

ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY IN POZNAŃ

**INTERDISCIPLINARY
CONTEXTS
OF SPECIAL PEDAGOGY**

25

Academic editor
MAGDALENA OLEMPKA-WYSOCKA



POZNAŃ 2019

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONTEXTS OF SPECIAL PEDAGOGY

The scientific journal of the Faculty of Educational Studies

Adam Mickiewicz University issued as a quarterly

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Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2019

Publication financed by the Faculty of Educational Studies

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

„Tłumaczenie zawartości 8 numerów czasopisma „Interdyscyplinarne Konteksty Pedagogiki Specjalnej” na język angielski – zadanie finansowane w ramach umowy 792/P-DUN/2017 ze środków Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego przeznaczonych na działalność upowszechniającą naukę”.



Ministerstwo Nauki
i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

ISSN 2300-391X



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Preface

This next volume of *Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy* of articles describes main topics focused on children, kids and adults *rehabilitation* with special educational needs and also indicate on contemplation of further changes in the education. The present publication is made up of 17 articles. The paper opens with the article by Bogusław Śliwerski on extirpation of the scholarly profession in pedagogy. According to extirpation process, intend to examine the institutional, academic pedagogy, as a scholarly environment, that faces internally contradicting tasks. In the criteria of the scientific character of pedagogical studies, the Author describes paradigmatic quantity by analyzing limited self-consciousness criteria in scope of scientific knowledge. The Author also analyses cause of decreased level of teaching quality by validating results of pedagogical postdoctoral thesis'. In next article, *The economics of disability and the discourse of eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportunities*, Marcin Wlazo compares disability results with economic situation of people, impact on self esteem and how people with disabilities perceive themselves against others. The analysis is based on examples that consolidate the traditional image of disability as a factor affecting low economic status, through a description of the market of services and goods for people with disabilities, to examples of economic success achieved by people with disabilities. Similar deliberations are presented by Teresa Żółkowska, Karolina Kaliszewska. Authors indicate that in the contemporary special pedagogy,

we are dealing with a situation of passing over scholarly programmes that refer to the medical and social model of disability. The most most popular scholarly approaches is the posthumanism, the characteristics of which are, i.a. : the critique of humanism, the departure from anthropocentrism, the appearance of a new materialism, the direction of research towards objects, animals, as well as, the relations of people and non-people. Another very interesting thread concerning analysis of the social reception of a protest by people with disabilities and their families (and guardians), with a special focus on its educational dimension comprises Magdalena Belza-Gajdzica, Zenon Gajdzica reference to the educational context of the Sejm protest by people with disabilities and their families. In the first part of the paper the Authors, comprises the essential characteristics of social protests and in the second, they give a brief overview of media information about the discussed protest. The recapitulation of this part specifies the conditions that give the protest an educational dimension. From there, the analysis is narrowed to the reception of knowledge pertaining to the situation of the needs of people with disabilities and their families and the change in attitudes to this social group. The third part comprises a presentation of the research results on this issue.

Reflection on the difficult situation in which special pedagogy was found are introduced by an article of Grażyna Dryżałowska. The objective of the article is an attempt of analysis of the difficult situation in which special pedagogy is found. It is more complicated than the crisis that took place after 1989, because the fascination with the idea of normalization and integration is gradually decreasing, and there is no new concepts for the further development of special education as a scientific sub-discipline obliged to respond to modern challenges.

The next article, by Iwona Chrzanowska, presents issues of *Inclusive education in the opinion of the teachers from special pre-schools, regarding the chances of success of the inclusive actions towards particular groups of students, education participants, and teachers' seniority*. The article indicate the context of the implementation of the inclusive

education model, it seems important to learn the opinions of the teachers, particularly those teachers that are experienced in working with a child/student with a disability, regarding the chances of success of inclusive actions, both in the context of the type, and the level of severity of the developmental disorder, the hazard of the developmental disorder, as well as, regarding the remaining participants of inclusive education, i.e. students without or with special educational needs, however, displaying certain aptitudes. The text focuses on the teacher from the pre-school level of education, as well as, refers to the determination of their attitudes towards the realization of the model of inclusive education, as related to their seniority. The next article, by Zuzanna Narkun, indicates the teachers' self-efficacy and its importance for inclusive education. As the author stresses, the aim of this article was to describe the teachers' self-efficacy, self-efficacy for the purpose of inclusive practices, and to show its importance for the development of inclusion. Issues related to the self-efficacy of teachers (the definitions, the sources of self-efficacy, and the measurement of teachers' self-efficacy) have been described. (Non)integrated culture in Polonia Maior elementary schools are introduced by the articles by Matylda Pachowicz. The author presents here the Activities of Polish educational authorities who are aimed at eliminating special education in Poland, for the development of integrated and inclusive education, following a model of certain European Union countries. Due to the new trends, as the author stress, the demand for special pedagogues in mainstream schools is increasing. Thus, the nature of both mainstream schools and mainstream pre-schools, as well as, special education establishments, is changing. Education of children with various types of development disorders has become a general educational problem. Not only does a narrow group of specialists deal with it, but it has also resulted in a change within the educational culture of Polish schools. In regard to the above, the school's culture towards the Different, can be either pro-integrated or anti-integrated¹.

¹ Fragment from abstract prepared by author.

A specific supplement to the deliberations regarding the improvement of partnership of family and school, is providing by a text by Karol Bidziński, where he present the result of a part of a broad material gathered in field researches which were conducted between 2015 and 2018 in eight schools of Świętokrzyskie province. As the author indicates that the aim of the research was to describe school community and the subjective and intersubjective structure of the meaning of entities directing the area of implementation of student's educational needs.

