the narrator's statement about the marriage which, as she stated afterwards, she entered into too early, which contributed to disturbing the homeostasis of the narrator and her child. The conversation became an opportunity for deeper reflection (not only recollecting and extracting events from memory). The narrator explained and evaluated her own experiences, searched for their meaning and tried to understand them.

Bibliography

Belkin G S. (1984) *Introduction to counselling*. Pennsylvania.

Dubas E, Świtalski W. (2011) *Uczenie się z (własnej) biografii*, Łódź

Dubas E. (2015), "Biograficzność w kontekście całożyciowego uczenia się", [in:] Dubas E., Stelmaszczyk J. (eds.) *Biografia i badanie biografii*. Vol. IV. Biografie i uczenie się, Łódź.

Golonka-Legut J. (2015), "Uczenie się w perspektywie biograficzności. Perspektywa andragogiczna". *Rocznik Andragogiczny* no. 22/2015.

Golonka-Legut J. (2012), "Indywidualne doświadczenie życiowe obszarem uczenia się człowieka dorosłego", [in:] W. Jakubowski. (ed.) *Kultura jako przestrzeń edukacyjna. Współczesne obszary uczenia się osób dorosłych*, Krakow.

Gutowska A. (2014), "Biografia edukacyjna i jej osobliwości – studium jednego przypadku", [in:] Dubas E., Stelmaszczyk J. (ed). *Biografie edukacyjne – wybrane konteksty*, Łódź.

James R.K., Gilliland B.E. (2004), *Strategie interwencji kryzysowej*. Warsaw.

Jarosz E. (2007), "Aktualne ujęcia problemu krzywdzenia dziecka", *Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny* no. 2/2007.

Lipczyński A. (2007) *Psychologiczna interwencja w sytuacjach kryzysowych*. Warsaw.

Malec T. (2008) *Biograficzne uczenie się osób z nabytym stygmatem*. Wrocław.

Matyjas B. (2008) *Dzieciństwo w kryzysie: etiologia zjawiska*. Warsaw.

Pośpiszyl, I. (1994). *Przemoc w rodzinie*, Warsaw.

Riemann, G., Schütze, F. (1992), *Trajektoria jako podstawowa koncepcja teoretyczna w analizach cierpienia i bezładnych procesów społecznych*. Z. Bokszański, A. Piotrowski (trans.). Kultura i Społeczeństwo, 2/36.

Rokuszewska-Pawełek A. (2002) *Chaos i przymus. Trajektorie wojenne Polaków – analiza biograficzna*, Łódź.

Sęk H. (1991), "Procesy twórczego zmagania się z krytycznymi wydarzeniami życiowymi a zdrowie psychiczne", [in:] Sęk H. (ed.) *Twórczość i kompetencje życiowe a zdrowie psychiczne*, Poznań.

Sęk H. (2004), "Wsparcie społeczne – sposoby definiowania, rodzaje i źródła wsparcia", [in:] Sęk H., Cieślak R. (eds). *Wsparcie społeczne, stres i zdrowie*, Warsaw.

Skowrońska-Pućka A. (2016), "Nastoletnie macierzyństwo-szansa, czy ograniczenie? Doświadczenia małoletnich matek z grup defaworyzowanych". *Studia Edukacyjne* no. 42/ 2016.

Skowrońska-Zbierzchowska A. (2010) *Doświadczenia małoletnich rodziców. Aspekty socjopedagogiczne*. Gdańsk.

Stanisławiak E. (2012), "Psychologia kryzysu", [in:] Plak J. (ed.) *Psychologia kryzysu i interwencji kryzysowej*. Warsaw.

Tedder M., Biesta G. (2009), "Uczenie się bez nauczania? Potencjał i ograniczenia biograficznego uczenia się dorosłych", trans. A. Nizińska, *Teraźniejszość-Człowiek-Edukacja*, no. 2/46.

Zakrzewska-Manterys E. (1995) *Down i zespół wątpliwości. Studium z socjologii cierpienia*. Warsaw.

Jarosław Marzec

Gdańsk

On instant pedagogy

ABSTRACT

The main intention of this text is to show the interpretative track in the attempt to find the genealogy of expert appraisal. The main thesis expresses Zygmunt Bauman's view of mutual connection between the weak and light status of identity in consumer culture and the tendency to create cultural practices in order to overcome that weakness, and to strengthen and confirm that status of identity. On the one hand, the main feature of consumer culture and our freedom expressed by consumption determines our identities and is the main reason for „corrosion of identity" (R. Sennett), but on the other hand it demands and generates the necessity of cultural institutions that guarantee its confirmation. Hence, we may find the reason for the so-called „counselling boom" and expansion of expert appraisal in our risk society. The presented text also shows the cultural background for cultural practices in the risk society and consists of the attempt to grasp social instant pedagogies. This phenomenon is analysed here by the role of advertisements and psychological guides as the main cultural practices of instant pedagogy. My intention seeks to bring to account often hidden and obvious practices, and to highlight in a critical manner the tendencies in our social milieu and in the face of „the unbearable lightness of consumption".

I would like to cover with the topic of my musings the dense field of cultural practices inseparably tied to the emergence of the contemporary form of exert appraisal. I would like to pursue the question and discoursively shape the complex conglomerate of thoughts delineated by the problem of even the sketch of the cultural genealogy of expert appraisal. The topic described as such suggests many discon-

nected, sometimes detached connotations. There emerge contemporary fetishes and figures of social discourse as well as the most varied labels formulated by researchers seeking self-definition frames for contemporary culture. In such a broad field of cognitive views as the risk society (U. Beck), therapy culture (J. Baudrillard, M. Jacyno), instant culture (Z. Melosik), post-secular society (Ch. Taylor, J. Mariański), post-humanism, culture of individualism (M. Jacyno), I would like to take a closer look at the categories of risk, identity, life policy, which – I believe – shall provide my attempt with the character of slightly more legitimised statements. Any attempt to embed thoughts on the genealogy of expert appraisal in the space of culture analyses requires, in my view, stressing of the presence of these categories in the context of many legal interpretations and the views of the problem established in discourse. In my undertaking, these categories appear to be binding ones – categories binding significant dimensions of social life and binding many cognitive tropes and interpretation attempts, through these categories, discourse gains an anchor in social practices.

I would like to present the thoughts of Zygmunt Bauman, Polish sociologists, one of the most important thinkers of the recent time, an attentive participant in the phase of the cultural transformation, a the same time a critical analyst of the post-modern world all the way to his latest work, the posthumously published „Retrotopia". Bauman's analyses aim to disclose the hidden meanings of culture, its deep structure and the grammar of life in the gears of consumer freedom. I believe that the work of Bauman fulfils a significant function in hermeneutic work and attempts at understanding the world to which we have gained access three decades ago.[1a] We struggled to catch up with the culture of the time of globalisation, and Bauman's work constituted a mature response of a researcher and an active participant of a world, in which disconcerting consumerist phenomena were all too clear. Our situation constituted a cultural and civilisation turning point, and Bauman's reflection disclosed – as I remember in the 1990s – frequently unsettling phenomena in the sphere of morality and ethic, identity or freedom. All the way until his ultimate work, the contact with deep reflection, its critical tone constituted a challenge within attempts to come to terms with phenomena and significant threats to identity in a time of risk, in a liquid phase of culture. It seems to me that the work of Zygmunt Bauman fits perfectly in thoughts encompassed by the title of this paper. Even if they are somewhat belated, I would still like to present one dominant motif of his work and to return to issues of ambiguous identity and freedom

---

[1] The author refers here to the fall of communism and the transformation of 1989 [translator's note].

in the context of consumer culture I dealt with in my doctoral thesis (March 2018). I would like to refer to the implications of his thoughts for our understanding of certain phenomena in the area of identity, in order to better understand the condition of the world and the existential effects of life in instant culture.

My presentation aims at indicating a general tension of the culture of consumption in the form of modes of construction of identity in consumer freedom and the unsettlingly weak, light status of identity. This property of it is the cause of a veritable „counselling boom" in culture, a tendency to reinforce identity as a response to the inadequacy of identity. In this context shines through the main practice of instant culture, in the form of guidebook discourse as an indication of reflectively constructed identity. These are phenomena complementing the image of anthropological consequences of the dominant consumer approach of instant culture, which, together with expert psychological appraisal and advertising **creates** paedagogies and cultural practices that are characteristic of it, in order to counter the tension caused by „the unbearable lightness of consumption". The general intent is to consider selected aspects of consumer culture and to indicate implications for our tendency that Zygmunt Bauman described as „consuming life".

In contemporary attempts to describe culture, consumption becomes the dominant plane of analysis. In a consumption society, it plays a frontal role in the mode, in which it determines the entirety of our social behaviour. According to many analysts of post-modern culture, consumption fundamentally describes the horizon of our deepest and most fundamental existential choices. Consumption becomes a symbolic plane, through which the post-modern man expresses their irreplaceable identity, it becomes at the same time a significant dimension in the analysis of transformation to which other important societal institutions (e. g. religion or education) are subjected. However, what I would like to stress has in its fundamental systemic and symbolic role also a fact that does not quite fit us. As a plane of expression of the post-modern man, consumption plays the role of the entire universe, entering the daily world of modern people, describing their patterns of participation in social life, however, putting man in a situation of the unfulfilled promise that is included in the consumption dance. It seems as though the property of consumption culture that fluidity, variability, a unique lightness and immediacy of execution definitely are, causes this state of unbearable lightness to become the dominant existential state of the spirit of consumers entwined in the game to provide meanings in modes of dominant consumption. The existential mood indicated above naturally has its unsettling cultural effects – the search for a stable identity (as it will turn out – not to be achieved by consumption), rein-

forces the cultural need for services guaranteeing it. The response to the lightness seems to be high demand for the provision of expert services in the instant culture – it is the practice of coping with the unbearable lightness… of consumption… that is enshrined in the model of consumer culture.

For several decades, Zygmunt Bauman has been taming post-modern culture for us, bravely disclosing before us its intricacies. In this, he is based on the disclosure of even simple meanings, veritably banal events that make up the cultural *praxis* of the post-modern man. Identity, freedom, ambiguity, globalisation, poverty – these are the keywords in his diagnosis of the late modern period. Bauman embeds his thorough analyses directly in Disneyland culture. He traces the transformation of personal types as post-modernity heroes. The *Flâneur* or a loafer along city streets is constantly seduced by institutions of culture to consume goods, the offer of which is unlimited. He looks at processes of establishment of identity using puzzles available on the global market. Identity is nothing else but a collage, a mosaic, shreds of experiences that make up a unique market-based design. He writes that professional work as a design for life is not fulfilled any more in attempts to integrate the axes of biographical narration. Post-modern culture experiences an increase in the value of entertainment, play as forms of participation, and the reversal of the Freudian dyad so typical for us – the rule of pleasure before the rule of reality. The life context is privatised, heightening ambiguity and uncertainty of the ordinary participant in the cultural game of identity.

Identity as an incomplete project

In his rich body of work, Zygmunt Bauman devoted much space to thorough analyses of identity in post-modern culture. Frequently, it is post-modernity itself as a condition of culture that is defined in the sphere of subjective identity. It is difficult to analyse one without the other. In his work *Liquid Modernity* (2006) he again took to scientifically analysing the issue of identity and changes in the life context of the inhabitant of the global village. I believe that the thoughts contained within it merit quoting in this sketch, the task of which is primarily bringing to order reflections on identity in the time of globalisation. In Bauman's view, modern culture includes a tendency to „melt" or „dissolve" historic, permanent, solid components that indicated and determined the existential context of man of the recent centuries. In a time of liquid modernity „we [...] are dealing with an individualised and privatised version of modernity, in which the duty to create patterns and the responsibility for failure rest primarily on the shoulders of individuals" (Bauman

2006, pp. 14-15)[2]. This change forces a rethink of the fundamental categories describing the human condition of the time of globalisation. The first fundamental context for thoughts on the identity of a man in modernity is to ponder the fall of all permanent reference systems that in not that distant past gave meaning to human existence. Whereas in present times: „The insufficiency of such patterns, codes and rules that might be adhered to, that might be considered points of reference and by which one could be guided in the future becomes ever clearer now. This does not at all mean that our contemporaries are driven in life solely by their own imagination and creativity, that they create their own methods of living from the ground up and as they please, without using buildings blocks and designs provided by society. This means, however, that we are presently moving from the era of imposed „reference groups" to an era of „common comparisons and lists", in which the ultimate of individual effort of self-creation is, by law and irrevocably, indefinite, unknown and threatened by frequent and deep changes, as their real end is the end of human life" (Bauman 2006, p. 14). Contemporary times have experienced in this regard a radical reformulation in the understanding of identity that must be perceived as an individual life policy, as an individualised strategy of life, as one version of several possible solutions and options to choose from. Bauman writes: „Today, patterns and orders are no longer "given" or for that matter "obvious". There are too many of them; they collide, and their rules oppose each other, stripping them of unconquerable, overpowering force. They have changed their character and started being perceived suitably to this change: as items on an individual to-do list. Instead of preceding the choice of life strategy and describing its future course, they are to be adapted to it (or to stem from it), giving way to its variable and unforeseen influences" (Bauman 2006, p. 14). The individual life design includes ever more strongly uncertainty at the time of self-determination, as too many possible paths co-exist, too many potential options to choose from. As a result, „contemporary changed situation shall see the majority of people cracking their heads through most of their lives rather over choosing the right objectives than looking for means to achieve objectives that give rise to no doubts at all" (Bauman 2006, p. 94). Every life design includes uncertainty and existential necessity to create identity upon one's own expense and responsibility. As Bauman notes: „If possibilities are to remain endless, it cannot be allowed for any one of them to solidify into permanent reality. They should remain liquid and fleeting, provided with a usable shelf life so that they do not hinder access to other possibilities and stifle future adventures" (Bauman 2006, p. 96). Life designs, co carefully

---

[2] All quotes (re)translated into English by the translator of the article into English.

constructed in post-modern culture, are characterised by the status of incomplete determination and non-finality. Bauman writes: „The state of non-finality, incompleteness and indetermination is related to the experience of risk and disquiet, but its opposition also does not provide the feeling of unruffled joy, as it closes possibilities that, in the name of freedom, should remain open" (Bauman 2006, p. 96). The archetype of this mad race after a new pattern, a new variant of identity, is the post-modern model of consumption. As Bauman describes it: „In a consumption society, giving into the consumption addition – the ubiquitous shopaholism – is the *sine qua non* condition of all individual freedom, primarily the right to difference, to "having an identity""(Bauman 2006, p. 129). A property of identity achieved in such a way is its volatility and fleetingness, which facilitates the tendency to look on the market for ever newer models and to abandon old ones the moment subsequent choices are made. The entire nightmare and paradox of identity-related activity in our time is for „identity" – being „unique" and „one-of-a-kind" – [...] to be constructed exclusively out of those materials that are selected and bought by everyone" (Bauman 2006, p. 130). Zygmunt Bauman proves in his work *Freedom* that in contemporary time to construct an identity means to select from among the goods offered on the market (consumption), symbols of identity. These symbols are so numerous that infinite combinations and arrangements are possible, everybody creates a unique design, a market mosaic. The market offers us contemporaneously so many possibilities, together with the freedom to choose and unlimited self-creation. This creates the need of the competence of flexibly following the emerging changes of the market offer. Bauman describes this as follows: „In a world, in which purposefully fleeting items form the foundation of identity – also fleeting, by necessity – one must remain constantly vigilant, but primarily ensure flexibility and care for the ability to quickly adapt to the new conditions so as to follow the changing shape of the „outside" world" (Bauman 2006, p. 130). The multitude of possibilities to create identity facilitates attitudes of the loose, indeterminate status of identity achieved in this way. As Bauman remarks: „What counts is how people themselves experience, receive and live this arranged necessity to construct and reconstruct identity. In contemporary consumption society, such phenomena as the loose, „associative" status of identity, the ability to „purchase', pick and abandon one's „true self" and the possibility of „being in motion" have become hallmarks of freedom, and irrespective of whether the analyst deems them to be real or illusive" (Bauman 2006, p. 135). It seems that Melosik and Szkudlarek aptly describe the paradoxes of post-modern identity policy: „Perhaps under the guise of freedom (or more precisely, the reduction of freedom to one of its socially constructed forms – the freedom to buy) we are dealing with subtle and blissful

control of identity? [...] The consumerist ideology includes the category of permanent inadequacy of the identity of the consumer, the category of non-fulfilment or rather incomplete fulfilment. One would believe that they have almost reached the basic raw state of their identity – that they have become what they should be (of course, thanks to appropriately prestigious or fascinating shopping). A moment later, however, they feel that the moment of satisfaction is gone, never to return, and hence the hunt must begin anew. As a result, man lives in constant consumerist disquiet that becomes their normal condition" (Melosik, Szkudlarek 2009, p. 32). In this way, we touch upon this unbearable lightness of identity as the effect of the immanent lightness of consumption.

To conclude this part on the modes of construction of the post-modern identity I would like to propose a psychological reading of the work of Zygmunt Bauman, in particular his approach to the „ambiguous identity" and the meaning of the existential need of „expert psychological appraisal" as a „reducer of ambiguity" and "inadequacy" of the market identity, offered in the seasonal and volatile consumption of goods. Culture as a „consumer cooperative" is characterised by high variability of the market offer, of which every participant in social life must pick their own set of „significant symbols" as the building blocks of identity, and the situation of overproduction of goods and meanings strips this choice of correctness and suitability. This in turn creates a broad field of existential uncertainty (ambiguity) caused, as Bauman states, by the „privatisation of existence" or the dissolution of all forms of interpersonal relations. Post-modern culture is the disappearance of all fixed reference systems, permanent foundations, subjective identity caused mainly by the lack of certainty in the instance of self-creation and the creation of one's own template or the establishment of identity as a „market-based puzzle". Bauman writes straight up about the drama of inadequacy of identity of the inhabitant in the global village, creating the need of an „expert psychological appraisal". The inadequacy of the post-modern identity is the cause for searching of certainty and reduction of ambiguity that can only be provided by EXPERT APPRAISAL as a rubber stamp of normality or lay confirmation. The need for psychological expert appraisal continues to gain momentum, and the dissolution of psychological discourse and therapeutical practices to many schools and orientations only reinforces existential ambiguity. As Bauman notes, it also stresses the exclusively conditional efficacy of all kinds of life advice produced by advisors or guidebooks. He writes: „Recipes for a happy life and tools needed to achieve them have a „best-by date", but most of them is out of use much earlier, eclipsed, depreciated and stripped of charm by competing "new, even better" offers"(Bauman 2006, p. 112).

This is the way the internal tension of consumption culture takes shape. Fragile identity needs support, and this need is filled by a broad range of services, advice or therapy being at the same time the field of a veritable *counselling boom*. Borne out of the need to anchor incomplete, frail identity designs, the practice of social confirmation of an insufficient and fleeting identity are two ends of the same phenomenon. It turns out that an identity constructed in such a way in the machine of consumption, is characterised by lightness, and the spiritual state brought about by this unbearable lightness should be treated as a sign of losses coexisting with consumption, described by Zygmunt Bauman in his work *Consuming Life*.

The risk society

According to A. Giddens, in late modernity, in the post-traditional society, „personal identity, as well as the broad institutional context, must be created with reflection"(Giddens 2006, p. 34). According to U. Beck, contemporary society can be described as a risk society. In risk society, „everything undergoes constant change, and our thinking of the future runs along many alternative scenarios. Risk refers to purposeful activity of man, to rational choices under conditions of uncertainty, but even so, all human life may be burdened by risk that is, in a sense, external" (Beck 2009, p. 35). As A. Giddens puts it: „Modernity reduces the overall riskiness of certain spheres and modes of living, at the same time introducing new parameters of risk that were almost or completely unknown to previous times. […] The late-modern world is apocalyptic but not because it inexorably moves towards a catastrophe, but because it brings with it such forms of risk that were unknown to past generations" (Giddens 2006, p. 7). U. Beck states in turn: „Individuals must to an ever greater extent themselves see, interpret and manage possibilities, threats and ambiguities emerging in their lives, with which they coped earlier in the family circle, in the local community or by reference to a social class or group. […] Even the „own self" loses its historic clarity and is subdivided into opposing discourses"(Beck 2009, p. 20).

In the opinion of Piotr Sztompka, risk in the subjective dimension is characterised by: „1. Stronger sensitivity to threats and danger stemming from the reduction of the role of defence mechanisms and magical as well as religious rationalisation; 2. Ever more common awareness of threats due to continuously improving education levels; 3. Ever later occurring clarity as to the imperfections in expert knowledge and repeating errors in the functioning of abstract systems. All this leads to the establishment of a specific non-clarity, uncertainty and the fluid char-

acter of social life under conditions of late modernity" (Sztompka 2005, pp. 91-92). We now let A. Giddens speak: „The problem, I repeat, is not that life has in itself become more risky than in times past. The case is that in conditions of modernity, thinking in categories of risk and risk assessment is quite frankly a task that constantly, yet perhaps unnoticeably, both laymen as well as experts are continuously at" (Giddens 2006, p. 170).

In the view of Małgorzata Jacyno, the globalisation of risk, meaning, the objective dimensions of risk, are „accompanied by transfer of responsibility: not weakening state authorities but individuals are bestowed with the task of choosing and applying efficient preventive measures both in terms of civilisation diseases, the ozone hole, terrorist attacks as well as marital infidelity and unemployment" (Jacyno 2007, p. 170). According to Jacyno, risk „is the semantic horizon of the human experience" and „describes the essence or the other side, a more or less hidden sense of what individuals experience" (Jacyno 2007, p. 93). In her view, two strategies of coping with risk are possible: first of all – „attempts at rational control and handling risk"; second – „attempts at rejecting the sense of experience closed in risk and prevention" (Jacyno 2007, p. 92). The first risk-coping strategy refers to expert appraisal, which, according to Giddens, replaces tradition in post-modern society. The second strategy entails a temporary suspension of risk, which boils down to the attitude of choosing risk as a form of controlling it, because it is chosen as my fate, as the destiny. As Jacyno writes, „suicidal and semi-suicidal practices (illegal car racing, extreme sports, survival camps or searching via newspaper classifieds for a partner who would guarantee a HIV infection) are attempts at returning to a traditional world, in which the individual is „rescued" by its destiny, not prevention" (Jacyno 2007, p. 92).

I suggest considering the concept of the culture of liquid modernity, expressed by Zygmunt Bauman, through the category of uncertainty as suggested by Sławomir Kmiecikowski in his work *Uncertainty – Zygmunt Bauman's Basic Ethical-Anthropological Category*. As the author notes, Bauman's reflection is overarched by the category of uncertainty, present in his analyses of post-modern ethics, in anthropological thinking on the identity of the post-modern period, and it is furthermore *implicite* contained in Bauman's work concerning the ontological status of the liquid modernity society. In the author's view, „uncertainty turns out to be an immanent, significant moment of existence of the contemporary individual that cannot be isolated from the global whole any more; a whole that exerts influence on the existence of an individual, and remains under it" (Kmiecikowski 2011, p. 39). According to Bauman, significance and the expansion of thinking about on identity in the culture of the end of the 20th century is caused by the fact that

„identity had become the prism through which significant aspects of contemporary life are viewed, understood and studied" (Bauman 2008, p. 71). In Bauman's view, identity generates the fundamental link of the culture of liquid modernity, meaning, the inadequacy of the market patchwork caused by privatisation and deregulation processes. Bauman writes about the consumption syndrome that is „an approach to practically all components of social space and the actions initiated and shaped by it" (Bauman 2007, p. 130).

The consumption syndrome is – according to Bauman – a „set of diverse yet closely related stances and strategies, cognitive attitudes, value judgements, presuppositions, clearly formulated and silently made assumptions on the rules governing the world" (Bauman 2007, p. 81). According to S. Kmiecikowski, subjective reality reduced to the mode of being the consumer, and – what must be stressed – its exhaustive nature that colonises identity discourse to become subjective market fetishism causes humanity to „on the one hand be blended into external uncertainty […], yet on the other hand, this humanity seems to be subject to influences of this uncertainty. In other words – the uncertainty transcendental with respect to the subject seems to permeate human nature to its core" (Kmiecikowski 2011, p. 81). As Bauman writes: „What is considered to be the manifestation of the inner truth of a subject is in actuality the idealisation of material – objectified – traces of consumer decisions" (Bauman 2009, p. 21). In his work *Liquid Life* (2007), Bauman, characterising the identity of the liquid modernity culture, noted that the sole descriptor of man is *homo eligens* (man choosing), and identity is characterised by non-fulfilment, non-finity and non-authenticity. In the consumption society, subjectiveness expressed by transactions of purchase and sale of symbols to create identity „is in essence a „simulacrum" as understood by Jean Baudrillard, putting a „representation" in place of what it is supposed to represent, and what must be removed from the final form of the product" (Bauman 2009, p. 21).

Kmiecikowski notes that uncertainty constitutes a category that is ever-present in Bauman's reflection that is used by him in course of ethical and anthropological musings; it can also describe the ontological status of the world of the time of liquid modernity. In Bauman's analyses, one can find the conviction of the chaotic, ambiguous and liquid reality. In view of Kmiecikowski, it is reality that „pulsates with instability and variability, and the uncertainty and helplessness of the contemporary man only constitutes a unique exemplification of existential ambiguity and opposition" (Kmiecikowski 2011, p. 91).

In view of Kmiecikowski, thoughts on identity in a time of liquid modernity [give rise] to the conviction about uncertainty being transcendental as compared to man, and a discernible intuition that „the outside world pulsates with varia-

bility and prevents man from cognitively touching upon existential rationality" (Kmiecikowski 2011, p. 83).

Bauman summarises his analyses of identity this way: „Instead of one, one must cope with several patterns in post-modernity – however, not in order to recreate the **diversity** of modes appropriately selected to suit personal or group preference, but in order to show the internal **discontinuity** of the mode, to which all people and each of them separately are party under post-modern conditions. The multitude of types indicates the analytical „impurity" of being, its incoherence, lability, chronic ambiguity, inconsequence" (Bauman 1994, p. 21).

In Bauman's view, this leads to the condition, whereby „we are dealing today with an individualised and privatised version of modernity, in which the duty to create patterns and the responsibility for failure rest primarily on the shoulders of individuals" (Bauman 2007, pp. 14-15). Tomasz Kunz summarises the work of Zygmunt Bauman in his work *Zygmunt Bauman pochwała niepewności albo socjologia jako wyzwanie moralne* [Zygmunt Bauman, a praise of uncertainty or sociology as a moral challenge]: „Ambiguity and liquidity of the modern world, in which it is impossible to find support in durable and repeatable cultural patterns, stable and recognisable identities, fixed ethical codes, clear social distinctions and hierarchies, subjects the individual to uncertainty that since becomes an inseparable partner in their lives" (Kunz 2013).

The birth of the culture of experts

In searching for a stable identity, its „anchor", in a world of sudden global acceleration, in a world of busted myths and fallen authorities, caused by the inadequacy of identity built on loose soil of „market competition over status indicators and symbols", over a difference, it facilitates all tendencies to stifle and reduce precisely ambiguity and at the same time creates the need of „expert appraisal" as a rubber stamp of normality and guarantee of social approval. As Bauman noted: „It is a paradox (or perhaps it isn't one at all) that the privatisation of ambiguity invigorates and expands the development of public expertise and a thick network of public specialists in solving private problems" (Bauman 1994, p. 228). The search for an „expert opinion" creates the opportunity of establishment of a culture of experts, authorities on the limits of normality and social perversion, mental health or even good taste. The „appraisal" should also not be treated exclusively as a social service on the service market, but also as an „existential reducer" of ambiguity and the feeling of inadequacy of subjective identity as inexorably described in the life of man in a time after all

meta-narrations have fallen and common sense decayed. In Bauman's view: „From the point of view of the user, an expert appraisal provides socially accepted modes of solving personal problems, naming them beforehand, and with equal authority, as *problems* requiring corrective measures. […] The expert appraisal thus enters personal life at quite an early stage, when unclear and unfocused fears and anxieties stemming from uncertainty and ambiguity of experiences or feelings are articulated in the *social language* as *individual* problems requiring the usage or *supra-individual* („objective") solutions" (Bauman 1994, p. 230).

In this way, the market paedagogy of post-modernity takes over all such solutions of the issue of reduction of identity ambiguity. The demand for „appraisals" and the omnipresent global market causes the specialisation of certain groups or individuals in the provision of such services. This role is played in post-modern culture by psychological guides, as a further example of instant paedagogy. Every one of such guidebooks contains solutions to existentially significant aspects of life searching to be rescued in a world devoid of convincing internal solutions. In instant culture, everything is available now and in unlimited volumes. Everything has become a commodity. Even issues of subjective identity in post-modern culture are solved in the mentioned „market game".

Culture – in Bauman's perspective – is a „consumer cooperative" characterised by significant variability of the market offer, and from which every participant of social life must pick their own set of „significant symbols" as the building blocks to create their own identity, and the situation of overproduction of goods and meanings strips this choice of correctness and adequacy. This in turn creates an enormous field of existential uncertainty (ambiguity) caused, as Bauman says, by the „privatisation of existence" or the decay of all forms of interpersonal relations. Post-modern culture is the decay of all permanent reference systems, fixed foundations of subjective identity caused mainly by the lack of certainty in the moment of self-creation and the creation of one's own pattern, or creating identity as a „market-based puzzle". As M. Lewartowska-Zychowicz writes: „Consumption requires particular competences and knowledge that are supplied by media experts, sponsored authorities and statistics. Their role seemingly entails limiting uncertainty related to the freedom to choose, however in actuality it means control over cognitive habits and knowledge of the people, meaning, actual governance of their identity" (Lewartowska-Zychowicz 2010, p. 246). As Bauman notes, stressed is also the barely conditional efficacy of all life advice produced by advisors or guidebooks.

In view of M. Lewartowska-Zychowicz, since culture was dominated by the discursive politics of capital, changes also touch upon the policy of identity in the cradle of consumption culture, as a result of which „the consumption dur-

ing development of the homogeneous attitude of identification and focusing the identity development process leading to the establishment of commodified and uniformised identities – which in essence are functional as compared to consumer freedom" (Lewartowska-Zychowicz 2010, p. 247). This also means that „hence, economic processes not only determine man's mode of living, but also process the structure of their character in such a way so that it would maintain the *status quo*" (Lewartowska-Zychowicz 2010, p. 250).

At this point, I would like to collate the analyses of Edyta Zierkiewicz on guidebook language and the rhetoric of advice discourse and the used persuasion tools that appear in guides. In this regard, important is the assumption that „the structure of a guidebook text should remind of the process of provision of help in direct counselling" (Zierkiewicz 2004, p. 62). Important is also the assumption that „a guidebook's message is a specific form of linguistic influence, in which the individual components reinforce its didactic and persuasive character. Such significant aspects may include: statement style, lexical colloquialism, strategies of reaching an agreement with the reader, its didacticism and dialogue" (Zierkiewicz 2004, p. 64). The analyses of Edyta Zierkiewicz in the work *Poradnik. Oferta wirtualnej pomocy?* [The Guidebook. An offer of virtual help?] *a*re for me the fundamental source of knowledge on the used tools of persuasion in guidebook discourse language. Polish researchers of guidebook discourse also include Małgorzata Jacyno and her work in the genealogy of therapeutic culture.

The style of guidebook discourse bears the following characteristics:
- it is informal, personal and living, direct, material, clear, specific, understandable to the average reader;
- colloquialisms (stimulating the existence of a direct relation between sender and recipient in it);
- didacticism (the core is to influence the reader; it is more or less a quintessence of direct influence, dominated by such communication forms as: encouraging, convincing, argumenting);
- intentional establishment of a relationship of closeness between the author and the reader (so-called closeness achievement strategies); (orientation towards subjectivism and value judgement" (Zierkiewicz 2004, pp. 65-66). The author exhaustively lists typical rhetorical tools used in guidebook discourse, however, it must be stressed that „guidebooks are a particular type of written material permeated by persuasion" (Zierkiewicz 2004, p. 147). In my opinion, however, the utilised resources should be enumerated so as to get an idea of the style of work of the virtual advisor or therapist. The author lists the following resources used in guidebooks:

   – examples and anecdotes (examples describe and present certain characteristic events, specific people, their behaviour and specific situations; the goal is to attract the reader's attention to behaviour considered required or to present an anti-hero, whose actions are evaluated negatively, whose behaviour should not be imitated by the reader);
   – metaphor – refers to daily experiences; helps advisors speak about things and problems that cannot yet be described by specialised concepts and vernacular; they are concise, relevant and easy-to-understand phrases that create images or expressions of the subject of discourse);
   – aphorisms – provide content in a very general manner, they are like sayings that the reader should internalise and continue repeating; guidebook authors frequently use them as mottos containing wisdom and knowledge; authors translate and explain to readers the sense of such aphorisms, and write out recommendations in informal language;
   – visualisation techniques – they entail imagining specific objects, situations, own reactions and behaviour (Zierkiewicz 2004, pp. 139-144).

Edyta Zierkiewicz showcases in the presented paper also a classification of forms of communication between the author-advisor and the reader seeking advice; she lists:
   – the sermon – found rarely, not the typical form in contemporary guidebooks;
   – persuasion – its object being to exercise influence on the reader seeking advice; it refers to all communication actions aimed at the other that are in place to bring about in them the internal state called a conviction; includes value judgements, as it entails convincing the interlocutor to the self, to the attitude, state or value described by the partner providing advice; the following forms of persuasion can be delineated between:
   – convincing persuasion – assumes that the recipient is an intellectually active individual, and that the sender has just intentions and plans;
   – encouraging persuasion – clear or hidden, just or unjust; the objective is to convince as many followers as possible to a specific idea or doctrine;
   – stimulating persuasion – campaigning; the goal is to win over the recipient for a cause, idea or thought, whereby significant here is immediate, temporary influence based on authoritarian and suggestive conviction.

Guidebooks – this form of instant psychology is, as I wrote in the beginning, a contemporary phenomenon: „In such guidebooks, authors strive to convince the reader, to encourage them to change their attitude that they had up to that point or even to alter their hierarchy of values; sometimes they also want the recipient to

accept the patterns and objectives as if they were their own, they encourage him to do justice to them. Such a mode of influencing people is characteristic for diverse supporting, help or therapeutic work" (Zierkiewicz 2004, p. 147).

What had happened to the man of the West of the end of the 20th century that they lost the faith in independently handling their own problems, especially mental (including psychological) ones? What took place in the last fifty years that diverse specialists and authorities on psychological matters emerged? The process of living through authorities is progressing (intermediation of one's existence using a source of spiritual wisdom), at the same time, the model of direct contact with oneself is vanishing. This is where room is found for instant psychology to grow, for all kinds of ready psychological recipes and guidebooks.

As Zygmunt Bauman noted, the post-modern period with its typical inflammation of the issue of identity that is hidden in the market game, in the feeling of inadequacy of identity that bothers participants of social life, is an era of the rise of counselling. As he noted, the post-modern period, with the phenomenon of the *counselling boom*, is an era of specialists in identity problems.

On instant paedagogy

In this part of the article I wish to show the inexorable process of expansion of cultural practices of instant paedagogy as a response to the contemporaneously changing existential context of the late modern man. Instant paedagogy shall be considered the response to the need to independently construct subjective identities that emerged in Western culture. The social usability and inevitability that is part of instant paedagogy is based on changes in the understanding of process of self-construction of identity designs in the post-modern period.

The main educational practice in post-modern culture are processes of creation of identity. At the same time, suggested was a wholly revolutionary approach to the process of creation or acquisition of identity itself. Unique is specifically the understanding of the process of creation of identity, being entirely different from modern interpretation. The post-modern theory of education lets go of the model of educational reflection that was dominant over the last centuries. It is not just „shaping the mind" or „exercising the mind" that defines educational practices, but reference to phenomena from so-called popular culture, in which senses are praised, and its use as the main identity-creating potential defines the post-modern educational practices. My analysis shall begin with the conviction that all social institutions and practices related to the notion of development and the shaping

of identity are paedagogical in essence. This conviction is founded on the Polish paedagogical thought from the initial period of Transformation, reaching all the way to the beginnings of application of traditional critical paedagogy in Poland. This conviction is also based on the assumption of a relation between the cultural placement of the researcher and processes of creation of identity in critical interpretation of social discourse and critical analysis of discourse. It is my aim to cover the broad social field and social instances, cultural and social institutions of paedagogy that shape the identities of actors of the world in the risk society, in instant culture, in the culture of individualism and in the self-realisation society, in therapeutic culture. And in line with Małgorzata Lewartowska-Zychowicz we may assume that „all social practices and institutions that co-shape identities must be treated as immanently discoursive" (Lewartowska-Zychowicz 2010, p. 20).

Instant paedagogy

Both the frail identity described by Bauman that is the result of a market game of constant consumption, as well as the negative consequences of late capitalism in the sphere of creation of identity strictly taken constitute the basis for the establishment of a therapeutic society, to use a term from analysts of postmodern culture, Jean Baudrillard (2006) and Małgorzata Jacyno (2007). The process of creation of the post-modern identity – as Bauman (1994) convincingly describes it in his work *Modernity and ambivalence* – is dominated inseparably by mechanisms of market **instant paedagogy**, the social practice created in the culture of privatised ambivalence of using the paedagogy of ready-to-use life recipes. Postmodern culture voices particular needs of all kinds of life authorities, and this is the direction taken (along with social demand) by cultural institutions guaranteeing such services, providing tested advice and recipes to build happy lives, equipped with guarantees and certainty; as Anthony Giddens writes „marketed can be (...) the design of identity itself. Not only the lifestyle, but self-realisation can be packaged and distributed in line with market rules" (Giddens 2006, p. 271). In post-modern culture, this need is satisfied by psychological guides responding to diverse needs of the mass reader, colourful magazines pretending to create models to be followed, and of course, television advertising as the dominant social practice of instant paedagogy. Therein lies the source for the subdivision of authorities (trainers, therapists, etc.). These lay priests remain convinced that they found the Holy Grail! Postmodern culture – as proven by the existential need of expert services – is thoroughly controlled by practices of

instant paedagogy. The discourse of guidebooks or psychological counselling is the main plane of presentation of instant culture.

Instant paedagogy is hence the response of culture to changes in the cultural and existential context of our time; it also has a suitably prepared environment of social acceptance and consent to its practices. Rising existential uncertainty of a player in the societal game of identity and the consumer character of participation in cultural exchange are inseparable causes of the emergence of contemporary education practices in the form of instant paedagogy. Instant paedagogy thus fulfils the significant role of a social stabiliser for subjective identities meticulously constructed in the market game. Nothing would indicate that these types of education practices were to lose their unifying and therapeutical social function. It is presently known, indeed, that advertising fulfils the fundamental informative and persuasive role in the market game of choosing symbolic components to construct frail identities in our times. It similarly seems that the need for psychological guidebooks as well as the advice and hints on the private aspects of identity of the inhabitants of the postmodern world contained in them is not weakening.

In my view, it is thus worthwhile to take a look at postmodern culture from the point of view of the education practices contained within it. Even if in fact when we are immersed in advertising and overly hastily accept the phenomenon of educational practices embedded in advertising, this does not exclude that we can treat it as permanent instant paedagogy in itself. In the consumption society, it is advertising, perhaps save for psychological guidebooks, that is the most frequently used strategy and tool to construct identities, a strategy to keep up with the time, to be trendy and not lose one's chance to participate in the ever-changing offer of market goods and visual symbols. It is through them that we create our identity, a design that is never complete.

In a world, in which the key struggle for identity was shifted towards a struggle for symbols, visual symbols of status, prestige and success, advertising becomes the key ordering tool in a deluge of goods and market services of persuasion. In the consumption society, advertising becomes a form of education, and the game is about the possibility of accessing the main carrier of consumer identity, about symbols (goods and the possibility of satisfying the ever so exorbitant needs). A significant transformation, thanks to which the influence of advertising is so visible, is doubtless the necessity of self-creation inscribed in the mechanism of individual consumption – self-creation, which by the way finds its satisfaction through consumption. This is where the demand of instant culture originates to delay the moment of completion of the search for the fulfilled identity. That is why it is sometimes called the culture of moratorium. As Marek Krajewski writes:

„The culture of the media society must be a culture of moratorium. The culture of moratorium is the culture of suspension and uncertainty, and in this sense it is a negative continuation of modern culture. It is a culture conscious of itself, of its limitations and consequences, hence, a culture whose cultural character was proven to it. The discovery of the lack of the centre of certainty is accompanied by doubt in the possibility of finding it and by manufacture, mainly by mass media, of a countless volume of its momentary substitutes. The media, taking over the role of main producer and distributor of culture, do not only shape the current life styles, fashions, value systems and objects of faith, but must also, according to their logic, simultaneously destroy them and suggest new ones. Hence, they banish individuals to uncertainty and manufacture a strong desire to overcome it" (Krajewski 1999, p. 79).

As Marek Krajewski stresses, a constant property of advertising is the insntruction manual contained within it; in the world created by it. He writes thus: „The advertising message would thus be an instruction manual for the world that is created within it. The key aspect of every manual is to equip its reader with the ability to control that sphere of life or that device, to which the manual applies" (Krajewski 1999, pp. 74-75).

In this context one finds similarly the function of advertising and its message. Anna Kowal-Orczykowska describes the concept of the message as its involved content, thus:„ […] contemporary message discourse is a new context in the perception and definition of ourselves in the world. It is the path of transmission of specific ideas that seek to pretend to be objective and unquestionable" (Kowal-Orczykowska 2006, p. 112). As Zbyszko Melosik observed: „Advertising is always a veritable recipe for what women should look like and how one should look at them, what kind of mood they should be in and what kind of behaviour is expected of them. Adverts simply contain the essence of the currently valid feminine identity" (Melosik 2010, p. 32). Hence, we should forget advertising as an innocent message as, through its ubiquity, it holds a strong cultural authority on judging what is valid in any given moment. By their omnipresence in the media, it has become a powerful educational force and cultural practice, slowly replacing institutions usually destined to perform these roles. Advertising thus is, in its every form, a further type of instant paedagogy, and its area of influence touches upon mechanisms of construction in the period of the instant. Giddens notes, on late modern conditions, that „identity narration as part of a reflective project is by design-- frail. To forgo a specific identity may mean to obtain specific mental advantages, but it is certainly also a burden. The individual is forced to create by itself and reconstruct its identity due to altered experiences of everyday life and

the tendency of modern institutions to fragment the identity of the individual" (Giddens 2006, p. 274).

In this way, the market paedagogy of post-modernity takes over all such solutions of the issue of reduction of ambiguity of identity. The demand for „expert appraisal" and the omnipotent global market cause the specialisation of certain groups or individuals in the provision of such services. This role in postmodern culture is also taken by psychological guidebooks as a further example of instant paedagogy. Each such guidebook contains solutions to existentially significant aspects of life of those searching for salvation for themselves in a world devoid of its own convincing solutions. In instant culture, everything is available, right away and in unlimited volumes. Everything has become a commodity. Issues of the subjective identity in postmodern culture are also solved in the mentioned „market game".

I have attempted to show the social contexts of the process of construction of identity in the period of the instant, and the cultural effects in the form of crystallisation of instant paedagogy that follow, with instant paedagogy being a response to the cultural phenomenon of the lack of anchoring of the meticulously constructed identity. I have described processes found in the general trend of the period of the instant, in which processes of creation of identity determine consumption practices.

Bibliography

Barker Ch, (2005), *Studia kulturowe. Teoria i praktyka,* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Baudrillard J. (1998), *Precesja symulakrów, [in:] Postmodernizm. Antologia przekładów,* R. Nycz (ed.), Kraków.

Baudrillard J., (2006), *Społeczeństwo konsumpcyjne. Jego mity i struktury,* Warszawa: Sic!

Bauer W., (2006), *Tożsamość i przemiany społeczne: przegląd teoretycznych stanowisk,* „Teraźniejszość-Człowiek-Edukacja", no. 4.

Bauman Z., (1994), *Nowoczesność wieloznaczna. Wieloznaczność nowoczesna,* Warszawa: PWN.

Bauman Z., (2000), *Ponowoczesność jako źródło cierpień,* Warszawa: Sic!

Bauman Z., (2006), *Płynna nowoczesność,* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie.

Bauman Z., (2007), *Płynne życie.* Warszawa.

Bauman Z., (2007), *Szanse etyki w zglobalizowanym świecie,* Kraków.

Bauman Z., (1995), *Wolność,* Kraków: Wydawnictwo „Znak".

Bauman, Z.(2009), *Konsumowanie życia,* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Beck, U. (2004), *Społeczeństwo ryzyka. W drodze do innej nowoczesności,* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe „ Scholar".

Bogunia-Borowska M., (2006), *Ekstremalne metamorfozy- projekt idealnego człowieka i perfekcyjnego życia w ponowoczesnym świecie,* „Kultura i Społeczeństwo", no. 4.

Bruner, J.(2006), *Kultura edukacji,* Kraków: Universitas.

Elliot A., (2007), *Koncepcje „ja",* Warszawa: Sic!

Frankl V., (2010), *Wola sensu. Założenia i zastosowanie logoterapii,* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo „Czarna Owca".

Giddens A., (2006), *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. „Ja" i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności,* Warszawa: PWN.

Glass, L. (2010)*, Toksyczni ludzie,* Poznań.

Gromkowska A., (2000), *Kobieta epoki wiktoriańskiej: społeczne konstruowanie ciała i tożsamości,* „Teraźniejszość-Człowiek-Edukacja", no. 4.

Jacyno, M. (2007), Kultura indywidualizmu, Warszawa: PWN.

Kowal-Orczykowska A., (2007), W niewoli reklamy? Percepcja ukrytych znaczeń reklamy prasowej, Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls".

Krajewski M., (1999), Medialna kultura moratorium. Nowoczesność i tradycja w polskich reklamach telewizyjnych, „Kultura i Społeczeństwo", year XLIII, no. 3.

Lewartowska -Zychowicz M., (2010), *Homo liberalis. Od emancypacji do funkcjonalności,* Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls".

Melosik Z., Szkudlarek T., (2009), *Kultura, tożsamość i edukacja. Migotanie znaczeń,* Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls".

Melosik Z., (2010), *Tożsamość, ciało i władza w kulturze instant,* Kraków.

Potulicka E., (2010), *Pytania o skutki neoliberalnej kultury i edukacji-aspekt jednostkowy i społeczny,* Gdańsk: „*ARS EDUCANDI", vol.* VII.

Sennett R., (2006), *Korozja charakteru. Osobiste konsekwencje pracy w nowym kapitalizmie,* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo „MUZA".

Sennett R., (2010), *Kultura nowego kapitalizmu,* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo „MUZA".

Skóra M., (2011), *Strategia flexiurity a powstanie kategorii prekariatu,* „Nauki Społeczne" no. 2.

Smith, P. (1999), *Drawing New Maps: A Radical Cartography of Developmental Disabilities,* „Review of Educational Research", vol. 69, no. 2.

Sontag, S. (1999), *Choroba jako metafora,* Lublin.

Tańczuk R., (1998), *Współczesne kłopoty z „tożsamością",* „Teraźniejszość-Człowiek-Edukacja", no. 1.

Zierkiewicz, E. (2001), *Jaką płeć ma poradnikowy dyskurs?,* „Teraźniejszość-Człowiek-Edukacja", no. 1.

Zierkiewicz E. (2004). *Poradnik-oferta wirtualnej pomocy?,* Kraków.

Marta Dziarnowska
University of Silesia in Katowice

The issue of social situation of homosexual women as a potential for using eclectic research

KEYWORDS

eclectic research, LGBTQIA, homosexual women, social situation

ABSTRACT

Scientists practicing social sciences issues more and more often undertake constructing and performing eclectic research projects. Nowadays, qualitative and quantitative approaches are thought to be equivalent. Their results can be characterized by complementarity, facilitation and/or triangulation.

The article presents two research papers – quantitative which is represented by a report titled 'Social situation of LGBTA people in Poland. Report 2015-2016' written by organizations supporting LGBTQIA environments – and quantitative master thesis titled 'The quality of life of homosexual women – cases study'. These projects arose in similar time, but they were developed and conducted independently. Compared results are connected to issues of functioning of homosexual women in a range of identical or approximate categories of both studies..

The main aim of the article is to show the validity of quantitative and qualitative trends connection on the example of presented papers – despite of distinctiveness of these two conceptions their results illustrate each other in many questions. The quantitative publication pictures the scale of the phenomenon while the qualitative one gives the context of gathered data. In presented text it is shown not only how the results complement one another, but also how they mutually verify and give a possibility to widen the cafeteria of dependent variables or categories of thematic-notions frame.

The secondary aim of the paper is to outline the problematic aspects of functioning of homosexual women in environments and social groups to which they belong. The article is rich in references that discusses in details mentioned issues; these are: an attitude toward public institutions and

politics in Poland, conditions of sexual orientation open-
ness, professional, family and social relations, same-sex
relationships and a violence motivated by prejudices.
The awareness of benefits from using the eclectic approach
in examining social phenomena can arise the cognitive val-
ue of research projects and as an effect increase effective-
ness of actions in favour of nonheteronormative individuals.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8199-6716

Introduction

The essence of research problems generates a reflection on a nature of research
project which by using its methods lets comprehensively answer gathered ques-
tions (Flick, 2012: 30-32). Qualitative and quantitative approaches, once treated
as oppositional, nowadays are thought to be complementary. Therefore, a two-di-
mensional consideration of a research problem becomes a common practice –
both from the perspective of particular phenomenon's scale and from the field of
individual stories that take part inside it.

In the subject literature there are suggestions relating to the connection be-
tween qualitative and quantitative approaches. Martyn Hammersley (2013: 11-12)
shows three ways of such solution and adds that there can be more of them. Those
mentioned by him are:

- triangulation: research results of both paradigms let check each other;
- facilitation: studies conducted in one trend bring hypothesis and inspira-
  tions that can be used in an another research approach;
- complementarity: qualitative and quantitative trends complement each oth-
  er and give wider description of studied issue.

The question of a qualitative results representativeness requires a theoretical
examination. Generalization of that kind of data obligates to reject the context
in which researched case is implanted and to wonder in which different contexts
extrapolated theory keeps the condition of accuracy (Flick, 2011: 194-195). Such
generalization will not have the statistical nature but it will receive a semantic
character (cited in Staś-Romanowska, 2010: 104). What is more, qualitative and
quantitative results linking favours the defining of qualitative results representa-
tiveness (Silverman, 2012: 269-276).

Handed article poses a presentation of two scientific papers that are implanted
in different methodologies but have similar aims and questions about the condi-

tion of interesting phenomena. Relating to ways of connecting research perspectives that are presented above, it must be noticed that those papers are complementary in a specific way (despite they were written independently) and among them one can use triangulation.

One of two aims that presented article has to achieve is a trial of exemplification of qualitative and quantitative approaches complementation. First mentioned trend – the qualitative one – is provided by a study that was conducted for my master thesis entitled 'The quality of life of homosexual women – cases study[1]'; the second – the quantitative one – is presented by a publication 'The social situation of LGBTA individuals in Poland. Report 2015-2016' which was written as an initiative of three organizations connected to LGBTQIA environments which are: Kampania Przeciw Homofobii[2], Lambda Warszawa[3] and Trans-Fuzja[4].

Another, minor, aim of the article is a renew outlining of the nature of individual and social functioning of homosexual women that bases on conclusions from mentioned publication and from the study that was conducted by me.

Both presented aspirations will be pursued simultaneously because the cognitive nature of the paper is less important than its second aim – results of both studies were shown in separate publications to a great extent (Świder, Winiewski, 2017; Dziarnowska, 2016a; Dziarnowska, 2016b; Piksa[5], 2016) – its main task is to picture the possibility of coexistence and overlapping of qualitative and quantitative research trends.

---

[1] Master thesis written under the direction of Tomasz Bajkowski PhD.

[2] A non-governmental organization established in 2001. It tries to work against violence and discrimination towards non-heteronormative individuals. By fulfilling its mission the activists engage themselves into: political, social and legal advocacy, education and forming allied movement. Source: https://kph.org.pl.

[3] An Association established in 1997 in Warsaw. The aim of people who are engaged in its activity is to help individuals who are in a difficult situation because of their sexual orientation and identity. Pledge a safe space to build a positive LGBTQ identity and provide expert help to those in need are the mission of the association. Source: http://lambdawarszawa.org.

[4] A non-governmental organization established in 2008 that works for transsexual individuals' rights. The mission of the organization concerns four aspects: legal advocacy (the analysis of legal conditions in a range of practices and regulations pertaining transsexual individuals), support (support groups, psychological support, social meetings), education (workshops in a range of transsexuality), cultural activity (organizing and promoting cultural events that are friendly to transsexual individuals). Source: http://fundacja.transfuzja.org.

[5] The maiden name of the author of the article.

Methodological assumptions and independent variables of analyzed studies

A study that was created for the LGBTQIA organizations' publication was conducted from November 2016 to February 2017 (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 14). Respondents (as assumed: homosexual, bisexual, transsexual and asexual individuals) were asked about their experiences and situation over the course of 2015-2016. Data was gathered with a questionnaire distributed in the Internet portals connected to issues of mentioned groups; afterwards it was described statistically (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 13-14). Questions concluded in the questionnaire covered a thematic range as follows: health, employment, education, family life, violence and discrimination, psychic welfare, socio-political believes and relationships approaches.

While studying groups that are socially sensitive, endangered to stigmatization, sampling is usually a problematic question. As authors of the paper underlined, such a situation also took place during their research, because it is difficult to state the sample which covers the representativeness of the results while there is no data defining the number of non-heterenormative individuals in Poland (Świder, Winiewski, 201714-18). What is more, due to the way and the 'places' where the questionnaire was distributed (thematic Internet portals) people who have taken part in the research in the majority were young and to some extent they were involved in a social life of their minority group – hence there is another doubt about the question of validity in results generalization to the whole LGBTQIA community. Nevertheless, as the authors of the report underlined, despite of all mentioned constrains the publication is one of the most extensive and one the most systematized analyzes of the social situation of non-heterosexual individuals. The research encompassed 9660 people, 17,2% of them were lesbians; age average of the respondents was 25,28, a median was 23 years (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 17).

The qualitative perspective, to which I am referring report's data, was used in a study that was conducted at the turn of 2014 and 2015 (Piksa, 2015). My interlocutors were eight homosexual women aged from 19 to 40 years old – these extreme values were represented by two of them, the rest (six) were women being 21-24 years old. A purposive sampling (Kubinowski, 2010: 278-282) was supported with a snowball strategy – following interlocutors were pointed out by previous ones until researched categories were theoretically saturated (Flick, 2012: 61).

A research method which I used was an instrumental cases study in a group variation (cited in Kubinowski, 2010: 172), applied technique was a directed free-form interview (Konecki, 2000: 169-170) and the main tool posed interview dis-

posals that were distinguished on a basis of previously made thematic-notions frame[6]. General categories underlying the research were (Piksa, 2015): physical health, social life, mental condition, interpersonal relationships, environmental aspects, financial status (within mentioned aspects there also were many subcategories).

Gathered data was factually coded (Kubinowski, 2010: 235) and the next step was to analyze it with two methods – the content analysis and the method of constant comparing (Kubinowski, 2010: 246-250).

Correlating both of mentioned studies shows that there are relatively many similar features despite their conceptions were made independently and without a researchers' awarness of the other one existence. Over the article I am referring to the situation of homosexual women because they are the group that is a common sampling link in analyzed papers.

In spite of a high similarity of independent variables encompassed in both studies not all of them can be compared – some categories were not distincted as those relating to non-heteronormative women.

The vast majority of report's respondents and my interlocutors were at a similar age – the average age of those first mentioned was 24,03 (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 18); using that statistical operation in a relation to a group that I researched it can be said that their average age was 24,87 (Piksa, 2015: 100-105). That category is the first thanks to which one can assume that participants of both studies create a homogenous group. Similar age and the fact that they agreed to fulfil the questionnaire/to take part in an interview[7] indicate that they are individuals with specific values, believes and opinions about the issues of being a member of a non-heteronormative society.

Another independent variable that lets making comparisons is education of researched women. Report's respondents finished averagely 14,16 years of education (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 21), that value for my interlocutors was 15 years (Piksa, 2015: 100-105). Mentioned numbers suggest that most of the participants of both studies were students of universities so there is a great chance that they had similar social and intellectual experiences in a range of education.

---

[6] I also asked my interlocutors for completing a series of sentences and I offered them to fulfil a particular SWOT analysis where I asked about strength and weaknesses (relating to the present), chances and threats (relating to the future) connected to their quality of life in the context of being a homosexual woman.

[7] It is worth to underline that these activities are related to a very sensitive and often very intimate areas.

Time lapse of both studies also should be noticed. A common element is a year of 2015. Even though work over my project has begun a bit earlier and acts connected to LGBTQIA organizations' report have finished later, both studies were done in a similar social, cultural and political conditions. Despite governmental change in Poland in 2015 no formal solutions for non-heterosexual individuals/relationships were implemented, so it can be assumed that the difference in the period of conducting studies is irrelevant for their results.

Independent variables which cannot be compared are: incomes, subjective evaluation of financial situation, place of living and migrations (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 22-29). These questions also appeared in my study but report's lack of contradistinction for data relating to homosexual women and the fact that not all of my interlocutors referred to some of the aspects specifically (e.g. income) make accurate comparison of studies' results impossible (Piksa, 2015: 100-105, 186-190).

Common categories

Presented part of the article shows similar or same categories of both analyzed research projects. I mention only those that appeared also during my study so that they can be compared. It is also very important if the authors of the report featured results related to lesbians. The starting point are results presented in the quantitative publication so following report's dependent variables are compared to issues of the thematic-notions frame made for my master thesis.

I. Public institutions

The LGBTQIA organizations' publication starts the proper analysis and results' interpretation with a chapter titled 'Trust towards institutions and parliamentary election participation'. Respondents were asked about their attitude towards the government, the parliament, the Police, courts, LGBTQIA organizations (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 31) and if they took part in the parliamentary election in autumn 2015 (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 38). The authors of the research showed that non-heteronormative individuals that were studied are mostly mistrustful towards government and parliament, towards police and courts they are mistrustful and trustful to the same extent and LGBTQIA organizations are granted with trust in majority (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 32).

Data referring to homosexual women was distincted in a range of trust towards the government and the parliament and towards organizations supporting

their rights. Among all of the respondents lesbians were those who as the vast majority mentioned the government and the parliament as institutions that are not worth their trust (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 32). They also in the greatest extent of all respondents, said that they trust LGBTQIA organizations (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 37).

The authors of the research did not distinguished answers of the group of interest in a relation to other mentioned institutions and to election because data representing homosexual women did not reach an extreme value.

The thematic-notions frame of the qualitative project considered a category described as 'political situation in Poland' – in my interlocutors' answers[8] it appeared mainly as a comment about the government and the parliament of that time. I believe that gathered data can be referred to the report's chapter presented above because the satisfaction with Polish political scene or its lack is connected to trust towards political institutions.

Homosexual women are disappointed with conducted politics; one of them said that political system existing in Poland is disadvantageous and the improvement of country's situation should be started by changing it (Piksa, 2015: 190-196).

Statements about LGBTQIA organizations appeared in narrations of two interlocutors even though that question was not encompassed in the research conception. These women pledged cooperation with Lambda Warszawa so it can be assumed that they trust mentioned institution (Piksa: 153).

Data included in the report and that gathered in my study can be described as analogous. Despite the fact that I did not ask my interlocutors just the same questions the narration that some of them have undertaken suggests that they have limited trust toward national institutions and they do trust organizations that support non-heteronormative individuals. The fact that only three of the interlocutors have commented that question is a result of the open form of the interview in which I did not imposed the necessity to answer particular questions; I believe that if I had offered each of them the questionnaire, their answers would be just the same with those given by report's respondents.

II. Sexual orientation openness

'Outing and worse treating' is the following chapter of the publication to which I am relating qualitative data. The issues of sexual orientation or sexual identity

---

[8] Three of them commented that topic, the rest of them avoided the answer or said that the political scene does not interest them so they do not have an opinion.

openness in different environments of respondents functioning was risen in the paper. Results showing the situation of homosexual women are following[9]:

a) awareness of sexual orientation of researched women have (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 41): 97% of friends, 82,9% of co-workers/school friends, 75,5% of family members, 29,7% of neighbours;

b) sexual orientation of respondents is open to (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 44): 67,8% of mothers, 51,2% of fathers, 64,7% of sisters, 57,8% of brothers;

c) full acceptation of homosexuality show (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 47): 37,5% of mothers, 28,1% of fathers, 23,1% of sisters, 21,8% of brothers;

d) from January 2015 to the moment of study participation 71% of researched women hid their sexual orientation at work place, 73,2% at universities and 50% of them did not reveal it for their neighbours, landlords or lessee (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 51);

e) in an immediate contact with Church/religious association representatives 63,8% of lesbians were unequally treated (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 52).

Gathered qualitative data that gives a possibility of comparing to results presented above is included in a range of three thematic-notions categories: interpersonal relations (openness of sexual orientation and its acceptance), social contacts (functioning as a homosexual at work, at university, at neighbourhood) and mental condition (issues of religiousness and contact with clerics).

Instead of taking a stance on each of points mentioned above I would like to link owned data into thematic groups. First of all, I am going to conduct a simultaneous analysis of questions connected to coming out and family acceptance. Referring to that community it should be underlined how important is sampling on the way of results interpretation. Qualitative data change, gathered in a range of only eight cases, into their percentage equivalents deprives them context (the real composition of the family) which is essential to understand their interpersonal relations. I am going to show shortly that context so that make it possible to illustrate mentioned data in a comparison with quantitative research.

Approximately 70% of family members of my interlocutors know that they are not heteronormative (Piksa, 2015: 141-152). Each of researched women had a mother and five of them came out as lesbians to them (around 63%) – two among five mothers accepted their daughters' sexual orientation unconditional-

---

[9] In the LGBTQIA organizations report there are data relating to: clients at work, immediate supervisors, medical staff, public places and institutions, loved ones loss. What is more, in some questions the authors of the study distincted detailed percentage contribution of some aspects in respondents answers; these also are not presented because of a lack of their reflection in qualitative data that I own.

ly (around 40%). Fathers were present in a half of the families, 75% of them knew about interlocutors' non-heteronormativity but non of them accepted it. Four studied women had sisters which experienced the coming out in 100% – one of them did not approve that fact (75% of them embraced their sister's sexual orientation). Three interlocutors pledged to have a brother from who only one knows about homosexuality (aroud 33%) and accept it fully (100%).

Comparing data from the quantitative research with these presented above that comes from qualitative material one can notice single similarities – the percent of family members knowing about sexual orientation of researched women and information referring to their mothers. It must be underlined that the family composition is an independent variable, so as I mentioned before, the context is indispensible because it lets to understand family relations' complexity. Instead of further comparisons I would like to use that considerations as an example of the necessity of complimentary treating both analyzed trends in scientific research conducting so as to fully understand interesting phenomenon.

Referring to following questions it should be noticed that my interlocutors pledged a high level of their sexual orientation openness among their friends (Piksa: 158-162). Only one of them had not come out to all of her friends because of the fact that she comes from a very conservative environment and she was afraid of their reaction (Piksa: 160).

Coming out towards immediate co-workers/co-students was done by the vast majority of studied women; they were not open about their sexuality in situations when their relations with others were not close enough to talk about sexual orientation (Piksa: 158-162). Five of my interlocutors (around 65%) happened to hide homosexuality at work place/place of education on purpose; such acts they usually justified with their knowledge about others' homophobic opinions or with co-working with older generation, which in their opinion, could not understand the issue of non-heteronormativity.

The category of relations with neighbourhood was only desultory described by researched women – four of them pledged that they do not have any contact with their neighbours and they also think that their homosexuality is not open to them (Piksa: 158-162). Two of them have neighbourhood relations with single individuals and they openly speak about their sexual orientation. I do not own data relating to openness/hiding of being a lesbian towards landlords/lessee.

The last question that needs to be referred to in a range of analyzed report's chapter is making a contact with clerics and the process of that relation taking into consideration homosexuality. Non of the women pledged a face-to-face conversa-

tion with Church[10] representatives about sexual orientation. Seven of them have an opinion about clerics' non-heteronormativity acceptance, or should I rather say, about its lack what for my interlocutors is incompatible with preached idea of compassion (Piksa: 135-140). Their notion about negative opinion of that environment towards LGBT individuals is taken from church sermons, narration in media and their non-heteronormative friends' stories.

Comparing report's data and qualitative research data relating to issues of the circle of friends, co-workers/co-students, neighbourhood and the contact with clerics, the results convergence can be noticed. Respondents of the report and my interlocutors came out to almost all of their friends. In a methodological part of the paper I mentioned that the age average of both groups of researched women is around 24-25 years; one can assume that their friends circle is also at a similar age. Supposably, youth in a broad sense, functioning in the Internet and being an active member of so called global village can generate a higher openness also in a range of non-heteronormativity acceptance – homosexuality exposure in almost 100% is not surprising in the face of determinants mentioned above.

Coming out to co-workers/co-students and a necessity to hide the sexual orientation had also a very similar results in both studies. Despite that fact, I believe that such a convergence can be true or false to the same extent. That is an another results' example where the lack of the context is peculiarly disadvantageous[11]. As I mentioned above, my interlocutors' motives of not being open with their sexual orientation are very different – not in every case the reason was a homophobic fear. Results of the quantitative research do not show causes of using these strategies so that in that question they do not fulfil the aim of sociological and psychological deepen analysis of LGBTQIA individuals' living conditions in Poland (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 15).

Openness of sexual orientation and its acceptance in a range of neighbourhood relations is also a very complex category. Two of my interlocutors pledged coming out to single neighbours but they had done it only because they have deepen relationships with these people. Homosexuality and heterosexuality (presupposed) are not questions that are discussed with people met randomly and occasionally.

---

[10] I omit representatives of religious associations because each of researched women was baptized and was raised as a catholic.

[11] Comparing that case to those presented above referring to the circle of friends it should be noticed that the circle is not 'imposed' in contrary to co-workers and co-students. It can be assumed that LGBT individuals will look for friends belonging to the same environment or these who will accept them – such a conclusion draws the context of my results' interpretation. Relations at work and at place of education are conditioned by more complex factors.

Especially taking into consideration existing socio-cultural determinants when the neighbourhood institution is not as important to the individual as it used to be (Pięta, 2014: 233). Results of the quantitative research do not examine the issue of studied women familiarity with their neighbours so that they do not picture reasons of the lack of sexual orientation openness toward them.

The last category that need to be compared is a relation with Church/religious associations representatives. The report treats about direct negative contact and such a situation applied to 63,8% of lesbians. My interlocutors underlined that they never were personally badly treated and their notions are the results of overheard situations. Despite that difference both results can be estimated as similar – frequent unfavourable clerics' statements towards non-heteronormativity are facts[12], even though Pope Francis himself said in 2013: 'If they accept the Lord and have goodwill, who am I to judge them? (...)'. Although, the head of the Roman Catholic Church took on a less conservative stand, a lot of its representatives do not want to accept it (Dziarnowska, 2016a: 122-126). It is worth to underline acts of 'Wiara i Tęcza' organization which unites non-heteronormative individuals and clerics who are favourable to them so that they can fulfil spiritual needs in a friendly environment – my interlocutors showed that association as a hope for Church in Poland.

III. The evaluation of life until now, sense of isolation
and ways of coping with stress

Categories listed in a heading were gathered in a following report's chapter[13]. Referring to the first of them it should be noticed that homosexual women while evaluating their life until now in 68% described it in a positive dimension, 15,5% of them commented it neutrally and 16,4% negatively (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 58).

Over a half of respondents (53,1%) declares that they have the sense of isolation (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 59).

The researchers distinguished a group of ways of coping with difficult situations that homosexual use, these are (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 64): doing distracting things (34,8%), asking for advice and help (32,5%), mobilization and acting

---

[12] Texts published in a magazine 'Miłujcie się' can be an example. They describe homosexuality in an uncompromised and highly negative way. It is often defined as denaturalization, a source of suffering or even it is put on a par with zoophile.

[13] Apart from showed issues, that and the next chapter focus also on: suicidal thoughts, current health condition, symptoms of depression. I do not take up description of these results because of a lack of distinction to those connected to lesbians or because the study did not encompassed some aspects in its thematic-notions frame.

(29,9%), cheering up that it could be worse or that other people are in a worse position (17,2%), giving up and acting resignation (13%), drinking alcohol (10,4%), using tranquilizers (5,4%), praying to God for help (4,9%).

Overall evaluation of life until now was described by my interlocutors in the very beginning of each interview. While starting researching each case I asked the woman: 'How do you evaluate the quality of your life?'. The empirical material gathered as an answer to that question and also the whole narration of interlocutors picture their lives' satisfaction. The half of women commented that topic positively, three of them rather neutrally, one rather negatively. Results of both studies are similar in a range of respondents and interlocutors content with their functioning – women researched by me, which I count to that group, underlined their satisfaction. Those I signed to other two categories did not pledged the extent of their satisfaction – defining its level is my interpretation of their whole narration. It is difficult to compare those results to the quantitative study – a very interesting thing would be a compilation of both approaches in which the qualitative narration, done here, relate to unambiguous choice in a questionnaire.

Six of my interlocutors felt isolated or was afraid of such condition (Piksa, 2015: 112-120). That issue appeared in the context of diagnosing fear sources of researched women. Presented results are analogues with report's data. It can be suspected that non-heteronormativity generates a bigger threat of loneliness. As my interlocutors underlined, their fear connected to being isolated has three-fold source. It is provided by messages coming from the family of origin which does not accept homosexuality, by homophobic living environment and also by personal experiences – studied women underlined that it is difficult to find an appropriate romantic partner.

Applying to the last described question – the strategy of coping with difficult situations – it should be mentioned that my interlocutors pledged fulfilling two of ways listed previously[14]: giving up (one woman) and mobilization (four women) (Piksa: 112-120). It is worth to stress that the one who said that she resigns acting does that only in a one situation which is not connected to homosexuality and in other positions she mobilizes. The strategy applying to most of my interlocutors places itself on a third position in the report but taking into consideration precise percentage data I would like to notice that there is a little difference in results between those from the first, the second and the fourth place. I believe that the fact

---

[14] I did not particularly ask about coping in difficult situations but that aspect appeared in a range of comments about stress and methods of dealing with it. I believe that these two categories can be recognized as unambiguous.

of taking part in a research conducted with the interview method (which is long and exhausting) and pertaining very delicate issues is an evidence of tendency to taking up challenges.

IV. Violence motivated by prejudices

In the report an analyzed category is understood as hurting somebody physically/mentally and also as passive acts (e.g. ignoring, services refusing) (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 75). To a little extent I can apply result of my study to these contained in the report[15]. I did not deal with the issue of violence particularly because of the fact that during interviews my interlocutors did not indicate that such a problem applies to them. The only indicator that I have data about is the percent of the respondents experiencing verbal violence. Information about insults addressed towards them appeared in a narration connected to the quality of their functioning as a lesbian in a social space. In the report it is said that 64,12% researched lesbians experienced such acts from 2015-2016 (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 81). Over a half of my interlocutors also was endangered on verbal violence motivated by homophobia (Piksa, 2015: 176-184). It can be assumed that there is a correlation between exposure on acts of violence and sexual orientation openness in group of their functioning (these results correspond with conclusions presented in the second point of this paper). What is more, they experience verbal violence in public places when they suggest not to be heterosexual by their behaviour and appearance (Piksa: 184-185).

V. Family life

Another chapter of the report is about both current romantic relationship of homosexual women and their opinions connected to family life in a broad sense. At the moment of conducting the research 63,8% women were in same-sex relationships (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 89)[16]. When asked if in Poland there was a possibility to reach a partner relationship would they use such a solution, 92,2%

---

[15] Another issues brought up in analyzed chapter: percentage of people experiencing different kinds of violence (sexual violence, physical violence, vandalism, refusing and threats), an average number of violence acts divided into counties, places where acts of aggression happen, profiles of attacks causers. In the report there also exist individual two chapters connected to that issue. One of them focuses on hate speech, the second is about minority stress. I am not going to refer to it in this paper because of the lack of results providing the possibility to make comparisons. I also omit the part about LGBT school youth and non-heterosexual women' incomes – the report does not distinguish results to the lesbian group.

[16] According to the lesbian stereotype – appearance, the way of dressing up and moving resembling a man.

answered 'yes'; 72,2% would like to get married and 44,5% would decide to adopt children (Świder, Winiewski, 2017: 91).

Most of homosexual women I talked to, at the moment of the interview were not in a relationship, but three of them pledged that they split up not a long time ago (Piksa, 2015: 153-158).

Interlocutors were asked what they think about same-sex legal partner/marital relationships and about children adoption by non-heteronormative homosexuals. Despite that the question did not refer to them indirectly, the vast majority interpreted it as their desire to do so (Piksa, 2015: 176-183). Results that I gathered are very up-close to those presented by the report. Six of my interlocutors would like to be in a partner relationships, one would like to form such a relation too or get married and five of them would adopt a child. That question contained in the questionnaire gave a possibility of multiple choice, probably that why respondents exhibited a high level of choices in a range of partner and marital relationship. I do not question each of my interlocutors about these two variants and they talked about partner relationship more often, probably because the public discussion in Poland is connected primarily to that option.

Table. 1 Synthetic comparison of analysed

		LGBTQIA ORGANIZATIONS' REPORT	AUTHOR'S STUDY[17]
METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS	Research perspective	Quantitative	Qualitative
	Research methods; techniques; tools	Diagnostic poll method; questionnaire; questionnaire survey	Cases study; directed free-form interview; interview disposals and thematic-notion frame
	Data analysis methods	Statistical analysis	Content analysis, constant comparing method
	Sample	Users of LGBTQIA Internet portals, about 1660 lesbians	Purposive sampling, snowball strategy, 8 lesbians
	Period of time	Years of 2016 and 2017, questionnaire questions were connected to experiences from 2015 and 2016	Years of 2014 and 2015

---

[17] The context of data presented in a proprietary qualitative study was described throughout previous parts of the article.

VARIABLES/ THEMATIC-NOTION FRAME CATEGORIES	Individual aspects	Age average	24,03 years	24,87 years
		Years of education average	15,16 years	15 years
	Public institutions	Trust toward government and parliament	The vast majority of researched homosexual women found government and parliament not worth to trust	All of researched homosexual women have limited trust towards public institutions
		Trust toward LGBTQIA organizations	Researched homosexual women trust LGBTQIA organizations to the greatest extent	Three of researched homosexual women trust LGBTQIA organizations; the rest of them do not speak about interesting problem, because it was not included in the thematic-notion frame
	Sexual orientation openness	Family of origin	Awareness of homosexual orientation of respondents have: 75,5 % of family; 67,8% of mothers; 51,2% of fathers; 64,7% of sisters; 57,8% of brothers; Full acceptation of respondents' homosexuality show: 37,5% of mothers; 28,1% of fathers; 23,1% of sisters; 21,8% of brothers	Awareness of homosexual orientation of interlocutors have: about 70% of family; 63% of mothers; 75% of fathers; 100% of sisters; about 33% of brothers Full acceptation of interlocutors' homosexuality show: about 40% of mothers; 0% of fathers; 75% of sisters; 100% of brothers
		Friends	Awareness of homosexual orientation of respondents have 97% of their friends	Awareness of homosexual orientation of interlocutors have 87,5% of their friends
		Co-workers/ co-students	Awareness of homosexual orientation of respondents have 97% of their co-workers/ co-students; about 71%-73,2% of researched women used to hide their sexual orientation at work/ at place of education	Awareness of homosexual orientation of interlocutors have the vast majority of their co-workers/ co-students; about 65% of researched women used to hide their sexual orientation at work/ at place of education
		Neighbourhood	Awareness of homosexual orientation of respondents have 29,7% of their neighbours; 50% of respondents purposely hide homosexuality	Most of interlocutors declare no contact with neighbours and probable secrecy of their sexual orientation; two of them who are in a relation with neighbours have come out

VARIABLES/ THEMATIC-NOTION FRAME CATEGORIES	Clerics	In an immediate contact with clerics 63,8% respondents were unequally treated	Non of the interlocutors declare an immediate negative relation with clerics; their statements are connected to inequalities met during church sermons, narration in media and their non-heteronormative friends' stories.
	Life evaluation	Respondents estimated their life until now as: positive: 68% of respondents neutral: 15,5% of respondents; negative: 16,4% of respondents	Interlocutors estimated their life until now as:- positive: 50% of interlocutors; neutral: 37,5% of interlocutors; negative: 12,5% of interlocutors
	Sense of isolation	53,1% of respondents declare having the sense of isolation	75% of interlocutors declare having the sense of isolation
	Ways of coping with stress	Respondents' ways of coping with difficult situations: 34,8% doing distracting things; 32,5% asking for advise and help; 29,9% mobilization and acting; 17,2% cheering up it could be worse or that other people are in a worse position; 13% giving up and acting resignation; 10,4% drinking alcohol and 5,4% using tranquilizers; 4,9% praying to God for help	Interlocutors' ways of coping with difficult situations: 50% mobilization and acting; 12,5% giving up and acting resignation
	Violence motivated by prejudices	Verbal violence touched 64,12% of respondents	Verbal violence touched more than 50% of interlocutors
	Family life	Being in a relationship	Same-sex relationship was made by 63,8% of respondents at the moment of conducting the study	Most of researched women were not in a same-sex relationship at the moment of conducting the study
		Attitude toward formal solutions	In a case of having a law letting to adopt children and to formalize relationships of homosexuals: – 92,2% of respondents would like to formalize their relationship; – 72,2% of respondents would like to get married; – 44,5% of respondents would like to adopt children	In a case of having a law letting to adopt children and to formalize relationships of homosexuals: – 75% of interlocutors would like to formalize their relationship; – 12,5% of interlocutors would like to get married; – 62,5% of interlocutors would like to adopt children

Source: own elaboration.

Results and summary

Information gathered in the article should be summed up on two levels as two-dimensionally its aims were formed.

Applying to cognitive issues of both studies it is worth to underline the difficult situation of homosexual women. Frequent lack of homosexual orientation' acceptance and the necessity to hide it in many environments of functioning leads to sense of isolation. The absence of legal solutions giving a possibility to formalize a relationship and to adopt children and a lack of Polish government acts in that range, makes that homosexual women do not trust public institutions and consequently they do worry about their future.

The second task of the article was to show possibilities of qualitative and quantitative research supplementing. The subject literature related to connecting both approaches says that results of both studies can (cited in Flick, 2011: 168): be convergent (totally or to a great extent coherent), fulfil each other (interviews deepen and provide details of some issues). In a vast majority results of both analyzed projects reflect each other. What is more, by interpreting those convergences I frequently pictured my interlocutors' statements which gave the context to some questions, explained and widen the analysis.

I believe that triangulation, facilitation and complementarity mentioned in the very beginning had application in linking both studies. Presented conceptions verify analysis and interpretation accuracy of gathered empirical material. Dependent variables showed in the questionnaire can be reflected in the thematic-notions frame of the qualitative study what will replenish it with issues yet unidentified (a group of such aspects was shown in references). On the other hand, deriving from the mentioned thematic-notions frame, the quantitative study could be built up with categories providing information about interpersonal relations what would outline the context of some answers (e.g. the issue of coming out to neighbours). The fact that both studies fulfilled the condition of complementarity I justified above – qualitative and quantitative data was a mutual replenishment.

Finalizing my consideration I would like to once again underline the fact that both projects were made independently. In spite of a lack of researchers cooperation they characterize with many similarities in a range of categories that underlain the research and as the effect – a high extent of the results' mutual reflection. Common formulation of eclectic research conception would give the possibility of deepen and more comprehensive analysis and interpretation of social situation and the quality of life of LGBTQIA society members. Such diagnosis would lead to a greater awareness of complexity of interesting phenomenon and emerging from it – both efficiency and effectiveness in designing actions for non-heteronormative individuals.

Bibliography

Dziarnowska M. (2016a). *Kościół, polityka, warunki życia – źródła irytacji homoseksualnych kobiet*. „Parezja" no. 2/2016.

Dziarnowska M. (2016b). *Relacje homoseksualnych kobiet z rodziną pochodzenia jako czynnik warunkujący jakość ich życia*. 'Kultura – Społeczeństwo – Edukacja' no. 1/2016.

Flick U. (2011). *Jakość w badaniach jakościowych*. Trans. P. Tomanek. Warszawa.

Flick U. (2012). *Projektowanie badania jakościowego*. Trans. P. Tomanek. Warszawa.

Hammersley M. (2013). *The relationship between qualitative and quantitative research: paradigm loyalty versus methodological eclecticism*. https://martynhammersley.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/relationship-between-qualitative-and-quantitative-research.pdf, access: 29.01.2018.

Konecki K. (2000). *Studia z metodologii badan jakościowych. Teoria ugruntowana*. Warszawa.

Kubinowski D. (2010). *Jakościowe badania pedagogiczne: filozofia, metodyka, ewaluacja*. Lublin.

Pięta J. (2014). *Pedagogika czasu wolnego*. Warszawa.

Piksa M. (2015). *Jakość życia homoseksualnych kobiet – studium przypadków*, typescript of master thesis. Białystok.

Piksa M. (2016). *Quality of Life of Homosexual Women in the Context of Their Functioning in Society – Chosen Aspects*. 'Journal of Gender and Power' no. 1/2016.

Silverman D. (2012). *Interpretacja danych jakościowych*. Trans. M Głowacka-Grajper, J. Ostrowska. Warszawa.

Straś-Romanowska M. (2010). *Badania ilościowe vs jakościowe – pytanie o tożsamość w psychologii*. 'Roczniki psychologiczne' no. 1/2010.

Świder M., Winiewski M. (ed.). (2017). *Sytuacja społeczna osób LGBTA w Polsce. Raport za lata 2015-2016*. Warszawa.

Elżbieta Rogalska
University of Szczecin, Faculty of Humanities, Institute of Pedagogy

The World of the Child in Selected Poems by Joanna Kulmowa

ABSTRACT

"Children's need for miracles" has been accentuated as elements appearing in the selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa, which allow the child to be amazed by the world; they are a predicator to the appearance of tutoring. The astonishment with the world, as a place full of lyricism, enables the consolidation of identity by the emergence of the child's "I". Not judging and classifying. Subjectivity is emphasized: the seriousness of the child's world, understanding oneself, transforming the world, individuality, respect, acceptance, cooperation, responsibility, independence, sense of agency and dialogue. It was concluded that the main "miracle" is dialogue which: requires presence to be astonished by the world; raises the child's responsibility for another person; cannot be deprived of love; manifests itself in the "question-cry " for presence as a result of trust in the subject of the relationship.

The objectives of the study were: to define dialogue as Bettelheim's "miracle" in selected poems by J. Kulmowa; demonstrate that selected poems of J. Kulmowa are dialogical. The aim of the article was to: present the "miracles" in the child's world in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa. The method of hermeneutics was used based on the methodology of Wolfgang Klafka. It seems important that so far the selected poetry of J. Kulmowa has not been interpreted in relation to Bettelheim's concept of "miracle" and its connection with the philosophy of dialogue, pedagogy and literary studies at the same time.

Introduction

Agnieszka Materne wrote about space as a place of memories that appear through the creation of poetic nostalgia (2017: 49). In this article a similar place, full of lyricism, will be the world of the child in the selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa. I will try to present all the "miracles" Bruno Bettelheim wrote about, exposed in selected poems by the 2010 honorary doctor of the University of Szczecin. Therefore, the term "miraculous" is intended for the "child's need for miracle" (Bettelheim, 1996: 83) and refers to all possible elements that exist in the world of J. Kulmowa's poems, which make the child wonder about the world. Astonishment with the world is part of the child's emerging identity: "The sense of separateness of one's own "I" from the environment is the basic dimension of identity, testifying to the sense of one's own uniqueness, difference and individuality" – wrote Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska (2006: 94). Every recipient and reader of J. Kulmowa's poetry, including a child, can find this sense of individuality in her works. It is the world presented in the poet's lyrical works that creates space for shaping one's own identity, bringing out the individuality of one's own "I".

Therefore, the objectives of the research were: to present that selected poems of Joanna Kulmowa are dialogical; define dialogue as a "miracle" appearing in selected poems of Joanna Kulmowa. The following research problems have been identified: What is the manifestation of dialogicality in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa?; What kind of dialogues appear in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa?; What "miracles" appear in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa?

The problem is significant because "In early childhood education, the child learns the difficult art of choosing values that determine the direction of "getting along" with the world and oneself" (Bałachowicz 2008: 70). Recognizing that the child's world in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa may be a predicator of tutoring and the formation of identity while preserving subjectivity seems to be important, because the above mentioned elements contribute to the strengthening of a given person's opportunities in life.

Therefore, the subject of research is "miracularity" appearing in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa, which defines the child's world and may be a good starting point to tutoring. Selected poems by the poet were examined in terms of the "miracles", their description and correlation with available pedagogical and philosophical literature. As a result, the significant role of dialogue as a "miracle" in the child's world has been emphasised. One can notice the implications of the philosophy of dialogue with selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa.

Theoretical background

The space of a child's nature is a specific place full of cognitive curiosity, astonishment with the world and magical thinking. These elements of childhood can be described as Bettelheim's "miracles". The child's world is as important as the world of adults, after all, "A child is a human being, and its life is important and serious" – wrote Barbara Smolińska-Theiss (2014: 118). The seriousness and importance of a child's element can be described as a desire for self-control, which results from the need to "understand oneself in the world and the need to transform reality", which "are universal distinguishing features of the subject" (Bałachowicz 2013: 15). Therefore, a child in his world strives to distinguish his individuality, to notice his own uniqueness, but also accept differences and vices. It is an art that children learn throughout their entire life until they achieve the consolidation of identity. (Brzezińska 2005: 427).

School and kindergarten, places responsible for the child's upbringing, do not always help in achieving developmental tasks, as Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik shows: "Judging and classifying pupils is an integral part of the whole system of 'sorting' individuals in the society" (2007 : 36). This does not allow for the acceptance of differences, lack of skills, vices and dealing with failure. The child's world is dominated by the need to please teachers, to achieve good grades or their representations in the form of various symbols, e.g. suns. This situation emphasizes the need to create a place in the classroom for subjective treatment, mutual acceptance, which is possible. As Kinga Kuszak shows:

> „In their relations with peers, children learn to present their own point of view, listen to what others have to say, and face the necessity of agreeing on positions and reaching common solutions. From their peers they learn how to act in order to gain acceptance, they learn how to accept and comply with the arrangements. As a result of contacts with other children, they mature to compromise in solutions, cooperation and co-responsibility" (2007: 14).

The quoted researcher describes peer tutoring based on research conducted in the Netherlands, from which the Polish education system can draw inspiration for the development of a child's nature. Thanks to the presented conceptualization of the role of a child as a teacher, one can see the mutual influence of children on each other. With the appearance of another child, the world of a child is enriched by the emergence of experiences and situations that allow for the development of independence. Independence appears in every period of human develop-

ment. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote about this issue. His views were presented by Janina Świrko-Pilipczuk in her book entitled "Independence in philosophical views and concepts of man – pedagogical implications" (Świrko-Pilipczuk 2011). Here is a short fragment showing Jean Paul Sartre's position on the subject of human independence:

> "His position overcame the existing patterns of describing human nature and introduced a significant and strong emphasis on human freedom and independence. First of all, he claimed that man cannot be defined, because originally he is nothing. Only later he becomes 'Somethng' […]" (Świrko-Pilipczuk 2011).