Another very interesting thread concerning the social and aesthetic themes in Helen Keller's activity in defense of humanity, comprises Edyta Nieduziak's reference to humanity as one aiding the description of typically human phenomena and actions, differentiating us from other beings, then using it in the characteristic of cultural activity and, more precisely, artistic activity, both active – meaning the creation of the works of art, as well as, passive, related to the reception of the aforementioned, it appears almost necessary and difficult to replace with other categories. Additionally, if we intend to reveal the mutual dependence between culture and art, and the social phenomena, particularly those, that shape the human being, i.e. the educational phenomena². The next article, by Izabella Kaiser, present issues of the careers of graduates of special schools. Author stresses literature lacks a precise vision of an adult with an intellectual disability. The dominant view, in which the life of people with intellectual disabilities is perceived, is the indication of health, architectonic, employment, and educational barriers, or of the lowered social competencies required for the proper fulfilment of social roles. She stresses, that it seems important to monitor the situation of special school graduates systematically, as, in the constantly changing reality, it will allow them, to be more rationally prepared for the fulfilment of their social life.

Issues of sociocultural identity of the deaf with a cochlear implant and experiencing symptoms of depression are introduced by

² Fragment from abstract prepared by author.

article by Joanna Kobosko. The objective of the article is the presentation of the sociocultural identity of the deaf as an important factor from the point of view of their psychological and social functioning. The research question concerned the relation between the aforementioned identity and symptoms of depression, as well as the age, sex and age at cochlear implantation. Also the text by Renata Marciniak-Firadza provides a response to the need to the cognitive processes of a child with hearing impairment, and the need to apply appropriate methods and means of teaching, requires participation of a properly prepared specialist in the field of remedial and educational, preventive and therapeutic work in the didactic process. Another very interesting thread focuses on senior citizens losing vision as a challenge to contemporary special education comprises Kornelia Czerwińska, Izabella Kucharczyk's reference to to indicate areas that have been so far neglected in the rehabilitation of elderly people who have acquired visual impairment and to formulate proposals aimed at increasing the availability and quality of therapeutic services for this social group. Also the text by Kamila Miler-Zdanowska provides a response to echolocation, as a method supporting spatial orientation and independent movement of people with visual impairment. The article present echolocation as a method supporting spatial orientation of people with visual impairment and also indicate the results of empirical studies of echolocation. It also presents the benefits of using this ability in everyday life and signals research projects related to the methodology of teaching echolocation in Poland.

Next article, by Amani Mussa, indicates that The Arab education system in Israel together with the ethics and legal regulations are found to indicate reports of maltreated and sexually abused children. The problem of viewed in this paper relates to the reporting of children who had experienced maltreatment and sexual abuse. The article aspires to present the work and dilemmas of art therapists using arts therapy when working within educational and therapeutic frameworks in Israeli Arab society³.

³ Fragment from abstract prepared by author.

The study is rounded off by an article by Olga Chrzanowska on architect's self-education on the issues concerning architecture history. As the author indicates, the role of architect's self-education on the issues concerning architecture history and aesthetic empathy theory in the context of everyday architectural landscapes. As an example, the historical foundations for the thinking on modernity in designs of the three architects: Peter Zumthor, Christian de Portzamparc and David Chipperfield.

The volume is amended by a review of the book *The Methods of Logopaedic Therapy (Metody terapii logopedycznej)*, Editors: Aneta Domagała and Urszula Mirecka, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin 2018.

I would like to thank all the authors for their effort to share their reflection.

Magdalena Olempska-Wysocka



ARTICLES



Extirpation of the scholarly profession in pedagogy

ABSTRACT: Bogusław Śliwerski, *Extirpation of the scholarly profession in pedagogy*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 13-31. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.01>

In the article I am dealing with the issue of unscientific depreciation of pedagogy as a science, which manifests itself either in the lack of reliable scientific criticism of dissertations in this discipline or the escape of some educators into politics to implement their own social intervention projects. The dispute about the scientific nature of pedagogy arises from various research traditions, scientific schools, so the author presents several such methodological approaches, whose creators emphasize the criteria of scientificity and indicate the resulting limitations and their incompatibility. Meanwhile, self-awareness of the academic criteria of pedagogy is important in the way of reviewing the scientific achievements of young academic staff. Based on reviews in post-habilitation proceedings, I present various types of arguments in favor of the unscientific status of someone's research and the reaction of those whose publications are reviewed.

KEY WORDS: science studies, methodology of scientific research, scientific criticism, scientific argumentation, pedagogy, resistance to criticism

Extirpation is a medical term, and more precisely - a dentistry one, as it means the rooting out, the complete extraction of an organ. However, it has one more meaning, one related to the extirpa-

tor, a cultivator used to erase the weeds and to scarify the soil. In the linguist circles we already see a phenomenon of the (...) *out-voting of scholars that offer a better calibrated scholarly materials (not mentioning sheer extirpating action)* (P. Wierzchoń 2009, s. 17) as an exceptionally unreasonable activity. I intend to examine the institutional, academic pedagogy, as a scholarly environment, that faces internally contradicting tasks.

On the one hand, every professor of academic pedagogy intends to ensure the highest possible scholarly level, and the education of those who just enter the path of the scholarly profession. However, on the other hand – apart from “scarifying own soil with science” to – preventively act against the appearance of “husks” and to root out “weeds” at the right moment. I am aware, that the metaphor is not friendly, probably as the visit at the dentist for some. However, one must notice the inflammatory condition of our circles, in order to stop tolerating it, to heal it in the short run with parapharmaceuticals, as, according to the closest parametric evaluation of the pedagogy as a scientific discipline, per analogiam for the patient, it may be unable to continue life.