On the basis of this short passage, it can be said that independence is one of man's fundamental aspirations, it is what is yet to come, a process that gives freedom. Therefore, "the acquisition of a mature personality depends on the acquisition of the ability to direct oneself, to give one's actions the right direction" (Błasiak 2009: 126). It is about self-determination, taking responsibility for oneself, which allows the child to believe in him/herself and strengthens the sense of empowerment. A similar opinion is expressed by Zbyszko Melosik, who writes: "one can negotiate the shape of reality in which we live with young people, and in particular form their habit of making conscious choices in relation to the shape of one's own self" (2002: 144). This means that even older children, i.e. adolescents feel the need for a sense of empowerment and the awareness that they have self-control and can decide on the direction of their own existence.

The second basic function that appears in the relationship between children is their verbal communication. Dialogue, as Hanna Krauze-Sikorska writes, is a departure from "simple procedures and establishing a real relationship with others and searching for different determinants of learning difficulties" (2014: 25). It is therefore a sign of increased mental activity. Thanks to dialogue, the child creates new neural structures and connections that are conducive to the abandonment of the existing rules and allow for the emergence of new rules. Literature on human developmental psychology recognizes the huge role of speech in the child's world: "At preschool age […] new areas of activity appear: communication with others through words, a tool of effective influence on the behaviour of others, and imagination, a tool of unrestricted mental activity" (Brzezińska, Appelt, Ziółkowska 2016: 164). One can see the co-existence of imagination next to speech, as the basic activity of a child in the world, starting from preschool age. Imagination is directly connected with the ability to fantasize. Fantasizing is one of the immanent features of a child. It is particularly evident in the work of

Julian Tuwim, who wrote: "A baby is born, and after some time it starts to speak – and almost immediately, without preparation, it speaks untruth. This means that fantasy is a natural phenomenon [...]. Children talk nonsense and want to hear nonsense. Then they grow out of it. Those who don't, become poets" (Słonimski, Tuwim 1990: 13).

In the next part of the article I will present selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa with reference to Bettelheim's concept of the "miracle" and the pedagogical and philosophical concept of a dialogue with subjectivity.

Research procedure

The research was carried out in accordance with the hermeneutical method research procedure, which is defined as a reflection on literary texts, extraction of their meaning (Wysocka 2004: 186). In particular, Wolfgang Klafka's method was used, according to which the following stages of the study were distinguished: 1. Selection of volumes of poetry by Joanna Kulmowa; 2. Selectin of individual poems; 3. Taking a position on the problem; 4. Constant reference to the research problems in the course of research; 5. Semantic analysis of the highlighted poems; 6. Determining the author's situation when writing the poems; 7. The use of sources supplementing the drawn conclusions; 8. The use of syntactic means; 9. Exposing the main theses from the works; 10. Exposing ambiguity and contradictions in the analysed texts, if any; 11. Definition of the social and historical context of the researched poems. In the end, four poems by Joanna Kulmowa were examined, from the following volumes: "Dębołki" (Kulmowa 1998: 10); "Aporemy czyli rozmyślania przed lustrem" (Kulmowa 1971: 76); "Co się komu śni, a nawet i nie śni" (Kulmowa 2006: 9); "Zagapienie" (Kulmowa 2001: 4). The selected poems contain Bettelheim's "miracles" and are works for children. I believe that adults can also derive knowledge and joy from them. A constant element of the research procedure, which was highlighted in the fourth stage of the research, includes the research problems: What is the manifestation of dialogicality in the selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa?; What kind of dialogues appear in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa?; What are the "miracles" that appear in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa? The aim of the article is to enrich the pedagogical theory concerning the child's world in relation to the "miracles" appearing in selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa. Especially the dialogue.

Results

This chapter will present the results of research on four poems with respect to the W. Klafka's methodology. This will include fragmentary interpretations of the results, according to the stages of research based on the aforementioned hermeneutical method.

The poem "Dębołki" [*Oaklings*][1] shows dialogicality. It manifests itself in the presence of the title "oaklings", which appear at nightfall. Thus, the "miracle" includes not only a dialogue with the reader/listener, but also the very fact of the appearance of "oaklings" as mysterious creatures – we do not really know who they are. This is the key element of their "miracle", i.e. their mysterious presence.

In this paragraph, I will focus on the author's situation which occurred when she was writing the analysed text (in accordance with the research procedure). The situation that accompanied the author at the time she was writing the examined text is connected with a random event in Joanna Kulmowa's life. The volume "Dębołki" was written two years after a difficult move from Strumiany near Szczecin to the Warsaw apartment of the Kulm family. Below I will present a supplement to the formulated conclusion.

Johann Mader's philosophy of dialogue was chosen as a complementary source. The thinker wrote about the philosophy of dialogue in the following way: "it is a way of thinking in which dialogue and meeting become a principle of philosophy" (Mader 2003: 4). This means that dialogue always requires someone's presence. Referring to idiographical reasons, it can be said that the "oaklings" also express their own presence. These creatures, created by Joanna Kulmowa, can be considered as *res loquens*, i.e. the Other (Gara 2009: 106). Someone transcendent and autonomous (ibid.), who disappears when the morning comes and appears at night. There are also causal relationships within and between the different verses. We can observe the implications between the expressions in the poem, e.g.

"The moon barely rises above the forest" […]
"When they are oak-founded" […]
"And when the fog descends from the meadows in the morning" […]
"They run away,
On the double, the oaklings!" (Kulmowa 1998: 10).[2]

---

[1] The English titles of all the analysed poems have been translated by the translator.
[2] Fragment of the poem „Dębołki" by J. Kulmowa, translated by the translator.

The juxtaposed verses of the poem point to a mystery which is a valuable element of learning in the child's world. I believe that teachers and parents do not deprive children of the pleasure of meditation that B. Bettelheim wrote about: "Fairy tales leave it to the child's imagination to decide whether and how it should relate to what the story says about life and human nature" (Bettelheim 1996: 83). I will not do it either, and I will allow the reader's imagination to work. I will confine myself to presenting the key thesis of each of the lyrical works in question. Therefore, the main thesis of the J. Kulmowa's poem "Dębołki" is the occurrence of dialogue through the mere fact of the presence of the "oaklings", as a partner for dialogue, of "miracles" enabling one to be amazed by the world.

Due to the limitation in the number of characters used and so as not to exceed them, I am forced to present the remaining three poems in a short form. It will present the main thesis of these works together with a reference to complementary sources.

The next poem that I will discuss is a lyrical composition entitled "Zasypianie sikorek" [*Titmice falling asleep*]. It captures the following "miracles": dialogue, nature, the presence of the moment of falling asleep. How do the these elements of the depicted world relate to the sought-after dialogue? Emmanuel Levinas is a representative of the philosophy of dialogue, who distinguished *res cogitans*, or the Conscious (Gara 2009: 106). Referring directly to the work in question, one can conclude that the child is entitled to perceive the nestling as – the Conscious in the Other (*res loquens*). I would like to briefly discuss this claim. Namely, in the discussed poem, the nestling – an autonomous being – manifests identity, which induces a "continuous responsibility for another human being" (Ibid.: 107). This concept can be presented in the following manner: I am the same, similar, I also fall asleep when the sun sets, which leads to the claim that the person falling asleep is equally important. The main thesis of this lyrical work, therefore, is that dialogue appears as a "miracle" that awakens the child's responsibility for the other.

The poem entitled "Sprawiedliwość" [*Justice*], in the fragment entitled "1", emphasizes dialogue as the "miracle" in the child's world, next to: a stone, bread and flour. Below I will present a proposal of interpretation of this work in comparison with the philosophy of dialogue. Ferdinand Ebner wrote: "It is a characteristic feature of our times that all other triumphs and victories lead to defeat at the same time" (Ebner 2003: 18). In the proposed concept, this defeat is reflected in the stones that have been thrown, in excess, and there is no more flour left for bread. For F. Ebner, word is a gift from God, so it cannot be abused, or deprived of love (ibid.: 25). The main thesis in this poem is that dialogue is defined as "miraculous", and ceases to be dialogue when it is devoid of love.

In the poem "Zagapiona jesień" [*Autumn Belated*] Joanna Kulmowa asks the question: "What should we do to make Autumn stay longer? Thus, the child's world is enriched with the "miraculous" dialogue with autumn. The "miracles" include: an orchard, wild wine, a cobweb, a butterfly, a cocoon, spiders. In the next part of this paragraph I will present the concept of dialogicality in the discussed lyrical piece, based on the philosophy of dialogue. Franz Rosenzweig wrote: "Revelation reaches its peak in an unfulfilled wish, in the cry of an open question" (Rosenzweig 2003: 34). The thesis proposed by the thinker can be used to describe the dialogue that has been embodied in the analysed poem by the "cry-question" about the presence of something. This means the presence of the title autumn. The situation presented in the lyrical work shows a desire to keep autumn for longer. It means a "cry-question" for autumn to stay a bit longer. The fundamental element of the presence is the trust that autumn can be stopped. Therefore, the presence may result from the trust that the subject of the relationship is endowed with. The main thesis of this poetic work is the "miracle" of dialogue manifested in the "question-cry" about the presence of autumn, which has beenendowed with trust.

Discussion

The results were compared only with the philosophy of dialogue. Therefore, in this chapter I will refer mainly to pedagogical literature, but also to philosophy or literature studies.

The dialogue dimension presented in the results referred to the "miraculous" world of the child: presence, love, responsibility for another person, the Conscious and the Other. Thus, we can sum up all the considerations based on the philosophy of dialogue citing Jaromir Brejdak as the ability to be open to another being (2015: 75). Karol Tarnowski adds that dialogue is a "bond of fidelity". (2015: 224), "It is about talking rather than about what is actually being said" (2015: 218).

The dialogicality of selected poems by Joanna Kulmowa is manifested in the form of such "miracles" as: dialogue, a "cry-question" and trust, autumn, orchard, wild wine, cobweb, butterfly, cocoon, spiders, stone, bread, flour, nature, the presence of the moment of falling asleep, "dębołki", the mystery of presence. The everyday life of some "miracles" allows us to use them in classes with children. Thus, the poetry presented by J. Kulmowa, apart from the dialogical dimension, gives the ordinary elements of everyday life a touch of magic. Alicja Baluch wrote about the language of archetypes that concretize "what is inexpressible and unclear. They testify to the existence of a dialogue between the unconscious and the conscious"

(2016: 14). Therefore, pedagogy is closely connected with literature studies, because "spontaneity, the ad hoc nature of lyrical 'inspirations', which may be realized by just one faint motif, one poetic image" (Krzyżanowski 1984: 189) is constituted in the poetry of Joanna Kulmowa. This poetry is "filled with a sense of humour and serenity, it breathes optimism, it speaks with direct imagery and solar symbolism" (Chęcińska 2012: 9). The solar aspect defines presence as a way of moving towards and away from life and death. It is related to the desire to preserve its essential character.

Thus, it can be said that selected poems of J. Kulmowa are dialogical; the dialogue of J. Kulmowa's selected poems enables the emergence of peer tutoring in a situation when the listeners/readers are children of different developmental ages; the dialogue in the child's world is a dominating "miracle" that illustrates the subjectivity of a child. Dialogues that appear in selected poems by J. Kulmowa are not obvious, they require a child's inborn artistic intuition or the effort of an adult who was deprived of the possibility to experience art or admire the world. At the same time, these poems are amusing, spontaneous and teach symbolism through the magic of ordinary things. It is worth noting that Joanna Kulmowa's poetry has not yet been compared with pedagogy, literature studies and the philosophy of dialogue at the same time. I hope that this article will contribute to a deeper exploration of Kulmowa's poetry in classes at all levels of education, especially in the initial period.

Bibliography

Baluch A. (2016), Co warto wiedzieć o literaturze dla dzieci i młodzieży. [in:] U. Chęcińska (ed.), Dziecko i baśnie świata w kontekście wczesnej edukacji. Szczecin.

Bałachowicz J. (2008), Styl pracy nauczyciela klas początkowych a wsparcie rozwoju podmiotowego dziecka. [in:] Puślecki W. (ed.), Wspieranie rozwoju dzieci w procesie wczesnej edukacji. Wrocław.

Bałachowicz J. (2013), Tutoring w rozwoju podmiotowym dziecka. [in:] taże i Rowicka A. (ed.), Nowoczesny wychowawca – tutor, mentor, coach. Warsaw.

Bettelheim B. (1996), Cudowne i pożyteczne. O znaczeniach i wartościach baśni, transl. by Danek D. Warsaw.

Błasiak A. (2009), Wartości w procesie samowychowania, [in:] taże., Aksjologiczne aspekty procesu wychowania. Wybrane zagadnienia. Krakow.

Brejdak J. (2015), O solidarnej naturze osoby w ujęciu Józefa Tischnera i Maksa Schelera. [in:] Ks. Jarosław Jagiełło (ed.), Spory o naturę człowieka. Józefowi Tischnerowi w 15. rocznicę śmierci. Kielce.

Brzezińska A. (2005), Psychologiczne portrety człowieka. Praktyczna psychologia rozwojowa. Sopot.

Brzezińska A., Appelt K., Ziółkowska B. (2016), Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. Sopot.

Chęcińska U. (2012), Bibliografia i ikonobibliografia twórczości Joanny Kulmowej. Szczecin.

Cybal-Michalska A. (2006), Tożsamość młodzieży w perspektywie globalnego świata. Studium socjopedagogiczne. Poznań.

Ebner F. (2003), Fragmenty pneumatologiczne, transl. by B. Baran, transl. by J. Doktór. "Dominikańskie studium filozofii i teologii Warszawa: Filozofia dialogu". Warsaw.

Gara J. (2009), Od filozoficznych podstaw wychowania do ejdetycznej filozofii wychowania. Warsaw.

Gromkowska-Melosik A. (2007), Społeczno-kulturowe aspekty nieuczciwości szkolnej i akademickiej, in: Gromkowska-Melosik A., Ściągi, plagiaty, fałszywe dyplomy. Sopot.

Krauze-Sikorska H. (2014), Mikro- i makrokontekst w procesie systemowej diagnozy psychopedagogicznej dzieci i młodzieży z trudnościami w uczeniu się. "Studia Edukacyjne" No. 33/2014, pp. 19-33.

Krzyżanowski J. (1984), Nauka o literaturze. Wrocałw-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź.

Kulmowa J. (1971), Aporemy czyli rozmyślania przed lustrem. Warsaw.

Kulmowa J. (2006), Co się komu śni, a nawet i nie śni. Warsaw.

Kulmowa J. (1998), Dębołki. Warsaw.

Kulmowa J. (2001), Zagapienie. Gdańsk.

Mader J. (2003), Filozofia dialogu, transl. by Kijowski R. "Dominikańskie Studium Filozofii i Teologii w Warszawie: Filozofia Dialogu". Warsaw.

Materne A. (2017), Genius loci a samowychowanie estetyczne, in: H. Krauze-Sikorska, M. Klichowski, Świat małego dziecka. Poznań.

Melosik Z. (2002), Globalny nastolatek. (Re)konstrukcja tożsamości w ponowoczesnym świecie. "Horyzonty wychowania" No. 2/2002.

Rosenzweig F. (2003), Gramatyka Erosa (mowa miłości), transl. by Gadacz T. "Dominikańskie studium filozofii i teologii w Warszawie: Filozofia dialogu". Warsaw.

Słonimski A., Tuwim J. (1990), W oparach absurdu. Warszawa.

Smolińska-Theiss B. (2014), Korczakowskie narracje pedagogiczne. Krakow.

Świrko-Pilipczuk J. (2011), Samodzielność w filozoficznych poglądach i koncepcjach człowieka – implikacje pedagogiczne. Szczecin.

Tarnowski K. (2015), Dialogiczna metafizyka Józefa Tischnera, [in:] Ks. Jarosław Jagiełło (ed.), Spory o naturę człowieka. Józefowi Tischnerowi w 15. Rocznicę śmierci. Kielce.

Wysocka E. (2004), Hermeneutyka, [in:] Pilch T. (ed.), Pedagogical Encyclopedia of the 21st century. Warsaw, Vol. II.

Celina Kamecka-Antczak
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

The process of acquiring civic competences by students in the school space – analysis of theoretical foundations[1]

ABSTRACT

The article analyses three selected theories: the theory of communicative action proposed by Jürgen Habermas, the theory of social learning by Albert Bandura, as well as dramaturgical theory by Erving Goffman. The aim of the analysis was to find one leading theory of the process of acquiring civic competences. The selected theory should meet the set conditions that allow it to be used in school space. Civic competences are understood as a particular subtype of social competences, the acquisition of which is an important element of social development. The scope of the definition of civic competences depends on the theoretical approach adopted. School space is a community made up of students, teachers and parents, who focus on a common goal. This space is also where students' socialisation takes place. The analysis was carried out on the basis of 5 questions regarding the subject, determinants, mechanism, place in development, and criteria for verifying the process of acquiring civic competences by students in the school space. The answers to the questions listed in the table have become the criteria for the analysis. However, this analysis did not allow for choosing a leading theory. None of the theories has met all the conditions set.

Introduction

In its 2006 recommendations on the development of key competences[2] through lifelong learning, the European Parliament emphasises and defines the terms *social*

---

[1] The article was inspired by the book by Mariola Chomczyńska-Miliszkiewicz (2002).

[2] The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council lists 8 key competences:
1. communication in the mother tongue;

competences and *civic competences*. It defines them collectively as "all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies" (Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council). The development of key competences comprises improving one's knowledge, shaping appropriate attitudes and improving practical skills.

Subject literature covers a number of definitions of social competences from psychological, sociological, pedagogical, and economic perspectives, as well as in intuitive understanding in the colloquial discourse of mass culture. The term "civic competences" is much more recent and specific, but the number of its definitions has also been growing recently, and the reasons for this include the differences in interpretations of civic competences as being linked to or existing independently of a democratic system.

The term "social competences" was introduced to psychology by Robert White in 1959, defining it as "an organism's capacity to interact effectively with the environment" (White, 1959, p. 317). The circumstances of an individual's social activity can take on various forms, depending on:

- whether the interactions take place between two, or more people;
- the role of the participant: partner, observer, source or object of influence;
- is the social context – direct or indirect;

The diversity of social situations and spheres of social functioning proves that we cannot consider one general social competence, but instead we need to distinguish multiple types (Martowska, 2012), which may also include civic and political competences. We may also identify a number of characteristics of social competences common to multiple definitions. These include being goal-oriented, intentionality (Spitzberg, Cupach, 1989) and determination of effective behaviour in social situations (Frost, 2004). In this article, I posit that civic competences are a specific subtype of social competences, concerning situations that require cooperation with others for the common good, which are essential for active and democratic participation in society, since they enable individuals to reconcile actions undertaken for the benefit of the community with a sense of personal autonomy (Plecka et al., 2013). The exact scope of civic competences (knowledge, attitudes and skills) will vary depending on the chosen theoretical approach.

---

2. communication in foreign languages;
3. mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
4. digital competence;
5. learning to learn;
6. social and civic competences;
7. sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
8. cultural awareness and expression (2006/962/EC; *cf.* Bacia 2015).

The aim of the socialisation process is for the individual to internalise social norms and identify with social models. The socialised individual thus becomes capable and willing to undertake various social roles (Czapów, 1974). The acquisition of social competences, which is sometimes referred to as social training (Matczak, 2001) is undoubtedly a part of this process. Social training may occur in one of two ways (Knopp, 2010). In a natural (informal) way, when it takes place in the process of upbringing or when the individual is dealing with difficult social situations and tasks in everyday life, as well as formally, when it takes the form of special training courses, interpersonal training sessions and workshops. The process of acquiring civic competences, which make up a particular subset of social competences, is also a part of the socialisation process. It can be presented from one of three perspectives.

1. As a specific form of training – when the model of the role of a citizen acquired in the process of socialisation stands out in a specific way from other social roles and behaviours, by distinguishing specific content and specific part of the whole process.
2. As identical to social training – when fulfilling the role of a citizen and any other role requires gaining exactly the same scope of social competences, and no specific content or specific part of the socialisation process for civic competences is distinguished.
3. As a parallel training – when in the process of social training detailed, differentiated competences needed to perform different roles are acquired in parallel, where specific content is distinguished, unlike specific elements of the socialisation process.

The presented three perspectives of perception of civic competence training in the process of socialisation determined the choice of theories analysed in this article. The first perspective encompassed the theory of communicative action, proposed by Jürgen Habermas (1999); the second perspective included the dramaturgic theory put forth by Erving Goffman (2008a, 2008b); the third perspective is based on the theory of social learning by Albert Bandera (2007).

The process of socialisation is always linked to a specific social space. This social space is understood as "the totality of dynamic relations between the forces within and outside the individual, in an environment in which the individual is actively involved" (Izdebska, 2015, p. 11). This space has a physical, material and mental dimension, and it enables parallel coexistence of many spaces of socialisation interactions (Matyjas, 2017). Family is the first and primary space of socialisation. As a child grows older, their spaces of socialisation expand, and the key ones include school and the local community. School is the next community encountered by the individual after the family (Forma, 2012). School space is a specific

product of human culture and is an essential element of human life space, actively influencing its shape (Matyjas, 2012). It is not only the building, the quality of education, and organisation of extracurricular activities, but primarily a community made up of teachers, parents and students focused on a common goal. The community character of the school is a key condition for the subject (students) to identify with other participants of the social life at school (friends, teachers, parents) (Modrzewski, Śmiałek and Wojnowski, 2008).

Class is a distinctive feature of the school space. Class is a small social group (Mika, 1986) formed in an institutional way, with a dual social structure (formal and informal). Referring to the definition of a social group, Mieczysław Łobocki (1974) defined a class as a group consisting of students who interact with each other, with different positions and roles, as well as a common system of values and norms regulating their behaviour in matters relevant to the class. The class group also serves as an educational environment and a place where the process of transferring models of behaviour, moral norms and shaping attitudes takes place. As one of the elements of the school structure, the class is not isolated, and many activities are defined in advance by the rhythm of the life of the school as a whole. Zbigniew Zaborowski (1964) distinguishes several types of social relations in a class. Interpersonal contacts take place between individuals. Material relations are formed in the process of carrying out joint tasks, encompassing issues such as determining the scope of the task at hand, leadership and responsibility. Personal relationships are then formed on the basis of personal visions and emotional contacts between students, including acquaintances and friendships. Classes also feature intergroup relations, which may involve cooperation or competition between groups within a class (Krasuska-Betiuk, 2015). From this perspective, a well-organised class space offers a wide range of opportunities for informal training of social and civic competences. Class also enables us to successfully observe the mechanisms of Goffman's sociology of interaction (Goffman, 2006; Goffman, 2008a, 2008b).

As an educational institution, school pursues the goals of education and upbringing given to it by society. Both formal and informal forms of training of social competences – including civic competences, should take place there (Gindrich, 2015). The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council (2006) indicates the necessity of prioritising the development of key competences in the education process. The development of social competences through school is additionally a statutory obligation. According to the definition contained in the Educational Law, upbringing comprises "supporting a child in the development towards full maturity in the physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and social

spheres" (Article 3 of the *Education Law Act*, Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2017, item 59).

By analysing selected theories, proposed by Habermas, Bandura, and Goffman, concerning the process of shaping social and civic competences, I am going to search for one theory that corresponds to the specificity of the process of socialisation in school space, which will make it possible to distinguish elements characteristic for the course of acquiring strictly civic competences at the same time, point to the factors that determine its effectiveness, and make it possible to involve all students in a class in the process of acquiring civic competences. The task of the socialisation environment is to create opportunities for both natural and organised social training of the individual, influencing the formation of needs and motivating values for interpersonal contacts (understood as entering social situations), as well as developing social and emotional skills that determine the effectiveness of the use of experiences (Martowska, 2012).

The theory in question should meet the following conditions in order to be applicable in the process of developing civic competences in the school space:

1. generality – it needs to exhaust the range of possible social situations requiring the use of civic competences;
2. specificity – it needs to make it possible to distinguish training of civic competences from training of other social competences;
3. universality – it should assume the possibility of including individuals with different levels of internal preparation in the training;
4. purposefulness – it should organise the socialisation process in a purposeful way for both formal and informal training;
5. determination – it should indicate favourable factors, namely internal and external determinants influencing the effectiveness of training;
6. empirical verifiability – it should be possible to measure the effectiveness of the training.

The process of acquiring civic competences. Theoretical basis

While exploring selected theoretical categories, I will use a pre-defined grid of criteria for the analysis of the socialisation process, which will enable me to compare and select the leading theory for planning the development of civic competences in the school space.

I posed five analytical questions, the answers to which will constitute the criteria sought in the analysed theories:

1. What is the subject of this process?

Quoting Pierre Rosanvallon (2011), the democratic order can be interpreted in three aspects: as the space of expression, implication and intervention. Democracy of expression offers space to express common emotions, feelings and judgements. Democracy of implication enables citizens to get together and forms groups in order to work together. Democracy of intervention offers tools for joint action, enabling achieving common goals. These aspects define the required categories of civic competences, covering for example critical analysis of the circumstances at hand, activity and communication competences. Individual competence groups are linked to specific attitudes, such as tolerance, respect for the interaction partner, respect for freedom and human dignity.

2. What are the factors (determinants) of this process?

Social competences, regardless of how their structure is defined, are usually understood as dependent on certain dispositions, which allow us to succeed in interpersonal relationships. Exogenous (external) and endogenous (internal) factors influence the frequency and intensity of social contacts (motivation to engage in social situations) and are individual for each person (Gumienny, 2010). Internal factors comprise personality traits – the need for social approval, pragmatism, being direct, alexithymia, as well as temperament – activity, liveliness, endurance, emotional reactivity. External factors are the environment in humans are brought up and function (Tomorowicz, 2011).

3. What is the mechanism of this process?

Depending on the adopted perspective, the process of developing civic competences may be presented as either continuous or taking place in stages, lifelong or starting upon achieving a specific level of maturity by the individual; finite – based on achieving a specific set of competences by the individual; or infinite – based on continuous improvement through experiencing new situations; intentional – formal and/or controlled and unintentional – natural and spontaneous; dependent or independent of the organisation of the space in which it takes place.

4. What is the relation between the development of civic competences and other areas of development?

Raymond Cattell (1971) introduced the division of general intelligence into two factors: fluid and crystal intelligence (Strelau, 1997). According to this theory,

fluid intelligence is impossible to learn, dependent on a genetic factor and conditioned by physiological processes taking place in the nervous system. It is shaped only up to a certain point of development and is independent of culture or education. In turn, crystal intelligence is a result of interaction of fluid intelligence with personal life experiences of every person, thus, it develops all the time under the influence of many experiences and learning processes. One of the dimensions of crystal intelligence is social intelligence.

5.   What are the criteria used to verify the process of acquiring civic competences?

Regardless of the theoretical approach to the socialisation process, it is always a process causing positive changes in the social behaviour of an individual (Koperek, 2011). The results of the socialisation process can be observed from an objective standpoint – when the society is understood as the subject of the process, as well as subjective – when this concerns an individual. The verification of objective results of socialisation will be thus based on the examination of the effects of norms and models concerning the functioning of the community learned by the individual. Verification of subjective results of the socialisation process is an analysis of the course and effects of this process from the standpoint of the socialised subject, for example competences acquired by an individual, conditioning their behaviour.

Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action[3]

1. What is the subject of this process?

The subject of the socialisation process is the internalisation of roles in communicative action. Habermas assumes that in the process of socialisation individuals acquire a communication competence defined as "the command of the ideal language user over the constitutive universals for dialogue, regardless of the current limitations of the empirical circumstances" (Szahaj, 1990, p. 96). In Habermas' concept, these universals comprise expressions and phrases, which enable directing the interaction towards reaching understanding in the sense of a "cooperative process of interpretation" (Habermas, 1999), which means intersubjective recognition of claims to the validity of a given statement, Leading to a consensus

---

[3] J. Habermas (1999). *Teoria działania komunikacyjnego*, Warsaw: PWN.

based on a common conviction, not imposed by either party. The acquisition of communication competence by members of the society is essential for the revival and continued existence of a democratic public life, in which important matters are debated by citizens (Calhoun, 2002).

2. What are the factors (determinants) of this process?

For a communication activity to end in understanding, a number of conditions needs to be met, depending on both internal factors – rational motivation of each of the participants of the interaction, as well as external ones – the existence of an ideal communication situation. Understanding can only be reached if all participants follow the appropriate procedures in an interaction –

a. integrate their formal concepts of the worlds (subjective, objective and social), thus building a common system that provides a framework for interpretation;

b. intersubjectively recognise the validity of the claims they make as true, fair and sincere;

c. jointly negotiate the definitions of the situation.

The ideal communication situation postulated by Habermas ensures equal opportunities and equal choices for all participants of the communication act; however, it requires a number of conditions to be met first:

a. no one, who could make a significant contribution, can be excluded from participation in the communication act due to valid, but controversial claims;

b. everyone needs to have the same opportunities to express their opinion on a given matter;

c. all participants must speak their mind;

d. the outcome of a debate should be determined by the strength of the arguments, everybody has the right to criticise and

disprove arguments of other participants and formulate one's own.

3. What is the mechanism of this process?

The acquisition of communication competence takes place during the communicative action. The process of socialisation is based on continuous participation in communicative actions and self-improvement, and thus it takes place in stages, it is based on self-learning and is infinite. If any of the claims to validity are not explicitly confirmed or rejected, they become subjects of a debate, relying on

the strength of the arguments presented. Reaching an understanding is possible thanks to the motivation of the participants of the act, who are guided not by an egocentric calculation of their own success, but by the possibility to achieve their own goals, thanks to aligning their actions with those of others on the basis of common definitions of the situation.

Communication acts are regulated by binding social norms and empowered by sanctions. These standards must be respected by at least two entities entering into joint communicative action. The validity of these standards is based on the "intersubjectivity of the understanding of intentions and on the universal nature of obligations" (Habermas, 1977, p. 355), and accepting these norms equips an individual with the discipline of personality structure.

4. What is the relation between the development of civic competences and other areas of development?

Acquiring communication competences is one of the elements of the socialisation process. It is possible thanks to the prior internalisation of social and cultural norms and the development of social competences enabling participation in communicative actions. The meeting of subjects in a communicative action is possible thanks to the existence of their common world: the world of life. The world of life is a system made up of three elements:

– culture – a source of knowledge and its interpretation for the participants of the interaction;
– society – a source of social bonds, ensuring solidarity and enabling belonging to social groups;
– competences of the subject – in particular language competences, which enable participants in interaction to take part in processes leading to understanding (Stasiuk, 2003).

5. What are the criteria used to verify the process of acquiring civic competences?

The author does not provide any verification criteria; other than setting the goal of the process of acquiring civic competences as the ideal of democratic public life. Thus, we may assume that this verification criterion will be included in an objective perspective in this case, and will be examined as the proximity to the achievement of the set goal – the current state of democratisation of public life.

Albert Bandura's theory of social learning[4]

1. What is the subject of this process?

The subject of social learning in Albert Bandura's theory (2007) is the shaping of behaviours of an individual – learning and sustaining pro-social behaviour, combined with a change or disappearance of anti-social behaviour. People learn by drawing conclusions and consequences of their own behaviours, as well as by modelling. Modelling is based on constant social observation, which is how the individual acquires knowledge about the world, the community to which they belong, as well as the binding norms and values. Thanks to modelling, said individual acquires social skills (competences). These skills make it possible to respect social rules, understand social mechanisms and participate in interactions. These include, among others: knowledge of the rules governing interactions, communication skills, understanding what others are saying, ability to adapt to social expectations, exerting influence, etc. The most important functions of modelling include instruction, braking, acceleration, facilitation and emotional stimulation.

2. What are the factors (determinants) of this process?

Human behaviour is jointly determined both by the individual (internal factors), as well as its surroundings (external factors). Bandura also pointed out the phenomenon of reciprocal determinism. According to this phenomenon, the behaviours of an individual are influenced by their environment and they also have an impact on this very environment, determining to some extent the future impact of external factors on their behaviour. "In reality, human psychological functioning is based on a continuous, reciprocal interaction of personal and environmental determinants (Bandura, 2007, p. 29).

The effectiveness of social learning is influenced by three groups of factors:

a) characteristics of the model (observers are better influenced by a highly competent and knowledgeable person. Other key factors include social status, appearance, age, signs of achieving success, being an expert in the modelled field);

b) characteristics of the observer (the lower their self-confidence and self-esteem, the higher the tendency to imitate the behaviour of the successful model. The higher the expectation of self-efficacy, the greater the motivation to undertake and intensify behaviours. Other important factors include concentration and cognitive skills);

---

[4] A. Bandura (2007). *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Warsaw: PWN.

c) the consequences of imitating the model perceived by the observer (the same behaviour may have negative or positive consequences in different social contexts).

3. What is the mechanism of this process?

Modelling is not a passive imitation of the behaviour exhibited by the model, since it requires involvement and creative activity of the observer, who needs to focus on the model's behaviour, remember this behaviour and try it out on one's own. The individual learns patterns of behaviour through observing the reactions of other people and the results of these reactions, using substitute reinforcement while observing others. At the beginning, however, they never attempt to perform the observed actions on their own, instead focusing only on analysing different ways of navigating a given situation. Thanks to abstract modelling – cognitive analysis of numerous behaviours exhibited by different models, an individual can detect important social contingencies. Social contingency is based on interdependence between behaviour and received reinforcement in a given social context. The detected dependencies are translated into the programming of the individual's own behaviour in various situations, as well as carrying out only behaviours expected to enable them to achieve some desired outcomes. Social learning is therefore not mechanical. It is a flexible, cognitive and holistic process. It depends not only on the behaviour of the models, but also on individual motivational and cognitive processes taking place in the mind of the observing individual.

4. What is the relation between the development of civic competences and other areas of development?

Modelling is a personal process. Different people may pay attention to different aspects of behaviour of the same model and translate them into various programming of their own behaviour. This results from individual differences in focus, cognitive skills, personality responding to given reinforcements, experiences, current motivation and other factors. Modelling enables some skills to be acquired more quickly and efficiently, which enhances the ability of an individual to operate in the surrounding environment and to acquire new skills. According to the author of the social learning theory, acting on purpose, anticipating the effects of these actions and modifying behaviours in line with one's image of them is possible thanks to the ability to use verbal and imaginary symbols. Of course, the scope of learning of the individual is directly correlated with the level of psycho-physical skills appropriate to their stage of development and life.

5. **What are the criteria used to verify the process of acquiring civic competences?**

The author does not explicitly provide criteria for verifying the process of acquiring civic competences. Taking into account the mechanism and purpose of modelling – behavioural shaping through observation of consequences, a subjective perspective seems to be appropriate for verification of its efficacy. The evaluation of the efficacy of this process needs to be based on the analysis of specific competences acquired by the individual, conditioning their proper, pro-social behaviour in situations of civic activity.

Erving Goffman's dramaturgical theory[5]

1. What is the subject of this process?

The subject of the competence acquisition process is the individual's behaviour in the public situations occurring in everyday life. According to Goffman (2008), competences do not constitute the content of a given behaviour – the presented impressions, but the way it plays out – the impressions it evokes, or in other words, the way an actor is seen and judged by others. Social interactions include any and all situation, where at least one additional person (audience) is present, apart from the actor themselves. There is no need for direct contact between the participants of social interaction; their presence is enough. Behaviour in a situation of social interaction (a public situation) is not only a conversation with the use of verbal symbols, but any manifestation of body behaviour, gestures, facial expressions, scratching on the nose or refraining from it. A competent behaviour is one that fits in with the conventions adopted by the society and is considered "normal", which means that it does not interfere with the collective sense of security.

2. What are the factors (determinants) of this process?

The basic determinant is the presence of other people, which transforms every human activity into a performance. Goffman rejects macro-social determinism. He considers external factors such as the social system, social role or class to have a much weaker impact on the individual's behaviour than the sense of being observed. Human behaviour is determined on a micro-social level by conventions,

---

[5] E. Goffman (2008a). *Człowiek w teatrze życia codziennego*, Warsaw: Aletheia and E. Goffman (2008b). *Zachowanie w miejscach publicznych*, Warsaw: PWN.

which govern interactions, defining what is "acceptable" and "normal". Conventions organise the order of interaction in a total way, and they govern every manifestation of behaviour of an individual at any time and in any place where at least one other person is present. Goffman also rejects internal determinism. In his observations, he is not at all interested in the inner world of the individual, in what they are experiencing or whether they are even aware of their roles. He claims that "self"[6] hidden under the mask is not what affects the behaviour of the individual. "Self" is created in the act of play, and the individuals shape themselves through interaction.

3. What is the mechanism of this process?

Social functioning of an individual is a natural process of infinite, continuous overlapping of their conduct with the conduct of others. This process is based on a mechanism of shaping oneself (here and now) according to the expectations of the audience – the participants of the interaction. "The proper object of the study of interaction are not the individual and their psychology; rather, it is the syntactic relationship between the acts performed by different persons present in close vicinity to each other" (Goffman, 2006, p. 2). Goffman wrote about the behavioural reaction to the consciousness of being observed by others. The actor's task is to impose their definition of the situation on the audience. The audience rewards them with applause or jeering. Whether an actor adheres strictly to a script imposed by a social system or improvises does not have a strict impact on whether they will be able to "sell themselves" to the audience. Competence, understood as an effective performance, depends on the context of a particular situation.

4. What is the relation between the development of civic competences and other areas of development?

According to Goffman, the competent social behaviour of an individual is not hinged on their cognitive abilities and awareness of their role, but only the way their behaviour is perceived by the audience. Is it considered "normal"? Does it interfere with their sense of security? Conventions are a prerequisite for the coexistence of individuals on the basis of an "ad hoc consent", since they organise the order of interactions and decide public consent to a given behaviour in a given situation. The actor's acting skills evolve as a result of the countless daily public situations that they

---

[6] The original, untranslatable title of the work was: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, 1959.

have to face. Knowledge of conventions also focus on the skill of social calculation, just like the ability to anticipate what behaviour is acceptable and desirable in a given situation. The greater the experience, the greater the ability to act.

5. What are the criteria used to verify the process of acquiring civic competences?

Goffman developed his theory based on his own observations, including a participatory observation of the social life of psychiatric hospital patients made during his residence at the Social and Environmental Research Laboratory of the National Institute of Mental Health in 1955-1956. The theory, which emerged on the basis of these observations assumes that the verification of the efficacy of the process of acquiring social competences (including civic ones) comes in the form of the reaction of the audience to the actor's behaviour – approval or disapproval, or recognising the actor as a member of a community or as a mad person. The perspective of verifying the efficacy of the process is thus both objective and subjective, since it assumes both an analysis of the actor's ability to meet the requirements of the audience and the observation of the behaviour of the audience taking care of their social sense of security.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the theories of development of civic competences

	Habermas	**Bandura**	**Goffman**
Subject	internalisation of the role of a citizen – communication competences	modelling pro-social behaviours – competences as social skills	behaviour in public situations – competence as a skill to evoke the desired effect in the audience
Determinants	internal determinants and external determinants	reciprocal determinism	micro-social determinism – the presence of an audience
Mechanism	participation in communicative actions. Process: staged, infinite, self-learning	committed observation. Process: cognitive, holistic, flexible	shaping oneself according to the expectations of the audience. Process: natural, infinite and continuous
Place in development	preliminary competences (e.g. linguistic) are required	preliminary competences (e.g. generalisation and abstract thinking) are required	no preliminary competences are required
Verification criteria	objective perspective	subjective perspective	objective and subjective perspective

Source: own compilation

The analysed theories do not meet all six of the aforementioned conditions to be met by a theory, which could be applied in the process of developing civic competences in the school space. All the presented theories meet the condition of generality, since they cover a comprehensive range of possible social situations requiring the use of civic competences. The theories proposed by Bandura and Goffman in particular, do not meet the condition of specificity, since they do not particularly distinguish behaviours that require civic competences from other social behaviours. In Goffman's theory, every behaviour in a public situation is governed by exactly the same mechanism and always concerns only the individual. Habermas' theory does not satisfy the necessary condition of universality, since his theory allows only individuals at the appropriate level of communication and cognitive development as well as rational motivation to participate in the civic competence training. On the other hand, Habermas' theory fulfils the condition of purposefulness, as does Bandura's. This condition is not fulfilled by Goffman's theory. Goffman's theory also completely ignores the role of endogenous determinants. Habermas' and Bandura's theories attribute importance to both internal and external determinants of the process of acquiring civic competences. Bandura also points out to the significance of correlations between them.

None of the authors, whose theories were analysed, directly defined criteria for verification allowing us to measure the efficacy of training. It seems that in the case of Goffman's theory, which does not meet the condition of purposefulness, defining such criteria is impossible altogether. Concerning other theories, it would be possible to establish some criteria on the basis of theoretical analysis, as well as derived from school theory. This is a possible area for further research.

Bibliography

Bacia E., Gieniusz A.M., Makowski G., Pazderski F., Stronkowski P., Walczak B. (2015). *Kształtowanie kompetencji społecznych i obywatelskich przez organizacje pozarządowe w Polsce*, Warsaw: Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych.

Bandura A. (2007). *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Warsaw: PWN.

Calhoun C.J. et al. (eds.) (2002). *Contemporary sociological theory*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Cattell, R. B. (1971). *Abilities: their structure, growth and action*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Chomczyńska-Miliszkiewicz M. (2002). *Edukacja seksualna w społeczeństwie współczesnym: konteksty pedagogiczne i psychospołeczne*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS.

Czapów Cz. (1974). "Funkcjonalność instytucji socjalizujących." [in:] A. Podgórecki (ed.), *Socjotechnika. Funkcjonalność i dysfunkcjonalność instytucji*, Warsaw: KiW.

Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws] of 2017, item 59, Act of 14 December 2016. Educational Law. Retrieved from http://www.dziennikustaw.gov.pl, on 2018.05.18.

Forma, P. (2012). *Socjalizacja dziecka z rodziny wielodzietnej. Studium teoretyczno-empiryczne.* Kielce: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jana Kochanowskiego.

Frost A. (2004). "The psychological assessment of emotional intelligence." [in:] J. C. Thomas (ed.), *Comprehensive handbook of psychological assessment,* vol. 4 (p. 203-213). New Jersey: Wiley.

Gindrich E & P. (2015). *Środowisko szkolne a nieprzystosowanie*, http://pedagogikaspecjalna.tripod. com (retrieved on 13.05.2019)

Goffman E. (2006). *Rytuał interakcyjny*, Warsaw: PWN.

Goffman E. (2008a). *Człowiek w teatrze życia codziennego*, Warsaw: Aletheia.

Goffman E. (2008b). *Zachowanie w miejscach publicznych*, Warsaw: PWN.

Gumienny B. (2010). *Kompetencje społeczne niepełnosprawnych wychowanków domów dziecka*, Rzeszów: Wyd. URz.

Habermas J. (1977). "Technika i nauka jako 'ideologia'." [in:] J. Szacki (ed.), *Czy kryzys socjologii?* (p. 342 – 360). Warsaw: Czytelnik.

Habermas J. (1999). *Teoria działania komunikacyjnego,* Warsaw: PWN.

Szahaj A. (1990). *Krytyka, Emancypacja, Dialog. Jürgen Habermas w poszukiwaniu nowego paradygmatu teorii krytycznej*, Poznań: Universitas.

Izdebska, J. (2015). "Wielowymiarowość przestrzeni życia współczesnego dziecka." *Zagadnienia Społeczne,* 2015 (4), p. 11-15.

Knopp, K. (2010). *Inteligencja emocjonalna i możliwości jej rozwijania u dzieci i młodzieży,* Warsaw: Wyd. UKSW.

Koperek A. (2011). "Socjalizacja jako społeczno-wychowawczy proces integracji jednostki ze społeczeństwem," *Pedagogika Katolicka* no. 1/2011, p. 261-265.

Krasuska-Betiuk M. (2015). "Interakcje w klasie szkolnej z perspektywy społecznych reprezentacji i oczekiwań interpersonalnych," *Studia z teorii wychowania*, vol. 6: 2015 (12), p. 49-77.

Łobocki M. (1974), *Wychowanie w klasie szkolnej. Z zagadnień dydaktyki grupowej*, Warsaw: WSiP.

Martowska K. (2012). *Psychologiczne uwarunkowania kompetencji społecznych.* Retrieved from: http://www.liberilibri.pl. on 2018.05.18.

Matczak A. (2001). *Kwestionariusz Kompetencji Społecznych (KKS). Podręcznik,* Warsaw: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych Polskiego Towarzystwa Psychologicznego,

Matyjas B. (2017). "Rodzina –szkoła – środowisko lokalne jako synergiczna przestrzeń socjalizacji," *Horyzonty wychowania,* p. 41-54. Retrieved from: https://horyzonty.ignatianum.edu.pl/ on 2018.05.18. DOI: 10.17399/HW.2017.163803

Mika S. (1986). *Psychologia społeczna*, Warsaw: PWN.

Modrzewski, J., Śmiałek, M.I. & Wojnowski, K. (eds.). (2008). *Relacje podmiotów (w) lokalnej przestrzeni edukacyjnej (inspiracje…),* Poznań: Wyd. UA.

Plecka D., Turska-Kawa A., Wojtasik W. (2013). Obywatelskie kompetencje polityczne, *Kultura i Edukacja*, 2013; 3 (96), p. 73-94.

Rosanvallon P. (2011). *Kontrdemokracja. Polityka w dobie nieufności*, Wrocław: WN DSW.

Spitzberg R. H., Cupach W. R. (1989). *Handbook of interpersonal competence research*, New York: Springer.

Stasiuk K. (2003). *Krytyka kultury jako krytyka komunikacji.* Wrocław: Wyd. UWr.

Strelau J. (1997). *Inteligencja człowieka,* Warsaw: Żak.

Tomorowicz A. (2011). "Struktura kompetencji społecznych w ujęciu interakcyjnym," *Psychiatria*, 2011; 8 (3), p. 91-96.

White, R. W. (1959). "Motivation reconsidered: The concept of competence." *Psychological Review*, 1959; 66 (5), p. 297-333.

Zaborowski Z. (1964). *Stosunki społeczne w klasie szkolnej*, Warsaw: PWN.

Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 *on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC),* OJ L 394/10. Retrieved from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu on 2018.05.18.

Syma Marta Al Azab-Malinowska
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

Family with an adolescent in the face of depression – possible effects in systemic family therapy

KEYWORDS

teenage depression, family, systems theory, adolescence, systemic family therapy

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to describe the phenomenon of teenage depression in the context of the impact of depression on the functioning of the family system. The first part of the paper shows the understanding of the concept of the family on the basis of the system theory, paying special attention to the family life cycle and the function of symptoms in the family system. The second part of the article presents the etiology, symptoms and specificity of teenage depression. The developmental tasks characteristic for the age of adolescence were also reconstructed. The last part of the article is devoted to the ways in which depression can be understood from a systemic and family therapy perspective The possible ways and directions of working with a teenager and his parents are also indicated.

Introduction

The family is changing together with the changing world – it is influenced by socio-cultural changes and historical events. Over the centuries, the problems faced by families have also changed, and families learnt how to respond to them in a developmental way. One of the areas that can and often generates crises in the family is the area of health and disease, especially in the case of the common, so-called, civilization diseases. The list of these diseases includes not only coronary heart disease

and cancer, but also mental disorders, including depression. The Polish version of Google finds over 9 million results in response to the search of the word "depression". After entering the phrase "Do I suffer from", the first and fourth suggested answer is "Do I suffer from depression" and "Do I suffer from depression test". The word "depression" has entered the vocabulary used by Poles also thanks to subsequent social campaigns (for example, "Faces of depression", "Forum against depression", "Stop depression") or the establishment of 23 February as the National Day for Combating Depression by the Ministry of Health. This problem, which, according to estimates, affects several percent of the world's population (including about 1.5 million Poles), is increasingly discussed. However, adolescent depression has become a widely discussed issue relatively recently, and this coincides with the crisis in mental health care and changes in education. On the publishing market there are more and more books for parents of adolescents suffering from depression and books addressed to teenagers themselves. The issue is present in social media and is being taken up by public persons (vloggers and influencers, who are popular among young people, speak about teenager depression more and more often).

In this article I would like to present the phenomenon of teenage depression, especially in the context of the impact of depression on the functioning of the entire family system. The aim of this paper is to present depression from the systemic perspective and systemic family therapy. I also signal possible ways and directions of working with a teenager and his/her parents, as well as factors that may influence the emergence of depression. Therefore, in the first part of the paper, I refer to the definition of the family on the basis of the system theory and discuss the family life cycle which includes the tasks and processes characteristic for the development phase of a "family with an adolescent" that appear in the dynamics of the system. An important aspect is also the way in which we can understand the symptoms of depression – due to their importance and functions in the system.

Definition of the family on the basis of the general systems theory

The family can be defined on the basis of various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, pedagogy and law. With the development of the general systems theory, as a proposal for metatheory, systemic thinking has also begun to be used to understand the family. The general theory of systems was developed on the basis of constructivist philosophy. Constructivism in its basic assumption states that "no organism is capable of reflecting reality, but merely constructs an image of the world, a 'model

that fits'" (Górniak, Józefik, 2003: 19). On the other hand, social constructivism assumes "that social reality is constructed and created primarily by discourse and joint actions. Cognition and knowledge arise within the framework of a specific culture, they are a product of that culture and its language" (Górniak, Józefik, 2003: 20). The application of the assumptions of the systems theory to the understanding of families was possible thanks to the work of G. Bateson. This anthropologist cooperated with researchers associated with e.g. the Institute in Palo Alto. The system as a concept derived from biology (works of Maturan and Varel) and cybernetics (works of L. von Bertalanffy) is understood as a set of elements that create something different than a simple sum of components. The system has a set of specific features, and its way of functioning is specific – it operates on the basis of feedback mechanisms, and in consequence, in system thinking, the principle of circular causality is adopted (moving away from traditional linear thinking). The systems are characterized by operational closeness, the existence of semipermeable borders which, while distinguishing the system from the background, allow it to exchange information with the environment, homeostasis, i.e. to strive for a balance that ensures stability and protects the system from disintegration. According to Maturan, systems are always autopoietic, that is, self-organizing and self-renewing. "Autonomy, self-regulation of the systems results in the fact that they are not subject to planned control from the outside, but they can react to disturbances and consequently change their state. This means that living organisms are subject to the laws that result from their structure and autopoietic organization" (Górniak, Józefik, 2003: 24).

From the perspective of the systemic theory, we can define a family as "a system with a specific structure, functioning patterns, relationship patterns, which, in order to last, must change. [...] The family is a psychosocial system, composed of individuals with biological conditions, which means that in describing it we must take into account all three levels: biological, individual and social" (Górniak, Józefik, 2003: 25). The family system is created by subsystems, i.e. individual family members who interact with each other and at the same time have their own unique point of view and individual way of experiencing the surrounding reality (including family reality). Thus, each person in the family influences the other, the state of one family member affects the state of other family members, but the ways of interpreting or understanding the situation differ between them. "Each structure is understood as a manifestation of the process it contains (e.g. the structure of a family in a systemic approach is a set of functional requirements addressed to its individual members)" (Janicka, Liberska, 2014: 8%). Following Ludewig, we can assume that "all the behaviours that happen between people may be treated as feedback loops" (Ludewig, 1995: 14). Consequently, any behaviour of the people

involved in interaction "influences the behaviour of the partner in interaction and is at the same time modified by the reactions of the partner. A linear model, in which behaviour is treated as a result of something, becomes useless" (de Barbaro 1999: 14).

To sum up: the system consists of a set of elements and mutual relations between them, which are dynamic and linked, the system constitutes a whole, is capable of functioning and a certain change. We always treat the system as a whole, and "the constituent objects and their attributes can only be understood from the point of view of their functioning in the system; the boundaries of the system are determined by its identity in time and space. Systems are open (flexible and partially permeable borders allow for exchange with the environment) and closed" (Janicka, Liberska, 2014: 7%). From this perspective, we will think of family members as inextricably linked. Neither people nor their problems (or solutions to these problems) exist in a vacuum. "They are all intertwined in broader systems of interaction, the most basic of which is the family. The family is the primary and, except in rare cases, the most powerful system to which people belong" (McGoldrick, Gerson, Shellenberger, 2007: 24-25). The family is never suspended in a vacuum – it functions in a specific social, economic and political context. It is surrounded by institutions, organisations and other families with whom it can interact. For a fuller understanding of the functioning of the family, but also of the individual within the family, it is necessary to consider all stressors affecting the family. These stressors may be variable in time and concern the reality both within the family and outside the family, i.e. within the community. Stressors include: historical events, the economic and political situation, institutions such as school, but also events such as illness or job loss (cf. McGoldrick, Gerson, Shellenberger, 2007: 26-29).

Symptoms and their functions in systemic family therapy

The adoption of systemic assumptions in the field of science about family has huge consequences in terms of understanding symptoms and disorders. First of all, this approach abandons the understanding of psychopathology exclusively as the intrapsychic reality of a human being, and from the individual level one needs to move to the system level – symptoms can be understood on the basis of their functions in the dynamics of the family system, which is usually related to maintaining balance within the system. "The basic assumption here is that the problems and symptoms reflect the adaptation of the system to its overall, current context at

a given moment" (McGoldrick, Gerson, Shellenberger, 2007: 25). Actually, from the beginning of applying system thinking when working with the family, some of the concepts from the general theory of systems were used "to explain problem behaviours and psychopathological symptoms. The basic assumption of family therapy was that pathology, problems of one of the family members cannot be explained in terms of its disturbed intrapsychic processes, because they are an expression of dysfunctionality of the whole system. Symptoms could be used to maintain the *status quo* in the family or as a signal to change it. […] By treating the family as a culture that produces its own stories and gives them meaning, it focuses rather on the way in which family members and the patients themselves define and give meaning to problems" (Górniak, Józefik, 2003: 26). It is recognised that all members who are more or less involved in the problem create a new system – the so-called problem system. Frequently, it is the problem-oriented system that allows the family to concentrate around the problem and unite in the fight against it. Thanks to this, the family system, even temporarily, is protected against disintegration. "It is therefore not surprising that families with children, especially during the period of adolescence, are the group to which family therapy is mainly addressed. It results from the assumptions of systemic thinking, i.e. the recognition that the behaviour of a given person is connected with the patterns of family relations, patterns of bonds and that – further on, through changes in the patterns of family relations and the meanings given to them – it is possible to cause a change in a given family member" (Józefik, 2014: 36).

Family life cycle and characteristic developmental tasks

Researchers observing the fate of subsequent families noticed that certain stages of family life are repetitive and of normative character – one stage determines and enables the occurrence of the next one. This phenomenon is called the family life cycle. The eight-phase model proposed by Duvall is considered classical. The eight consecutive phases form a coherent life story of a nuclear family, the beginning of which is the moment when two adults decide to bond and the end is marked by the death of both spouses. Starting from the first phase, i.e. marriage (without children), through the second phase, a family bringing up small children, then the following phases occur: third – a family with a child at preschool age, fourth – a family with a child at school age, fifth – a family with adolescents, sixth – a family with children leaving home (i.e. the so-called empty nest stage) and finally the eighth, last phase of the cycle: aging parents (until the death of both parents) (cf.

Namysłowska, 1997: 19, de Barbaro, 1999). Events of a biological nature (e.g. age of family members) and psychological nature (e.g. building a sense of autonomy) coincide with events of a formal nature (e.g. marriage).

We can see that the course of a nuclear family's life is quite similar – each of these phases presents its own challenges, but also a certain risk whether the system will survive. "It has been found that the family as a system develops and therefore changes with a simultaneous tendency to maintain balance. This quest for homeostasis helps the family to protect the system, to maintain its own identity. It has been described that the transition to each successive phase in the family life cycle can take place only when all the tasks of the previous phase have been completed. Otherwise, individual members of the family system may experience disorderly symptoms" (de Barbara, 1994: 19). Thus, the transition from one phase to another can be interpreted by the family (or the individual) as a crisis. If family members fail to find new, useful ways of coping, the symptoms (problems) and even the break-up of the system may occur. The family system striving for balance (homeostasis) will protect itself against disintegration. "The system is characterised primarily by a tendency to survive" (de Barbaro, 1994: 15). The concept of homeostasis is essential to understand the sustainability of the system. Satir sees the need to create the concept of family homeostasis in relation to the fact that "the family behaves as if it were an individual. [...] According to the concept of family homeostasis, the family acts in such a way as to achieve a balance in mutual relations. Family members help to maintain this balance in an open and hidden way. Repetitive, cyclical, predictable communication patterns show this balance. When family homeostasis is at risk, family members put a lot of effort in order to maintain it" (Satir, 2000: 17). Referring to the notion of family life cycle, according to which successive stages of family development are associated with a specific developmental crisis, the family must introduce changes in order to adapt to the changing circumstances. "The functionality of the family is assessed on the basis how family members cope with changes resulting both from the family's life cycle, i.e. its natural development processes, as well as from unforeseen random events (Górniak, Józefik, 2003: 25).

The key feature is the characteristic of the system, which assumes that any change in a certain part of the system (change of its element) affects the whole system (the other elements and the relations between them). The functioning of the system consists of two principles: equipotentiality and equifinality. The first means that the same causes can have different effects, the second means that even with different causes we can have the same effect (cf. de Barbara 1999: 11). The concepts of equipotentiality and equifinality are crucial in the interpretation of family dis-

orders. The inability to identify a single cause makes it possible to relieve family members of a sense of guilt or taking on total responsibility – which, in the context of a family with a teenage child, is often one of the most important interventions that allows to start a therapeutic effect.

A time of dynamic changes, i.e. a family with an adolescent

From the point of view of this article, the fifth phase, i.e. a family with an adolescent child/children, is the most interesting. The most important tasks of this phase are the separation of a teenage child, where a successful separation is one that takes place without a sense of guilt. "This means that young people moving away from their families should be reassured that their parents will 'cope' without them. The example of this phase of the family life cycle clearly shows how all components of the system (subsystems) participate in what happens to the system as a whole. Parents should withdraw from the position of authority, and the borders around their subsystem should become much more flexible (open to the flow of information) than in families with younger children" (Namysłowska 1997: 22). The basic developmental task a teenager needs to fulfil is quite paradoxical: the quest for autonomy and separation is accompanied by the need to maintain a bond with the parents. In this phase, we observe a certain relaxation of boundaries within the family, which allows the teenager to move away and then to move towards to the family. This is the moment when young people gain the right to be independent and to experiment with their roles outside the family. "At the same time, the whole family system should become open to new values and ideas brought to it by young people, their friends, music" (Namysłowska 1997: 22). Especially the period of early adolescence may be a time of intense conflicts with parents, and the amount of time spent with them decreases. "However, some researchers stress that the process of creating identity, although often difficult and turbulent, does not necessarily mean that the relations between teenagers and their parents will drastically deteriorate" (Trempała, 2011: 277). If there are emotional bonds in the family, which allow for this relaxation (free moving away and getting closer), then this period does not necessarily need to be turbulent". According to Erikson, the solution to the growing conflicts between adolescents and adults is to introduce the principle of 'delegating authority'. It consists in a gradual increase of the participation of young people in their subjective decisions, while maintaining the right of the guardians to control those areas of life in which life experience is crucial" (Trempała, 2011: 278).

A family with a teenager will go through a lot of changes. These changes affect not only the teenager him/herself, but also his/her siblings and parents. It is the parents who bear responsibility for and how this developmental crisis can be resolved. As always, the whole system is involved in events directly related to one family member. A strong desire to belong to the family stands in the way of achieving autonomy and independence – that is why it is important to help maintain ties with the family and develop new ways of their implementation. Literature emphasizes how important it is for a teenager to see that his/her parents also carry out tasks related to this phase of the family life cycle. These include preparation for the abandoned nest phase, i.e. parents' turning towards each other again – strengthening or rebuilding themselves as spouses, but also broadening their interests, participating in social life. Thanks to this "they show their daughter or son that they will be happy together when they are alone. On the other hand, parental misunderstandings, emotional divorce or a significant dysfunction or illness of one of the parents cause a dysfunction of the whole system, which may slow down or even prevent the process of gaining independence [...] because this phase carries a high risk of developing symptoms in one of the family members, most often the growing child. Their function will be to save the system from undertaking tasks that are too difficult at a given moment" (Namysłowska 1997: 22).

The development of a teenager

The adolescence period is above all a moment of many, often turbulent, changes both in the body and in the functioning of teenagers (mental and social functioning). A young person faced with the so-called developmental tasks, to some extent has to deal with them on his/her own. These tasks include the process of identity shaping – finding an answer to the question "who am I" and "what am I", moreover, "a confrontation of the previous image of oneself with reality [...], the acceptance of the changing appearance" (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016). The sexuality of teenagers is also developing, it is a moment of experimentation – of defining one's identity and sexual orientation. Changes in self-image are accompanied by a time when the teenager makes certain life choices and decides about his/her future – seeks a goal in life, develops passions and interests. There are also significant changes in the social context – there are new roles and the creation of closer, more lasting emotional relationships. The importance of the peer group and the willingness to belong to it also increases. Separation from parents is also crucial, as it increases the sense of autonomy, which gives more freedom, but also clashes with

the sense of responsibility for oneself and one's own decisions, actions. This moment is important, but also difficult for the whole family system, as was mentioned earlier. As the authors emphasize, emotional separation from parents may involve a sense of fear and guilt towards them (cf. Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016). The teenager must find his/her own way to cope with the challenges of this period. "The 'burden' of developmental tasks combined with hormonal changes occurring in the body during adolescence often results in: reduced or changeable mood, irritation, anxiety, low self-esteem, concentration on one's appearance, sometimes difficult behaviours (breaking social norms, auto-aggressive behaviours) – the so-called adolescent depression"[1] (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016).

Adolescent depression

In the common sense, depression is associated with sadness, lack of willingness to act. Often, people do not treat depression as a disorder or illness, but rather as "having a worse day" or "being lazy". Therefore, there are many unfavourable myths about depression and people affected do not always seek help. "Depression is a condition characterized by long-lasting reduced mood and a number of other psychological and somatic symptoms. Depression, understood as a disease, belongs to the group of mood disorders. It can be chronic, with a constant intensity of symptoms, or it can take the form of recurrent episodes of mild, moderate or severe intensity, separated by periods of well-being. Depressive symptoms often accompany other mental disorders – e.g. anxiety disorders (in which case depressive-anxiety disorders are diagnosed) or are a reaction to unpleasant, traumatic events (adaptive disorders with the so-called depressive reaction)" (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016). Although depression is much more common, or diagnosed, in adults (currently we are talking about 350 million people worldwide and 1.5 million Poles who struggle with depression), it also affects children and young people. "Depression is diagnosed in 2% of children (it affects girls and boys equally often) and even 8% of teenagers (girls more often). It is estimated that 20% of teenagers may develop depressive disorders understood in a broad sense, and some sources report that depressive symptoms are found in nearly one in three teenagers" (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016).

---

[1] Adolescent depression is: "a particular form of depression (some sources even say it is a normal stage of development). Although mental disorder classifications do not describe it as a separate disease, it is often used to refer to emotional and behavioural disorders observed in teenagers" (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016).

In the case of adolescent depression, it is more likely that the cause of the disorder is multifactorial. There are three main groups of factors that can and often co-exist: biological, psychogenic and environmental. The first group includes genetic determinants – children from families with cases of depression have a greater chance of developing the disease, but also people with abnormal brain neurotransmitter activity or hormonal disorder. The second group includes, among others things, individual psychological construction, i.e. low self-esteem, lack of security, tendency to blame oneself, and moreover: "depressive thinking patterns (a tendency to automatically interpret facts and events to one's disadvantage), inability to cope with stressful situations, poor social skills" (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016). Finally, the third group of factors are the so-called "triggers", which may include: a difficult family situation (e.g. parents' divorce, experience of domestic violence), problems at school – learning problems and rejection by a peer group, as well as other difficult or traumatic experiences (e.g. sexual abuse). "Often symptoms of depressive disorders are revealed as a result of environmental and external factors, e.g. family conflict or school failure" (Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016).

In order to diagnose depression, symptoms typical of depression must persist daily for at least two weeks. The symptoms of adolescent depression include: sadness, crying, but also, irritability, quarrelsomeness, unusual in the case of adults. Other symptoms may include withdrawal from social contacts, suicidal thoughts, auto-aggressive behaviour, reduced self-esteem, feeling discouraged or worthless, blaming oneself, the so-called resignation thoughts, depressive thinking. Teenagers often avoid activities that previously gave them joy, do not take up activities typical for them – this may be accompanied by a decrease or loss of a sense of joy, apathy. Depression is often accompanied by fear (unspecified, of constant intensity), a feeling of anxiety and inner tension appears. (cf. Miernik-Jaeschke, Namysłowska, 2016). "The authors […] describe children's depression by indicating the presence of typical symptoms observed in adult depression (sadness, anhedonia, decreased self-esteem, somatic symptoms). They also indicate the presence of symptoms, which are treated as typical for depression in children and/or adolescents. These symptoms include: withdrawal from social contacts, anxiety, aggressiveness, negativity, behavioural disorders, school absenteeism" (Role, 2001: 14). "Teenage depression" may be dominated by: "Anxiety, resignation, self-aggression, mood instability. Psychosocial factors play an important role in the dynamics of depression. Among them, the situation of families is very important. General social factors are also significant, as indicated above" (Rola, 2001: 17-18).

The fact that depression is a syndromic disorder also makes it difficult to notice it. "This means that in its clinical picture there may be other, additional, individual symptoms, such as behavioural disorders, difficulties in school, somatic symptoms" (Role, 2001: 5). These symptoms are often treated as symptoms of the so-called "period of rebellion" or an ordinary reluctance of a child to learn. "The presence of these and other symptoms in its clinical picture has a fundamental influence on the cognitive, emotional and social functioning of children with diagnosed depression" (Role, 2001: 5). School failure exposes children to even greater stress and anxiety and may increase their fear of school or discourage them from learning (there may be a thought that it is not worth trying if you do not see the results). There are many typologies of depression (see Role, 2001), and these considerations go far beyond the size of this work. Nevertheless, it is worth quoting the classification by McConville, Boag and Purohit (after Role, 2001), in which the authors distinguish three types of depressive disorders, while stressing that they are "directly related to the level of development achieved by the child" (Role, 2001: 15). These include: "The affective type, which according to the authors is typical for younger children, aged 6-8. The axis symptoms include: sadness, a sense of helplessness, a sense of hopelessness; the cognitive type – where the main symptom of depression is reduced self-esteem and frequently occurring suicidal thoughts. This type of depression, according to the authors, has been observed in children over the age of 8; and depression accompanied by a feeling of guilt, which concerns only children over the age of 11" (Role, 2001: 14). Another classification can be found in Kępiński, who distinguishes four basic clinical forms of adolescent depression, i.e. the apathetic-abulic form, rebellious form, resigned form, and labile form (cf. Rola, 2001: 16). On the other hand, Bomba distinguished four psychopathological syndromes of depression in adolescents: "Pure depression, which is typical of decreased mood, weakening psychomotor drive, undefined fear of the future; depression with resignation, where the symptoms of pure depression are accompanied by: failure in learning, a feeling of a lack of sense of life, suicidal thoughts, tendencies and attempts; depression with anxiety is expressed by mood changes and self-destructive behavioural disorders occurring against the background of pure depression; hypochondriac depression – includes symptoms of pure depression and somatic manifestations of anxiety and hypochondriac concentration on the body" (Role, 2001: 17). According to Bomba, depression in youth may occur as a consequence of difficulties in implementing the developmental tasks envisaged for this period.

Teenage depression – the systemic perspective

The disease undoubtedly makes it difficult, and often impossible, to carry out development tasks. This also applies to depression which affects teenagers. In the course of this disorder, people have difficulties in fulfilling compulsory schooling, and their learning outcomes clearly deteriorate. Depression has a negative impact on their relationships with peers. The adolescence period should be a moment when the teenager performs successive roles related to life within a peer group, while at the same time separating from the family, which is effectively prevented by depression. It also has a significant impact on family relationships. In this context, we can notice a kind of regression – a teenage child is usually independent in many areas, parents no longer have to watch him or her or control him or her in the context of clothing, hygiene, sleep or school. Also the relationship between parents and the child changes – it is a time when we move from a diagonal, hierarchical relationship to a partnership relationship that will soon be beneficial for the adult child of the parents. Depression interferes with this process. In the course of depression there is a disturbance of the daily rhythm, difficulties with learning – it is the parents who have to take responsibility for the basic functioning of the child and help him/her. They must increase control. As shown earlier, the occurrence of problems, especially in the case of children, can cause a great sense of guilt, affecting both the parents and the patients themselves. Unfortunately, there exist many harmful stereotypes concerning depression, and people affected often hear that they should take care of themselves, try harder or motivate themselves. Such a conviction also functions "in the minds" of people with depression, which intensifies their feeling of guilt. That is why it is so important to psycho-educate the whole family about depression and to show that it is a disease, and not someone's bad will or intentional action. The metaphor of a cold or a broken leg is very useful at this point, as it allows to illustrate and separate the problem from the person affected by it.

From the point of view of the system theory (or in broader terms, in accordance with the assumptions of constructivism), we may say that depression is a kind of label, a name, and not a real existence. However, such a label can be very useful, especially at the beginning of providing help. First of all, it brings a sense of relief and removes responsibility. It also makes us realize that the teenager "did not invent" his or her symptoms, and his or her experiences have already been described (and considered as real). It can reduce the overwhelming sense of loneliness in the face of problems. The word disease also takes away the feeling of guilt – after all we say that a disease does not choose its victim – which allows to take away the bur-

den of responsibility from the patient. Of course, there is a certain risk in this kind of thinking. It may cause a feeling of lack of influence and effectively discourage people from taking any actions that could help or bring relief. Restoring the sense of empowerment will be another important therapeutic effect, and the teenager's belief in his/her abilities and their influence on their own life should be strengthened. For this purpose, the technique of externalisation is also used, i.e. an intervention which, at the linguistic level, makes it possible to separate the problem (symptom) from the person himself. This helps to realize that a person suffering from depression is not just the disease, and the disorder has not dominated his or her life – teenagers and their families often say that their life begins to revolve around the disease – by concentrating on the problem they stop functioning outside it, or they get the impression that their whole life is reduced to the disease.

An important issue in working with a family with an adolescent is the issue of the adolescent growing up and becoming independent. "Working to strengthen the processes of separation/individuality can also be a challenge for those parents who fear their child's attempts to become independent and their willingness to make their own decisions" (Józefik, 2014:40). Depressive symptoms can have a protective function – by preventing the separation process, they protect parents from experiencing anxiety. Therefore, it would be important to strengthen the parents so that they are ready to accept the child's independence.

Adolescent depression is also seen as a threat due to learning and schooling difficulties. School absenteeism increases the backlog and increase learning difficulties. "This example illustrates a more general issue, which is often the case in the therapy for families with teenagers, namely time pressure. The mental and emotional problems of adolescents need to be solved quickly enough not to hinder them from carrying out their developmental tasks. When this does not happen, we observe a snowball effect" (Josephine, 2014: 42). Time pressure is felt primarily by parents who watch their child "suffering from depression", while the world does not slow down even for a moment. It is worth sensitizing parents to their own hierarchy of values – is school success more important than mental health? In addition, it is important to talk about the temporal nature of the illness and the possibility of building a vision for the future.

Depression, like other children's and adolescents' disorders, can also have a stabilising effect on a parental relationship at risk of disintegration. The emergence of problems requires parents to seek help and focus on their child. This is another argument in favour of strengthening parents in their role, but it also shows how important it is to relieve the teenager from the sense of responsibility for parents and family – of course, a large part of these processes are subconscious and

take place on a circular basis. Therefore, it is important to avoid looking for those guilty, or rather to see "the complex context of family life and other co-existing risk factors" (Josephine, 2014: 36). In this sense, it is important to involve not only the young people affected by depression, but also the parents (the family system) in the process of treatment and recovery from depression.

Conclusion

The way out of depression is not easy both for the teenager and his/her family. It requires a lot of sacrifice, patience and perseverance. The first and most important step is to notice the problem and seek help. As I stressed above, the key issue in the context of depression seems to be psycho-education – showing the family that depression is a disease, secondly, that there are a number of activities that can help the child, and that the supporting presence of parents is very important. Often the teenager does not actively seek contact with the parents by him/herself and, especially at the beginning, does not declare that he or she needs the support or the presence of parents. The responsibility for actively seeking contact with the child and organising time spent together lies with the adults. One of the paradoxes of depression may be the fact that at the end of the road the family underwent from diagnosis to cure, there may be positive changes in family relationships. In a family that has experienced adolescent depression, the ties are often closer, more authentic than the initial ones. Such a family experiences more understanding, warmth and openness.

Bibliography

Amroziak Konrad, Kołakowski Artur, Siwek Klaudia, *Nastolatek a depresja. Praktyczny poradnik dla rodziców i młodzieży*, GWP, Sopot 2018.

de Barbaro Bogdan (red), *Wprowadzenie do systemowego rozumienia rodziny*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Krakow 1999.

Górniak Lech, Józefik Barbara (ed.), *Ewolucja myślenia systemowego w terapii rodzin. OD metafory cybernetycznej do dialogu i narracji*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Krakow 2003.

Harwas-Napierała Barbara i Trempała Janusz (ed.) *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. Rozwój funkcji psychicznych*, Vol. II, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2002.

Janicka Iwona, Liberska Hanna, *Psychologia rodziny*, PWN Warsaw 2014.

Józefik Barbara, *Terapia rodzin nastolatków — dylematy, kontrowersje*, [in:] Psychoterapia 3 (170) 2014.

Ludewig Kurt, *Terapia systemowa. Podstawy teoretyczne i praktyka*, transl. by M. Ubertowska, GWP, Gdańsk 1995.

McGoldrick, Monica; Gerson, Randy; Shellenberger, Sylvia, *Genogramy. Rozpoznanie i interwencja*, transl. by Hartman Monika, Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka, Warsaw 2007.

Miernik-Jaeschke Magdalena, Namysłowska Irena, *Zaburzenia depresyjne u dzieci i młodzieży*, Medycyna Praktyczna 2016 [accessed online 20.02.2019] https://www.mp.pl/pacjent/pediatria/choroby/psychiatria/81302,zaburzenia-depresyjne-u-dzieci-i-mlodziezy

1Namysłowska Irena, *Terapia rodzin*, PWN, Warsaw 1997.

Parkinson Monika, Reynolds Shirley, *Depresja u nastolatka. Poradnik dla rodziców*, transl. by Grażyna Chami, Wydawnictwo Rebis, Poznań 2018.

Rola Jarosław, *Depresja u dzieci*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warsaw 2001.

Satir Virginia, *Terapia rodzin. Teoria i praktyka*, transl. by Olena Waśkiewicz, GWP, Gdańsk 2000.

Trempała Janusz (ed.) *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka. Podręcznik akademicki*, PWN, Warsaw 2011.

Kurt Ludewig

Systemic therapy – A practical implementation of systemic thinking

ABSTRACT

A summary presentation of the historic development of systemic therapy as the follow-up to family therapies, with the usage of new metatheoretical thinking from the constructivist point of view is followed by a description of the material theoretical conditions of this psychotherapeutic approach, with particular consideration for the theories of cognition and autopoiesis by Chilean biologist Humberto Maturana as well as the sociological system theory according to German sociologist Niklas Luhmann. This is followed by an understanding of interaction systems with respect to the theory of therapy, as developed by the author – the *member concept*, as well as a system-theoretical adequate conceptualisation of psychical systems. The work ends with a short presentation of the implementation of the described theoretical concepts in systemic therapy practice.

1. The origins

A significant number of psychotherapist found in the 1970s much pleasure to strongly introduce the social contexts of their clients in their therapies. The work of the second Palo Alto Working Group headed by Paul Watzlawick (Watzlawick et al. 1967) in particular, concerning the relations between communication theory and psychotherapy reverberated broadly. At that time, I was a student of psychology at the university of Hamburg, and can still remember very well, how a photocopied edition of the German translation of this book was available everywhere as a »pirate copye«. It was talked about and discussed. So-called Watzlawick's Axioms, like "One cannot

not communicate", were the talk of all students of social sciences such as psychology, sociology and paedagogy. At that time – during the 1960 student revolutions – specifically these sciences were at the centre of fundamental transformations. Hamburg saw institute appointments soon after they began in Berlin, the degradation of the professors and strong struggles towards democratisation and liberalisation of studies as well as of university structures. Specifically in Hamburg, a city traditionally socio-democratic, politics were ready and open to changes. In this historic context a text took centre stage that moved communication in itself into the spotlight, calling for a transformation of thinking that focused on the individual within applied psychology, and found fertile ground. At that time, one learned at very much positivistically arranged psychological institutes exclusively behavioural therapy and, at best, client-centred psychotherapy. The approaches of depth psychology and psychoanalysis that were valid until that time were considered to be pre-scientific and obsolete. Still, these two approaches, considered to be scientifically valid, were neither attractive nor convincing for some of us, and moreover they seemed to strongly limited to individual needs. The new approaches, founded on communication, assumed in turn a change in perspective towards social issues and relations. Entirely in line with our expectations, the expansion of the individual to their social contexts set a real revolution in psychotherapy in motion.

In the 1970s, psychotherapy experienced rapid growth of differentiation. Primarily within the humanist psychotherapies that formed as a result of World War II, many new approaches were established, among them family therapies. In the beginning they were mostly developed by psychoanalysts. These people reached the limits of their methods in particular when therapeutically dealing with psychotic and delinquent youths, and they searched for new ways of access. The most important founders of approaches that aimed at including family members of young patients were, among others, beside the employees of the first Palo Alto group headed by Gregory Bateson (e. g. Bateson et al. 1956, Bateson et al. 1969, Bateson 1972), the groups headed by Lyman Wynne and Margaret Singer in Rochester (e. g. Wynne & Singer 1965), Salvador Minuchin in Philadelphia (e. g. Minuchin 1974) and Harold Goolishian in Galveston, Texas (conf. MacGregor et al. 1964).

2. Psychotherap – Revolutions

2.1. Family therapies – the first revolution

Until halfway through the 20th century, psychotherapy was theoretically founded for the most part by way of aid from physics and medicine. It was only in the 1950s

that proper psychosocial models came to be. The origin of pathological or divergent processes was sought rather in the interpersonal sphere than in the somatic and/ or mental one. The therapist gradually gave up their distanced, analytical attitude and became an actively involved party. In this regard, the observing look turned from the individual to the social network. Family therapy was born; within psychotherapy, that emerged, what Switzerland's Gottlieb Guntern (1980) referred to a bit later as the Copernican Revolution in psychotherapy, namely the move from the psychoanalytical to the systemic paradigm.

First attempts to include family members in children's therapy were supposedly made by Alfred Adler in Vienna in the 1920s (conf. Ackerknecht 1983). An individual practice in family therapy, however, was only established in the beginning of the 1950s in the United States; Europe followed a decade later. In the United States, individual teams began to work with families in therapy, independently of each other. These clinicians asked, how was it possible that youths first suffering from »Schizophrenia« returned to hospitals from their families, frequently with heavy relapses, after achieving improvements by inpatient treatment and being released home. In order to clarify what happened, they invited parents to talk or searched for them. Along the way, they were able to recognise certain regularities in the interaction behaviour of the families, and also concluded that the improved condition of their patient could be stabilised if these patterns were shattered (for a historic reconstruction of these developments conf e. g. Lynn Hoffman 1981).

Theoretically, the superstructure valid until that point, focusing on the individual, was not sufficient to handle the complex events and histories in families. This situation forced a rethinking. The pioneers of family therapy successfully attempted to explain their pragmatically executed practice with their own, temporary concepts. Significant impetus in this regard came from the work of the polymath Gregory Bateson, who just happened to be dealing with issues within psychiatric research in Palo Alto, California. The activity of this first Palo Alto Group brought about in the year 1956 the frequently quoted »double bind hypothesis« (conf. Bateson et al. 1956). It was to become a milestone in the further development of family therapy. Subsequently and gradually, an understanding of psychopathological disturbances through the prism of system theory was able to prevail. Instead of mental components and states, binding patterns and processes moved into the spotlight; properties, constancy and linear causality ceased to be the basic terms; they were replaced by completeness, feedback and circularity.

In the 1970s, family therapy became acknowledged by clinicians and psychotherapists. All leading schools – among them, psychoanalysis, behaviour, Gestalt and client-centric therapy – expanded their offer to include working with families.

In most cases, however, they only expanded their *setting* from the individual to the family, not contributing significantly to the further conceptual development of the new approach.

The core of the newly formed family therapy from the United States was initially made up of two approaches: the strategic approach (Haley 1976) and the structural approach (Minuchin 1974). There are many conceptual and methodological similarities between these two approaches. Pragmatically focussing on efficiency, they perceive families as open social systems that may be purposefully changed in terms of structure through interventions. The family forms a network of behaviour rules serving to maintain its inner balance – the family homoeostasis (conf. Jackson 1981). Internal and external threats to homoeostasis are neutralised or dismissed by way of negative feedback – often assessed as symptoms. Symptomatic behaviour also has an important function in terms of family survival, and in this regard is not an expression of individual pathology, but any sort of dysfunction of the system of the family requiring a correction. One can then speak of psychotic or psychosomatic families, and focusing on individuals – symptom carriers or index patients.

Systemic family therapy

Disappointed with the possibilities of psychoanalysis in terms of treatment of anorectic disorders, Milan's psychoanalyst Mara Selvini Palazzoli started halfway through the 1970s to search for something new. After looking for employment with Jay Haley, Paul Watzlawick and Salvador Minuchin in the United States, and encouraged by the cybernetic and epistemological writings of Gregory Bateson, she published in Milan in the year 1975, together with three colleagues – Luigi Boscolo, Gianfranco Cecchin and Giuliana Prata – a book that thoroughly influenced me and many others: "*Paradox and Counterparadox*" (conf. Selvini Palazzoli et al. 1975). This marks the shift from the then-contemporary family therapies to a new understanding of human problems and their therapeutic treatment: systemic family therapy. It shall be the direct predecessor of proper systemic therapy that was formed in the beginning of the 1980s.

The Milan approach holds the family to be a self-organised system. Pathological families are considered to be victims of an inescapable communicative »game«. In this game, the individual members are forced to enter into paradoxical forms of interaction to protect the homoeostatic regulation of the family system. In order for the therapy to be successful, it must be opposed to the pathogenic game that feels like a paradox – counterparadoxes must be developed. The pathological behaviour is considered to be 'functional' through suitable interventions, provoking

the family to opposition and to change of the game. The goal of the 'paradoxical' intervention is to block or disable the pathological game of the family with a counterparadox.

Summary

Family therapy introduced mainly the following important novelties:
– The transfer of circular thinking onto the understanding of human interactions, meaning, a departure from linear-causal patterns of explanation;
– The shift of pathological phenomena from persons to interpersonal processes;
– It was also possible, thanks to orientation based on cybernetic models, to shorten therapeutic processes, to simplify them and make them more efficient.

2.2. Systemic therapy – The second revolution

What does "systemic" mean here?

Before I move to a description of this therapeutic approach that developed only in the beginning of the 1980s with breathtaking speed, I want to include a word or two to explain the meaning of 'systemic' here. Differing from somatic medicine, in which systemic medicine and interventions are such that apply to the entire organism, the adjective 'systemic' applies here to a general perspective, to knowledge from systemic theories. I use this term in plural here, because it is used differently by diverse disciplines. »Cybernetics« or »synergetics« in physics, »dissipative structures« in chemistry, »autopoiesis« and »self-organisation« in biology, »self-reference« in sociology and »radical constructivism« in philosophy, they are all variations on *one* topic and differ primarily in terms of the objectives and the terminology of the original fields. Their common denominator is namely a protective confrontation with complexity, meaning, an attempt to limit as much as possible unavoidable reductionist assumptions. It is their goal, to put it in the words of the German family therapist Helm Stierlin (1983), to provide "*complexity-maintaining complexity reduction*". Systemic thinking liquefies the analytical discourse of the West and forms a synthesis, within which all significant approaches of natural sciences, humanities and social sciences can find their place. Within this »new synthesis«, man functions as the discoverer and protector of their mental worlds (conf. among others Varela et al. 1991; von Foerster and Pörksen 1998).

To put it in short, "systemic" in this regard describes a general thought approach that deals with systems, meaning, with thought structures or relations that

are generated in order to cognitively arrange human and other phenomena. In this sense, this thought approach sees itself epistemologically as a constructivist one. As will be shown later, this view entered psychotherapy towards the beginning of the 1980s. This caused, among others, a fundamental departure from positivist *objectivisms* and from approaches based on feasibility/ *doability*.

The birth of systemic therapy

Not long after the Milan concept of family therapy solidified its presence not only in Europe, but worldwide as well, a young psychologist from Texas held in Autumn of 1981 in Zurich a lecture that was to lead to a radical change in the understanding of therapeutic relations (conf. Dell 1982). This referred in particular to concepts of authors hitherto unknown in the area of therapy, Chilean neurobiologist Humberto Maturana, and Francisco Varela. Using these concepts, Paul Dell was able to sustainably shake up the theoretical foundations on which those of family therapies were built. After the congress in Zurich, we immediately commenced studying and learning these newer thoughts and including them in our understanding of psychotherapy. The goal in this regard was not a minor one. Our purpose was to provide a new metatheoretical ground for psychotherapy. As a result, step by step, a theoretical network was created, in which newer practices of systemically-aligned therapy could be embedded. In our first step, we particularly strongly referred in the years 1981-1984 to biological cognition theory according to Humberto Maturana (conf. e. g. Maturana 1982, Maturana & Varela 1972, 1984). In the year 1984 we amended our metatheory step by step using concepts from sociological system theory according to Niklas Luhmann (1984). A first summary written work on the concepts created in this way was provided in the year 1992 in the study work "Systemic Therapy" (Ludewig 1992). Below I shall describe the key foundations, on which the new systemic therapy was constructed: The biological and sociological basics. Afterwards I shall provide the psychological foundations.

3. Systemic thinking – theoretical conditions

3.1. Biologische Grundlagen

The central aspects of the concepts attributable to Maturana are based on his theory of the living, the theory of autopoiesis, developed in cooperation with Francisco Varela. Diverging from the then-contemporary understanding within traditional biology, Maturana does not satisfy himself in his explanation of living processes with listing individual partial aspects (properties) such as the metabolism, move-

ment, growth, reproduction, etc, he also doesn't refer to vitalistic simplifications. For him, the living being is a system with a specific interconnection of components: the *autopoietic organisation*. The system lives as long as its autopoietic organisation remains in concert with its environment. The concept of autopoiesis and its implications have in recent decades provided sustainable influence on many disciplines, among them philosophy, jurisprudence, sociology, cybernetics and psychotherapy.

The term »autopoiesis« – Gr. *autos* = self; *poiein* = design, create, produce – was introduced by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela in the year 1972 in Chile in their book *De máquinas y seres vivos* (Machines and living things). In order to be recognised as such, a living thing must fulfil the conditions of an autopoietically organised unit. The dynamics of its states must create both its components as well as its boundaries that provide a limit to this dynamic and which in effect enable it. The dynamic and the limit of such a unit are different in terms of structure and function, however, in the existential sense, they belong to that which constitutes the unit.

The unit of the »cell« fulfils these conditions. Biochemically speaking, it functions like a »molecule factory« that continually produces its own constituent components: molecules. In course of this, not only are the basic building blocks of the »factory« formed, but also those components that delineate it topologically (cell wall or membranes). If the network is broken, interrupted or damaged in important places, the production of components ends and the autopoietic organisation falls apart.