Here, I do not intend to demand the scientific work ethos, as Polish pedagogy parted ways with it to a large degree, a few dozen years ago. Paradoxically, during the totalitarian period, it caused more sensitivity, and the feeling of obligation towards its internalisation among the scholars, than it is during the period of freedom started in 1990 with the post-socialist act on higher education. The subsequent generations of academic teachers focused in their publications, on arguing that pedagogy is a science, and on to what degree, and aspect it cooperates with other disciplines, but the more the mass access to academic education increased, i.e. the demand for lecturers that ensure the staff minimum, the more the senior academic staff members, would turn their eyes from the extirpation of science from our discipline, including the institutional. A UoI, i.e. a University of Ignorance, could be established in every town, as it was the most profitable business in the public sphere.

More than 100 thousand scholars are employed in Poland, in more than 1600 academic entities, which, according to Hubert Izdebski, do not perform scholarly work, but scholarly production, as the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, had qualified more than 2 thousand journals as scientific. More than 10 thousand scientific books are published yearly. *It is accompanied by the increase of the mediocrity of the level of scientific works (...) which must result in the quality itself (there are reasons to speak of the 'littering of the world with scientific overproduction, or, more accurately, quasi-production'), and this in turn results in side-effects in the of scientific dishonesty of varying forms* (H. Izdebski, 2018, s. 11). The ethos of academic science in a Humboldtian aspect, transforms into an ethos of corporate, service, enterprise, commercialised science, departing from the autotelic values of scientific research, that is subjected to massification, egalitarianism, and the globalisation of higher education. However – as Leszek Kołakowski stated – the logic of thought is different from the logic of interest (after: H. Izdebski, p. 138).

Someone would say that there is no reason to formulate claims for the scientification of pedagogy, as, from Johann Friedrich Herbart, the fact that pedagogy is a science, is universal knowledge on our continent. However, from the methodological viewpoint, the humanities and social sciences in the 21st century stand before a dilemma of justifying own scientific nature, not in a historical, administrative-legal, social, or institutional aspect, but in the methodological one. The matter at hand is the imperative of meeting the methodological criteria that are appropriate for the contemporary social sciences and humanities, that without a doubt are different from natural, technical or strict sciences, and have no chances of achieving their scientific status. What brings pedagogy closer to medical sciences, technical or other social sciences, it its application character, orientating its achievements towards a broadly perceived pedagogical, educational, and upbringing practice, directly and indirectly serving people, regardless of their age and other instrumental, or cultural features. Our discipline must serve practice, however, it should also go beyond the common knowledge on

upbringing and schooling, and, with the use of the conducted empirical studies, create an appropriately grounded knowledge, that may, but does not have to have a practical application. What is important, that it should allow to describe and explain phenomena, events or processes, that are not visible to laymen, but allow some of them to understand them, and allow the educated to project the subsequent research.

As in the case of legal sciences (...) *three words of the legislator, may trash entire legal libraries* (H. Izdebski, 2018, p. 36), the ideological war of the authorities with one of the normative pedagogies may, for a period of time, render its constitutive sources useless, or – as in the case of a totalitarian country – render them censored, partially or entirely. The authorities, who intend to use pedagogy, or a different social science to steer the society, to manipulate the society for the purpose of accomplishing own political and ideological interest, expect the submission of science to the ideology of the party of power by applying e.g. economic instruments, and desire to fuse science with the only true ideology of the “better sort”. The accomplishment of the axio-normative function by science is unequivocal with performing it, when it appears in an ideological form.

Therefore, some scholars, following science determined as such, accept positions in the government or for the government, in order to announce an ideological truth and indoctrinate the society starting with children and youth, and ending with their parents and family members, instead of pursuing and discovering the real truth. *However, fulfilling the ideological function cannot be considered as doing science. This could be the peak of science only in an official science of totalitarian countries, in essence identical with the ideology. The ideological function of science cannot be identified with its axiological determinants, that do not have to, and should not stand in the way of practising its appropriate, traditional epistemic virtues* (H. Izdebski, 2018, pp. 96-97). The social sciences and humanities are particularly prone to the authorities’ intervention, if the position assumed by the scholars is incoherent with the interest of the government in power with a populist orientation, i.e. a government that rejects the results of

scientific studies that question the sense of the reforms, or, of the changes in legal regulation. *Additionally, this may become a point of reference for some scientists, who, in order to speed up their careers, will question the position of their elder colleagues due to essentially non-scientific reasons (...)* (Izdebski, s. 122).

The scientific criteria

The common criterion in the procedures of granting all scientific degrees, is the expert agreement about the scientific nature of these dissertations, which are characterised by an independent, original solution to a scientific issue. An original work is a work, that contributes something new to the existing state of the science represented by the scholar. However, this feature is so general, that the new contribution to science may be almost everything, that was not previously presented or published in the form and content given by the author. The lawyers are right to note that (...) *the higher the level of dishonesty, the lesser the level of the scientific level of a given "scientific production"* (...). (H. Izdebski, s. 143)

Table 1. The criteria of the scientific character of pedagogical studies (source: own research)