The concept of autopoiesis has significant consequences for the understanding of living beings not only as individuals, but also as beings that are socially embedded, hence, also in terms of therapeutic phenomena. It follows from the concept of autopoiesis that biological systems as living beings have a predetermined structure, are autonomous, operationally closed, lacking purpose and atemporal (conf. e. g. Maturana 1982). The autopoietic organisation is principally invariant, hence, it remains constant as long as the being lives. The structural composition may vary to the extent that organisation remains constant. The relevant current condition of its structure determines the limits, within which a living being is able to change without losing its autopoietic organisation, meaning, without dying. On the basis of its structure, the living being is able to select the type and mode of the environmental events that are able to cause changes within it. External influences may irritate (perturb, violate) the structure of the being only to the extent that this structure allows. It is not these influences that determine the effect, but the current structural condition of the biological system. In this regard, Maturana speaks of living systems as having a predetermined structure. Living beings live only as long

as they are able to generate and maintain themselves, meaning: their constituent components. Their mode of work determines hence their entire phenomenology. Accordingly, they also basically self-regulate, meaning, they are autonomous, and, differing from *non-living* systems, identical with their products (conf. among others Varela 1979). Autonomy refers here to entelechy, a sort of completeness, perseverance, hence neither autarchy nor socio-political self-determination.

Furthermore, it follows that living beings are basically not »instructable« (structurable), but in any case »unsettlable« (or irritable, perturbable, interferable). As they do not function on the basis of »input« and »output«, they cannot be determined heteronomically. They can only be influenced if the characteristics of a being (or its species) and its environment is sufficiently well known that changes of specific environmental conditions are able to »trigger« required behaviour of/ in the living being. In this regard, the change is not brought about causally, but only »incited«. Only in this sense one may speak of a causality of actions. Otherwise the postulation of linear causality in this regard is misleading. This indicates the central challenge of a systemically conceived clinical theory: It must forgo assumptions of causality and still develop pragmatically usable concepts.

A network organised autopoietically is only able to operate using its own states or conditions. It works by self-reference by recursively regulating its own states, in order to protect its organisation. Living beings are thus operationally closed; their operations may only be based on their earlier states, and not on external conditions. And because an observer is able to utilise their outside perspective in order to consider the living being and its environment as a whole, they perceive an energy and material exchange between the organism and its environment. This, however, says nothing about the mode of operation of the organism and does not substantiate any abstract, causal conclusions. The outside world is relevant for a living being only in the sense that it uses the same due to its structure, in order to be able to continue.

Similarly, the nervous system operates as operationally closed, and this determines the mode of action of cognition. Nerve cells form an operationally closed network and may only react to external events if they are excited according to their structure. »Excited« receptor cells »discharge« in a uniform way, irrespective of what caused this discharge of theirs. As the components of the nervous system operate only with own states (or the relations between them), they are unable to differentiate between internal and external triggers. There would be no neurophysiological mechanism that could enable or permit an explanation of any sort of cognitive difference between illusion and perception (cognition induced internally and externally). This differentiation that is so important in human life refers to the

activity of mental and social processes, for instance, in the form of descriptions and explanations.

Finally, there follows from the concept of autopoiesis that living systems neither follow objectives or goals nor fulfil programmes or functions. Criteria are applied by external observers when they observe living beings in a broader context and are searching for an orientation that could provide a meaning. The concepts of objective, goal or time thus serve a sort of coherent description, however, they do not describe the internal functioning of living beings.

Cognition

Maturana's contribution to the understanding of the process of perception, or of cognition, can be summarised by the following theses:

– Human cognition is determined, as a biological phenomenon, by the structure of the organism and not by objects from the outside world.

– Humans have an operationally and functionally closed nervous system that does not differentiate between internal and external triggers; hence, perception and illusion, internal and external stimuli principally can not be differentiated between.

– Human cognition results from »private« experiences; as a capacity of the organism, it is basically bound to the subject and thus non-transferable.

Concerning the question as to how one can achieve knowledge or cognition, there follows:

– Cognition/ knowledge is neither a true representation of a reality separate from the one performing the cognitive process, nor a random or arbitrary structure. It rather serves to uphold life, thus corresponding to the structural capacities and the status of the cognitive entity.

– The traditional requirement of objectivity as the correspondence of the external and the internal (*adaequatio rei et intellectus*) exceeds human cognitive capacity. The biological bond of all cognition and the lack of any sort of mechanism to differentiate between illusion and perception limits the criterion of objectivity to purely communicative objectives.

– The content of communicated knowledge is aligned with the biological structure of the recipient. Communication is an ongoing process that must be renewed, the efficiency and information content of which is determined solely by the addressee. Any sort of equivalence of structural conditions of the »sender« and »recipient« can neither be purposefully achieved nor determined by an observer. Hence, it is forgone as a criterion of scientific perception or truth. To illustrate this situation, Maturana stated: *»In a curious*

way, I am entirely unaccountable for what you are hearing, but fully respon-
sible for what I am saying« (Maturana 1990, p. 63, transl. from Spanish by
the original author of this article [transl. into English by the translator of the
article]).

The usage of cognition. Would one still want to limit arbitrariness and lack of
transparency in scientific discourse, then only one pragmatic criterion can be con-
sidered: The criterion of *communicative usability.* This criterion as proposed by me
(conf. Ludewig 1988) expands upon the concept of viability of Ernst von Glaser-
feld (1987). It is fulfilled, if the speaker and addressee are able to optimally coor-
dinate their purposeful procedure by way of an exchange. A piece of knowledge is
useful communicatively if it can be described, meaning: conveyed, if it promotes
the coordination it struggles for and if describes an advantage (gain) as compared
to other pieces of knowledge or the lack thereof.

A challenge. Systemic thinking takes hope of being able to discover away from
the scientist if they only adhere to the rules of the game. The scientific project of
eliciting from »the world« its truths, loses its meaning; at the same time, research
without care for the effects becomes anachronistic and irresponsible. Just like any
sort of criticism against traditional obvious factors and any new sense or meaning,
systemic thinking also comes with two consequences: It opens up for the scientist
unexpected perspectives an at the same time robs them of the certainty of the
known. The way towards anything new first leads through uncertainty, doubt and
rejection. This describes the present-day position of systemic thinkers: Not only
do they have to check whether the known tools of science are also useful in the
new system of thinking, but at the same time they have to develop relevant criteria
and redefine their position.

Description. Any type of describing constitutes the result of an operation of
differentiation using language (conf. Maturana 1982). Describing is composed of
differentiating, meaning, it assumes a comparison in the cognitive area of the ob-
server, between units brought about through cognition – be it between objects, be-
tween an object and a background, or between an object and a non-object. When
describing, the observer generates differences in their own way: *linguistically.* The
basic components of the human world are, hence, descriptions: Anything that is
not described, that is not differentiated by language, is missing from it. Any at-
tempt to leave the sphere of that which is described, and to reach »the things them-
selves«, concludes with a further description – it is, hence, pointless: One always
remains in the sphere of the described. This applies in particular to describing
people. In this regard, comparative observation may be based on various phases
of life (biographically), on other people (differential) or abstract, general values

(normative). In any case, comparisons are always necessary, as no description can emerge without them.

As they are formed in the cognitive area of an observer, all descriptions point to their creator. After all, behind every description stands an observer. To describe is self-referential (it refers back to oneself), it takes place in a closed field of recursive, retroactive operations. Human discovery is hence based on an endless retroactive process of internal »calculation« of the own states of that which is being discovered, which constitutes the cognitive area (conf. von Foerster 1985).

The relation between I and You. Human cognition is based on observation accessible only as/ when described. As observing and describing always takes place in the closed cognitive area of an observer, people generate their cognitive realities basically in loneliness. Still, all descriptions stem from the fact that man, as a linguistic being, is a communicating one, and this requires the existence of a different being that is also able to describe. Man is thus *at the same time* alone as caught in their biological structure and »connected« or »coordinated« with others. This substantiates the dual identity of man as being both biologically individual and linguistically social. In order to understand discovery of knowledge, we must hence also not only follow the operations of the observer, but also that communicative process that enables and maintains human cognition.

As lonely creator of their realities, man has access neither to an independent object world nor to the psyche of others. Still, it can perceive (and describe) themselves as a communicative being, and discover that there are other people, in structural terms – equal to them, with whom they may communicate. They may thus conclude both on the singularity/ individuality of their existence – their I-Being – as well as on the existence of an independent You. The relation between I and You substantiates the area of joint eperience, from which the social [sphere] arises. Considered against this backdrop, man lives in the equation *Reality = Community* (von Foerster 1985, p. 41).

As every discovery is based on differentiating, no I may arise without assuming an independent yet structurally strongly related You. Even if this assumption is only »arrived at« cognitively, it still assumes communication and itself enables communication. Men are basically unfathomable for one another, still, they may ascribe to themselves structural equality and, in this manner, pragmatically overcome the existing chasm. Communication may thus be considered to be »cooperative problem-solving«, through the aid of which people conquer their mutual opacity.

Within a "We"– the *social system* – there arises the humanly specific relation between the biological individuality and the social-communicative identity. In this

I recognise the *"systemic principle"*, on which all that follows is based, particularly as it is founded on systemic thinking.

Existence. Linguistic differentiation brings about units, of which the objects of our material and mental world are composed. The question as to whether something »exists« basically aims at the operation that must be performed in order to bring the relevant unit into the area of experience of the questioning. It asks of the »recipe« with actions (differentiations), on the basis of which the described experience could be reproduced. Still, the reproduced may never have exactly the same structure as the original experience, as it stems from a different area of experience. All consensual expressions of existence – even scientific ones – are based on the operational reproduction of experiences. Even if in course of this it is always the questioning party that determines the validity of the achieved »recipes«, they usually rely on criteria of their linguistically-consensual community (family, tribe, society or »scientist community«). Knowledge arises by communication by way of adhering to valid criteria of understanding (or of *communicative usability*).

The human [factor]

People produce their own specific area of existence, namely, one of *"existing in language"*. In operational terms, interaction takes place when individuals meet and "perturb" each other or trigger structural changes. By repetition, gradually, a *structural connection* is established. Consensus, or an area of sensual coordination, is established by recurring interaction. All living beings are ale to coordinate their behaviour in some measure with that of others; this is when that takes place, what Maturana referred to as "primary behaviour coordination". Man is, additionally, able to generate areas of second-order behaviour coordination. This specifically human phenomenon was designated by Maturana in Spanish with the neologism *"lenguajear"*, translated into English as "to language", which I refer to in German as "*Linguieren*". These terms refer to the fact that the case does not concern use of language but a form of behaviour that takes place when primary behaviour *coordinations* are coordinated by different forms of behaviour coordination, when people, by way of gestures or noises, refer to primary behaviour coordination. To use an example: If one were to indicate, by a hand gesture, to another that they should open a door that is closed, so that both could pass. In this case, the coordination "pass through the door" is coordinated superordinately by the hand gesture ("to language"). It is irrelevant whether words are used or not. *Languaging* is more basic than speaking (conf. Maturana 1976).

As a self-referential system, language can only refer back to language. In this regard, »*languaging*« constitutes a recursively closed, inescapable area that one

can only be left through being silent, with this silence not being part of human communication. The »objects« of our world and we ourselves as observers, arise in course of instances of linguistic coordination. For instance, the word »table« refers only to the linguistic differentiation of the table, as the described objects have nothing *tabley* in them. Compared to behaviour coordination in the area of specific activities, the linguistic potential of differentiation is basically unlimited, as that coordination may be described in a broad number of ways. *Languaging* thus forms the basis of the human mode of living, and forms an independent phenomenal domain. Hence, Marurana's saying: »*Everything said is said by an observer to an observer who could be themselves*« (Maturana 1982, p. 240 [English version: Maturana and Varela, 1980, p. 8]) thus defines the human area of existence as one of linguistic togetherness.

Explaining. Explaining, the way Maturana describes it, is reforming an experienced situation using components from other situations from life practice. The validity of an explanation is determined by the structure of the one posing the question. In the process of explaining, Maturana differentiates between two options, namely, according to whether this process is considered independently or dependently on the biology of the observer. In the first case, an universal ontological reality is assumed that should in some way be accessible to people, whereby the result must satisfy the criterion of objectivity. In the latter case, the assumption is made that man has no access to any sort of subject-independent reality, and that everything that is real refers back to and relies on observation. Accordingly, there are as many realities as there are applied methods, meaning there is no *uni-verse*, but there are *multiverses*. Matuarana suggests to bracket [off] the criterion of objectivity in order to make it clear that the case concerns constituted circumstances. The *bracketing* should be a reminder that <realities>, as binding and as inevitable as they may seem, are always the product of our observation. However, when knowledge or discovery take place and are accepted as useful, for all practical purposes they take on the character of the real (conf. e. g. Ludewig 2013, chapter 3).

However, if one would want to keep the logic of describing as unequivocal as possible, it is suggested to maintain correct *logical bookkeeping*, meaning, a precise correspondence of terms between the generated phenomenon and the relevant described phenomenal domain. It protects against incoherence and unsuitability (conf. Maturana & Varela 1984). Correct logical bookkeeping proves to be particularly necessary in the clinical area for the purpose of diagnosis, prognosis and evaluation. This protects from common mixing of phenomenal domains such as, for instance, in course of unilateral descriptions of life problems in analogy to bodily illnesses or as a result of ambient conditions.

3.2. Sociological foundations

The biologically founded concepts introduced by Humberto Maturana reveal themselves as being extremely useful and liberating for psychotherapy, especially with respect to cognitive and linguistic processes. One is liberated from the overly narrow orientation on physical analogies, and, additionally, from holding on to »ontological truths«. However, when handling communication and social systems, they reach the limits of the biological, especially since Maturana treats everything that is social basically as a biological phenomenon. The fundamental work »Social Systems« published in the year 1984 by the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann provided us with a phenomenologically sound amendment to the biological concepts of Maturana. Luhmann's systemic theory of the social justifies a phenomenal domain that permits the consideration of psychotherapeutic processes as genuinely socio-communicative occurrences extending beyond the biological.

The concept of the system

The ancient Greek roots of this term indicate those two aspects that describe systems: *systema* = entity, composed of *syn* = together, and *histanai* = establish (according to Wahrig 1997). A syste is also a complex, meaning: a composite entity that can be delineated from others. There are no systems in themselves, they are relations of order or entities of human observation. According to Luhmann, a precise definition of the concept of the system would require consideration of three differentiation: the *system boundary* differentiates the entity from a background (difference system/ environment), the *components* constituting the system (system differentiation) and the *relations* between the components that hold the system together (difference component/ relation). All these aspects emerge and pass as the system emerges and passes. Components in themselves emerge on the basis of the type of their relations that in turn enable the system being as opposed to its environment. A precise definition of the system thus requires the definition of its constitutive units: Components, relations and boundaries. All of these are constituted by the unit of difference.

   Complexity. Systems are complex units that reduce complexity. Formation of systems does not entail increasing complexity or fusing that which already is, but creating *another* complexity. Complexity is a quantitative term. An amount is complex when its components can not be joined at any given time. The environment of a system arises as a result of system formation and must be more complicated than the one of the system. Without this difference in complexity, the difference between the system and its environment would be void and the system would not

be recognisable. System boundaries are functional; they separate and fuse the system with its environment. Systems always interact only through their components and not as entireties. The processing of interactions is determined by the internal *operationality* of the system and not by external influences.

Social systems

Considering the establishment of systemic theory in the area of psychotherapy, the following shall describe aspects of the social system theory of Luhmann (1984, 1997) that seem relevant to me. Social systems are not composed of mental systems or entire people, but of communication instances and the relevant formation of connections along a mental boundary. To determine a social system, Luhmann suggests to consider communication instances as components of a social system. The relations between these components constitute the establishment of connections between the instances of communication. The system boundary is defined as a mental boundary. For his system theory, Luhmann takes over Maturana's concept of autopoiesis, whereby this concept is not only applied to biological systems, but is also extended to encompass mental and social systems. Such systems constitute themselves by way of establishing differences, and thus may be considered to be autopoietic. The described system types, however, differ according to the fundamental operation of their autopoiesis: Biological systems process and reproduce events at the molecular level, whereby mental and social systems in turn process the sense, or meaning, be it as consciousness or communication.

Luhmann could describe social systems as autopoietic when he considered them to be composed of related mutual communication instances. If social systems were to be composed of people, as Maturana considers it, then they could not be considered to be autopoietic, because social systems do not generate people; communication in turn generates communication. Instances of communication align along a meaning and in this sense generate the system boundary that differentiates between a meaning (system) and a meaning (environment). The physical, biological and mental systems necessary to cause and maintain communication are assigned to their environment. Despite being necessary, they belong to other phenomenal domains and thus are not part of the definition of the social system.

Meaning/ sense and its boundary. Sense, as a specific strategy of selective behaviour under the condition of high complexity, encompasses everything that »has sense« or »makes sense«, it is thus a formal concept without differences that cannot be perverted to its opposition or negated. Sense is self-referential; it always and only refers back to sense: »*Systems bound to meaning can therefore never experience or act in a manner that is free from meaning.*« (Luhmann 1995, p. 62). Abbreviat-

ed to a short form: *One cannot not make sense*. The selection of a specific usage of sense neutralises temporarily or negates other possibilities, however, without the possibility of eradicating them entirely (Luhmann 1971, p. 12). »*Information*« causes in the addressee system conditions (without defining them). On the basis of operational *closedness* of systems, information does not form a specific input; it can only then cause specific system conditions in an addressee, if it finds structures suitable for this purpose. Information aims at causing specific system conditions in the addressee, however, the choice of what is considered information is made by the system itself. Information is experienced as an *action*, if it is parsed as the system's own performance; else it is deemed to be an external selection, is causally assigned to the external world and is interpreted as an *experience*. This differentiation gives rise to the difference between the internal and the external.

During processing sense/ meaning, mental and social systems provide for complexity reduction. Sense brings about establishment of connections and continuity as well. At the same time, as a temporary event that must be continuously regenerated, it is basically unstable. Every sense or meaning may be different in the next moment. This aspect is exceedingly significant for the establishment of theory in the psychotherapeutic area, both in terms of understanding human problems as well as of overcoming them.

Double contingency. All communication is characterised by mutual indeterminableness and opacity. Self-referential, meaning, operationally closed systems, do not have any access to their environment or to other systems. Even very precise observation is not able to fully encompass the entire operationality of the other. If this were to happen, both systems would intertwine. Systems with meaning are exposed to contingency, meaning, they can always be different. Communication must also overcome the problem that arises due to the mutual opacity of the participants. Luhmann speaks in this regard of the double contingency and refers in this regard to the fact that people must endlessly be able to handle the problem of both participants being able to do or understand this or that. Because both partners of a social interaction experience at any time double contingency, and both know it. Hence, in order to be able to refer to the actions of another, considering uncertainty, one must take risks, as lack of clarity incites clarification. According to Luhmann, social systems may only emerge because a diffuse initial state would force the creation of structures. Every action works selectively, reduces complexity and thus enables continuity. "Pure" double contingency is not found in any society, as communication is based on societally transferred symbols and expectations. Hence, within the context of double contingency, expectations acquire, a structural value for the production of emergent systems (Luhmann 1984, p. 158).

Double contingency works autocatalytically in social systems: It facilitates communication without being used itself. Within double contingency, one feels both secure and insecure at the same time. Even if one does not know what the other will do, however, they may trust that they experience the simulation just as one does themselves. Who would take the risk and determine themselves, lets others establish a connection, and is able to refer to it then. Hence, improbability, uncertainy and indetermination always cause the emergence of their opposites. The problem of double contingency bears within itself a solution. Risks are overcome by risky offers. In this regard, there is no alternative to trust. Anybody that would seek to avoid any sort of risk due to distrust, cannot survive.

Communication theory

Communication is based on actions. The differentiation between action and communication makes the mixing of these concepts possible. Action is assigned to a single actor, communication – wholly in the sense of this term, Lat. *communicare* = perform together, unify (Wahrig 1997) – requires at least two communicating entities: A sender and a recipient. Accordingly, Watzlawick's Axiom that "One cannot not communicate" can be replaced by an amended formula that "One cannot not make sense". A motion of the hand can be "understood" as a pure movement (action) or for instance as a wave. This depends solely on the current structure of the "Recipient".

According to Luhmann, communication must be considered as a three-part selection process. On the part of the sender, an *information* is selected along with a mode of *communication behaviour*, whereby the recipient performs the third selection: *Understanding*. It results from the difference between information and message. Understanding in this sense does not mean as usual an adequate interpretation of a message, but solely the fact that an observed action is is considered a message, and not just information. If the recipient would understand the action of the sender as a message, then it is irrelevant whether this was intended as such. As this process is respectively borne by operationally closed systems, misunderstandings, lies and dishonesty genuinely form a part of communication and need not be evaluated as pure errors.

Communication process. Separate communication units, for instance, in the form of commands, short greetings when passing or calls for help are usually the exception to the rule. Communication processes in turn fuse many communicative events into a sequence. Communication similarly causes redundancy and difference, not only consensus, as this would result in trivialisation. Redundancy brings about structures; difference opens up further areas for negation, protest

and opposition. Thus, the social system – just like the nervous system – remains in a form of self-generated permanent excitation that can also be co-determined by the environment.

The member concept

Niklas Luhmann (1984) differentiates between four system types with respect to their base operation types: Machines, organisms, social and mental systems. Therapeutic processes take place as face-to-face meetings on the interaction level, meaning, as a social system concerning primarily the participants. The concepts of the sociologist Luhmann with respect to system theory are particularly suitable to understand macrosocial relations. Hence, it seemed important to me to conceptionally redetermine the dynamics of interaction systems with a focus on psychotherapy (conf. Ludewig 1992). The task was to avoid the dilemma of having to apply clinical theory either only with respect to communication or to people. For this purpose, the concept should be expanded so as to include both the corporeal and the mental in course of instances of communication. The sought concept should be clear enough in order to be able to describe the practice, yet at the same time sufficiently empty and abstract so as to be able to avoid objectification. In order to establish a conceptional bridge between man and communication, I have introduced the concept of the »member« and redefined the components of interactional social systems as «members«.

A member is an abstract working term. It stands for a socially constituted, functional operator that characterises and solidifies a communication process. Members emerge from the communication and undergo constant changes. They exist only as long as the process begins that caused their emergence. Members constitute each other in the communication as »operational coherences«. They emerge only through the execution of communication and are thus qualified as such. An observer who cannot observe communication directly anyway can, however, extrapolate about it by retracing the communicative operations. Members process differences. Members are selecting operational coherences (relations, networks) that enable human communication. They form the functional »link« of the people participating in the communication. Analogously to computer languages, one can compare the relation between man and member with the relation between hardware and the individual calculation processes. This analogy naturally applies only conditionally, as members act recursively and change themselves continuously, so that in most cases they are not executing a fixed programme (»role«).

Man and the member are structurally connected to each other, however, they do not cause each other. Ritualized membership for instance does not assume any

conscience, however, only as long as this person ponders it. Man and member belong to different phenomenal domains: the biological and the social one. Man in themselves is never a member of a social system, they may only »embody« memberships, meaning, make available the necessary structures of the physical and mental type, to which the member can refer in order to establish communication and enable the construction of social systems. The differentiation between man, member and role proves to be useful for clinical theory. While »man« describes a living being, the social operator »member« indicates a single communicative action, and the »role« is a generalised programme to execute a class of memberships (a policeman, a housewife). During therapy, people embody respectfully the participating members in the diverse roles as the therapist and the client/ patient.

3.3. Psychological foundations

As the successor to family therapy, systemic therapy was initially interested mainly in social systems. It became gradually clear, however, that this form of therapy is suitable for work with individuals as well. It thus became necessary to adapt the theory to this state of affairs and to expand around it the conceptualisation of mental systems within systemic theory. I have been working on this issue since the end of the 1980s and with time I was able to show such a theoretical concept (conf. Ludewig 2011, 2013). I always use the concept of »mental systems« in plural, particularly as a singular mental system is a synthetic concept without relevance for clinical theory. Mental systems accordingly provide processes that take place in individuals and thus create sense and reproduce. They are composed of *emotional-cognitive coherences*, that similarly emerge and vanish along with the emergence and vanishing of a specific sense/ meaning. As processes, they are naturally transient and must be permanently regenerated to be able to continue. The psyche as a structural term in turn offers at best a synthesis of many diverse mental systems that take place within an individual at a specific point in time.

Mental systems constitute the individual counterpart to members within interactional systems. The mental and social systems stand with respect to each other in a relation of structural coupling. Even if both system types utilise sense and require each other to be able to exist, they operate, however, separately of each other and always generate in this regard diverse phenomena, here – awareness, there – communication. This relation differs from the traditional concepts aimed at unity, such as personality, identity and the self. These consistently intended concepts of academic psychology were developed within the frmework of analytical and structural thinking. Such concepts only seem useful for a process-oriented understanding of psychology if they are treated as synthetic structures. They simplify

communication about human conditions. The concept suggested here of psychic systems as transitional processes or events aligns broadly with new knowledge of cognitive sciences. It is there that everything that is mental is more or less connected, understood as mutually dependent processes (conf. e. g. Varela et al. 1992, Roth 2001, LeDoux 2002).

Polyphrenia

As an alternative to the unity of the mental, the following shall substitute substantial concepts by temporalised ones, unified concepts by differential ones. The avoidance of comparative, objectifying metaphors that have become obsolete and invalid as an apparatus, structure, whole or parts need not necessarily mean that structural aspects must be forgone entirely. Mental phenomena considered to be processes cannot be observed, but may only at best be reconstructed with the aid of observation of actions or thanks to introspection. The identity – the characteristic of man – is considered to be a narrative that is synthesised on the basis of repeated behaviour observations. The description of an identity thus contains a current selective reconstruction from the multitude of the own states that it experiences and the embodied memberships in social systems. This applies both to a self-description as well as to describing others. The questions on the identity of an individual, »Who am I? Who are You?« are posed within the scope of introspective musings or during communication. To the extent that this would require more suitable differentiations, self-descriptions are relational descriptions that may be construed as *relational coherences* or relational identities, or relational *selves*.

Mental systems are interpreted here as temporalised *emotional-cognitive coherences* that always react anew to internal or social demands with respect to a specific sense/ meaning. The components of mental systems – emotional-cognitive units – constitute intramental, meaningful processes that can relate to further experiences with the same content of meaning, ensuring this way the continuity of the experience of sense. They are composed of relational components – emotional-cognitive units – along a sense boundary. Mental skills that are already present (thinking, feeling, remembering, motives, etc.) as well as those that are currently being established anew, are mobilised selectively and bound into a relevantly unique relation, an emotional-cognitive coherence. In this way, there emerges in every individual situation an *actual I*, which only exists so long as it is continued by way of connections to further emotional-cognitive coherences. From this perspective, when describing mentality, I assume *polyphrenia*. With this I describe the broad potential of an individual to generate individual mental systems suitably to the context or to relate accordingly to their past emotional and cognitive experiences.

Polyphrenia in this regard describes an ability and no array of existing components. In course of communicative and/ or introspective activities, the polyphrenic potential of an individual becomes active; the reaction to this is the formation of a mental system. The current mental systems selectively »take« from the available mental potential and bind individual components of it into emotional-cognitive coherences, into mental systems. A flexible polyphrenic potential could guarantee that an individual would be able to maintain a healthy attitude towards the requirements of their changing environments. Polyphrenia allows flexible adaptation, while a limited state reaching all the way to monophrenia is a significant sign of a reduced ability to adequately react to the multitude of requirements of everyday life.

I assume that a person embodies at any time only one mental system. The continuity in self-experience, meaning, the feeling of permanent identity, is constituted each time by an *ad hoc* emerging mental system. It is then made available to the person in order to be able to reply to relevant questions in course of self-reflection or as a member of an interaction by way of the description of a *personal I*. The personal description of a person would certainly include those traits that characterise the self-experience of that individual regardless of whether they are innate or learned and characterise them both for themselves as well as for others. The differentiation between the actual and the personal I corresponds to the difference between a process and a structure, or the temporary and the persistent.

4. Clinical theory of systemic therapy

The following, closing section deals with a description of a systemically founded theory of psychotherapy limited to the most important components. Exhaustive presentations can be found, among others, in Ludewig (1992, 2005, 2013).

Definition. Systemic therapy perceives itself as a contribution to the establishment of a suitable framework for self-change of the individual seeking help. It facilitates trust by way of a stable therapeutic relationship and encourages changing of preferences. It does not perceive itself as causal changing.

Subject. I understand the subject of a systemically founded clinical theory to be a series of diverse social systems with diverse, discernible communications (conf. Ludewig 1992). This allows for the description of the processes involved in the therapeutic situation – the problem, the intervention and the evaluation – to be perceived as a sequence of discernible interaction systems, and not as a profess of a structural whole. These interaction systems are usually: 1) a problem system,

2) a help-seeking system, 3) an unspecific help system and 4) a specific help system, e. g. a therapy system (conf. Ludewig 1992).

Individual and interactional problems. The formulation of a systemic clinical theory assumes that one first identifies those specific situations that motivate an individual to seek therapy. Such situations are traditionally described as »problems«. Family therapy as the predecessor of systemic therapy holds on to tradition and satisfies itself with defining problems as structural conflicts or deficits, as dysfunctional patterns or communicative disorders of a social system, in most cases, of a family. Harry Goolishian, one of the most innovative pioneers of systemic therapy, formulated halfway through the 1980s a new genuinely systemic concept: the concept of the *problem-determined-system* (Anderson, Goolishian et al. 1986). This inverted the traditional concept, as it is not social systems that have problems, bt it's problems that generate social systems.

This idea had a revolutionary influence on clinical theory. Well thought-out, this concept came in order to entirely replace the traditional interpretations of psychopathology. One could think about clinically relevant problems without relying on semantics metaphorically derived from medicine or natural sciences, especially as they lead one to use inappropriate concepts such as mental illness and mental disorder. Goolishian's concept focuses on communication and social systems.

Enriched with the emotional processes that inevitably come up in every therapy, and using the constituent components from the communication theory of Luhmann, Goolishian's concept was set upon a materially more comprehensive theoretical foundation: the *problem system*. In the sense of this innovative concept, the clinically relevant human problems could be considered to be results of failed attempts to conquer an irritation (perturbation, disturbance, interference) that is alarming and that causes suffering. This irritation exceeds – as stress – the capacity of a system to overcome it, so that it neither can react adequately nor retreat. As a result, a personal »problem« may arise, which, depending on its intensity, remains an individual »*life problem*« or becomes a communicative »*problem system*« (conf. Ludewig 1992). A characteristic trait of human problems, life problems or problem systems, is their stability over time. Problems must be permanently reproduced in order to continue. This applies irrespective of whether the case would concern a single interior monologue or a ritualised communicative pattern, as they are composed of an endless repetition of the same *(more-of-the-same)*. Alternative thoughts and/ or communications that eventually broaden the horizon thus attracting attention away from the problem or able to entirely replace it, have almost no chance at succeeding. The thoughts

or communications maintaining the problem are gradually reduced to a pattern of permanently self-reproducing repetitions. The participating persons may be aware of this stagnation and suffer from it, but paradoxically may rely on the fact that as long as it remains it will at least not become worse. The relationship between the life problem and the problem system lies, from my point of view, at the core of clinical reflection and thus contains a central main difference for clinical theory.

The therapeutic process

The tasks of the therapist. A methodology of psychotherapy must refer to actions that are suitable tu oppose the dynamics that maintain the problem at hand. In the field of systemic therapy, this goal is approached from diverse perspectives. These range from direct orientation on the problem all the way to an exclusive solution orientation. In agreement with the basic assumptions represented here, this goal is approached by way of a combination of aspects of communication theory of Luhmann with interpretations from emotion theory (conf. e. g. Maturana 1988; Ciompi 1997). This combination contains the necessary components to describe a therapeutic change as the dissolution of life problems and/ or problem systems.

I understand life problems and problem systems to be repetitive thought and behaviour patterns that maintain a status quo that is usually perceived as being uncomfortable because no possibility is seen to precisely determine the effects of a change ahead of time. It is not clear whether the next step would have the effect of reducing the burden or on the other hand, make the situation worse, with an increased volume of suffering. In these conditions, *no change* seems more certain than any venture of a change. This explains why people, despite all the discomfort, remain enveloped in the continuing repetition of a specific pattern. With respect to the therapeutic strategy it proves to be essential to strive to break the pattern of repetition (conf. Watzlawick et al. 1974). This would be simple if the participants would suit and not be held back by the fear of making the situation worse. The therapist is thus required to establish for the client framework conditions that would offer encouragement and security, that would make it easier for them to take on the necessary risks and to try out uncertain changes. The therapist must be able to maintain for this purpose to a certain extent an »artistic balance« between the empathic value judgement of the client and their right to be what they are on the one hand, *and* on the other hand downplaying the problem and the behaviour patterns that maintain it as a balance between a suitable *appreciation* of the client and the therapeutic encouragement to change (*inter-*

vention). In other words, this balancing may provide the client with stabilising emotional security that makes more probable the necessary destabilisation of the problem. The clients are thus encouraged to undertake a »change of preferences«, meaning, to shift their sights from the problem to possible alternatives and other resources that are suitable to replace the problem. In this respect, systemic therapy generally may be perceived as a social activity that is aimed at establishing more advantageous framework conditions for the self-modification of the client – help towards self-help.

The therapist's dilemma. According to the theory-based abandonment of lineal causality, the therapist is confronted with the following dilemma: »*Act effectively, not knowing ahead of time, how and what your actions would cause!*« (conf. Ludewig 1992). Any therapist taking this dilemma seriously would reject both their own determination of therapeutic objectives as well as any causal process or procedure planned ahead of time. They shall rather attempt to encourage the client to formulate their own wishes and concerns or desires in such a way, on the basis of which the agreement may be established on the therapeutic task, which then would introduce the therapeutic activity. The therapist is mainly obliged to describe a suitable context for helpful therapeutic discussions. The knowledge that the assumption of simple linear causality in the interpersonal domain is misguided with respect to theory was one of the most significant contributions of systemic thinking to psychotherapy.

Systemically speaking, every mention of the problem brings with itself the danger of confirming the stability that is uncalled for, especially, as Steve de Shazer (e. g. 1988) demonstrated, that the construction of a »solution« need not necessarily align itself with the structure of the problem. In this regard, the countering or solution of a problem requires no fundamental knowledge of the same. While certain clients profit from direct orientation on solutions, others think it better to be able to speak about their problems and be listened to. As the effect of such measures cannot be estimated ahead of time, the therapist should be open for the relevant requirement of the client and, according to the situation either permit »*problem talk*« or work with »*solution talk*«, not forgetting that therapy is, after all, about striving for change.

The dilemma of diagnostics. The nest challenge to be overcome with respect to the formulation of clinical theory from the systemic perspective results from diagnostics. Aiming at maintaining complexity and variability, meaning, focusing on not to easily fall prey to simplifying reductionism, the systemic therapist must try to maintain also in this regard the difficult balance between reductionist and systemic requirements. A way out of the dilemma of diagnostics is indicated by the

concept of »*survival diagnostics*« (Ludewig 1999). This concept calls for therapists to take on that attitude of interest or curiosity, in the sense of Cecchin (1987), towards all such aspects from the life of the client that have made it possible for them to survive until the present. Such an attitude allows one to search for resources, alternatives, exceptions and whatever else may be useful in order to shift the attention of the client from the problem and to open it to alternatives. With this attitude as a leading orientation it is then possible to view the client as an expert in themselves, without devaluing or ignoring the expertise of the clinician.

The intervention. Since it was created about 30 years ago, systemic therapy had only developed very few special techniques. It utilised the majority of its work to formulate a therapeutic attitude that could be reconciled with systemic thinking, and less on developing new techniques. The rather limited special range of methods in systemic therapy, however, does not constitute an insurmountable problem, especially since there is no theoretical or practical necessity to reduce systemic practice to any sort of specific technology. A possibility of finding whether a specific technique is suitable or not is the adherence to the following criteria: *Advantage* with respect to therapy objectives, *beauty* with respect to the selection of interventions and *respect* with respect to the interpersonal attitude between the therapist and the client (conf. e. g. Ludewig 1992, 2013). The formulation of a systemically substantiated therapeutic attitude had proven itself in practice. In the year 1987 I published a methodical framework composed of 10+1 guidelines or questions for practical orientation of therapists (Ludewig 1987, 1992).

Differentiations

Systemic therapy had strongly differentiated itself in the 30 years since its establishment in many areas, and nothing else can be expected. This development cannot be understood in the end as a quite »natural« result of systemic thinking, the more so as this mode of thinking forgoes absolute truths and thus does not require and cannot expect any normative »adherence to principles«. The most important movements in systemic therapy include, among others, the interventional approaches in the tradition of the Milan approach, short term therapy solution-oriented approaches according to de Shazer (e. g. 1988), cooperation-stressing approaches such as the *Reflecting-Team* according to Tom Andersen (1990), linguistically stressed approaches on the basis of so-called social constructionism according to K. J. Gergen (1991, 1999; Gergen & Gergen 2004), of Goolishian & Anderson (e. g. 1988), post-modern approaches (e. g. Anderson 1996, Anderson & Gehart 2006, Hoffman 1990, 1993), narrative approaches based on anthropological and linguistic principles (e. g. White & Epston 1989), biographical and

encounter-oriented approaches (e. g. Welter-Enderlin & Hildenbrand 1996) and diverse integrative approaches. A decisively personal and clear presentation of these developments is provided by Lynn Hoffman (2000). With all the differences in detail, these differentiations are characterised by sufficient commonalities to be recognised as being systemic. They share the meta-theoretical background of constructivist positions (including „social-constructivist" and other non-realistic ones), and they mainly refer to theory with respect to the interdisciplinary programme of systemic sciences, meaning, the theories of self-organisation as well as the system and communication theories.

5. Summary

The systemic approach was classified by psychotherapy in the phenomenological domain of the social, in particular due to the fact that everything that takes place in therapy is communication. A significant advantage of the takeover of systemic thinking was relieving psychotherapy from its historically established exclusive embedding in analytical and objectivist thinking. Considering the fact that man can only be understood appropriately with the inclusion of the diverse systems that constitute them – biological, mental and social systems – psychotherapy should be understood as a comprehensive *social exchange* between similarly complex multi-system bio-psycho-social units, namely – people.

Considered systemically, people are living beings that live at the same time individually closed in themselves *and* embedded socially. Viewed this way, with the use of the *systemic principle*, an individual can neither be reduced to a *homo biologicus* nor to a *homo sociologicus*. The recursively generated relationship of the individual and the social does justice to the fact that being human is rooted in a social system, hence, it emerges at least in a pair. As a child of the concluding 20th century, systemic thinking allows us to simultaneously view this complex human existence simultaneously from biological, mental and social aspects, without having to reduce it to them. Beside its pragmatic efficacy, therein lies the main advantage of this mode of thinking for psychotherapy.

Bibliography

Ackerknecht, L. K. (1983): Individualpsychologische Familientherapie. Rückblick und gegenwärtige Praxis [in:] Schneider, K. (ed.): *Familientherapie in der Sicht psychotherapeutischer Schulen*. Paderborn (Junfermann).

Andersen, T. (ed.) (1990): *Das Reflektierende Team*. Dortmund (modernes lernen).

Anderson H. (1996): *Conversation Language and Possibilities: A Postmodern Approach to Therapy*. New York (Basic Books).

Anderson, H. & D. Gehart (eds.) (2006): *Collaborative Therapy: Relationships and Conversations That Make a Difference*. New York (Brunner-Routledge).

Anderson, H., H. A. Goolishian, G. Pulliam a. L. Winderman (1986): The Galveston Family Institute: Some Personal and Historical Perspectives [in:] D.E. Efron (ed.): *Journeys. Expansion of the Strategic-Systemic Therapies*. New York (Brunner/Mazel): 97–122.

Bateson, G., D. D. Jackson, J. Haley, J. H. Weakland (1956): Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia. *Behavioral Science* 1 (4): 251-264.

Bateson G. et al. (1969): *Schizophrenie und Familie*. Frankfurt (Suhrkamp)

Bateson G. (1972): *Steps to an Ecology of Mind. A Revolutionary Approach to Man's Understanding of Himself*. New York (Ballantine).

Cecchin, G. (1987): Hypothesizing, Circularity, and Neutraliy Revisited: An Invitation to Curiosity. *Family Process* 26, 405–413. [dt

Ciompi, L. (1997): *Die emotionalen Grundlagen des Denkens. Entwurf einer fraktalen Affektlogik*. Göttingen (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht).

Dell, P.F. (1982): Beyond Homeostasis: Toward a concept of coherence. *Family Process* 21: 21-41.

de Shazer, S. (1988): *Clues. Investigating Solutions in Brief Therapy*. New York (Norton).

Foerster, H. von (1985): *Sicht und Einsicht*. Braunschweig (Vieweg).

Foerster, H. von, B. Pörksen (1998): *Wahrheit ist die Erfindung eines Lügners. Gespräche für Skeptiker*. Heidelberg (Carl-Auer).

Gergen, K.J. (1991): *The Saturated Self*. New York (Basic Books).

Gergen, K.J. (1999): *An Invitation to Social Construction*. London (Sage).

Gergen, K.J., M. Gergen (2004): *Social Construction: Entering the Dialogue*. Chagrin Falls (Tao Institute Publ).

Glasersfeld, E. von (1987): *Wissen, Sprache und Wirklichkeit*. Braunschweig (Vieweg).

Goolishian, H. A. , H. Anderson (1988): Menschliche Systeme. Vor welche Probleme sie uns stellen und wie wir mit ihnen arbeiten [in:] Reiter, L., E. J. Brunner, S. Reiter-Theil (ed.): *Von der Familientherapie zur systemischen Perspektive*. Berlin (Springer), pp. 189-216.

Guntern, G. (1980): Die kopernikanische Revolution in der Psychotherapie: der Wandel vom psychoanalytischen zum systemischen Paradigma. *Familiendynamik* 5: 2-41.

Haley, J. (1976): *Problem-Solving Therapy*, San Francisco (Jossey-Bass).

Hoffman, L. (1981): *Foundations of Family Therapy*. New York (Basic Books)

Hoffman, L. (1990): Constructing Realities: An art of lenses. *Family Process* 29: 1-12.

Hoffman, L. (1993): *Exchanging Voices: A Collaborative Approach to Family Therapy*. London (Karnac).

Hoffman, L. (2000): Eine gemeinschaftsorientierte Perspektive de Therapie. *Zeitschrift für systemische Therapie* 18: 152.160.

Jackson, D. D. (1981): The Question of Family Homeostasis. International Journal of Family Therapy 3: 5-15.

LeDoux, J. (2002): *Synaptic Self. How Our Brains Become Who We Are*. New York (Penguin).

Ludewig, K. (1987): 10 + 1 Leitsätze bzw. Leitfragen. Grundzüge einer systemisch begründeten Klinischen Theorie im psychosozialen Bereich. *Zeitschrift für systemische Therapie* 5: 178–191.

Ludewig, K. (1988): Welches Wissen soll Wissen sein? Reflexionen eines Praktikers zu Fragen einer systemischen Forschung. *Zeitschrift für systemische Therapie* 6: 122-127.

Ludewig, K. (1992): *Systemische Therapie. Grundlagen klinischer Theorie und Praxis*. Stuttgart (Klett--Cotta), rev. 2015; (Polish 1995): *Terapia systemowa. Podstawy teoretyczne i praktyka*. Gdánsk (Gdańskie wydawnictwo psychologiczne).

Ludewig, K. (1999): »Überlebensdiagnostik« – eine systemische Option. *Kontext* 30 (2), 121–135.

Ludewig, K. (2005): *Einführung die theoretischen Grundlagen der systemischen Therapie*. Heidelberg (Carl-Auer) (an unpublished Polish translation exists at the Wielkopolskie Towarzystwo Terapii Systemowej WTTS, Poznań, Poland).

Ludewig, K. (2011): Psychische Systeme – ein nützliches Konzept für die systemische Praxis? *Familiendynamik* 36: 222-238.

Ludewig, K. (2013): *Entwicklungen systemischer Therapie. Einblicke, Entzerrungen, Ausblicke*. Heidelberg (Carl-Auer).

Luhmann, N. (1971): Moderne Systemtheorien als Form gesamtgesellschaftlicher Analyse. In: Habermas, J. and N. Luhmann: *Theorie der Gesellschaft oder Sozialtechnologie – Was leistet die Systemforschung*? Frankfurt a. M. (Suhrkamp), p. 7-24.