Author	Criterion	Self-awareness of the limitations
The paradigm of quantitative studies		
Heliodor Muszyński	<p>Scientific knowledge is a type of knowledge, that expands beyond the current moment, current situation, and beyond individual experience. It is, and at least it may be a common property of people, informing them of something relevant regarding the world. (H. Muszyński 2018, p. 17).</p> <p>Three ranges of scientific knowledge, depending on the degree of its applicability: 1) very high degree (for the general range); middle degree of applicability (e.g. on a national range, or at a given time), 3) low degree (e.g.</p>	<p>In the relations between people, not everything is empirically available, particularly, as it refers to the spiritual sphere of a person. There is no way of identifying all the factors that determine the human behaviour, or assume control over them.</p> <p>One cannot apprehend the reactions and behaviour of people, into laws without exceptions, but only in probabilistic propositions. Educational phenomena are unique and contextual, and so one is unable to generalise the knowledge on them.</p>

Author	Criterion	Self-awareness of the limitations
The paradigm of quantitative studies		
Heliodor Muszyński	<p>in a given institution or even a group, or an organisational unit). Scientific knowledge is a certain knowledge that gives a high level of certainty, that its claims are in accordance with the actual state, therefore – it causes our trust (Ibidem); it is a reliable knowledge, empirically confirmed, therefore, it is infallible.</p>	
Krzysztof Rubacha	<p>A scientific study is (...) regulated by the norms created by the community of scholars (Rubacha 2008, p. 9) (...) quantitative studies, the results of which are a consequence of the statistical analyses performed on data in form of figures, they serve the purpose of formulating general regularities referred to a particular population. On their basis, one may formulate and verify the theoretical propositions. The more verifications can a given proposition “handle”, the broader the range of explanation it gains. (Rubacha 2008, p. 10) Quantitative studies serve the purpose of building a theory of a range referred to a population, therefore a rather wide one. (p. 23)</p>	<p>The probabilistic character of the explanations, results in the fact, that we do not gain, the so called complete interdependencies; the theory denotes the limitations of the study, it enforces the schema of scholarly proceeding and the categories, to which the study must answer. Pedagogy does not create a theory on the object of its studies, reducing them solely to a range referred to the diagnosed population. Practical studies do not serve the development of science, but the development of educational practice. (p. 25) (...) generally, education can do well without science, e.g. pedagogy, psychology or social sciences. The remark (...) allows to understand that science does not create educational practice, but can only regulate it, or – from its own point of view – regulate its course. (p. 26)</p>
Krzysztof Konarzewski	<p>The scientific study results from the curiosity of the phenomenon, their understanding and synthetic apprehension. Here, the strict scholarly proceeding is in motion, a clear and unambiguous language, almost obsessed control of each phases of the scholarly proceeding, and enabling their repetition. <i>The scholar serves no cause other than the matters of cognition. He renounced the conscious manipulation of data in order to prove a previously assumed thesis, he tries to identify the stereotypes in own thinking, and stops himself from valuating the examined objects. However, he feels responsible for the consequences resulting from conducting research, and announcing their results.</i> (Konarzewski 2000, p. 8) The study must be credible due to the application of instruments of a determined reliability</p>	<p>The lack of knowledge regarding the object of study, the scholar's inability to agree with himself, whether how he understands the object of own research, what he wants to achieve by the research, how he justifies his methods and study techniques. Evading confrontation of own project with other scholars-specialists. The awareness of the possible omission of facts, or not seeing their association with concepts. The feeling of uncertainty, whether the regularity established by the scholar is not ruled by a factor, previously unconsidered. (...) in social sciences the correlation indicators are never close to unification (...). (p. 37)</p>

Author	Criterion	Self-awareness of the limitations
The paradigm of quantitative studies		
	and accuracy, and the strict observation of the scholarly procedure.	
Wladyslaw Zaczynski	<p><i>The scientific study is a multi-phase process of varied activities in order to provide us with objective, accurate, and comprehensive cognition of a given element of natural, social or cultural reality. (Zaczynski 1980, p. 9)</i></p> <p><i>The scientific results consist of the knowledge of pedagogical facts 1 – described in a profound way, in the entire abundance of its features and the circumstances of occurrence, regarding time, place, and conditions; 2 – ordered in appropriate classes based on the identified common features; 3 – explained by showing their interdependencies. (ibidem p. 11)</i></p> <p>Scholarly proceeding must be subject to rigorously effective methodological procedures.</p>	Pedagogy is dedicated to very complex phenomena (upbringing, schooling, etc.) that cannot be demonstrated in a satisfactory way, due to the insufficient surplus of facts, and the insufficient capabilities of reaching them. The danger of receiving <i>subjectively “bent reality images</i> in research. (p. 15)
Marian Nowak	<p><i>Pedagogy is a philosophically-empirically-practical science, with an enormous assortment of particular concepts and their tradition in the history of the development of scientific methodologies (...) Above all, it is a humanities’ science, thus, to a degree, it is required to display a certain attitude and a certain selection of proper scholarly procedures. (M. Nowak 2010, p. 15) A scholar obtains knowledge that is almost objective in the result of respecting certain regularities, norms and means of establishing relations (p. 17) in the study process.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, pedagogy is not a rigorously scientific knowledge in a positivist sense, divided and functioning in accordance with defined rules, but it is a certain dynamic knowledge, which places sense on events considered from a certain epistemological perspective. (p. 27)</i></p>	<p>Due to the complexity of the phenomena in the open human world (...) <i>the scientific studies, also empirical, are much more complex, and more problematic than one would have seemed. Due to such complexity, they cannot be as objective. (p. 16)</i></p> <p>Empirical research is realistic-probabilistic, considering various perspectives.</p>
Tadeusz Lewowicki	<p><i>The continuous reason for dilemma, remains the “independence” of the methodology of pedagogy (abundant with imports from methodologies of varying sciences) and – particularly “the scholarly maturity” of pedagogy (compared to – in accordance with the scientific approach – with “strict sciences”). (T. Lewowicki 1995, p. 12)</i></p>	<p><i>The understanding of pedagogy remains ambiguous. Contrary to the majority of sciences or scholarly disciplines, there is no at least general, but universally accepted definition of it, it is not defined in a way that would situate it among the sciences (or beyond them). (...) Various weaknesses of pedagogy (and its methodology encourage a signi-</i></p>