Luhmann, N. (1984): *Soziale Systeme. Grundriss einer allgemeinen Theorie*. Frankfurt (Suhrkamp).

Luhmann, N. (1995): *Social Systems.* Stanford University Press, Stanford California, United States.

Luhmann, N. (1997): *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt (Suhrkamp).

MacGregor R, A. M. Ritchie, A.C. Serrano, F.P. Schuster, E.C. McDanald, H.A. Goolishian (1964): *Multiple Impact Therapy with Families*. New York (McGraw-Hill).

Maturana, H. R. (1976): Biology of language: The epistemology of reality [in:] Miller G. A., E. Lenneberg (eds.): *Psychology and Biology of Language and Thought*. New York (Academic Press).]

Maturana, H. R. (ed.) (1982): *Erkennen: Die Organisation und Verkörperung von Wirklichkeit*. Braunschweig (Vieweg).

Maturana, H. R. (1988): Reality: The search for objectivity or the quest for a compelling argument. *Irish Journal of Psychology* 9, 25–82.

Maturana, H. R. (1990): *Biología de la Cognición y Epistemología*. Temuco (Univ. de La Frontera)

Maturana, H. R, F. J. Varela (1972): De máquinas y seres vivos. Santiago de Chile (Editorial Universitaria); Engl. (1975), The Organization of the Living: A Theory of a Living Organization. International *Journal of Man-Machine Studies* 7: 313-332.

Maturana, H. Varela, F. J. (1980) *Autopoeisis and Cognition. The Realization of the Living*. Dordrecht, Holland/ Boston, United States/ London, UK. Reidel Publishing Co. Boston Studies in the Philosophy of science, 42.

Maturana, H. R., F. J. Varela (1984): *El árbol del conocimiento*. Santiago (Editorial universitaria); Engl. (1987), *The Tree of Knowledge. Biological Basis of Human Understanding*. Boston (Shambhala Publ.).

Minuchin, S. (1974): Families and Family Therapy. Harvard (University Press).

Roth, G. (2001): *Fühlen, Denken, Handeln. Wie das Gehirn unser Verhalten steuert*. Frankfurt/ Main (Suhrkamp).

Selvini Palazzoli, M., L. Boscolo, G. Cecchin & G. Prata (1975): *Paradosso e controparadosso*. Milano: Feltrinelli; Engl. (1978): *Paradox and Counterparadox*. New York (Aronson).

Stierlin, H. (1983): Familientherapie: Wissenschaft oder Kunst? *Familiendynamik* 8: 364-377.

Varela, F. J. (1979): *Principles of Biological Autonomy*. New York (Elsevier North Holland).

Varela, F. J., E. Thompson, E. Rosch (1991): *The Embodied Mind*. Cambridge/Mass. (MIT-Press).

Wahrig (1997): Deutsches Wörterbuch. Gütersloh (Bertelsmann), 6th ed.

Watzlawick, P., J. H. Beavin, D. D. Jackson (1967): *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, New York (Norton).

Watzlawick, P., J. H. Weakland u. R. Fisch (1974): *Change: Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution*. New York (Norton).

Welter-Enderlin, R., B. Hildenbrand (1996): *Systemische Therapie als Begegnung*. Stuttgart (Klett-Cotta).

White, M., D. Epston (1989): *Literate Means to Therapeutic Ends*. Adelaide (Dulwich Centre Publ).

Wynne, L. C., M. T. Singer (1965): Denkstörung und Familienbeziehung bei Schizophrenen. Parts I-IV. *Psyche* 19: 82-160.

Przemysław Żebrok
University of John Paul II in Krakow

Contemporary means of communication in educational institutions

ABSTRACT

The subject of the paper deals with the issues of communication in educational institutions. Effective exchange of information plays a key role in achieving the desired results in every organization. This depends largely on the tools, language and the way the content is delivered. In the modern world communication is increasingly carried out by means of digital communication. Examples include e-registers, organizational sheets, electronic mail and websites, which have become the main tools for communicating information in educational institutions.

Introduction

Every day we witness significant transformations in all areas of life. They affect the entire socio-cultural order. One of the elements of this order is education, which reflects it, co-creates it, remains under its influence and is subject to the process of shaping a new rationality – a postmodern breakthrough [Rusek, Górniok-Naglik, Oleksy 2008: 9]. A technological revolution is also taking place in educational institutions, and concerns both the educational and organizational spheres. These transformations largely concern the areas related to ICT.

Functioning in a modern school requires mastering the ability not only to search for information, but also to select, organize and critically evaluate the usefulness of the acquired content. Support has been provided by modern computer, network and telecommunication technologies, currently used when working with information and communication. In order to meet the current requirements of

civilization, all participants of the school organization should be competent in the effective use of these technologies. They are a necessary support in practically all processes taking place at school. Skilful use of ICT tools increases work efficiency, the quality of education and allows for more effective communication [Żebrok, Smyrnova-Trybulska 2015: 106].

The aim of the article is to indicate the changes that have taken place in educational institutions in recent years. These transformations are associated primarily with the emergence of new ICT solutions in these institutions, which in turn is associated with different ways of communication and the use of innovative techniques and tools in everyday work. A few concise paragraphs present the results of previous research on the areas related to the use of modern communication tools in schools. These are the observations of both the author and other researchers. Due to the limitations, this paper only signals the problem. The author touches upon the discussed issues and the results of the research are presented briefly. In addition, the article focuses only on the area of school organization and management, leaving the issue of the use of ICT in the teaching process for a separate analysis.

Communication in school organization

Issues related to communication are an important and topical subject, because the processes of information exchange have become an important element of the activity of every institution, including education. An efficient communication system is not only an inseparable part of the organization, but also a condition for a proper division of decision-making activities and is directly related to the basic functions of management: planning, organization, motivation, control.

In recent years, the development of ICT has contributed to many changes in the communication processes in organizations, including the popularization of electronic communications. It has become an essential element of the activity (equipment) of every educational institution, both in its didactic and administrative areas.

Each organisation is somehow connected to an environment that is classified according to the degree of variability and homogeneity, among other things. Recently, this space has been characterized by a high degree of uncertainty, therefore it is often referred to as a *turbulent environment* due to the dynamics of change [Webber 1990: 393]. It includes dimensions and forces, which have not been defined in a clear manner, among which the organization operates and which may

influence it. Educational institutions are a particular type of organisation. They operate as an open system, i.e. they exchange certain resources, including information, with the environment. Schools are situated in an environment that has an economic, technical, socio-cultural, political and legal dimension. A characteristic feature of the current environment is its variability, and the phenomena occurring in it are unpredictable. This gives rise to both opportunities and threats, and makes specific demands on the organisation. If one considers the *turbulent* feature of the environment, it concerns mainly the technological element. First of all, it concerns the processes that take place in the rapidly changing IT industry. Rapid changes are also taking place in learning technology. There is talk of an IT revolution that is taking place in the school environment, but its effects are also felt inside the school.

In the process of information exchange between people, A. Augustynek distinguishes several types of communication: interpersonal, intrapersonal, social, mediated [Haber 2011: 66]. The latter, i.e. CMC (computer mediated communication), which is mainly the subject of this paper, means communication through computers. This type of communication is also referred to as face-to (via the monitor) – face or face-to-monitor communication.

In the analysis of definitions one has to mention issues related to vertical and horizontal communication. This phenomenon is particularly visible in schools. It concerns the flow of information from the director to employees and back and communication between employees. The latter is referred to as a *grapevine* or an informal communication network in an organisation. The communication processes also take place between pupils, teachers and pupils, teachers and parents, etc.

In order for a school to achieve its objectives, it must be able to communicate effectively with all those involved in the school organisation. There is no doubt that the latest means of information exchange have significantly modified traditional ways of communication. The manner in which information is exchanged and communication tools themselves are changing radically. The Internet has become such a tool, providing virtually unlimited data transfer on a global scale. An important phenomenon in modern schools is the increasingly common resignation from traditional forms of communication in favour of digital communication (e-mail, e-register, e-intelligence). Websites, which have practically become an indispensable element of the schools' functioning, are also a popular form of content transfer.

It should be added that in order for communication to be precise it is necessary to communicate effectively, i.e. to send a message in such a way that the message received is as close as possible to the intended message [Griffin 1996: 554]. This is particularly important in relations with school stakeholders. An example

of ineffective communication can be communication by e-mail or text messages. A message is sent into the digital space without a guarantee of its reception. It is also worth considering the notions of *communication* and *communicating*, listed among the basic types of interpersonal communication. *Communication* is understood as sending a message into the information space with the intention of being received, while *communicating* is characterized by the existence of feedback, with a temporary reversal of roles [Haber 2011: 66].

Communication tools in contemporary schools

Electronic mail. In recent years, electronic mail has become one of the main tools for communicating information. It is an instrument that enables communication with the environment and provides easy access to information. The speed of information transfer, widespread availability, the ability to transfer multimedia files, the capacity of the channel and virtually no costs – these are elements that have significantly determined the universality of e-mails. The main advantages also include the lack of space and time limitations, communication does not hinder the location of the sender and recipient. Usually, this type of communication is asynchronous, which means that it does not require the coexistence of those communicating at the same time. The sender sends the information, which is cached in some place and then collected by the recipient [Wróbel 2014: 2/44].

This method of communication forces technological progress, but it should be remembered that it does not always meet the requirements of effectiveness. Excessive and incompetent use of electronic mail may cause a number of negative consequences – primarily disruptions in communication. It may consist in shortening the message, lack of non-verbal information and limited and delayed feedback [Wróbel 2014: 2/44].

Most respectable companies have their own domains, and therefore, individual mail addresses adapted to the position in the organization. Each message is addressed to the right person, reducing information overload and chaos. If the mail is not addressed to a specific recipient, it is very likely that it will not be read. Therefore, there is a risk that in a multitude of e-mails, an important message will be omitted.

Research carried out by the author[1] shows [Żebrok 2014: 211] that most schools do not have addresses assigned to particular departments, people, func-

---

[1] The aim of the research was to analyze the communication processes in educational institutions with the use of electronic mail in the area of the Bielsko-Biała Branch of the Board of Education. These topics result from the conviction that electronic mail is the basic and most common tool for

tions. Schools have one postal address, so the information usually reaches the computer in the secretary's office, thus delegating the manner in which it is disposed of to the secretary. The secretary becomes the decision-making person (he/she transmits the message to the school management, another recipient or deletes it). Often, the transmission of information is done by printing the e-mail content, which generates unnecessary costs. In most schools, messages are stored in a single folder, despite the fact that individual e-mails are addressed to different people (management, teachers, staff, authorising officer, pedagogue, psychologist, speech therapist, etc.). This makes it difficult to select and find the right content. Research also confirms that school directors often delegate mail service to secretaries, deputies, and less often to IT specialists. Many people have access to one mailbox.

First and foremost, electronic mail should be efficient. However, more and more attention is paid to such important features as speed, capacity, a friendly name. The offer of free e-mail accounts provided by various services is very rich, but it is often associated with the consent to receive unwanted messages and advertisements, and the possibility of data transfer is also limited. Free e-mail accounts are offered by such portals as Onet, Wirtualna Polska or Interia. Most schools use these companies. On the basis of the research [Żebrok 2014: 211], in the area of the Bielsko-Biała branch of the Board of Education, 466 schools (i.e. 71%) use free e-mail accounts out of all 657 analysed. Most addresses belong to the Onet group – 178. The most popular among free accounts is wp.pl (Wirtualna Polska) – 106 e-mail accounts. Among them, 8 belong to private persons (usually school directors). Only 60 schools have their own domain.

E-registers. E-registers have recently become very popular in schools. The possibility of keeping electronic records is specified in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 29 August 2014 on the manner of keeping documentation on the course of teaching, educational and care activities by public kindergartens, schools and institutions and types of such documentation (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1170).

An electronic register is a computer software that is used to collect all kinds of information about the work of a school. Lesson topics, attendance, grades, learning process, personal data, etc. are recorded. Additionally, e-registers are equipped with various functions – they can print certificates, school ID cards, grade sheets, letters, synchronize data with other applications. The register is no longer just a tool for writing lesson topics and documenting student attendance. More and

---

the exchange of information in education. The author's intention was to try to answer the question about the degree of effectiveness and professionalism in using this tool. The research was conducted in 2013.

more often companies offer powerful tools to support the processes of school or-
ganizational management, often correlated with other applications. One of the
most important advantages of the e-register is to improve attendance in classes.
Computer software allows parents to be immediately informed about the pupil's
absence from school. Most companies offer applications for smartphones, so when
teachers systematically document attendance, parents can track their child's at-
tendance in class in real time, the child's grades or behaviour also in real time.

Research carried out by the author[2] proves [Żebrok, Smyrnova-Trybulska
2015: 105] that school employees are convinced that the quality of school work
will be improved through the use of modern technologies. They believe that e-reg-
isters are useful for the teacher's work and contribute to the improvement of teach-
ers' communication with parents. They are also convinced that the entire school
community is destined to a digital school – the IT revolution will soon force all
schools to use e-registers. In conclusion, there is no turning back on tools such as
the electronic register at school due to social, technological, organisational and
technical aspects, humanistic aspects and the need to improve the quality of school
management and the educational process.

School websites. As part of the research[3] [Smyrnova-Trybulska, Krupa 2011: 5]
the websites of schools in the Cieszyn district were evaluated qualitatively and
quantitatively. The sites were evaluated according to twelve criteria and the scores
developed for the research: town/website address; administration (school or other
institution); website/information update; downloadable materials (scenarios, les-
son plans, presentations, articles, etc.), the possibility of uploading materials by
teachers; the possibility of uploading materials by pupils (e.g. forums, chats, blogs,
Wiki); e-learning service; photo-gallery; IT tool used to create the school website
(HTML, CMS); contact details; graphic design. Taking into account the overall im-
pression of all the sites analysed, it can be seen that the vast majority of them were
of a high standard. The services were characterized by an extensive graphic design
(e.g. gallery). Most of the pages offer the possibility to download files. A positive
phenomenon is that schools treat their websites as their showcase.

---

[2] The aim of the research was to analyze selected aspects of functioning of the electronic register
in educational institutions, and at the same time to verify the effectiveness of information transfer by
means of new tools introduced into schools. The main research problem was included in the ques-
tion: what is the effectiveness and level of communication with the use of such tools as an e-register?
The research was conducted in the years 2015-2016.

[3] The results of the research concerning the websites were derived from the report: "Informa-
tion and educational space on the Internet in lower-secondary schools in the Cieszyn district, cur-
rent status and future prospects: research report", Smyrnova-Trybulska E., Krupa K., Cieszyn 2011.

Among the negative features, it should be pointed out that most websites lack any interactivity. Only single websites provide forums or the possibility to use a contact form. A big disadvantage is also the lack of multimedia materials. Among all the criteria, the lowest results were achieved in terms of access to e-learning. As the results of the research have shown, most schools do not yet implement distance learning in any form. Only three websites contained additional materials for students to use outside the classroom.

Organisational sheets. An organisational sheet is a document that defines the detailed organisation of teaching, education and care in each educational establishment. It is the basis for determining the weekly schedule of educational activities, an important element of work planning and school financing. The sheet is prepared by the school director and approved by the representative of the managing body. The rules for the preparation of the organisational sheet are set out in Article 110 of the Act of 14 December 2016 – educational law (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 996, as further amended) and § 17 of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 March 2017 on the detailed organisation of public schools and public kindergartens (Journal of Laws of 2017, item 649).

The traditional organisational sheet was prepared in paper form, but the development of new technologies also contributes to changes in the preparation of the document. There are new programming instruments on the market, which give the possibility to prepare organizational sheets in electronic form. A very important advantage of these tools is the use of web technologies, which create integrated systems supporting education. These applications make it possible to plan school work more effectively and manage it more efficiently. They also enable better control of the managing authority. This mainly concerns the number of employees, the number of educational activities financed by the local government, compliance with the framework curricula. Therefore, the authorities running educational institutions more and more often decide on this form of preparation of sheets. On the basis of the analysis carried out in the Cieszyn district, it can be concluded that the majority of the authorities in charge decided to switch to the electronic form of preparation of the organisational sheet.

Conclusions

Electronic mail, organisational sheets, e-registers and websites have become a frequently used medium for providing information in educational institutions. The widespread use of such tools has become an irreversible fact, but the level of com-

munication still seems to be unsatisfactory. Too little attention is paid to the professional use of these tools. First of all, the lack of professionalism in the names of e-mail accounts and the selection of hosting services is striking. It is also unacceptable for private e-mails to be used as official school addresses. This causes serious complications, e.g. in the event of a change in the position of director. A large part of school managers do not keep pace with the development of electronic services and the requirements of modern organizations. A serious shortcoming is the stoppage in receiving mail during the Christmas holidays, winter holidays and summer holidays. Despite breaks in education, each school has specific organizational tasks to fulfil. Furthermore, school websites lack interactivity and e-learning training.

Many companies offering electronic documentation tools have appeared on the market. There are therefore legitimate concerns about the degree of professionalization of these companies, the ways in which data is secured, etc. When introducing electronic registers in schools, technical support must be provided. It is important for the school to have an adequate number of computers and a secure and reliable Internet connection. It is important to provide professional help for teachers and the possibility of consultation. It also seems important to choose the right software, adapted to the needs and possibilities of the school, so that the tool can be used in its full potential (printing of certificates, sheets, school ID cards, etc.).

The use of information technology in education is a permanent and irreversible phenomenon. Technological progress has forced school organizations to use and provide access to the Internet with all its consequences. Educational institutions have naturally switched to digital data transmission and the use of new tools for information exchange has become a natural and everyday activity. These tools are used in intra-school communication, in inter-school relations, in contacts with pupils, parents and institutions. At the same time, the existing forms of communication, such as: paper student registers, faxes, traditional mail, etc., are abandoned.

Bibliography

Augustynek A. (2011), Komunikacja interpersonalna w relacjach społecznych, in: Lesław H. Haber, Komunikowanie i zarządzanie w społeczeństwie informacyjnym, Krakow.

DeTienne K.B. (2009), Komunikacja elektroniczna, Wolters Kluwer, Warsaw.

Griffin R. W. (1996), Podstawy zarządzania organizacjami, Warsaw.

Grzenia J. (2007), Komunikacja językowa w Internecie, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw.

Haber L. H. (2011, Komunikowanie i zarządzanie w społeczeństwie informacyjnym. Wybrane zagadnienia, Krakow.

Rusek H., Górniok-Naglik J., Oleksy J. (2008), Oświata w otoczeniu burzliwym. Migotliwe konteksty i perspektywy rozwoju współczesnej edukacji, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice.

Smyrnova-Trybulska E., Krupa K. (2011), Information and educational space on the Internet in lower-secondary schools in the Cieszyn district, current status and future prospects: research report, Cieszyn.

Szpunar M. (2006), Rozważania na temat komunikacji internetowej, in: Mazur J., Rzeszutko-Iwan M. (ed.), Teksty kultury – oblicza komunikacji w XXI wieku, Lublin

Webber R. A. (1990), Zasady zarządzania organizacjami, Warsaw.

Wróbel P. (2012), Konsekwencje stosowania poczty elektronicznej z perspektywy organizacji i pracowników, E-mentor No. 2 (44).

Wróbel P. (2011), Wybrane uboczne skutki wykorzystania poczty elektronicznej w organizacjach, "Przegląd Organizacji", No. 7-8.

Żebrok P., Smyrnova-Trybulska E. (2015), IT Tools – Good Practice of Effective Use in Education, Katowice-Cieszyn.

Żebrok P. (2014), The electronic mail as a means of communication at the educational institutions. Based on the example of Bielsko-Biała Branch of the Board of Education area, Edukacja Humanistyczna, Szczecin.

Żebrok P. (2014), Przeciążenia informacyjne i komunikacyjne w organizacjach na przykładzie instytucji oświatowych, in: Kapitał ludzki wobec wyzwań współczesności, Wziątek-Staśko A. (ed.), Dąbrowa Górnicza.

Żebrok P. (2018), Rodzina w systemie społeczno-kulturowym Śląska Cieszyńskiego. Studium teoretyczno-badawcze, Kraków.

Agnieszka Bzymek
Ateneum University in Gdańsk

To Live in Harmony with Oneself. De-somatisation and Sated Childhood Hunger

Keywords

biographical method, narrative interview, *de-somatisation*, seniors, childhood

Abstract

The inspiration for this article was a project entitled "Crossing Borders: Activation of Disabled Seniors" carried out in the Daily Nursing Home run by Stowarzyszenie Przyjaciół Strzyży (Strzyża Friends' Association) in Gdańsk, in the period between 15 June and 15 December 2015. The project focused on eliciting memories about the seniors' past with the use of a biographical method and a narrative interview. The problems concentrate on the issue of de-somatisation and possibilities and modes of compensation. Referring to the therapeutic role of the biographical method, the author tries to find out if creating narratives supports the acquisition of sense of life and acceptance of the past in the context of traumatic childhood experiences.

Introduction

"Crossing Borders: Activation of Disabled Seniors", a project implemented in the Daily Nursing Home run by the Strzyża Friends' Association in Gdańsk between 15 June and 15 December 2015, induced the author to analyse the issue of acceptance of own past in the context of traumatic childhood experiences. Furthermore, it provided an opportunity to promote the biographical method among elderly people and bore fruit in "Biographic Memoirs" ("Wspomnienia biograficzne") which were published for own use of nine participants in the project.

Interest in the issue of self-acceptance of elderly people in the context of own history that includes traumatic events prompted the author to conduct studies

which became the subject matter of this paper. The chosen subject has allowed the author to perform a double function, namely a theoretician and a practitioner, in the realm of work with people. The performed study relies on the issue of *de-somatisation*, which is described below. The research problem tackled by the author consisted in an attempt at finding an answer to the question whether the feeling of self-acceptance is possible in spite of difficult and painful experiences in life. In line with the adopted methodology, no hypotheses were formulated, enabling free accounts of the participants through the narrative interview.

Moreover, the idea of creating memoirs of Gdańsk seniors grew from the author's experience of applying the biographical method in scientific work. The author of the paper, convinced about justifiability and unique therapeutic properties of the method described below, created a project that allowed for carrying out the narrative interviews in the area of quality studies. Workshops with seniors devoted to recounting own stories turned out to be a unique time for building relations between the researcher and the respondents; furthermore, they became an opportunity for mutual understanding and dialogue, and finally contributed to coming to terms with often difficult and silenced or suppressed moments from own past. Thus, the author solidified her belief about the auto-therapeutic power of recounting own life, extricating memories from the nooks of memory and looking at them from a completely different perspective. This resulted in the decision of making the seniors the respondents of the study, caused by the desire of examining the significance of the biographical method in seniors who experienced a number of harsh events related to the difficult history of their country and their families. The conference organised in the "Strzyża Friends' Association" Daily Nursing Home in Gdańsk in December 2015 was aimed at recapitulating the project and presenting its effects in the form of printed memoirs; it also provided an opportunity to show the joy and the satisfaction of the participants, as well as greater openness towards other seniors, expressed in the desire to share the story of their lives.

This paper presents the study methodology selected by the author, its theoretical context, analysis of interviews and conclusions.

Study Methodology

According to Teresa Bauman, the autobiographical method, alternately also known as the biographical method: "is a symbolic message, created by an understanding and interpreting individual, in specific circumstances, in reference to specific val-

ues"[1]. The tradition of autobiographical narratives dates back to the ancient times: "the desire to talk about ourselves has accompanied us for hundreds of years, probably since the moment when writing as a creative act adopted the form of a story of one's life, recounted in the first person, with an intention of saving specific experiences and impressions from obliteration"[2]. In the modern times, the autobiographical method in social studies still has its promoters including, *inter alia*, Pierre Dominicè or Duccio Demetrio, who analyse autobiography in the context of a man's transforming identity[3].

The concept of biographical studies which, following Ewa Skibińska, the author of this paper formulates as a "written account of the story of one's life"[4], in Polish sociology starts from Florian Znaniecki, who is considered the author of the autobiographical method. Znaniecki, together with William Thomas, wrote a work entitled "Polish Peasant in Europe and America" ("Chłop polski w Europie i Ameryce") using the autobiographical method to present a monograph devoted to Polish immigrants and aimed at understanding the social phenomena accompanying their lives.

The autobiographical method allows for seeing a man in his/ her uniqueness, resulting both from the individual existence and simultaneously from the perception of this existence from the perspective of the narrative created by him/ her, which is inseparable from such existence; using the words of Jerome Bruner: "Narrative imitates life, life imitates narrative"[5].

As mentioned several times before, creating stories plays a therapeutic function, allowing one to take a look at own life from a different perspective and to make changes. Anthony Giddens claims: "Autobiography is not an ordinary chronicle of past events, but a corrective interference in the past. One of sample aspects of such interference of the individual into own past is taking care of "*oneself as a child*"[6]. Finding one's own internal child that awaits support acquires a therapeutic dimension, offers a feeling of strength and causality: "everybody who talks about their life, keeps it in their hands"[7] as noted by D. Demetrio. In another pub-

---

[1] T. Bauman, *O możliwości zastosowania metod jakościowych w badaniach pedagogicznych*, [in:] T. Pilch, *Zasady badań pedagogicznych*, Żak, Warsaw 1995, p. 68.

[2] D. Demetrio, *Autobiografia. Terapeutyczny wymiar pisania o sobie*, Impuls, Kraków 2000, p. 9.

[3] E. M. Skibińska, *Mikroświaty kobiet. Relacje autobiograficzne*, Wydawnictwo ITE PIB, Warsaw 2006, pp. 11-28.

[4] Ibidem, p. 8.

[5] J. Bruner, *Życie jako narracja*, [in:] *Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny*, 1990 No. 4, p. 4.

[6] A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość*, PWN, Warsaw 2002, p. 101.

[7] D. Demetrio, *Autobiografia…*, op. cit., p. 9.

lication, Demetrio calls returns to the past "concluding an autobiographical pact"[8] with one's memories and a travel: "an antidote, a cure-all, a form of treatment, auto-therapy"[9]. On the other hand, J. Trzebiński writes that "auto-narratives provide man's life with shape"[10].

The author of this study based the biographical narratives of seniors on the assumption that life is a narrative[11]. The sources of narrativism are to be searched for in the narrative psychology and in the philosophical anthropology from the turn of the 20th century[12]. P. Dominicè, thinking about the causes of applying the biographical method, draws attention to the ageing of the society and, in relation to this, a new look at the life cycle; furthermore, economic crises and unemployment often induce a new look at own biography[13].

From the point of view of the participants of the project, the narrative interview was an opportunity of taking a look at own past from the perspective of time, which was metaphorically captured by Marcel Proust, quoted by D. Demetrio: "Precise determination of the height of the cathedral is possible at dusk, not from a close distance, not from the road, which is filled with traffic and commotion, not from a place where the view is obstructed by the neighbouring houses, but from a certain distance, when we are looking at the city in solitude, which resembles a figure with a blurred shape"[14].

During the interviews, the author of the paper used the autobiographical narrative interview, which is one of the forms preferred in biographical studies. By choosing the quality methodology characterised above and reaching to the concept of a grounded theory of Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss (1967),[15] the author embeds her studies in the biographical method with the use of an autobiographical interview. The interview is a certain form of a free or in-depth conversation, with the use of which the respondent recounts his/ her life, creating an

---

[8] D. Demetrio, *Pedagogika pamięci*, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Akademii Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej w Łodzi, Łódź 2009), p. 94.

[9] Ibidem, p. 102.

[10] J. Trzebiński, *Narracja jako sposób rozmienia świata*, Gdańsk 2002, GWP, p. 43.

[11] J. Bruner, *Życie jako…*, Op. cit., p. 4.

[12] M. Straś-Romanowska, *Zmiana pozycji narracyjnej podmiotu jako przejaw jego rozwoju. Analiza biograficzna wybranych postaci literackich*, [in:] E. Chmielnicka-Kuter, M. Puchalska-Wasyl, (ed.), *Polifonia osobowości*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2005, p. 89.

[13] P. Dominicè, *Uczyć się z życia. Biografia edukacyjna w edukacji dorosłych*, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej w Łodzi, Łódź 2006, p. 46.

[14] D. Demetrio, *Autobiografia …*, op. cit., p. 41.

[15] Footnote after: M. Malewski, *Teorie andragogiczne. Metodologia teoretyczności dyscypliny naukowej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 1998, p. 72.

improvised autobiographical story[16]. The interview relied on instructions focusing on the issue of childhood memories.

When starting the analysis of data, the author takes into account the opinion of Frank Ankersmit, who claims: "We interpret not only when we have too little data, but also when we have too much data. (…) Our age, with its' excess of information, is rather facing problems with organisation of knowledge and information than accomplishing it, has every reason to take interest in the effects of narratives"[17]. The author made a conscious decision to analyse data instead of a full transcription, where the compiled systems "disregard the actual situation and lose information"[18].

De-somatisation and Hunger of Parent: Theoretical Context

Pursuing the issue of de-somatisation in scientific literature, Katarzyna Schier and Marina Zalewska point out to the theory of Max Schur[19], who notes that infants react to the disruption of homoeostasis by physiological reactions, due to the fact that the somatic and psychical structures of their psychical apparatus are insufficiently diversified. It is only in the course of development, together with the maturing of cognitive mechanisms and ability of the ego to control emotions and urges, that de-somatisation takes place, i.e. diversification of somatic and psychical structures. In reference books, one may find a genesis of psychosomatic disorders, where in the case of a trauma experienced in early childhood, failure of de-somatisation takes place[20]. A growing infant gives an answer to the world by simultaneous reactions of the body and the psyche. When it cries, its body flexes and becomes red, thus sending a signal to the closest people about the infant's needs. K. Schier claims that the development of emotion regulation, consisting in handling of difficult states, means a transfer from the reaction of the body to the reaction of the psyche. The phenomenon described above, understood as *de-somatisation* (from

[16] M. Prawda, *Biograficzne odtwarzanie rzeczywistości. (O koncepcji badań biograficznych Fritza Schütze)*, [in] "Studia Socjologiczne", 1989, No. 4, p. 88.

[17] F. Ankersmit, *Narracja, reprezentacja, doświadczenie. Studia z teorii historiografii*, Wydawnictwo UNIVERSITAS, Kraków 2004, pp. 55-61.

[18] I. K. Helling, *Metoda badań biograficznych*, [in:] J. Włodarek, M. Ziółkowski, ed., *Metoda biograficzna w socjologii*, PWN, Warsaw – Poznań, 1990, p. 27.

[19] K. Schier, M. Zalewska, *Krewni i znajomi Edypa. Kliniczne studia dzieci i ich rodziców*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw 2002, p. 81.

[20] Ibidem, pp. 80-81.

soma to the psyche)[21] requires a mature role of the parent, leading out difficult emotions from the level of the body to the mind. Absence of the process of de-somatisation results in disrupted regulation of feelings and, in consequence, interferes with verbal expression of emotions trapped in the body.

Over ten years of experimental studies conducted by scientific centres from Israel and the United States, under the supervision of Professor Ruth Feldman from Bar-Ilan University proved that protective reactions of the mother during the first half year of the child's life determine the child's emotional behaviour as far as in the tenth year of the child's life and furthermore affect the cognitive and the executive skills. On the other hand, absence of close contacts with the mother results in problems with expressing emotions and susceptibility to neuroses and anxiety[22].

Deprivation of touch and physical warmth is a traumatic experience for an infant. In line with the development of body stages, the formation of the "I" takes place, first of all, through *proprioceptive* experiences, felt via receptors positioned in the skin, muscles and joints[23]. The hands of the mother determine the borders of the infant's body area, experiencing even the slightest touch. Mutual harmonisation of the child and the mother who is empathic towards the child allows for reception of signals from the infant's body. Children often fantasise about having one body with the mother, the so-called *one-body fantasy*[24] which derives from the foetal period.

Katarzyna Schier notes that the image of the body requires separation of the physical representation of the "I" and the internal image of the carer[25]. In practice, this means creation of a "fixed object" in the mind, i.e. maintenance of an internal image of the carer during his/ her absence and combination of the "good" and the "bad" object into a single, full representation[26]. Even if the object – mother – does not gratify the needs, thus causing a feeling of discomfort and tension, it does not have to be replaced with another one – thanks to this, building a consistent body image becomes possible, irrespective of the opinion of others or external circumstances. Thus, the psychical representation of the body leads to the development of the psychical "I", uniting the body and the mind. It is expressed even more strongly in the following opinion: "It is only when a given person attempts to separate and

---

[21] K. Schier, *Piękne brzydactwo. Psychologiczna problematyka obrazu ciała i jego zaburzeń*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw 2010.

[22] https://research.biu.ac.il/researcher/professor-ruth-feldman/.

[23] K. Schier, *Piękne…*, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

[24] Ibidem, p. 13.

[25] Ibidem, p. 224.

[26] Ibidem.

move away from the internal object whose good image was protected for most of her/ his life, such person may recover her/ his body and, in consequence of it, its beauty"[27].

Gordon Allport claimed that the experience of own body is an "anchor of our self-awareness"[28] and an aspect of a man's mature personality. A chronic body tension and constant stiffness, which are a result of lack of parental love, require a healing touch, experiencing of which becomes possible thanks to body psycho-therapy[29], deriving from the first body psychotherapist, Pierre Janet. The therapy relies on an assumption that the body accumulates emotions remembered in a somatic manner and is a source of information about the man's condition.

Furthermore, work with the body is of primary significance, for example gymnastics, massage, dancing, relaxation techniques, yoga or tai-chi, work with voice aimed at "awakening" hidden emotions, movement therapy and music therapy, dog therapy and swimming which is an experience of an "inner touch", being held by the water, trusting the water, experiencing naked skin, cold and warmth[30]. Being among people is also of vital importance, building relations with the other person throughout one's life. The author, who works in the Local Support Centre with seniors, is convinced that this facility fulfils such role. Here, relations among the seniors become closer; they experience contact by spending time together on a daily basis and through social integration in a number of undertaken psycho-physical and emotional activities. It is particularly clear during cyclically organised events that integrate the community of seniors, such as individual celebrations, anniversaries or centre-related festivities.

Building an intimate relationship with a partner also offers support: "[…] a romantic relationship is one of the guarantors of physical and mental health"[31]. Being in a relationship is an opportunity for mutual development, growing by learning the other person, opening to the entire range of feelings hitherto enclosed in the body. This is where the author is also trying to find compensation activities, which the participants of these studies might have experienced: their experience of closeness in adult life, as wives and mothers, along with their professional work seems to be a sufficient mode for experiencing being loved, accepted and meaningful. Here, the author finds a justification for the theory of Carl G. Jung who claims that

---

[27] Ibidem, p. 224.
[28] G. Allport, *Osobowość i religia*, Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, Warsaw 1988, p. 39.
[29] K. Schier, *Piękne…*, op. cit., p. 206.
[30] Ibidem, pp. 213-216.
[31] Ibidem, p. 225.

the Archetype of the Great Mother and the Wise Old Man[32] may be found not only in the primeval relations, but in the experiences important for us, women/ men, throughout our lives. Elaborating on this issue, the author claims that it may be suspected that the experiences of deprivation of relations stand a chance of compensation in the next stages of life by significant individuals that appear in various moments of life. Consequences of the author's meetings and talks with the project beneficiaries are presented below.

Interviews and Analysis

Based on the performed studies of reference books pertaining to the quality methodology, which the author discussed in one of the sections above, the participants were asked questions about their childhood and youth memories. Their responses are coded with the capital letter K and a relevant digit, e.g. K1, K2, preserving the original style of the utterance.

In line with the adopted methodology, no hypotheses were formulated, allowing for free accounts of the participants through the narrative interview. Based on the interviews, the author has distinguished categories that appear in all interviews and that are subjected to analysis: childhood, "hunger" of a parent, professional and social activity, as well as relations with close people.

The subject of childhood seems to be the leitmotif in the seniors' accounts. Undoubtedly, the time when their childhood took place is also an important element. The period of war was strongly ingrained in their memory, which is testified by the subsequent accounts with memories. Definitely, difficult situations threatening the feeling of safety simultaneously pushed them to look for places where it was possible to retain relative stability. One of the ladies recounted: "(...) when the Germans went away, the Russians appeared. With the whole family, we sat hidden in the cellar under the larder. We had a lamp, some baked bread and cured meat" [K2]. Another respondent had equally painful memories: "I was the youngest and I was four years' old when the war broke out; I remember that there was the Russian front line on the one side and the German front line on the other in the Białowieża Forest; bombs would fall on our land, ninety-six shells on a 12-hectare field and later the soil gave no crops for three years, it was so burnt out. The house was burnt down and the stable too. We slept in the cellar where we kept potatoes. Later, we went to live in a barrack with no heating, so my dad started to build a wooden

---

32 C. G. Jung, *Archetypy i symbole*, Czytelnik, Warsaw 1976, p. 90.

house" [K1]. Difficult and painful situations were probably conducive to the desire of keeping relations closer and searching for a safe haven. Other people became important, provided they were not enemies, with whom one had to fight. Another lady recounts: "(...) during the round-ups, men were taken to work in Germany. Women were also taken to labour camps," and she continues her story: "After a few days, the Germans came and they took a beautiful mare from our stable. Then, my dad lost his temper and grabbed an axe, not wanting to give the horse away. The German man shot the dog which was barking at him and would not let him enter the stable. Then, he was trying to kill my dad, but I kept shouting at him not to shoot, I shielded him with the door. And later the commune head appeared and stood up for my dad as the father of nine children. The German man gave up, but they took away the horse and additionally the last cow. I followed them for around five hundred metres crying. Then, one soldier accidentally shot the horse, but I managed to bring the cow back and the whole family was happy because we had milk for the children" [K2]. Experiencing childhood during the war was, without doubt, a particularly harsh period and definitely exerted an indelible mark in their memories. Another senior lady presents a very suggestive and picturesque image: "Houses, churches, all development broke into parts like playing blocks. Dead people from the house were buried in the courtyard in shallow graves, so it happened that legs, hands or heads would emerge above the ground after the next air strikes... As children, we were completely not afraid of this. We were uniquely rational in our understanding that we should be afraid of the Germans, and not the dead people..." [K8]. Another lady remembers the role of her mother engaged in conspiracy activities: "In 1945, my mother evacuated herself to the country and continued her conspiracy activities under the pseudonym of Zapolska" [K5]. This remark drew the attention of the author to another significant element of the experience, i.e. the absence of a parent.

One of the ladies remembers her double orphanhood: "When I was fourteen, my mother died, I was left alone with my elder brother and we ran the household together. My mother died whilst cutting wood; a log prepared for cutting fell on her head; it was March and the temperature was below forty degrees Celsius; trees were bursting from cold and this was a unique sound. Back then, I wanted to die and I went outside without clothes with a thought that I would catch pneumonia and die. I did not succeed. I had anaemia because of lack of food. I only wanted it to be warm and to have something to eat, these were our dreams..." and later: "In 1943, my father was taken prisoner by the Germans, he got brain ulcers and died in 1944, when I was five years' old. My mother was left alone with seven children, my eldest brother was sixteen" [K1]. Determinism of the parent's struggle during

war-time activities is clearly marked in the speech of one of the participants, who also experienced the loss of her father: "(...) he said that he had to go to war, that this was his duty. I remember how we walked him to the train, as he was going to join his unit in Grudziądz, it was 28 August 1939. He never came back" [K3]. Another one says: "(...) my dad was in prison and he was tortured by the NKVD, which cooked up a counter-revolutionary plot of Jewish Trotskyites. He was accused of the loss of revolutionary alertness and the reason was his wife, who was a Pole and additionally a Catholic. Subjected to atrocious torture, he did not give away any of his friends. When he was released from prison in 1939, his health was ruined. Unfortunately, in 1941 by dad was taken away by the NKVD to the front line and we did not hear from him..." and she concludes: "I continued to wait for my father. My mother looked for him through the Red Cross, but she did not manage to find him" [K5]. Another senior expresses her emotions straightforwardly: "I have a great longing and sorrow related to my father who died during the war time activities. I do not even know where he is buried, I would like to light a candle for him so much. My dad went to the war in line with his conscription in 1939. He died in Modlin-Zakroczyn, near Warsaw, in the trenches during the shelling in 1939. My brother was a witness to this. We only learnt about it after the war" [K6]. Eventually, the absence of a parent at home and the child's anxiety related to his/ her return was also a frequently experienced situation: "(...) the fear that my mother would leave me" [K5]. It is necessary to draw attention to the special significance ascribed to the parent and his/ her authority: "My dad was a unique man, very honourable, empathic and sensitive to the human harm, with a great sense of humour. I miss him so much..." [K2].

Employment and social activity plays a double role in the accounts of seniors. On the one hand, it results from the necessity of sustaining themselves and their families; one the ladies recollects: "I was sixteen when I went to work. I went to gastronomy, at my own risk, because children in such age were not allowed to work. At that time, I was doing a course in Sopot and I started to work as a kitchen aid peeling vegetables. As a twenty year-old girl, I became a chef in the Jantar restaurant. I was the youngest chef in Gdańsk" and further: "When my children were a bit older, I decided to work as a seamstress to repair the family budget; I learnt to use the sewing machine" [K1]. Another one says: "I started post-graduate studies on mathematics and I taught mathematics in the 8th General High School in Gdańsk" [K3]. Employment was also the source of self-fulfilment, joy and satisfaction: "I had very noble and friendly superiors. (...) They were very demanding with respect to the employees and this is how I learnt the proper work discipline. Coming late and leaving the work early was not tolerated: work was work. I was

satisfied with my work and my superiors were satisfied with me. I was promoted every two years" [K4]. Physical activity played a similar role for her: "I took part in table tennis tournaments and volleyball games. I climbed Mount Giewont on 29 August 1952. I did it on my own, without anybody's help. We went with a group, approximately twenty people, but nobody helped me" [K4]. Another woman says: "I came to Gdańsk after my wedding, in 1959, I settled here with my husband. We both come from Działdowo. Gdańsk was in ruins, the city was greatly destroyed. At that time, work consisted in removing rubble from the city. (…). I worked at the post office, at the telephone exchange, as a telephone operator. After I retired, I worked for ten more years at the telephone exchange and as a porter. On the other hand, my husband worked in the board of the Nowy Port harbour in Gdańsk" [K6]. Another woman says: "I lived at ul. Wiślna until 1966; in the meantime, I got married and gave birth to two of my children there, my daughter and my son. Later, we settled in Orunia with my family. I finished primary school in Leśniewo. I went to the Economic Technical School in Sopot. For a short time, I worked in the SPOŁEM Food Enterprise and in the wholesale store at ul. Kliniczna, and for the next eighteen years in the "Marlinka" Steelworks Services Cooperative Society as a director of the employee services division" [K8].

Last but not least, relations with close people play a particularly important role. One of the beneficiaries says: "My family is large, we still have good relations with one another and we keep in touch, already the second generation" [K2]. Another one, recounting a sentimental story about her father, recollects that she re-creates his behaviour towards her own children, simultaneously showing how important it was for her to set up a family: "I gave birth to two children and when they were older, I did the same thing – I took them on a trip – just like my father did with me. My daughter Elżbieta was seven years' old then, like I was... My son was almost six. My uncle Wiktor still lived in Hel, together with my aunt; they did not have any children. He was a shoe-maker and I asked him to make orthopaedic shoes for my son. And he made them. Later, after seven more years, I give birth to two more children: a daughter and a son. My husband dreamt of building a house for the children. He found a place in Oliwa at ul. Drożyny 8 and he built a house there with a garden. He believed this would be a peaceful and safe place for the family. My husband worked in the workers' development design office. Before that, we lived in Jaśkowa Dolina and later in a larger flat at ul. Racławicka" [K3] Another woman says: "On the other hand, my husband grew up without his mother; he was brought up by the step-mother, but in spite of it, we had a good marriage. When she was old, she lived with my husband's father with us and we jointly took care of them. He was a great husband and father and even greater grandfather. I gave birth

to three children, a daughter and two sons. (…). I have five granddaughters and one grandson and three great-grandchildren. Two of my brothers are dead; I have close relations with the rest of my siblings, warm and heartily" [K6]. She continues: "My husband died in 1995, a year later my mother passed away. My children live in Gdańsk, all of them completed higher studies and work. I am in touch with my other siblings; unfortunately, we suffer from ailments. I also have good relations with my husband's family, there is no division into "my/ your" families, there is mutual liking and respect" [K6].

Conclusions

In the author's impression, the described project exemplifies self-acceptance in life, reconciliation with what cannot be recovered and does not show unrealistic returns to the past. At the same time, it is an example of non-efficiency of determinist concepts about inability to compensate childhood needs. Nicodemus, talking to Jesus, tried to prove that such return is impossible: "How can someone be born when they are old? Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born![33]". It seems that the critical period has passed when the infant, completely dependent on adults, did not satisfy its needs. Deprivation was ingrained in the body memory and doomed the individual to constant searching of satiation. But does it really happen this way? Piotr Stawiszyński presents a completely different standpoint; he proves that the determinist concept of a man's development where childhood plays the key role is a nonsense[34]; what is more, he refers to psychological studies showing the determinism of genes in their impact on the individual's life, at the same time failing to appreciate educational processes[35]. In his opinion, the socio-emotional experiences in the life of seniors are the illustration of compensation of the childhood period of life. Hence, the past with a trauma of war ingrained in it, the loss of parents and hunger are subjected to at least partial satiation.

One senior beautifully concludes on her life by saying: "On 1 January 1982, I retired at the age of fifty-five. Since that time, I have been living joyfully, healthily and I intend to live for a long time. My greatest pleasures are walks and trips.

---

[33] *Gospel of St. John* 3:4 [in:] Old and New Testament, Wydawnictwo Pallottinum, Poznań-Warsaw, 1990.

[34] T. Stawiszyński, *Potyczki z Freudem. Mity, pułapki i pokusy psychoterapii*, Carta Blanca, Warsaw 2013, p. 24.

[35] Ibidem, pp. 32-33.

Nowadays, I walk from Jelitkowo to Sopot and back. I have never felt lonely; I have never been lonely in this sense; I had friends, we organised parties, I also liked reading, but now I cannot read any more. But I told myself that I have read a lot and I accepted the fact that my eyes are not good any more. But I am happy that my other senses are working, that I can hear, that my legs are healthy and there is nothing to complain about. And somebody else can read to me know" [K4]. Ending her story, she provides her own definition of life: "Life is poetry, music, singing and dancing. The world is a mysterious garden. The woman is a goddess of joy. The man is a knight. Children are the greatest treasures of their parents and every society" [K4].

The issues discussed by the author in the text above constituted an attempt at finding an answer to the question whether the feeling of self-acceptance is possible in spite of difficult and painful experiences. As evidenced by the participants in the project, the feeling of sense is not only not contradictory with difficult experiences, but in many cases of the narrative it is synonymous with the feeling of satisfaction. It may be claimed that this status tends to be accomplished not "in spite of", but "thanks to" the crisis situations, which make one aware of the power to overcome difficulties and release their potential and also deepen the relations with others.

Bibliography

G. Allport "Osobowość i religia", Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, Warsaw 1988.

F. Ankersmit "Narracja, reprezentacja, doświadczenie. Studia z teorii historiografii" Wydawnictwo UNIVERSITAS, Kraków 2004.

T. Bauman, *O możliwości zastosowania metod jakościowych w badaniach pedagogicznych*, [in:] *Zasady badań pedagogicznych*, Pilch T. (ed.), Żak, Warsaw 1995.

J. Bruner, *Życie jako narracja*. "Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny", 1990 No. 4, pp. 4-9.

D. Demetrio "Autobiografia. Terapeutyczny wymiar pisania o sobie", Impuls, Kraków 2000.

D. Demetrio "Pedagogika pamięci", Wydawnictwo Akademii Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej w Łodzi, Łódź 2009.

P. Dominicè "Uczyć się z życia. Biografia edukacyjna w edukacji dorosłych", Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej w Łodzi, Łódź 2006.

Gospel of St. John 3:4 [in:] *Old and New Testament*. Poznań-Warsaw Wydawnictwo Pallottinum, 1990.

A. Giddens "Nowoczesność i tożsamość", PWN, Warsaw 002.

I. K. Helling, *Metoda badań biograficznych*, [in] J. Włodarek, M. Ziółkowski, (ed.), *Metoda biograficzna w socjologii*, PWN, Warsaw-Poznań 1990.

C. G. Jung "Archetypy i symbole", Czytelnik, Warsaw 1993.

M. Malewski "Teorie andragogiczne. Metodologia teoretyczności dyscypliny naukowej", Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 1998.

M. Prawda, *Biograficzne odtwarzanie rzeczywistości. (O koncepcji badań biograficznych Fritza Schütze)*, "Studia Socjologiczne", 1989 No. 4, pp. 88-92.

K. Schier, M. Zalewska "Krewni i znajomi Edypa. Kliniczne studia dzieci i ich rodziców", Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw 2002.

K. Schier "Piękne brzydactwo. Psychologiczna problematyka obrazu ciała i jego zaburzeń", Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warsaw 2010.

E. M. Skibińska "Mikroświaty kobiet. Relacje autobiograficzne", Wydawnictwo ITE PIB, Warsaw 2006.

T. Stawiszyński, "Potyczki z Freudem. Mity, pułapki i pokusy psychoterapii", Carta Blanca, Warsaw 2013.

M. Straś-Romanowska, *Zmiana pozycji narracyjnej podmiotu jako przejaw jego rozwoju. Analiza biograficzna wybranych postaci literackich*, [in:] E. Chmielnicka-Kuter, M. Puchalska-Wasyl (ed.), *Polifonia osobowości*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2005, pp. 88-89.

J. Trzebiński "Narracja jako sposób rozmienia świata", GWP, Gdańsk 2002.

Sylwia Stano-Strzałkowska

SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities

In the face of change – reading in a new cultural context

KEY WORDS

Readership, e-reading, new technologies, e-book, book market

ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to present modern readership habits and the impact of new technologies development on them. Those technologies and social changes can also pose a danger or provide support for the development of readership; however, the point is how to skilfully make use of them.
Readership plays a significant role in modern societies. It is considered not only a socio-cultural tool giving people equal chances in life and facilitating dialogue between different cultures, but also an important economic development factor. Nevertheless, the level of readership keeps successively decreasing in developed countries. Poland is not an exception – on the contrary, the level of readership is decreasing faster than in other developed countries.
This article is an outline of opportunities and barriers as well of new technologies affecting readership. The relations between those opportunities or barriers and the level of readership are also discussed. The article includes a range of examples of positive solutions from abroad, suitable for introduction in Poland.

When electronic media and then the Internet began to develop dynamically, many observers expressed their fear that it would lead to the decline of reading. According to this vision, people would spend their time staring at TV screens or surfing the web instead of sitting in a chair with a book. However, this did not happen (or at least not to such an extent). There is no denying, however, that many changes

are taking place. New trends, which can be observed around the world, include a decline in readership, readers' metamorphosis and the emergence of new ways of contact with books. There is no simple dependence of more electronic media = less reading. What is more, those who use the Internet most often also read the most.[1] This is partly due to a better education, partly due to the fact that the Internet makes it easier to find out about a book and obtain it. The Internet has not had a negative impact on reading; in fact, these two types of activities are rather positively correlated.

Upon observance of this phenomenon, a science-based concept of "interaction" began to be used, which in chemistry refers to the interaction of substances consisting in mutual stimulation or irritation. The Internet allows people to do what they used to do – not excluding reading books. The cultural consequences of the development of a global network have, of course, a major impact on reading practices. Digital media democratise access to culture in spatial and temporal dimensions. Thanks to digitisation and archivisation, a cultural event such as an author's meeting or a festival is no longer rigidly linked to one time and place. It is the recipient who chooses when to view them. The Internet also allows feelings and ideas to be expressed spontaneously, creating a degree of directness and intimacy that was previously characterised only by face-to-face communication.

Below, I present the basic trends of changes in reading.

Decline in readership

Readership has been steadily declining in many countries in recent years. Researchers adopt different methodologies and select respondents differently, which must be taken into account when comparing research data from different countries. However, some trends are clear.

The European Commission's report on participation in culture shows that readership has decreased by 3% (from 71% in 2007 to 68% in 2013), taking into account the average of all EU countries (EU-27).[2] Only the Czechs, who are among the most ardent readers not only in Europe but also in the world, prove that enthusiasm for reading does not have to weaken. A study by Jiří Travniček shows

---

[1] J. Kopeć, D. Michalak, I. Koryś, "Hybrydy cyfry i druku", *Teksty Drugie*, no. 3, 2015, p. 429–441.

[2] Special Eurobarometer 399, *Report: Cultural access and participation*, European Commission 2013, p. 10.

that in 2013, the percentage of readers aged 15 and over in the Czech Republic was 84%.[3] In Finland, the Finnish Statistical Office conducts time budget surveys every 10 years. An analysis of readership data over the last three decades shows that the importance of reading in Finns' time budgets is declining. From 1979 to 2009, the percentage of respondents who mentioned reading as one of their activities decreased from 78% to 56%, while the average time spent reading per day decreased by 12 minutes – from 48 in 1979 to 36 in 2009.[4]

In Germany, the frequency of leisure activities undertaken by adults has been examined from 2014 onwards. This is a new method of reading research and it is not possible to compare data from many years, but even such a short time horizon makes it possible to read certain trends. First of all, television consumption is growing – by over 2% from 2014. 78.9% of Germans turn on their televisions often. The use of the Internet has slightly decreased. The drop is minimal, only by 0.2%, but it is puzzling because the authors of the study expected an increase at this point. In the ranking, however, this decline caused the Internet usage to drop from seventh to eighth place, while the Internet overtook cooking and baking. Reading was 14th in this ranking. 19.7% of Germans often reach for books, which is less than in previous years. More and more Germans say that they never reach for a book (24.2%).[5]

The Polish Book Chamber proposed a new approach to the readership research model practised in Poland. It consists in observing not readership, but reading as a cultural model of behaviour. One of the tools used was the creation of new indicators, such as a text diet, which made the book text equal to any other text, press release, blog, e-mail, text message or Facebook post.[6]

All respondents, regardless of what activities they performed during the day preceding the survey, were asked what kind of texts they read at that time. Nearly 44% of the respondents had no contact with the written word in any form. Every fifth person read text messages or notifications from social networking sites, and almost 15% read short posts and messages on the Internet.

---

[3] D. Michalak, I. Koryś, J. Kopeć, *Raport: Stan czytelnictwa w Polsce 2015: wstępne wyniki*, Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw 2016, p. 18.

[4] Ibid., p. 18.

[5] *Raport: Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2016*, Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels e.V.,-Frankfurt am Main 2016, p. 32.

[6] Report of the Polish Book Chamber "Kierunki i formy czytelnictwa w Polsce", Warsaw 2013-2014, p. 145.

What kind of texts did you read yesterday?

Category	%
SMS, tweets, push notifications	20%
Papers	18%
E-mails, short information, online news	15%
News tickers in TV	9%
Longer texts on the Internet, articles, blogs	9%
Leaflets, flyers, promotional materials	9%
Paper books	7%
Posters, murals, street ads, screens	7%
Electronic papers	5%
Ebooks	1%
Audiobooks	0%
None	44%
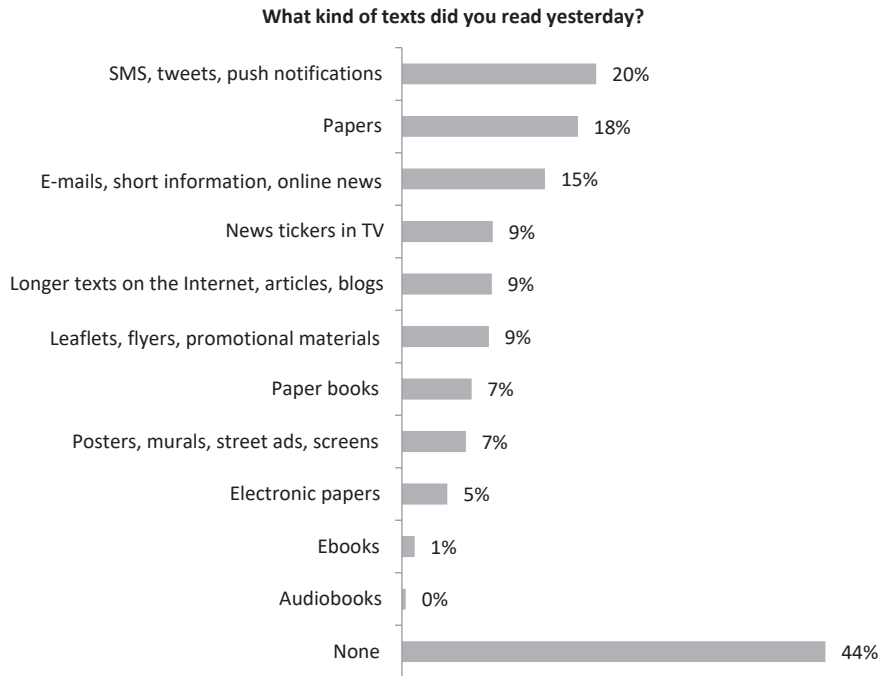
Figure 1. The text diet of Poles

Source: PIK, own interpretation

The situation on other continents is no different from that in Europe. A survey conducted by the US Pew Research Center in March and April 2015 showed that 7 out of 10 Americans (72%) had reached for at least one book in the previous 12 months (including every format). This is a lower score than four years ago. Since 2012, the result has been relatively stable and oscillates around 74%. The average American has read 12 books in the last 12 months and the median was 4 books.[7]

Readership has also declined in Taiwan, although the population is considered one of the most culturally developed in Asia. The Taiwanese people currently read on average two books per year, while in China, Japan and South Korea, people read 4.3 books, 8.4 books and 10.8 books per year respectively.[8]

Despite the global downward trend in readership, the decline in Poles' readership is striking in the international context. Reading as a cultural pattern of behaviour has changed a lot in Poland over the last 25 years. The reduction of reading

---

[7] A. Perrin, *Book reading 2016*, http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/09/01/book-reading-2016/ accessed February 2017.

[8] Executive Yuan, Republic of China (Taiwan), http://www.ey.gov.tw/access February 2017.

practices in Poland took place in three stages: first, in 1994, the intensity of reading decreased sharply, then in 2006, the declared reading of books started to decrease, and since 2008, both indicators have decreased significantly.

In order to fully understand the level of the decline in readership in Poland, it is also important that we speak with increasing openness and determination about the fact that we do not read books.

Readership levels in Poland in 1994–2015

Figure 2. Readership levels in Poland in 1994–2015

* I do not include data for 1992 and 1998 in the graph for the BN report due to their incomplete comparability
Source: TNS OBOP and TNS for BN 1994–2015

Janusz Kostecki notes that although the picture is slightly deformed because research has not been conducted regularly, some phenomena seem to be very clear. At the end of the Polish People's Republic, reading was declared by about 3/5 of Poles over 15 years of age. In 1994, readership and the declared reach of books fell. The next decade (until 2004) was characterised by some stabilisation and deviations were within the limits of statistical error. In 2006, there was another significant decrease in the number of people declaring that they read. The reach of books shrank by 8 percentage points, and two years later, by another 12 percentage points.[9]

The pessimism of researchers is deepened by the observation of changes in the declared intensity of reading by Poles.[10] Since 1994, the percentage of occasional

---

[9] J. Kostecki, "Potencjał poznawczy współczesnych ogólnopolskich badań czytelnictwa w Polsce" [in:] *Na co dzień i od święta. Książka w życiu Polaków w XIX i XX wieku*, eds. A. Chamera-Nowak, D. Jarosz, Oficyna wydawnicza Aspra-JR, Warsaw 2015, p. 679.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 680.

readers has exceeded the percentage of active readers, and the gap is still growing. Poles declare themselves as readers less and less often, and if they read, it is sporadic.

Also according to the PIK survey, nearly 2/3 of the respondents did not declare even superficial contact with books, in any form, during the last year. In the study entitled "Directions and forms of transformation of reading in Poland", the basic question concerning book reading was asked referring to the broadest possible experience of respondents within the last 12 months. They were asked to include contacts with books in any form, i.e. paper, e-books or audiobooks, and secondly – both reading the book in its entirety and partially. 37.2% of the respondents responded affirmatively to the study.

Tendency: Two types of readers – classic and modern

There is no consensus as to in which direction reading is going to evolve. It is not known how much the reader changes when choosing a modern style of reading books or whether the relation is altered with the change of the medium of the text. Today we have a whole kaleidoscope of activities connected with traditional reading practice once developed exclusively on the basis of printed books. E-book readers even imitate the rustle of pages, as well as the impression of reading on real paper using the *paperwhite* technology. Today's digitally accessible books give the reader turning to new technologies a whole range of new experiences. In a world that is accelerating, the greatest luxury for readers on the European and North American book market, however, is not access to the latest technologies, but simply finding time for reading.

Meanwhile, in *The Pleasure of the Text* Roland Barthes provokes the reader with a sensual metaphor, at the same time gently leading them into the depths of his reflections on the relationship that is created during reading. Barthes depicts the relationship between text and reader as an intimate relationship, full of contradictions and complications, in which an important element is the relationship of the reader with themselves. Barthes encourages: "you want [...] not to devour, to gobble, but to graze, to browse scrupulously, to rediscover – in order to read today's writer – the leisure of bygone readings: to be *aristocratic* readers".[11] The biggest global players, by adding various functions to their readers, show their ideas about the role of digital books in the future culture. The two main directions we can observe today are, firstly, the direction of an individual relationship with a book transferred to another device; secondly, reading that exploits social bonds.

---

[11] R. Barthes, *The Pleasure of the text*, trans. Richard Miller, New York 1998, pp. 12–13.

When studying the impact of digitisation on the book and reader market and analysing the changes taking place due to the emancipation of books on the Internet, it should be remembered that the way of reading is determined by the reader themselves. Differences in reading paper and electronic books represent different goals and expectations for traditional and modern readers. Moreover, each reader can pursue different ways of reading, depending on the type of book, mood or circumstances.

It is worth looking at the reading choices of Americans, because the United States, where e-books and audiobooks account for about 20% of the market, is the largest digital book market in the world. At the same time, classical reading is maintained on a stable, high level. Americans are referred to as "hybrid consumers". The younger Americans are, the more likely they are to reach for books – in any format. As much as 80% of "young adults" (in this case defined as people aged 18-29) reached for at least one book in 2015. However, many young Americans turned their backs on digital books in favour of printed books this year. Hits like *Diary of a Whimpy Kid: Oldschool* sold better in the paper version. What is more, fold-out books have appeared, as well as experimental books and colouring books for adults (their sales increased by 95% this year), which as electronic editions have no raison d'être at all.

Decrease in the focus on reading

While there is strong criticism of reading texts online, and, among others, the US National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) treats online reading as an activity that interferes with "proper" reading, it is increasingly noted that although reading short news, blog posts or articles on the Internet cannot be treated as equal to reading novels, many people today spend a lot of time reading and sharing digital texts and the reader is reduced to a consumer of content.

Reading research suggests that the obstacle to reaching for a book is not so much the transformation of the relationship between work and leisure time, but a release from everyday stress, switching to a state of tranquillity needed for quiet reading.[12] Contemporary entertainment is distracting to the reader and makes many people, especially children, lack the quiet skills they need to sit back, read and develop their own interest in a book. In his essay "Za długie, nie przeczytam" [Too long, didn't read], Jacek Dukaj notes that the media career of "the curse of Internet reading" began with the publication of Nicholas Carr's article "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" in *The Atlantic* (July 2008). Carr expanded on his concerns in his book *The Shallows*,

---

[12] Report of the Polish Book Chamber, op. cit., p. 44.

in which he conducted an experiment on neurological changes in people who had permanently started using the Internet. It turned out that the acquisition of Internet proficiency precluded the preservation of the old reading ability. These people, even when they want to, cannot "switch" their brains back. "I think in staccato rhythm. I am able to receive short messages 'in parallel' from many sources, but I am no longer able to read *War and Peace*".[13] The very possibility of access to the web makes it difficult to focus. It is difficult to switch the mind to "book thinking" when it demands more and more new stimuli from us. It is not enough to close the browser or leave the computer – the mind is waiting in readiness.

Critics of the introduction of new applications and social media into electronic readers point to the risk of invasion of privacy, the impact of other people's highlights on the private act of reading and the aforementioned distraction caused by the awareness of the "presence" of others in the book. Maryanne Wolf and Mirit Barzillai argue in their article "The Importance of Deep Reading" that it is very important to read carefully in order to immerse oneself in reading. The researchers cite three factors that ensure behaviour that brings happiness, according to Aristotle. It is, firstly, a life focused on action, secondly on pleasure and, thirdly, on contemplation.[14]

Today, we have plenty of pleasure and action, but the last factor – contemplation – is missing. Aristotle believed that culture can be judged by how it cultivates these lifestyles. According to Wolf and Barzillai, today's society is moving from a print culture to a digital culture and it is important to grasp how this change affects it. Digital education seems to be ideally suited to the needs of an active and enjoyable life. The emphasis on uninterrupted streaming, availability, flexible multitasking, fast and interactive ways of communication and countless forms of online entertainment are conducive to these forms of living. At the same time, this form is less conducive to the slower and more time-consuming cognitive processes that are necessary for a contemplative life and which are at the heart of what Wolf and Barzillai call the heart of "deep reading". "Deep reading" means the area of sophisticated processes that drive understanding and include inference-based deductive reasoning, analytical skills, critical analysis and reflection. Experts need milliseconds to start this process; the young mind needs years to develop it. Researchers point to the potential dangers posed by the emphasis of digital culture on immediacy and discouraging deeper reflection in both reading and thinking.

---

[13] J. Dukaj, "Za długie, nie przeczytam…", *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 17.08.2010, p. 4.

[14] Arystoteles, *Dzieła wszystkie t. I*, trans. K. Leśniak, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2003, p. 406.

In 2001, the following test was carried out: one group read a story in its traditional form and another group read the story presented online (hypertext). Readers on the Internet not only took more time to read, but at the end of the day they were seven times more likely to report misunderstanding of what they had just read. Microsoft's research conducted on a group of two thousand Canadians shows that Internet users succumb to the temptations of procrastination on a massive scale. They read texts on the Internet superficially, and the increasing popularity of multitasking makes them unable to concentrate on one task for too long. According to these studies, in the last 13 years, the "attention span", i.e. the duration of human concentration, has been reduced by one third. This change concerns mainly persons aged 18 to 24 years. 77% of people admit that the first reflex when occupied with nothing else is to reach for their smartphone. In addition, the statistical user does not read more than a few paragraphs. A web acronym was created for this reaction: TL;DR – which means Too Long; Didn't Read.

Reading books for pleasure requires many years of training. In educating readers, it is important to support the family environment. Therefore, in environments with low cultural capital, it is more difficult to find book lovers. Such a perspective presents the Gordian knot of cognitive advantages and challenges for present and future generations, which, if left unanswered, may result in a noticeable diminishing role of contemplation in our society, which is already noticeable today.[15]

Although distraction is possible with any medium, online reading offers the most opportunities. Terje Hillesund shares the view that there are differences in the way of reading resulting from the material form of the text. In his study of the reading behaviour of academics in the humanities and social sciences, he found that there were real differences in reading objectives and reading patterns. Reading for professional purposes is sometimes superficial, indicative, reviewing, fragmented, interrupted, even if it concerns content that is difficult to read. Continuous reading, from the first to the last page, remains inseparable from the reading of the novel. Scientific texts are also often "individualised" – by underlining, making notes, adding comments, etc.[16]

In printed books, we pay little attention to form and focus on content instead. New forms also attract attention with their material side, i.e., the role of touch in reading. First impressions of using readers and e-books are associated with aes-

---

[15] M. Barzillai, M. Wolf, "The importance of deep reading", *Educational Leadership*, 2009 (66), pp. 32-37.
[16] T. Hillesund, "Digital reading spaces: How expert readers handle books, the Web and electronic paper", *First Monday* 2010, vol. 15, no. 4, p. 22 http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2762/2504, access February 2017.

thetics, weight, fit to the hand, manual navigation, legibility (including screen size, contrast, glare, the ability to adjust the font).

As a result, the author identifies two challenges to maintain readability of long texts. The first is to preserve the conditions for long-term, continuous and imaginative reading, and the second is to create favourable conditions for such reading to broaden or deepen knowledge. However, digital text will always be different from printed text and, consequently, the way and experience of reading will be different. Reading for imagination is not fostered by displaying the text on monitors on desktops or laptops. However, e-readers seem to be sufficiently similar to previous reading experiences.

The second challenge seems to be more difficult. Attentive, focused reading can be continuous or intermittent; in the latter case, we actively use our hands to flip through pages, underline, take notes – in physical unity with the printed text.

There should be special, dedicated software for reading, blocking distracting elements, less needed links and illustrations, software focused on reading, e.g. switching to "reading mode" (for continuous reading, removing everything that interferes with it) and "study mode" – also for continuous reading, but with the ability to navigate, highlight, add notes and comments. It should allow links to the most frequently read resources, such as dictionaries and encyclopaedias, and the "study mode" should be easily linked to creative applications, such as word processors, to easily move notes, quotes and bibliographies. Pages with rich text resources should also have versions to read on e-readers.

Social Reading

Social reading can be understood as discussions about books with friends or other readers in book clubs or as use of applications and activity in social media. However, it can be understood even more broadly. Social reading is increasingly defining a new way of reading that has become possible through the digitisation of books. One can comment on books at the same time as one reads or add notes on the so-called dynamic margins – so that other readers can see them, too. Conversation becomes an integral part of the text, redefining the notion of "content".

Differences between individual and common reading are the basis for understanding marketing strategies in the competition between Barnes & Noble and Amazon – the authors of the report "Jak czytają Polacy? [How Poles Read] quote J.R. Stevens.[17] Both booksellers compete with each other to be market leaders, also

---

[17] M. Kisilowska, M. Paul, M. Zając, *Jak czytają Polacy?*, Centrum Cyfrowe, Warsaw 2016, pp. 39-42.

when it comes to the sale of e-readers. In the article "The Kindle vs. the Nook: Two models of social reading", Stevens argues that the B&N strategy is more social and open to going beyond the familiar framework. Amazon goes in the opposite direction, focusing on the classic relationship between the reader and the text. Through the Public Notes tool, readers can check which fragments have attracted others, which fragments are marked as important and how many people share this interest. The Nook offers additional features to accompany reading if it is carried out in special locations (libraries, Barnes & Noble bookshops), encouraging reading together, discussion, and the exchange of opinions and quotes from books read via Twitter and Facebook. With Nook Friends, users can even exchange e-books. As a result, Nook users are more involved in social networks in order to recommend, review and exchange opinions, while Kindle users rely more on statistical opinions.

Another strategy based on reader to reader interaction was introduced in 2011 by the Japanese Kobo network. Reading is a way to win prizes. The principle is simple – the longer one reads, the more rewards and achievements they can win. For example, a reader can receive a "Juggernaut" for reading 10,000 pages. Another award – "Afternoon Rush Hour" – is for those who have read for five days at the same time in the afternoon. Users can share your achievements and awards using built-in social media interfaces. Representatives of Kobo argue that this system increases interest in e-reading.

Introducing social applications into e-readers is a step towards using the possibilities of the Internet while reading. However, not all readers like such innovations – sometimes the awareness of other people's presence in a book, other people's emphasis or comments, are perceived negatively and evoke a sense of alienation of the text. Each producer opted for a different way of using text and applications. Differences between them can be seen on the level of use of text space, the possibility of interaction between users and content, and each other.

Social reading can be understood in a different way. The phenomenon of digital times are fanfiction stories Fanfics, because that is their popular name, tell fictional stories of idols, celebrities, famous characters, as well as continue the adventures of favourite literary heroes. It is estimated that fanfics account for 33% of the book resources on the web. The most popular platforms are FanFiction.net, Archive of Our Own and Wattpad. In the latter service, there are 45 million registered readers. The service boasts that in a world where the user is able to focus for 7 seconds, a place has been created where users spend a total of more than 15 billion minutes a month reading. Books are published here thanks to the support of the community. One needs only want to write and share their work with others. These

can be chapters of one's favourite book, stories, longer forms, but also poems. The portal is extremely popular, especially among young readers, who make up 85% of the website's users.

Using the Internet is the domain of young people, where it is as popular among women as it is among men. In the youngest age group, 65.3% of the respondents declared Internet usage on the day preceding the survey, while in the oldest group – 11.5%.

Young people's readership

The Educational Research Institute conducted a readership survey of children and young people, whose aim was to assess the social range of books among students finishing primary school (12 years) and middle school (15 years). The survey was conducted in schools. 1,721 primary school students were examined: 53% boys and 47% girls, and 1816 middle school students: 52% boys and 48% girls.

Students in the study declared the frequency of performing selected activities in their free time. The results show the place of the book in the leisure budget of 12- and 15-year-olds.

12-year-olds - leisure activities - daily or weekly

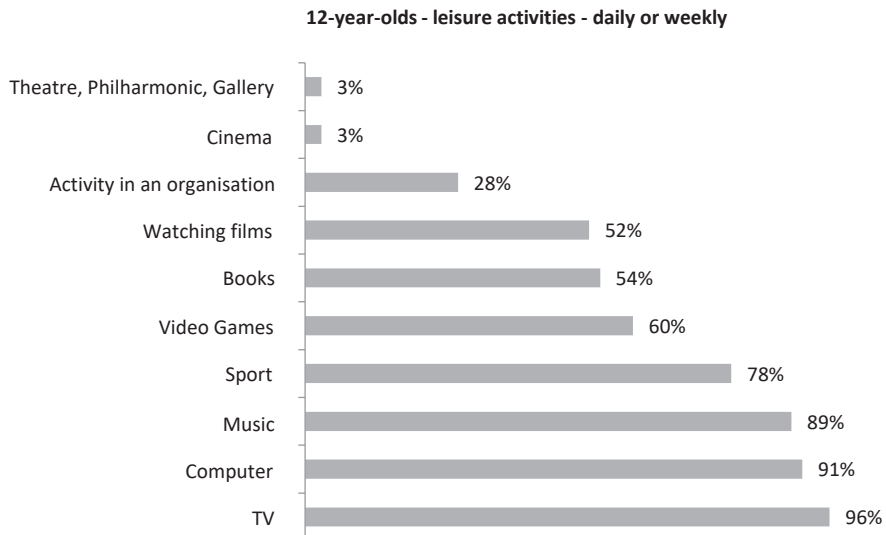| Activity	%
Theatre, Philharmonic, Gallery	3%
Cinema	3%
Activity in an organisation	28%
Watching films	52%
Books	54%
Video Games	60%
Sport	78%
Music	89%
Computer	91%
TV	96%

Figure 3. Map of activities for 12-year-olds

Source: IBE 2014, own interpretation

Twelve-year-olds are independent children, but are still largely dependent on their parents for organising their time after school. Apart from sport, which is a favourite form of spending time for 77% of teenagers, and meeting friends, 12-year-olds spend most of their time at home. This is done mainly in front of a TV set (96%, 75% of them daily) or a computer (91% systematically, 65% daily). These are the basic elements of a child's lifestyle, both for those who read and those who do not. However, in the case of similar joint activities, significant differences result from the gender of teenagers and their socio-cultural environment.

Systematically 48% of 12-year-olds read at least once a week, and 20% even every day. 27% of girls and 16% of boys are among daily readers. Daily and systematic reading is also influenced by the family's cultural capital, expressed in terms of the number of books owned, along with the wealth of the children's personal books. As many as 42% of the readers who declare that they read books every day are among the students who have more than 20 books treated as their own.

Interestingly, the tendency to daily reading increases with the increase in grades received in Polish language classes, but the majority of daily and systematic readers are not among the top students, but among book collectors. Book ownership also reduces differences in reading levels between boys and girls. While girls read more statistically, there are no differences among book owners. 23% of students reach for a book several times a year. 8% of 12-year-olds do not open books at all.

Books are perceived at this stage as quite an attractive form of spending time, a great cure for boredom. Most of the time, however, teenagers find time in their schedule to read in the evening, just before bedtime. They prefer to read books in their room or corner, in bed or on the sofa. The weekend is a good time to read, because a book is a simple idea to fill the time, it does not require any effort or company. In teenagers, the practice of daily reading also depends on the seasons and place of residence. During the summer holidays, students from farming families have less time to read books because they have to help with the farm. Students in the city can spend their summer holidays reading books.[18]

Middle school students complain about chronic lack of time and fatigue. In addition, intensive learning, preparation for final exams and a growing variety of extracurricular activities mean that in the face of such competition, a book has a chance to win only if reading has become a previous habit.

---

[18] Z. Zasacka, *Czytelnictwo dzieci i młodzieży*, Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, Warsaw 2014, pp. 29-34.

15-year-olds - leisure activities - daily or weekly

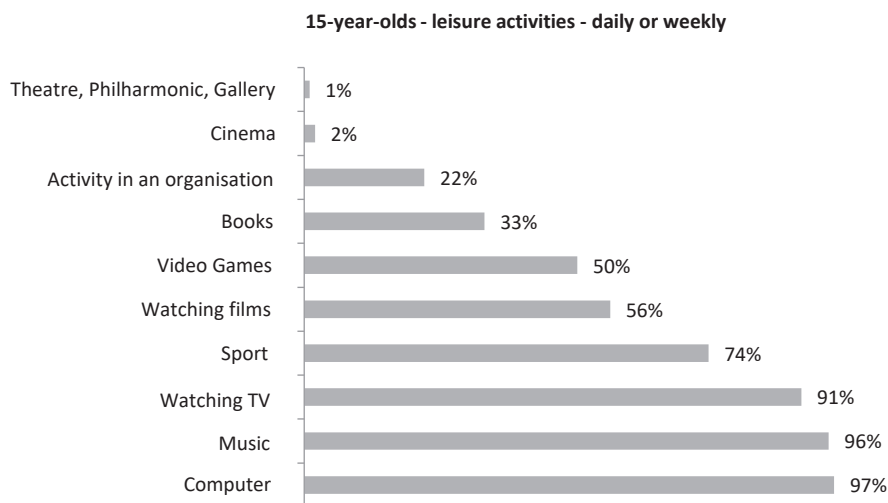|	
Theatre, Philharmonic, Gallery	1%
Cinema	2%
Activity in an organisation	22%
Books	33%
Video Games	50%
Watching films	56%
Sport	74%
Watching TV	91%
Music	96%
Computer	97%

Figure 4. Activity map of 15-year-olds

Source: IBE 2014, own interpretation

It is a common pastime for 15-year-olds to listen to music and use computers. Television and computer games are still popular, but less than for 12-year-olds. Among the regularly practised activities is also watching films at home and practising sports.

33% of junior high school students (38% of girls and 28% of boys) read systematically at least once a week. 15% of 15-year-olds have a daily reading habit. For 40% of teenagers, reading in their free time is almost non-existent.

Reading books is one of the leisure activities of young people which are influenced by the family environment: with the increase in the level of education of parents, the frequency of reading increases, and vice versa. Interestingly, although girls are statistically more likely to read, the gender difference in reading activity changes when the cultural capital of parents is taken into account. Girls who are daily and systematic readers (reading at least once a week) outnumber boys if they come from families with basic vocational training. In situations where the parents have a higher education, the gender gap begins to decrease and disappears in houses where books are collected. Having one's own books is much more important for the education of a future reader than having top grades at school.

Can reading be an attractive way of spending free time? If a book is interesting, "absorbing", reading it is an attractive enough activity that it competes with its main opponents: computers and television. Books can be an attractive form of

spending time, as they are associated by teenagers with "relaxed" home practices, outside of the rigid daily schedule[19]

What should be done to encourage young people to read?

The promotion of books is one of the priorities of cultural policy in most countries. Most countries have integrated strategies to promote reading. Libraries are given a leading role in reading promotion programmes. Particular attention is paid to developing good habits in children and youth. In France, for example, every general practitioner is required to identify young patients having trouble reading.

Active child readers

Grzegorz Leszczyński believes that a library intended for teenagers must tempt them with modernity of collections, provoke questions and force them to reflect, and not irritate with mentoring narratives and sermons of caution. Instead of moralising books, he brings up controversial ones – the reading of which will force teenager to face their own problems, because "the disdainful pop culture of eternal chortling and ignorance will not help them to build an inner order. This is supposed to be a library for readers who live and struggle with their own fate, not elsewhere, but here and now".[20]

Polite books discourage the rebellious teenager effectively and permanently. Books and readership are threatened by the book itself – boring, pedagogical, barren. And the people of the book industry themselves, ready to kill the joy of reading for fear that evil lurks in this joy, and not in the life surrounding the library.[21]

Libraries are increasingly becoming cultural centres. The British run reading circles at libraries and have the Six Books Challenge, which is organised by the state Reading Agency. Participants – school children – undertake to read six books per year in addition to the mandatory reading. After proving their acquaintance they receive a certificate with which they can apply for attractive prizes. Bebetecas – Portuguese reading rooms for children – are also well known. These are usually special rooms in children's libraries, each of which resembles a common room with gadgets (from mascots, through educational games, to musical instruments). The aim is to enable children to have contact with books and spoken literature in the form of fun. The classes are specially designed for different age groups: infants,

---

[19] *Ibid*., pp. 29-34.
[20] G. Leszczyński, *Bunt czytelników. Proza inicjacyjna netgeneracji*, Wydawnictwo SBP, Warsaw 2010, p. 11.
[21] Ibid., p.12.

children aged 18-36 months and then 3-5 years. They include, among other things, reading aloud, recognising words and practising imagination. Japanese bunko have a similar function, except that they are privately funded. They are created in places where books can be gathered and where there is space to play (even in Shinto temples, not to mention supermarkets).

The South Korean Miraculous Libraries, established in 2003 on the initiative of a television station and a non-governmental organisation, have a similar character. However, for several years now, the newly established National Library for Children and Youth has been coordinating similar actions in Korea.

Children's and youth book market

There are several cultural and social reasons for the expansion of the offer of literature for children and youth at the beginning of the 21st century. One of them has a global character and his name is Harry Potter. The success of the phenomenon was a surprise for the publishing market, where there was a belief that today's youth are computer game and television enthusiasts, who are not likely to turn into readers and therefore do not constitute a target group worth investing in. Until that moment, youth were not important addressees of the publishing offer. The unbelievable success and popularity of J.K. Rowling's series about the young wizard changed this approach and initiated an explosion of numerous varieties of fantasy for young people, as well as a revival of the whole book market for young people.[22] "Harry Potter is a living embodiment of marketing," notes Brown in his book *Wizard! Harry Potter's Brand Magic*. In 2016, *Time* estimated the market value of the Potter brand at $25 billion. The novel series by J.K. Rowling is an example of such an effective application of marketing in practice that it has become a model of effective, yet unconventional marketing. Two years after the first book's publication in 1999, British media reported on Harry Potter's phenomenon, quoting teachers who were afraid of the mass truancy of students in connection with the premiere of the third part of the series, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. "Preventing the accusation of inciting to mass truancy, Bloomsbury immediately announced that the book would be available at 3:45 p.m., when lessons were over. This CSR decision on how to sell was surprising to everyone, but it was also a great advertising trick".[23]

---

[22] S. Brown, *Magia Harry'ego Pottera. Kreowanie globalnej marki*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2008, p. 14.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

For several years now, the great hopes associated with Young Adult literature, have emerged on the Polish market. The first success was fantasy literature and a fashion for vampires, initiated by Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* saga and for dystopias, such as Suzanne Collins' *Hunger Games*. Last year, the biggest hit were contemporary novels such as John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* (140,000 copies sold in 2014).

The sales phenomenon and fashion on the book market, which has been implemented very quickly in Poland, also turned out to be colouring books and books like *Wreck This Journal* and *This Is Not a Book* by Keri Smith. These are peculiar "not-books" as the title itself indicates. Smith's publications contain instructions on each page on how to treat the "not-book", including "make a shoe out of this book" or "lose this page (throw it away, accept the loss)".

However, the digital offer of books for children and young people is not good. The number of titles published as e-books for young readers in 2014 was between 400 and 1100. Given that today's teenagers are referred to as the digital generation, the paucity of the offer in this segment seems surprising. The audiobook offer addressed to young readers in 2014 consisted of about 600 titles. There are also no Polish applications that would enable the use of the digital offer.

Polish publishers do not use the potential of e-reading and there are many indications that the lack of trust in new technologies on the Polish book market will lead to an even deeper decline in readership. However, while promoting reading, one needs to keep up with the times. Changes in leisure activities or new technologies cannot be treated as evaluative. As Krajewski says: "Something can only become popular if its use, viewing and experiencing is based on our personal choice, which is not imposed on us from the outside, which we are not forced to do by others. What is regarded by individuals as coercion, or what is assigned to us, cannot become popular".[24]

Young people spend a large part of their day in front of a computer or with a smartphone in their hands, and that is probably not going to change. It is possible, and even necessary, to take advantage of this phenomenon and ensure that popular and attractive content related to books or reading is included in new communication channels (social networking sites, video services or communication applications). Meanwhile, publishers or public institutions, whose duties also include the promotion of reading, rarely use newer technologies than websites and Facebook. At the same time, young people who are present on Snapchat or Reddit also look at Wattpad and read fanfics. From there, it is not far to reach for more

---

[24] M. Krajewski, *Kultury kultury popularnej*, Wydawnictwo naukowe UAM, Poznań 2003, p. 37.

serious and, what is more important, longer texts. Whether this potential next stage of reading will take place on paper or just on an e-reader screen does not matter much.

Bibliography

Aristotle, *Dzieła wszystkie t. I*, trans. K. Leśniak, Wydawnictwo naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2003

Barthes, R., *Przyjemność tekstu*, trans. A. Lewańska, Warsaw 1997

Barzillai, M, M. Wolf, "The importance of deep reading", *Educational Leadership*, 2009 (66)

Brown, a, *Magia Harry'ego Pottera. Kreowanie globalnej marki*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2008

Dukaj, J., "Za długie, nie przeczytam…", *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 17.08.2010

Kisilowska, M., M. Paul, M. Zając, *Jak czytają Polacy?*, Centrum Cyfrowe, Warsaw 2016

Kopeć, J., D. Michalak, I. Koryś, "Hybrydy cyfry i druku", *Teksty Drugie*, no. 3, 2015

Krajewski, M., *Kultury kultury popularnej*, Wydawnictwo naukowe UAM, Poznań 2003

Leszczyński, G., *Bunt czytelników. Proza inicjacyjna netgeneracji*, Wydawnictwo SBP, Warsaw 2010

Michalak, D., I. Koryś, J. Kopeć, *Raport: Stan czytelnictwa w Polsce 2015: wstępne wyniki*, Biblioteka Narodowa, Warsaw 2016

Perrin, A., *Book reading 2016*, http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/09/01/book-reading-2016/, accessed February 2017

Raport: Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2016, Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels e.V., Frankfurt am Main 2016

Raport Polskiej Izby Książki "Kierunki i formy czytelnictwa w Polsce", Warsaw 2103-2014

Special Eurobarometer 399, *Report: Cultural access and participation*, European Commission 2013

Zasacka, Z., *Czytelnictwo dzieci i młodzieży*, Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, Warsaw 2014

Joanna Poziemska

Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Poland

Development of the School Events Locus of Control Scale

KEYWORDS

education, paedagogy, diagnosis, locus of control, school event, school situation, student, pupil

ABSTRACT

Many studies have shown that the activity of individuals depends, among others, on constructs such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, motivation, learned helplessness or relations with the environment. They are in turn closely related to the locus of control. As it takes shape under the influence of experiences, past events are important in this process, for students – school events in particular must be taken into account. Due to the fact that tools are missing that could be used by paedagogues to study and diagnose the locus of control of school events in pupils, an attempt has been made to construct it. Existing tools are constructed in other cultures or socio-economic conditions, so this research is an attempt to construct a tool to determine the direction of explaining school events, separately for successes and failures. The sample consisted of 449 second graders from schools above the lower secondary level. The reliability of the tool was verified by the internal compliance coefficient and the validity – by studying the relationship with the chosen variables. The tool can be considered validated. In terms of the failures scale, the tool achieved satisfactory reliability, while the in terms of the scale of success – it needs more development.