Author	Criterion	Self-awareness of the limitations
The paradigm of quantitative studies		
Tadeusz Lewowicki		<i>significant number of pedagogues, and even more, the representatives of other sciences, to treat pedagogy more like a specific technology, a discipline that is dedicated to the practical application of the elements of knowledge of other sciences and – what is worse – the elements of politics and ideologies. In such definition, pedagogy is an area of the practice of social life, but is not seen as a science. (T. Lewowicki 1995, p. 12)</i>

The analysis the postdoctoral proceedings in the pedagogy discipline in Poland, shows that the level of science in science is getting lesser, not because 1) the academics have no access to the source literature on the methodology of social studies, or 2) due to the lack of knowledge regarding what pedagogy is as a science, or 3) because they lack knowledge, but of the lack of the self-education effort, the methodological self-awareness, as they make fundamental mistakes in their scientific studies. Therefore, it would be difficult for the situation to not result with a pedagogical “sad layer”, if some components were not fresh, were not selected carefully, or were combined in wrong proportions, or, mixed in the wrong order. With concern, I examine the students’ mistakes in scholarly procedures, in the conceptualisation of studies, or in the way of realising them, as well as, of discussing them by persons, who had already received the doctoral degree, and even a professor’s title in humanities or social science, within the pedagogy discipline. They ridicule not only themselves, but they disgrace our discipline and the academic units they represent.

So what motivates academic and titular professors, when they review someone’s scholarly accomplishments? Some write about their opinions directly, and the majority would probably agree with the criteria of the substantive evaluation of someone’s accomplishments: “(...) *I will answer three questions: what does the Postdoctoral Candidate study, and how does it fit into the scientific discipline? How does the Postdoctoral Candidate perform the study? Eventually, where*

does the Postdoctoral candidate present his research findings, in what form and in what language? (...) an essential point of reference for the formulated opinions will be the accordance of the conducted research with the identity of the listed discipline. The identity consists of four elements: 1) the object of research, 2) the theories and schools of thought, 3) the study methods; 4) the conceptual system, therefore, the language of the discipline. One must highlight, that it is imperative to treat aforementioned four elements, that constitute the identity of the scientific discipline, in an integrated manner." For some reviewers, in the evaluation of the accomplishments of the postdoctoral candidate, is the active participation in scientific conferences, and particularly, in international conferences.

No one would believe, that quasi-scientific dissertations, scientific slops, are created, and published in the printing houses of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the Jagiellonian University, the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, the Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin, the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, the Pedagogical University of Cracow, the University of Gdańsk, the University of Łódź, the University of Silesia, the University of Szczecin, the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, the University of Warsaw, the University of Wrocław, the University of Zielona Góra (the order is alphabetical). Obviously, great works are also written and published there, however, we are facing increased displays of tolerance regarding pathologies, or even their legitimisation, in result of the decisions of the by the unit councils' decisions on giving the postdoctoral title to persons that in no way meet at least the statutory requirements. Reading the reviews of some professors we may - in result of examining the evaluated accomplishments - conclude that they, for own reasons, assume the devil's advocate position, simply to second the application, and to vote in favour of conferring the scientific degree to a person who has little to do with science.

Within the process of reviewing the scientific accomplishments of the postdoctoral candidates, the phenomenon of pedagogizing pathologies and quasi-sciences occurs, by academic and titular professors, who use various arguments, such as:

- the education argument: *“she will learn sooner or later”*; However, it is imperative for the postdoctoral candidate for the role of an “independent” senior staff member, a teacher of upcoming generations, to work on her methodological culture in studies.
- the social-geragogical argument: *“he is at such an age, that no harm will be done”*;
- narrow competency argument: *“he knows English”*, *“he has been working here for so long”*, *“he knows statistics”*; *“His accomplishments are modest in terms of publications. However, in general, his work was published in a leading world renowned journal from the given discipline. On the other hand, his accomplishments are entirely in English, therefore it is accessible to scholars worldwide”*.
- environment argument: *“he is in such good scholarly circles”*;
- perverse argument: *“the more someone criticises, the more I am in favour of the postdoctoral candidate”*;
- quasi-methodological argument: *“(…) however it has once again failed to reflect in the scholarly premises, discussing the subject in the monograph....; Refers to the scholarly trends present in the country. (...) in a matter not entirely realised in accordance with the adopted assumptions, however it contributes to the research within the given subject.*
- an argument that justifies the postdoctoral candidate: *“The author of the research realises this flaw, as, in a certain place, she argues (...), however it is not a convincing argument”*; *“The subject examined within the monograph cannot be ascribed to the leading or priority studies in Poland, however, that does not mean, that the discussed subject is deprived of cognitive value or practical usefulness.*
- the self-justifying argument of the reviewer: *“I know that it is difficult to formulate critical remarks regarding a dissertation being an attempt to solve a difficult scholarly issue. Therefore, the presented remarks to the empirical sections, are not aiming to depreciate the discussed publication. It is more of an attempt to alert the postdoctoral candidate to certain issue, if she intends to continue the studies regarding the subject in the future”*; Despite the lack of “clarity” of this criterion, and the previous critical remarks, I wish to highlight

that the postdoctoral candidate's accomplishments, meet the requirements of a significant contribution to the development of the discipline; "Despite the references being fragmentary, and consider the research results to a lesser degree, they provide a proper background for data presented later on...".