Introduction

Intense changes taking place on the job market had caused the redefinition of strategic objectives described for education systems. Particular pressure was put on equipping learners with key competences enabling life-long learning (Organisa-

tion for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2008). The efficacy of the learning process depends on traits of personality, on attitudes and convictions.

Studies indicate significant influence of the locus of control on the functioning of people within self-education. Persons with a feeling of internal control of events are more active and better motivated (Weiner, 1985). Hence, it is important to shape within youths the conviction that they are able to influence the results of their actions.

Organising effective educational activities should take into account a reliable diagnosis of pupils' convictions. The available questionnaires that are used to measure the locus of control, constructed under different cultural conditions and having unsatisfactory psychometric properties, substantiate the need to construct a new tool that could be used in daily educatin practice.

The concept of the locus of control and its significance for explaining behaviour

The *Locus of Control (LOC)* is a relevantly permanent character property of man, constituting a generalised expectation concerning subjectively experienced location of the influence of events. According to the social learning theory of Julian B. Rotter, throughout their lives people learn to believe that they are in control of their fate or that it is controlled by factors that are independent of them (Drwal, 1995). This permits the delineation between persons with a feeling of internal control, meaning, those that are convinced that events depend on their behaviour, and those with a feeling of external control – convinced that the results of behaviour are outside of their sphere of influence – and depend on fate, destiny, on others (Rotter, 1966).

Many studies indicate the decisive role of past experiences in the emergence of the perception of control (Bandura, 1977; Rotter, 1966; Seligman, 1984). Theories of attribution divide causal factors into personal and environmental ones. As a result of the repetition of a sequence of events, expectations solidify and can be treated as a fairly durable property of personality (Drwal, 1995; Forsterling, 2005; Krasowicz and Kurzyp-Wojnarska, 1990; Wong and Weiner 1981).

According to the *achievement theory of motivation*, human behaviour is determined by the expectation of future success within a specific person, its value for the individual and the motivation to strive for success or to avoid failure. Only after the event, people analyse the relevant causes and the, and the response aims their later behaviour (Weiner, 1985). This means that to see one's influence on

the causes of events has significant meaning for the expectation of success in the future, meaning, it shapes motivation, shining through in the positive correlation between the internal LOC and motivation.

Additionally, the feeling of control is closely related to *perceived self-efficacy*, hence, the conviction of people that they are able to achieve goals that are important for them. According to the social learning theory, human behaviour is driven by expectations concerning: situations, results of actions and self-efficacy. The feeling of self-efficacy concerns the action itself and forms a part of the scope of control of personal activity. Studies confirm this relation and the positive correlation of efficacy with the internal locus of control (Bandura, 1997).

As a result of the feeling of inability to control events (meaning, the external LOC), *learned helplessness* emerges. (Meier and Seligman, 1976). The attributive model of learned helplessness permits one to expect that a higher level of learned helplessness shall be the case in persons with an internal locus of control for failures, and an external one – for successes (Abramson et al., 1978).

It was also shown that persons with an internal locus of control, thanks to the fact that they believe that they have influence on the world that surrounds them, exhibit higher self-acceptance and self-esteem, and thanks to this, become better emotionally and socially adapted. According to Morris Rosenberg, *self-esteem* is the attitude towards the I, a type of global assessment of one's self (positive or negative). A high global self-esteem describes the conviction that one is a sufficiently good, valuable person, whereby low self-esteem means dissatisfaction with oneself, the rejection of one's own I (Rosenberg, 1965, from: Dzwonkowska et al., 2007). As a literature overview shows (Baumaister et al., 2003), persons having high self-esteem see themselves in a better light, as a result of the conviction of controllability of their own lives (meaning, the internal locus of control).

The *feeling of loneliness* is a subjective assessment of the fact that the number of relations or their quality is lower than desired by an individual (Dykstra et al., 2012). This is why persons having an external LOC, who have the feeling that what is happening in their lives is the result of other people's actions, do not make close and heartfelt relations with others or are not satisfied with the relations that they already made. This is confirmed by the positive correlation between the feeling of loneliness and the external locus of control and between satisfaction with interpersonal relations and the internal LOC (Hojat, 1982; Yinghua and Lin, 2015).

Persons with an external LOC are more persistent when solving puzzles and experimental tasks (Crandall et al., 1965), they devote more time to home chores (Rotter, 1966), have higher self-esteem (Nowicki and Strickland, 1973) and a more real image of themselves (Maqsud, 1980), they are able to delay gratification thanks

to their conviction of the ability to achieve more valuable rewards even if they are delayed in time (Drwal, 1978).

Studies (Skinner, Zimmer-Gembeck, Connell, Eccles and Wellborn, 1998; Klein and Wasserstein-Warnet, 2000) indicate the possibility of shifting the locus of control, and the school, as an institution ran by professionals, is able to change harmful convictions and to support behaviour enabling effective functioning both in the school environment, outside of it, as well as in the future, in professional life.

Tools to measure the LOC

Below is a short description of selected tools used to measure the LOC.

According to the idea of the generalised feeling of control, many tools used to measure this property treats as being unidimensional, meaning, it fuses the convictions of the studied individuals referred to various spheres of life.

A popular tool to measure the LOC is the Rotter scale meant for adults (Internal-External Control Scale; I-E) with reliability measured by Cronbach's α at 0.69-0.73 (Rotter, 1966). In the original version, on the basis of factorial analyses, the LOC was treated as a unidimensional construct. However, later analyses of the I-E scale had shown that the locus of control measured using this scale is not unidimensional (Drwal, 1995).

Unifactorial is also the tool developed by Stephen Nowicki and Bonnie R. Strickland. It was constructed in three versions for various age groups (<9 years; 9-18; 18<). Every scale applies to a generalised locus of control. The reliability of estimation using the split-half method for forms 3-5: r=0.63, for forms 6-8: r = 0.68, for forms 9-11: r = 0.74 and for pupils from form 12: r = 0.81 (Nowicki and Strickland, 1973).

The Polish unifactorial test is the Delta questionnaire. The reliability of the test was estimated by various methods using various samples. In a group of students, estimates by way of the test-retest method yielded results ranging from 0.38 to 0.79, however, using the split half equivalence method – 0.68. The internal consistency of the questionnaire in a group of pupils at a juvenile detention centre was at Cronbach's α = 0.69, and in the group of pupils of upper secondary schools – Cronbach's α = 0.83 (Drwal, 1995).

A popular test to measure the LOC in children and youths (forms 3-12) is the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility (IAR) Questionnaire by Virginia Crandall et al. (1965). Beside the general result showing the locus of control it differentiates

between subscales for successes (I+) and failures (I-). Reliability measured using the split-half method for the pupil sample was between 0.54 and 0.60.

A Polish questionnaire, meaning, the *Kwestionariusz do Badania Poczucia Kontroli* (Questionnaire studying the Locus of Control) for youths aged 13-17 tests the LOC in four areas: school, peer group, parents and others. The test reliability measured using Cronbach's α internal consistency for failures = 0.54, for successes 0.40, and for the entire scale 0.62. It was created in the year 1983 on the basis of studies from the year 1981 (Krasowicz and Kurzyp-Wojnarska, 1990).

The revised Polish version of the tool consists of 43 items, of which 38 are diagnostic ones (15 success subscale, 10 failure subscale and 13 not qualified within any subscale). The tool, similarly to its original version, refers to four spheres of life: school (14 items), parents (nine items), friends (seven items) and "unspecified" (nine items). The reliability of the revised version of the questionnaire (Krasowicz-Kupis and Wojnarska, 2017) was for the general result 0.80 (girls) and 0.86 (boys), and for the subscales: success – 0.63, failure – 0.64. The authors do not indicate the reliability for the individual spheres of life, however, due to the number of questions in the spheres and the properties of Cronbach's internal consistency coefficient, one may judge that the reliability of detailed scales is lower than the subscales of failures and successes.

Taking into account that the majority of existing tools was constructed in different cultures or socio-economic conditions, and the newest Polish tool assumes values of α only permitting studies and diagnosis at the highest level of aggregation, an attempt was made to construct a new tool that would be useful in the daily work of the paedagogue, to test the feeling of the locus of control in situations specific for pupils, meaning – events taking place at school.

Method

The study[1] saw the participation of 506 pupils (of which 45.0% were girls) of second form in upper secondary schools of Bydgoszcz, Poland, aged 17-19, written basis for the drawing was data from the municipal teacher's education facility (Pl. Miejski Ośrodek Edukacji Nauczycieli) spanning upper secondary schools operated in the area of the city of Bydgoszcz and the forms at these schools. The sample was taken selecting three layers (school type: general education upper secondary

---

[1] Badanie zostało przeprowadzone pod kierownictwem Barbary Ciżkowicz, przy współpracy z Miejskim Ośrodkiem Edukacji Nauczycieli w Bydgoszczy w I kwartale 2015r.

school, technical school, vocational school). In every layer, schools were drawn, after which classes were drawn. However, not everyone would answer correctly (e. g. they would not select any answers to a question or would select two different ones). In the end, analysed were responses of 449 persons (214 from general schools, 169 from technical schools and 66 from vocational schools), where the proportion of correct responses exceeded 80.

Pupils filled in standardised psychological questions concerning their own efficacy, self-esteem, feeling of loneliness, school helplessness, motivation, as well as a *questionnaire to measure the locus of control in school situations*, constructed for the study.

The *feeling of efficacy* was tested with the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) as adapted by Juczyński (2001; Schwarzer, 1998). It measures the power of the general conviction of an individual about the efficacy of coping with difficult situations and obstacles. Its reliability measured using Cronbach's alpha is 0.84. The tool is composed of ten statements making up a single factor, to which the studied individuals were to provide responses on a four-grade scale of estimation. The empirical coefficient of the feeling of efficacy takes values between 10 and 40, whereas the higher the result, the higher the feeling of self-efficacy of the tested person.

The *Feeling of loneliness* was measured using the De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale (DJGLS) in the Polish adaptation by Grygiel et al. (2013). It is composed of 11 statements concerning interpersonal relations. The tested persons would express their opinion on the statements using a five-grade scale of estimation. Hence, the result is found in the range between 11 and 55 points, whereby the higher the result on the scale, the relations are worse in view of the tested persons. The internal consistency of the scale items is high (Cronbach's alpha = 0.89).

The measurement of *self-esteem* used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) in the Polish adaptation by Dzwonkowska et al. (2007). It is composed of ten statements analysing the positive or negative attitude towards the self, being a type of global evaluation of oneself. The tested persons would indicate the level of agreement with a specific statement on a four-grade scale. The higher the result, in the range between 10 and 40, the higher the self-esteem. The internal consistency of the scale items is high (Cronbach's α = 0.84).

The *feeling of helplessness* was measured using the School Helplessness Scale (Pl. Skala Bezradności Szkolnej, SBS) by Ciżkowicz (2009). Reliability of measurement estimated using the internal consistency method is high (Cronbach's α = 0.84). The scale is composed of 20 items describing behaviour related to participation in classes. The tested persons would estimate, how frequently they occur,

by providing answers ranging from „never" (encoded as 1) to „always" (5). The helplessness coefficient takes the value of 20-100 points. The higher the result, the more intense the helplessness.

The *motivation to learm* was tested using the Statistics Learning Scale (Pl. Skala do Uczenia się Statystyki) (Ciżkowicz, 1999). It is composed of 38 items, to which the tested persons would express their responses using the five-point Likert scale (1-5). As a result, the level of motivation to learn may have a value between 38 and 190, whereby the higher the result, the higher the motivation to learn. The reliability of the scale is estimated to be 0.91.

The scale of the locus of control for school events

In course of construction of the tool, considered were historic studies, in which factorial analyses indicated that with respect to various spheres of life, people utilise different explanations. As the tool was constructed in order to be used to execute a possible diagnosis of the locus of control in school conditions, attention was paid to the most frequent school-related events, meaning, situations that a pupil experiences during their learning that are directly related to the school environment.

Another significant aspect when developing the tool was the fact that people perceive and explain situations differently depending on whether the result of the event is positive or negative (Abramson et al., 1978, Crandall et al., 1965). For this reason, the questionnaire is made up of two subscales: locus of control for successes and failures.

The first version of the questionnaire was composed of 20 sentences describing school situations (10 positive and 10 negative events), constructed conditionally, e. g. as: „if… (event description, e. g. „If I did not understand the lesson"), then in most cases because:". Every sentence is concluded with two answers, e. g. an internal explanation (meaning, if the cause of the event was related to actions or properties of the pupil, e. g. „I didn't listen attentively enough") and an external one (if the event took place as a result of actions of others or of circumstances, e. g. „the teacher did not explain it well"). The mode of explanation (internal or external) is marked as **A** or **B** (the letter assignments were random). The pupils could choose, which cause takes place more frequently in their opinion, by marking responses as „A much more often", „A more often", „B more often", „B much more often" and „don't know". An example question would look like this:

1. If I did not understand the lesson, then in most cases because:						
A: I didn't listen attentively enough	A much more often	A more often	don't know	B more often	B much more often	B: the teacher did not explain it well

Responses of the pupils were coded ranging from 1 (most external explanation of the causes of the event) to 5 (most internal explanation of the causes of the event). The mean score for the items for failures or successes is accordingly the empirical factor of the locus of control of failures or successes.

The fundamental criteria that research tools in social sciences must fulfil are reliability and validity (Brzeziński, 2004).

Reliability, referred to as the level, to which test results may be assigned to the influence of systematic variance sources (APA, 2007), was estimated using a method based on an analysis of the properties of test items (Brzeziński, 2004), on the basis of Cronbach's α reliability scale (1951). The reliability analysis was conducted separately for the subscales of failures and successes.

Table 1. Results of the analysis of reliability of the failure subscale

question	all items factored in		items selected on the basis of the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient factored in	
	r	α	r	α
1P If I did not understand the lesson, then in most cases because: A: I didn't listen attentively enough B: the teacher did not explain it well	0.46	0.61	0.43	0.64
3P If I do bad on a test, then in most cases because: A: it was too difficult B: I didn't prepare well enough for it	0.42	0.62	0.46	0.63
4P If I did not know the response to a question the teacher asked, then in most cases because: A: I did not pay attention in class B: it was too difficult	0.41	0.62	0.40	0.65
6P If I am late for classes, then in most cases because: A: I left home too late B: my bus got away	0.22	0.66	x	x

8P If the teacher admonished me, then in most cases because: A: they do not like me B: I did not behave like I should have	0.25	0.65	0.28	0.68
13P If I had not done my homework, then in most cases because: A: I had more important things to do B: there was no time for it	0.16	0.67	x	x
15P If I got a bad mark, then in most cases because: A: the teacher was unjust B: I wasn't prepared well enough	0.38	0.63	0.44	0.64
16P If a project that I participated in failed, then in most cases because: A: I did not fit in with the work of the group B: other members of the project team did not do what they should have done	0.16	0.67	x	x
18P If I did not do an exercise right, then in most cases because: A: I did not listen to the teacher's explanation attentively enough B: the teacher did not explain the exercise in a manner that was understandable to me	0.38	0.63	0.35	0.66
20P If I did not remember the material, then in most cases because: A: it was too complex B: I didn't devote enough time to it	0.41	0.62	0.42	0.65
Cronbach's alpha of the subscale	0.66		0.72	
Spearman-Brown coefficient	0.67		0.71	

r – correlation between the item and the rest of the scale,
α – Cronbach's α reliability coefficient after that item is removed from the scale

Source: Own work

Table 2. Results of the analysis of reliability of the success subscale

question	all items factored in		items selected on the basis of the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient factored in	
	r	α	r	α
2S If I was active in class, then in most cases because: A: the lessons were interesting B: I knew the answers to the questions	0.04	0.34	x	x

5S If the teacher praised me, then in most cases because: A: he just liked me B: I deserved the praise	0.16	0.28	0.24	0.49
7S If I remembered the material fro class well, then in most cases because: A: I listened attentively and understood a lot B: the teacher explained it well	0.03	0.34	x	x
9S If it was easy for me to do the exercises in class, then in most cases because: A: I paid attention and thus I knew how to do it B: they were easy	0.09	0.31	x	x
10S If I got a good mark, then in most cases because: A: I was lucky B: I studied	0.25	0.24	0.34	0.42
11S If an undertaking succeeded that I took part in, then in most cases because: A: others did what was supposed to be done B: the entire team worked effectively	0.12	0.29	0.27	0.47
12S If I responded to the teacher's question correctly, then in most cases because: A: I made it B: my knowledge was sufficient	0.29	0.22	0.38	0.40
14S If I understood a concept correctly, then in most cases because: A: it aligns with my interests B: I amended my knowledge of my own accord	0.11	0.30	x	x
17S If a friend asked me for help, then in most cases because: A: learning together is more effective B: they know that I am able to help them	0.18	0.27	0.20	0.51
19S If I solved an exercise correctly, then in most cases because: A: it was explained well by the teacher B: I prepared for it ahead of time	-0.04	0.37	x	x
Cronbach's alpha of the subscale	0.32		0.55	
Spearman-Brown coefficient	0.36		0.51	

r – correlation between the item and the rest of the scale,
α – Cronbach's α reliability coefficient after that item is removed from the scale

Source: Own work

As result of the analysis of the differentiating power of the scale items (table 1 for the failure subscale and table 2 for the success subscale), three questions were rejescted for the failure subscale and five questions were rejected for the failure subscale. The value of Cronbach's alpha for failures (seven items) was 0.72, and for successes (five items) – 0.55. This means that the success subscale needs more work and must be reanalysed.

Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient for the entire tool is 0.81, and the Spearman-Brown coefficient – 0.78.

In order to verify the conducted analysis and selection of the best test items, an exploratory factorial analysis was conducted (Zakrzewska, 1994). The fulfilment of assumptions of the use of reduction of data by way of a factorial analysis was confirmed by Bartlett's test ($\chi^2 = 921.86$, df = 190, p <0.01) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index (0.734). On the basis of these results, the hypothesis can be rejected that the matrix of correlation coefficients is an identity matrix, and conclude that the expected reduction is significant, indicating the execution of the analysis was substantiated.

Factors were discerned using the varimax rotation method. On the basis of Kaiser's criterion, two factors were discerned that, when all items are factored in, explain 65% of the total variance (first scale – 37%, second scale – 28%), whereby when items are considered as selected on the basis of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient – they explain 72% of the total variance (first scale – 41%, second scale – 31%).

When all items in the questionnaire are taken into account, eight of them (PK2, PK6, PK7, PK9, PK13, PK14, PK19), those, the removal of which from the scale was related to an increase of Cronbach's alpha, did not sufficiently load any of the factors (above 0.4). This confirmed the necessity of removal of these items from the scale. One item (PK 15) more strongly loaded the factor that was opposed to its scale. Taking into account solely the items indicated in the scale, all items load the factor loaded by other questions from the same subscale. This confirms both the justification of inclusion of these questions in the tool as well as the subdivision into the subscales of failures and successes.

Table 3. Factorial load values

QUESTION NO.	FAILURE / SUCCESS	all items factored in		items selected on the basis of the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient factored in	
		FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2
PK1	F	0.06	**0.69**	**0.68**	-0.19
PK2	S	-0.08	-0.11		
PK3	F	0.35	**0.49**	**0.63**	0.16

PK4	F	0.24	**0.52**	**0.61**	0.006
PK5	S	**0.45**	-0.08	0.05	**0.45**
PK6	F	-0.06	0.39		
PK7	S	-0.11	0.24		
PK8	F	0.35	**0.46**	**0.44**	0.21
PK9	S	0.37	0.08		
PK10	S	**0.52**	-0.25	-0.07	**0.63**
PK11	S	**0.52**	-0.09	0.06	**0.55**
PK12	S	**0.52**	-0.19	-0.01	**0.61**
PK13	F	-0.04	0.32		
PK14	S	0.08	-0.15		
PK15	F	**0.61**	0.33	**0.53**	0.46
PK16	F	-0.217	**0.41**		
PK17	S	**0.42**	-0.21	-0.05	**0.48**
PK18	F	<0.001	**0.63**	0.61	-0.22
PK19	S	-0.33	-0.09		
PK20	F	0.34	**0.5**	**0.59**	0.18

Source: Own work

The validity of a tool allows one to determine, just how faithfully do the measurement factors reflect the studied property (APA, 2007). On the basis of subject literature, it may be expected that persons with an internal LOC will be characterised by high global self-esteem (SES) and motivation to learn (MOTIV), high self-efficacy index (GSES) and low helplessness (SBS) and low loneliness (DJGLS) levels.

Table 4 lists the descriptive statistics for all quantitative variables included in the analyses as well as the values of the Shapiro-Wilk test.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics and values of the Shapiro-Wilk test (N=449)

Variables	M	SD	Min.	Max.	W	p
LOC failures	3.2	0.71	1.0	5.0	0.990	0.005
LOC successes	3.7	0.67	1.4	5.0	0.979	<0.001
DJGLS	23.6	8.25	11	52	0.959	<0.001
GSES	30.3	4.65	10	40	0.981	<0.001
SES	29.7	6.00	10	40	0.977	<0.001
SBS	53.3	10.29	24	87	0.996	0.356
MOTIV	125.4	19.56	57	179	0.992	0.016

Source: Own work

The validity analysis was conducted in two ways: by verifying the relationship of the analysed variable and criterion variables and by differentiating of the level of criterion variables by the analysed variable. As almost all of the analysed variables (save for helplessness) were characterised by distribution strongly different than normal (conf. tab. 4), the validity analysis used non-parametric tests (Spearman's Rank correlation and the Mann-Whitney U test).

The average result on the failures scale (conf. tab. 4) was lower than for the success scale (meaning, more strongly aimed at the outside).

In tasks concerning successes, only 20.5% of those studied (that is, 92 persons) found themselves in the group with external LOC, and 79.5 (357 persons) with internal LOC. In tasks concerning failures, 182 people (or 40.5% of those studied) explained them by external causes.

In order to confirm criterion validity, correlations were calculated between the individual variables (tab. 5)

Table 5. Values of Spearman's Rank correlation coefficient

Variables	LOC successes	DJGLS	GSES	SES	SBS	MOTIV
LOC failures	0.12*	-0.14**	0.04	0.06	-0.09	0.12**
LOC successes	1.00	-0.04	0.17***	0.12*	-0.33***	0.51***
DJGLS		1.00	-0.34***	-0.47***	0.26***	-0.10*
GSES			1.00	0.51***	-0.39***	0.24***
SES				1.00	-0.45***	0.19***
SBS					1.00	-0.61***

Source: Own work

The above results show that the more internal explanation of failures, the less lonely and better motivated do people feel. And the more they ascribe successes to themselves, the more efficient they are and the better they perceive themselves, are more strongly motivated and less helpless. The directions of relations between the variables are thus aligned with expectations.

Tests of criterion validity were additionally conducted checking, whether criterion variables differ in groups characterised by internal and external LOC. For this reason, the LOC variable was dichotomised (both for failures as well as successes), with the value being the mean point score achieved for items dealing with failures or successes. As the division criterion the value of three was assumed, in line with the assumed response scale: the tested subjects who achieved a score below 3 were classified as having an external LOC (182 persons for failures and 92 persons for

successes), and persons with scores above 3 – as having an internal LOC in that area (267 persons for failures and 357 for the success scale), there were no people who would have a result equal to 3.

The analysis of differences in the levels of criterion variables between persons with an internal and an external LOC was conducted using the Mann-Whitney U test (tab. 6 and 7).

Table 6. Direction of explanation of failures and criterion variables

variable	LOC failures	N	Me	M	SD	rank average	U	Z	p
DJGLS	ext	182	24	25.2	9.20	203.34	20354	-2.92	0.003
	int	267	21	22.4	7.34	239.77			
GSES	ext	182	30	30.0	5.21	220.30	23441	-0.64	0.525
	int	267	30	30.5	4.21	228.21			
SES	ext	182	29	28.9	6.43	209.74	21519.5	-2.06	0.039
	int	267	31	30.1	5.64	235.40			
SBS	ext	182	54	54.7	10.60	239.81	21601	-2.00	0.046
	int	267	52	52.4	9.97	214.90			
MOTIV	ext	182	119	122.1	20.69	203.14	20318	-0.23	0.003
	int	267	127	127.5	18.46	239.90			

Source: Own work

Table 7. Direction of explanation of successes and criterion variables

variable	LOC successes	N	Me	M	SD	rank average	U	Z	p
DJGLS	ext	92	23	24.2	7.88	210.61	15098.5	-1.19	0.233
	int	357	22	23.4	8.34	228.71			
GSES	ext	92	29	2.9	0.55	190.98	13292.5	-2.83	0.005
	int	357	31	3.0	0.43	233.77			
SES	ext	92	30	2.8	0.59	205.47	14625.5	-1.62	0.105
	int	357	31	2.9	0.60	230.03			
SBS	ext	92	57	2.8	0.50	281.84	11192.5	-4.71	<0.001
	int	357	52	2.6	0.50	210.35			
MOTIV	ext	92	114	2.9	0.45	140.05	8606.5	-7.04	<0.001
	int	357	128	2.9	0.45	246.89			

Source: Own work

Persons explaining failures internally feel significantly less lonely than persons explaining failures externally. Persons explaining failures by internal causes have a higher feeling of efficacy, however the difference as compared to persons explaining failures externally is not statistically significant. The analysis shows that persons assuming the internal direction of explanation of failures have significantly higher self-esteem than persons assuming the external direction. Higher helplessness is found in persons assuming external explanations, lower for persons assuming internal explanations. On the basis of the conducted research one could say, with an error probability of 0.3%, that persons taking responsibility for their failures are more motivated.

Persons explaining successes externally are much less satisfied with their relations, however, the differences are not statistically significant. An analogous relation is found for self-esteem. With respect to the feeling of self-efficacy this difference is highly significant – persons ascribing successes to themselves feel much more efficient than those who do not do it. The same direction is taken by the difference between persons explaining successes differently – much more helpless are those that relinquish control to the outside. Additionally, persons who ascribe to themselves their successes are significantly more motivated than those who do not do it.

The above relations align with expectations.

Summary

To construct a tool to study the *locus of control for school events* should be useful in the daily work of a paedagogue allowing a swift evaluation of the LOC in school situations. In relation to this, alarming is the high proportion (11%) of the persons studied who did not fill in the scale correctly. Even more so as this does not apply to the remaining scales used for testing validity. This can be due to the fact that the scale has an atypical structure or that they are found towards the end of the tool (reduction in respondent engagement). This, however, requires further study.

The advantages of the tool include the fact that it applies exclusively to school situations, is suitable for the age group of 17-19 years and is short, hence it can be easily used for the efficient diagnosis of student convictions.

The reliability of the tool as a whole as well as of the failure scale is sufficient. The measurement precision of the success scale fares worse. And even if this imperfection is not found only for the constructed scale (low reliability of this subscale also applies to other tools to measure the LOC), however, work must be continued on perfecting the scale.

Persons taking over responsibility for failures themselves are much more satisfied with interpersonal relations, have a higher self-esteem, feel less helpless and more motivated, and the persons who ascribe successes to themselves believe that they are much more efficient, less helpless and more motivated. On the basis of the above analysis, one can hence say that the indicated relations aligned with expectations, however, not all of them seemed statistically significant.

Hence, one can conclude that the tool is valid, however, due to the psychometric parameters – it needs further development. The mode of providing answers must be simplified so that youths of all social groups, attending all kinds of schools, would understand its structure and be able to correctly fill it in; certain questions and answers must also be described with greater precision, in particular in the success scale.

Bibliography

Abramson L.Y. et al. (1978), Learned Helplessness in Humans: Critique and Reformulation. "Journal of Abnormal Psychology", no. 1, pp. 49-74, DOI http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-843X.87.1.49

Alloy L.B. et al. (1984), Attributional Style and Generality of Learned Helplessness. "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology", no. 3, pp. 681-687, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.46.3.681

American Psychological Association (2007), "Standardy dla testów stosowanych w psychologii i pedagogice", transl. by E. Hornowska. Gdańsk

Bandura A. (1977), Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change. "Psychological Review", no. 2, pp. 191-215, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191

Baumeister R.F. et al. (2003), Does High Self-Esteem Cause Better Performance, Interpersonal Success, Happiness, Or Healthier Lifestyles?. "Psychological Science in the Public Interest (Wiley-Blackwell)", no. 4/1, pp. 1-44, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1529-1006.01431

Brzeziński J. (2004) Metodologia badań psychologicznych. Warszawa

Ciżkowicz B. (1999) Motywacja do uczenia się statystyki. Bydgoszcz

Ciżkowicz B. (2009) Wyuczona bezradność młodzieży. Bydgoszcz

Crandall V. et al. (1965), Children's Beliefs In Their Own Control Of Reinforcements In Inteuectual-Academic Achievement Situations. "Child Development", no. 1, pp. 91-109, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.1965.tb05285.x

Drwal R.Ł. (1978) Poczucie kontroli jako wymiar osobowości-podstawy teoretyczne, techniki badawcze i wyniki badań. [in:] L. Wołoszynowa, (ed.), Materiały do nauczania psychologii, series III, vol. 3, pp. 307-345. Warszawa

Drwal R.Ł. (1995) Adaptacja kwestionariuszy osobowości: wybrane zagadnienia i techniki. Warszawa

Dykstra P.A. et al. (2011), Cross-National Differences In Older Adult Loneliness. "The Journal Of Psychology", no. 146(1–2), pp. 201–228, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2011.631612

Dzwonkowska I. et al. (2007), Skala samooceny SES Morrisa Rosenberga – polska adaptacja metody, "Psychologia Społeczna", no. 02 (04), pp. 164–176.

Forsterling F. (2005) Atrybucje. Podstawowe teorie, badania i zastosowanie. transl. by J. Radzicki. Gdańsk

Grygiel P. et al. (2013), Validating the Polish adaptation of the 11-item De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale. "European Journal of Psychological Assessment", no. 29(2), pp. 129-139, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1027/1015-5759/a000130

Hojat M. (1982), Loneliness As A Function Of Selected Personality Variables. "Journal of Clinical Psychology", no. 38, pp. 137-141, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(198201)38:1%3C137::AID--JCLP2270380122%3E3.0.CO;2-2

Juczyński Z. (2001) Narzędzia pomiaru w promocji i psychologii zdrowia. Warszawa

Klein J.; Wasserstein-Warnet M. (2000), Predictive Validity of the Locus of Control Test in Selection of School Administrators. "Journal of Educational Administration", no. 38/1, pp. 7-24, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09578230010310957

Kofta M. (2001), Poczucie kontroli, złudzenia na temat siebie, a adaptacja psychologiczna, [in:] Złudzenia, które pozwalają żyć, ed. by M. Kofta, T. Szustrowa, Warszawa

Krasowicz G., Kurzyp-Wojnarska A. (1990) Kwestionariusz do Badania Poczucia Kontroli. Podręcznik. Warszawa

Krasowicz-Kupis G., Wojnarska A. (2017) Kwestionariusz do Badania Poczucia Kontroli wersja zrewidowana. Warszawa

Maqsud M. (1980), The Relationship Of Sense Of Powerlessness of Antisocial Beahavior And School Achievement. "The Journal of Psychology", no. 105, pp. 147-150, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1980.9915143

Meier S.F., Seligman M. (1976), Learned Helplessness: Theory and Evidence. "Journal of Experimental Psychology: General", no. 1, pp. 3-46, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0096-3445.105.1.3

Niemierko B. (1999) Pomiar wyników kształcenia. Warszawa

Nowicki S. Jr, Strickland B.R. (1973), A Locus Of Control Scale For Children. "Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology", no. 1, pp. 148-154, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0033978

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 2008. Education at a Glance.

O'Leary M.R. et al. (1977), Perceived Locus Of Control, Experienced Control, And Depression: A Trait Description Of The Learned Helplessness Model Of Depression. "Journal of Clinical Psychology", no. 33, pp. 164-168, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/1097-4679(197701)33:1+%3C164::AID--JCLP2270330136%3E3.0.CO;2-O

Rotter J.B. (1966), Generalized Expectancies For Internal versus External control Of Reinforcement. "Psychological Monographs: General and Applied", no. 609, pp. 1-28, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0092976

Skinner E.A, Zimmer-Gembeck M.J, Connell J.P, Eccles J.S, Wellborn J.G (1998), Individual Differences and the Development of Perceived Control. "Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development", vol. 63, no. 2/3, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1166220

Schwarzer R. (1998), *General Perceived Self-Efficacy in 14 Cultures*, available at: http://userpage.fu--berlin.de/health/world14.htm (access on 03.07.2017.)

Weiner B. (1985), An Attributional Theory of Achievement Motivation and Emotion. "Psychological Review", no. 4, pp. 548-573, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.92.4.548

Wong P.T.P., Weiner B. (1981), When Peopple Ask "Why" Questions And The Heuristics Of Attributional Search. "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology", no. *4*, pp. 650-663, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.40.4.650

Zakrzewska M. (1994) Analiza czynnikowa w budowaniu i sprawdzaniu modeli psychologicznych. Poznań

Reports

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4941-009X

Report from the 4th National Scientific Conference from the series "Child – a digital native at school"

On 23 March 2019 the 4th National Scientific Conference "Child – a digital native at school" took place. It was organised by the Laboratory of Early School Pedagogy, the Department of Early Education and the Branch of the Polish Pedagogical Society in Olsztyn. The event was held under the honorary patronage of the Rector of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (UWM) and the Polish Pedagogical Society. The main direction of considerations in the series of meetings is the relationship between new media and education, while the issues of this year's edition focused on the theme of the "Digital environment for education". The invitation from the organizers was accepted for the fourth time by representatives of various circles, who took part in plenary sessions, specific problem sections and workshops. Among the conference participants were researchers from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Warsaw University, the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw, the University in Białystok, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad, the Centre for Social Prevention and a large representation of employees and students of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn. Among the guests were also teachers, psychologists, librarians and methodological advisors representing schools, kindergartens, libraries and teachers' in-service training centres from the Warmia and Mazury Voivodship.

The guests were welcomed by the Chairperson of the Conference Organizing Committee, dr hab. Marzenna Nowicka, Prof. UWM, followed by the Vice-Chancellor for Human Resources, dr hab. Sławomir Przybyliński, Prof. UWM and the Dean of WNS, dr hab. Joanna Ostrouch-Kamimńska, Prof. UWM.

The conference began with the results of the competition "My digital world – episodes from student life" and the presentation of the awarded films, the subject matter of which corresponded with the issues discussed during the conference. The organiser of the competition was the Olsztyn Branch of the Polish Pedagogical Society. The jury, chaired by Dr Wiktor Sawczuk, awarded three works and awarded two distinctions. A detailed account of the competition can be found at http://wns.uwm.edu.pl/sprawozdanie-z-konkursu-moj-cyfrowy-swiat-epizody-z-uczniowskiego-zycia.

During the plenary sessions, dr hab. prof. UWM Marzenna Nowicka gave a speech entitled *The development potential of the digital environment*, which was an introduction to the subject

matter of the conference. It was a retrospective look at the three previous conferences held in the same representative hall of "Stara Kotłownia" in 2016-2019. The Chair of the Conference recalled the main topics of those meetings and the directions of deliberations, recalling the key speakers whose speeches were part of the achievements of the Conference and presented publications which were the aftermath of the previous meetings.

The opening lecture entitled *Education in times of idiocracy – new challenges and tasks –* was delivered by prof. dr hab. inż. Janusz Morbitzer. Its aim was to show the essence and causes of the phenomenon of idiocracy, also known as an epidemic of stupidity, and ways to prevent it, to present the new role of the teacher in the school of the digital era, as well as to outline the idea of education towards wisdom and spirituality. In the first part of the lecture, Professor Morbitzer drew attention to the context in which contemporary education takes place. It is created by phenomena present in the sphere of technology – the ubiquity of digital media, in the sphere of culture – postmodernism with its multitude of truths and the idea of unlimited freedom, finally, in the sphere of civilisation transformations – the era of anthropocene, the reign of man-destroyer. In the further part of his speech, the Professor described, especially in the area of perception, imagination and thinking, the "digital natives" – the generation "born with a computer mouse in their hand", juxtaposing them with "the generation of the printed book". The speaker devoted a lot of time in his speech to the discussion of the phenomenon of idiocracy, defining concepts such as stupidity, fanaticism, the agony of knowledge, illiteracy or medioticism in the context of human use of digital media. An interesting part of the speech, especially for the staff of schools and kindergartens present at the lecture, was an indication of the role of the teachers in a world dominated by modern media. The Professor describes their role as preparing pupils to be architects of their own knowledge. In the last part of the lecture, the listeners had the opportunity to learn about the Professor's vision of the new school and the tasks of the teacher, which is to accompany the pupil on the road to self-fulfilment, i.e. to move from the role of a "wise man on the stage" to a "guide in the background". Professor Morbitzer's lecture abounded in accurate quotations from the works of great thinkers, poets and scientists, which perfectly correlated with the presented ideas.

The next guest of the plenary session was prof. dr hab. Marlena Plebańska, with a lecture *STEAM lessons: how to teach competences of the future*. The speaker discussed the assumptions of STEAM as a model of future education, used to support holistic human development in five thematic blocks, whose English names were used to create the name of the model: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ART and MATHEMATICS, and presented the possibilities of applying this approach to the development of "future competences" among students, necessary to function in a rapidly changing world dominated by new technologies. Photos from STEAM lessons conducted with younger schoolchildren, during which pupils prepared nesting boxes for birds as part of an educational project, served as an illustration for the presented model. Professor Plebańska also presented a model of a room arranged for the needs of classes according to the STEAM model, with space for several types of activities typical for this approach.

Dr hab. Natalia Walter was the last speaker in the plenary session and gave a lecture on *Digital support for children's reading. The role of audiobooks in elementary education*. In the first part of the lecture, the speaker recreated the history of audiobooks, and then presented research on the impact of spoken books on the psychosocial functioning of children with dyslexia. She emphasized several advantages of using audiobooks in working with children (e.g. conveying

content in a clearer and more lively way, promoting a higher level of reading, shaping the passion for reading, increasing the level of understanding of content). In the last part of the lecture, the conference participants were presented with the results of research conducted by the speaker with the participation of two research groups (children from a comprehensive school, age 8-9 years; children from a non-public school, age 7-9 years). During the experiments the pupils listened to the texts read by the teacher and audiobooks, and then answered the questions related to these texts. In the final considerations, the author presented conclusions from her own research, drawing attention to the developmental benefits of using audiobooks for children, which include: development of auditory attention and imagination, development of linguistic awareness, increasing verbal fluency, improving correct pronunciation, understanding and learning of new idioms, etc.

The plenary session was followed by workshops, conducted by experts in the use of modern technologies, on the following topics: *Gamification elements in the school – practical use of the ActionBound mobile application* (run by: Lidia Bielinis, MA), *Immersion in a digital environment. Head on top* (run by Jolanta Okuniewska, MA), *A STEAM lesson – robotic theatre* (run by prof. Marlena Plebańska), *How to teach (programming) thinking from an early age?* (run by Iwona Brzózka-Złotnicka, MA).

In the specific problem sections, with the participation of 28 speakers, three leading themes were discussed:

1. *A child in a digital environment – in search of solutions.*
2. *Supporting the potential of young people in the digital environment.*
3. *Academic digital environment – (un)exploited opportunities.*

The speeches in the first problem section focused on the topic of *A child in a digital environment – in search for solutions*. The speakers characterized the digital competences of children and assigned them important roles in the everyday life and school life of young people. The speeches raised the issue of risks related to the use of digital technologies and the responsibility of adults (parents and teachers) for the safety of children in cyberspace. However, more attention was paid to the educational potential of new technologies, reflected, among other things, in pupils taking responsibility for learning. The participants of the section were also interested in the teacher's themselves and their digital competences, as opposed to a sense of being lost in the world of digital technologies.

The topic of the second section, *Supporting the potential of young people in the digital environment*, was to focus on the problems of young people in the digital environment, with an emphasis on supporting the potential (in the broad sense of the term) of young ICT recipients. However, the age limit turned out to be fluid, as e.g. both children, young people and adults are interested in computer games, which was highlighted in several presentations. Their joint message was to stress the educational potential of games, e.g. because of the rules, which are not far from the real world.

In the last section, entitled *Academic digital environment – (un)exploited opportunities*, papers on three main topics were presented. The first one concerned the digital world of students in/for their academic and non-university education. It showed the Internet resources used by students in the scope of broadly understood educational needs and specialist vocational and educational programs. The second problematic issue were academic proposals for the use of Internet tools in school education. This included examples of cooperation between academics and students in the implementation of projects based on the use of digital instruments. The third

field of considerations mentioned in the papers included a reflection on relations between individuals and digital media in the context of two important characteristics: searching for identity in the digital world and succumbing to manipulation of the digital media.

The wide spectrum of problems raised by the participants of the conference deserves to be emphasized, as well as the good atmosphere of the meeting, encouraging questions and discussions. Although the conference had a rather national dimension, the presence of two researchers from Russia, from the I. Kant Baltic University in Kaliningrad was greatly appreciated. The participation of young academicians students and doctoral students from several academic centers in Poland was also an advantage of work in the sections.

Małgorzata Sławińska

Notes on authors

Articles

Jarema Drozdowicz, PhD, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, (Poland)

Sławomir Futyma, Prof., Zbigniew Rudnicki, PhD, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, (Poland)

Dmitry Leontiev, Prof., Moscow Lomonosov State University (Russia)

Jolanta Suchodolska, Prof., University of Silesia in Katowice, (Poland)

Anna Mańkowska, PhD, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, (Poland)

Agnieszka Skowrońska-Pućka, PhD, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, (Poland)

Jarosław Marzec, PhD, Gdańsk, (Poland)

Marta Dziarnowska, PhD, University of Silesia in Katowice, (Poland)

Elżbieta Rogalska, PhD, University of Szczecin, (Poland)

Celina Kamecka-Antczak, PhD, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, (Poland)

Syma Marta Al Azab-Malinowska, Master, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, (Poland)

Kurt Ludewig, Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy of childhood and adolescence of the University Hospital Münster, (Germany)

Przemysław Żebrok, PhD, University of John Paul II in Krakow, (Poland)

Agnieszka Bzymek, PhD, Ateneum University in Gdańsk, (Poland)

Sylwia Stano-Strzałkowska, PhD, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, (Poland)

Joanna Poziemska, Master, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, (Poland)

Reports

Małgorzata Sławińska, PhD, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, (Poland)

Editorial information

The editorial board is asking the authors to conform to the following rules:
– Times New Roman font size 12
– space 1,5
– text adjusted to the left and right margin
– pages numbered with Arabic numbers
– black color of the font
– footnotes in the text

Articles are to be provided with a short abstract with a list of key words. Texts have to include literature and parathetical references (Harvard Referencing System). Works cited are to use the following pattern:
– Books:
Williams Jr. V.J. (2006). *Rethinking Race. Franz Boas and His Contemporaries*. Lexington.
– Articles:
Baldissera F. (2009). *Telling Bodies*. „Paragrana. Internationale Zeitschrift fur Historische Anthropologie" Band 18, Heft 1: 93-106.
– Texts published in magazines with the character of edited works are to be treated as articles
– Texts in edited works:
Clammer J. (1973). *Colonialism and the Perception of Tradition in Fiji*. [In:] T. Asad (ed.). *Anthropology & the Colonial Encounter*. New York. p. 199–220.
– Unpublished works:
Drozdowicz J. (2002). *Pomiędzy ladino a indio. Współczesne oblicze samoidentyfikacji Majów w Gwatemali*, unpublished MA thesis, Poznań (when citing a BA, MA or PhD thesis please include the academic title, name and surname of the tutor)
– Internet sources have to include the initial of the author's name and full last name, title in italics, address of the web page and the date of the entry.

Published on the basis of an authorised copy

Cover design: Helena Bielicka
Technical editor: Dorota Borowiak
DTP: Wojciech Tyma