- *an argument that covers auto-plagiarism or plagiarism: "I will not discuss the articles, that are dedicated to the subject similar to that discussed in my postdoctoral book; Within the postdoctoral candidates, the publications in English deserve words of criticism. They are a rather accurate translation – in terms of contents – of works published previously or simultaneously in Polish. (...) If you want to appear in the international forum with your publication, you should be more careful in submitting your articles, and take care of their better language quality; "The book is theoretical and empirical, it is the crowning of the postdoctoral candidate's scientific-scholarly work, within the framework of the given discipline (partially examined and published by Her in different sources); "the published article ... is a re-examination of the data presented in section 1 and 3 of the monograph. Within the context of the modest number of the postdoctoral candidate's works, it is difficult to consider the text as an entirely independent publication.*
- *advisory, publishing argument: "The issue deserved an additional section in the monograph – the value of the issue deserves it".*
- *quantitative argument (by weight): "Summarising the published works (...) I would like to highlight, that despite the fact that it is not quantitatively extensive, each of her publications (both original and in co-authorship) is a significant contribution to the discipline; "However, quantitatively, the presentation of the research results at conferences and scientific symposiums, is decent, however, one must notice, that the majority of them was held at her University; My concerns are raised by the very modest amount of published works, and no independent publications;*
- *the shortcoming reduction argument: "However, regardless of the remarks about the lack of consequence, and the lack of precision regarding the categories applied in the section titles, one must state,*

that it is a thoughtful scholarly idea; "Apart from listing the names of authors, whose publications were useful for the monograph, the introduction lacked a more comprehensive study of the state of research, and of determining how the reviewed monograph stands out in comparison to the existing research"; In favour of the author, I consider the doubts regarding the paucity of the theoretical basis of the work, indeed the volume of the theoretical section, in comparison to the analytical, looks unfavourable. However, must the author prove own competencies in regard to theory in a postdoctoral dissertation? Does it not suffice, that he sketches out the theoretical context and present the conceptual system of the dissertation, as in the book? Some authors treat the theoretical sections as a specific "obligatory course", which serves the purpose of displaying knowledge regarding theory. Then, it happens, that the erudite presentation of the theory is not applied in the analytical part of the work. (...) The author abandoned the tedious overview of the theoretical positions, probably hoping to address not only the academic reader, but also seeking readers among practitioners."

- *the error-reducing argument: "The number of research hypotheses subject to verification seems to be too large. (...) A certain issue, that affects the quality of the conducted analysis, is the lack of a consequent application of the principle of going from the general to the particular; one must highlight, that the methodological aspect of the work is its rather significant weakness. However, that does not mean, that the dissertation deserves criticism. The postdoctoral candidate is aware of the study methods, and surely, is able to apply some of them well; "The determinations made by the author, surely possess substantial practical value, their cognitive value is not as obvious. Primarily – the claim which the candidate presents in the introduction – in her studies, she did not display theoretical ambitions, limiting herself to the comprehensive description of the practical issue that interests her; In my opinion, the monograph is not consistent in quality: it is great empirically, and significantly worse in the theoretical aspect (a narrow apprehension of the phenomenon, sporadic mistaking of terms). "The postdoctoral candidate, by con-*

structuring models and explanations, did not refer to the source literature to a satisfactory degree, and even if he did the aforementioned, the references were general.

- *the argument of transferring responsibility to others: “A certain explanation – however, not a justification – of the erroneous thinking of the X analysis, may be the reference, made by the candidate, to a certain handbook, in which the method is wrongly interpreted.*
- *the argument of the alleged value and appeal of the dissertation: “the analysis of the reviewed considerations is aided and made more appealing by the 14 tables, despite the fact, that they were created by other authors”; Many of the remarks made by the author of the reviewed work, should be considered as accurate. While, in a majority of cases, they are not Her scientific discoveries, it is valuable that He learns them by means of a comprehensive analysis of the presented phenomena, and processes, displaying knowledge, demonstration skills, the knowledge of life, and the awareness of its complexity; Not all conceptual innovations of the Postdoctoral Candidate deserve recognition. However all his semantic innovations are backed with a profound understanding of the functioning of the particular mechanisms.*
- *the ad infinitum argument: “Despite the fact, that the examined issue has received much interest and was examined on numerous times, the dynamics of the processes that cause the phenomenon, or are its consequence cause the results of the research results to become out of date quickly. This require to continue or conduct a new type of efforts to verify the existing results, and to continuously update the examined processes.*
- *a ingratiation-deconspiring argument: “In his postdoctoral dissertation the candidate considers himself not only an author, but also a reviewer, i.a. writing about the “comprehensive analysis”, “accurate conclusions”, “profound observation”, “accurately selected research methods”, etc.”*
- *the “basically” and essential contribution argument: “Basically, the author answers satisfactory to the questions presented in the introduction, however...”; “The postdoctoral book should be considered*

as an essential contribution to the scientific discussion about its title issue. It should be considered as a legitimate element in the application accomplishments leading to achieving scholarly independence.

- the organising argument: *“The complaint above, is of organising nature, indicating the necessity for scholarly care in regard to the biased presentist examinations of the X issue. Does that affect the truth behind the theses of the candidate? Paradoxically, no.”; “The indicated errors and inconsistencies, surely lower the scholarly level of the reviewed work, however, they do not nullify it.*
- etc.

Wojciech Pisula referred to the critical reviews, that negate the fundamental competencies and the scholarly level of the dissertation, and still end with a positive conclusion, as the “Polish reviews”, stating that it is phenomenon on a world scale. However, he is incorrect, as if he would examine the postdoctoral reviews from Slovakia, he would see, how low the level of scholarly proceedings can be (B. Śliwerski 2018).

The issues with the scholarly self-evaluation of academic teachers

The accomplishments of the scientist, submitted for evaluation in the proceeding for a degree or a scientific title, should meet the minimal standards of the scientific level, however, it is not defined by the law, and there is no agreement for it, from the circles of each of the scientific disciplines, particularly in humanities and social sciences. If such existed, none of the majors, doctors, or postdocs would appeal to the Central Committee, in a situation of receiving at least one negative review of their own scholarly accomplishments. However, there is a number of scientists with a very high self-evaluation, who appeal even when all three reviews are negative, and the remaining members of the postdoctoral committee vote in favour of refusing to give them the postdoctoral degree. In this case the degree of science in science is a result of the feeling of

(in-)justice. Such persons do not know the quote of Cicero, on laws: “(...) *the belief that all agreements and proclamations of various communities should be considered as just, is a display of utmost tomfoolery*” and “*if these laws were established only due to the will of the commonalty, or by the decision of the leaders, one could legitimise mugging, adultery, last will forging, if only the majority would vote in favour* (H. Izdebski, op. cit., p. 39).

Still, the moral flexibility perceived as such, is taking place “here and now”, in Polish universities, in 2018. There are sessions of the councils of scientific units, during which some of their participants, do not bother with the consequences of own decisions. It is enough to gain the support of minimum four members of the postdoctoral commission, to, contrary to facts, forget about science, and by immunising to criticism and foolishness, vote in favour of giving a title of the postdoc to a person who absolutely fails to meet not only the statutory, but also ethical requirements. Then, they will vote in favour of every, even the most absurd proposal, only to “fix” someone with a postdoc, because they have certain obligations in regard to the person, or his protectors. These are morally flexible, irresponsible persons, and that might be the way how they advanced within the academic environment. Corruption has different faces, not necessarily financial.

Yes, some provide postdoc degrees to doctors from own or other departments without caring about their own academic circles, as – to their understanding – they will not be affected. The council members, who de facto initiate a resolution about bestowing an academic title upon someone, may, during the presentation of the council, read a newspaper, engage in private conversations, evaluate the tests of students or PhD students, etc. They don’t have to analyse anything any more. They are like the parliament representatives of the party of power, that are subject to the academic “discipline”, and instead of discussing, they are to defend their position against all odds. The fact, that arithmetically someone is IN FAVOUR, does not necessarily mean the TRUTH about the actual state of the accomplishments of a postdoctoral candidate. Additionally,

if, during the proceedings, there was “customarily” little time given to a given case, it will pass easily and painlessly. Everyone is in a hurry, and everyone wants to leave the hall. Who examined all the reviews between the council? Who wrote the protocol contents? The less people did it, the better for the candidate, but that is even better, because there will not be additional voices during the discussion. So easy. No reform will change this. We all know that. Instead of your academic accomplishments, the support of the senior academic teachers is important, also in such devalued councils. As Lech Witkowski wrote in the *“Applied Humanities”* („*Humanistyka stosowana*”) – “(...) *always, behind actions laid with good intentions, some evil lurks*” (L. Witkowski, 2017, p. 299).

The issues with criticism, i.e. the mechanism of sweet lemons

Some academic teachers believe, that the postdoc degree of a scientific title of a professor should be handed for everything but the scientific accomplishments. They do not understand and do not want to accept in their consciousness, that they must display necessary methodological and substantive competencies in the submitted scholarly achievements. How are we supposed to expect the future doctors or postdoctoral candidates to display original contributions to science, if we ourselves have contributed little? How is a person supposed to educate PhD students, if they have not conducted any meaningful scientific studies, and have not received funds for a scientific project, in a contest?! Why someone, who is a politician, a media commentator of events, and is a representative for the European Parliament, should be exempt from scientific requirements? Does playing such social roles constitute scientific qualification? What does it change if he submitted publications for evaluation, as the members of the postdoc commission, or the members of the faculty council would follow the good of science, and not the good of his media or political status?

As seems from the reviews of professors – the leading specialists on political science, within the previous term of the Central Commission for Degrees and Titles – the low scientific quality of persons appealing in regard to the refusal of giving them a title of a postdoc is apparent. These persons have not taken to their hearts and minds, that one should expect more from an author of a dissertation for the postdoctoral title, than from a student that writes a major. However, they choose the self-defence mechanism, with the inadequate, heightened self-evaluation. They communicate to the society, a feeling of injustice and they refuse the evaluations of the professors-reviewers. They do not bother to cite the critical fragments of the reviews of their dissertations, nor answer to them in a substantive way. The Polish science reform A.D. 2019, will save this people, as they, for different reasons, will be appointed professors of universities without having a postdoc. They will not have to be subject to the evaluation of the postdoctoral commission, as the postdoc will not be required.

Many fear criticism

It is untrue, that within the scientific circles, the scientific criticism is allowed. Criticism is the greatest hazard to those, whose actions contradict the law in motion, and the good customs. *Criticism is a statement, that within the comparable, the similar is different. The similar, however, different – is the aims of the actions on the one side, and the effects on the other. As the difference is large, and obvious, being a natural consequence of your intentional bungling (parasitism), and as – let us continue – the statement is, as is said, independent of You, you have found yourself in peril* (M. Karwat 1983, p. 109).

The critic is the mirror of those who forgot, what they were supposed, i.e. what they should do. Therefore, he excludes the explanation of reasons, that something has not occurred, or something couldn't be done, as he reminds the authorities about their duties and abolishes the foggy attempts to evade particular explanations.

The person who exercises power in an authoritarian way, not only does not need critique, but is clear in the fact that it does not play well with him. That person does not need reproach/reminding of what he was supposed to do, or what he promised to do (what she should have done), as he would allow his subordinates to remind him, that he hadn't done something that he couldn't or wouldn't do. Substantive, accurate and principle-based criticism of dissertations, becomes a hazard for the publishing reviewer, as it reveals his own, personal responsibility, although resulting from various motivations, but primarily, from his actions or the lack thereof.

What does the scientific community do when they notice that the true face of a dishonest professor was revealed? It fights the criticism and not the cause of the pathology, and eagerly. For years we have been getting used to the fact, in order to, if only possible, to not allow any criticism, excluding critics with various means, and tactics, or scaring off criticism so it would not appear. If a criticism appears, everything is done, simply not to accept it. *You can accomplish this in various forms: you can negate it, receive it as not criticism at all, as well as, act as if it wasn't there in the first place. You must lead to a situation in which it is no longer certain, whether the criticism is a fact* (M. Karwat, p. 113). Some attempt to deprive us of the critical right to criticism, or at least, efficiently question the possibility of criticism in given academic circumstances. If the aforementioned strategies were unsuccessful, the critic, *whom you failed to stop and incapacitate, must be destroyed (institutionally)* (M. Karwat, p. 114).

Young pedagogues, under the PAN Pedagogical Sciences Committee (Komitetu Nauk Pedagogicznych PAN), founded the "*Parezja*" ("*Parrhesia*") journal. Its editorial team assumed the premise, that it will provide the young scholars with the space to raise voice in important, actual issues, taken from the ethical perspective, as well as, the dialogue between pedagogy and other disciplines. They encourage polemics, to go beyond the narrow boundaries of scholarly areas, as well as, to combine the scientific methods. What is more important, they share critical remarks with the authors, regarding the structural, methodological, pragmatism, or even lin-

guistic issues found in submitted papers, that should be evaded (A. Korzeniecka-Bondar 2017). It is better to be wise before the event, so that the extirpation of the ethos of scholarly work will unnecessary.

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The economics of disability and the discourse of eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportunities

ABSTRACT: Marcin Wlazło, *The economics of disability and the dis-course of eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportunities*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 33-53. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.02>

Disability results in certain economic consequences, which are analysed mainly because of the generation of cost. The economic situation of people with disabilities and their families is usually associated with negative effects of neoliberalism, or causing and strengthening social inequality and excluding people unattractive on the market. In this context, the relationship between technological progress, economic growth and diagnostic and therapeutic services are also analysed. The article presents various aspects of the economic discourse focused on disability. The analysis is based on examples that consolidate the traditional image of disability as a factor affecting low economic status, through a description of the market of services and goods for people with disabilities, to examples of economic success achieved by people with disabilities.

KEY WORDS: economics of disability, inequalities, equalization of opportunities

Introduction

Interest in the economic aspects of disability is integrally linked to the development of its social model, under which a category of economic barriers, listed next to environmental (physical) barriers as a separate element or part of broadly understood social barriers, has appeared. The new (social) expression (construction) of the problem of disability was associated not only with undermining the dominance of its traditional models (moral, medical, individual), but also with showing the variety of factors and the complexity of relationships that shape social reality and human functioning. Disability has become a subject of scientific interest going beyond medicine, inspiring equally social (including economic) and humanistic (cultural) research. Twentieth-century social theories, including particularly post-structural concepts that enabled the study of disability from a class (socioeconomic), racial (minority), feminist (intersectional), postcolonial (global) or cultural perspective, have proven to be powerful support for disability studies. By identifying the social model of disability with an interactive approach, Marcin Garbat has traced the historical conditions of including disability issues in economic theories.¹ The most important finding is that the aforementioned author links the social model of disability with historical materialism and class perspective, which he does, referring to the precursor studies in this area of Vic Finkelstein,² i.e. a researcher associated with both the introduction of the social model of disability and the development of academic disability studies. The personal involvement of people with disabilities in the struggle for their own rights has led to the initiation of changes whose basic direction has been set by historically and socioeconomically shaped slogans aimed at eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportuni-

¹ M. Garbat, *Spółeczny wymiar niepełnosprawności w teoriach ekonomii*, „Studia Oeconomica Posnaniensia” 2017, vol. 5, no. 10.

² V. Finkelstein, *Attitudes and Disabled People*, World Rehabilitation Fund, New York 1980.

ties. Respecting civil rights in relation to all people has never been a matter of course or common practice, even in countries where social change (including revolutions) sanctioned anti-discrimination solutions. Disability is actually the last factor that commonly conditions socioeconomic inequalities, which have not completely disappeared even in the case of factors such as gender, race or social origin, which much earlier than disability became the cause of the fight for equal treatment.

Summarizing his historical and theoretical considerations, including Marxist tradition, institutionalism and protective capitalism, Garbat states that

Disability, despite a strong development of anti-discrimination laws and a change in the perception of people with disabilities, is still one of the main factors of poverty, and thus, stigmatization and social exclusion. It is even stronger because it directly affects a given person as well as indirectly their relatives, according to the assumptions of social systems responsible for helping a person with a disability.³

The subject of this paper includes selected examples of economics and disability discourse in media reports and journalistic texts. The analysis of this form of discourse allows for the presentation of both the current perception of disability as a factor strictly conditioning the economic situation of a large group of people (with disabilities and their families), as well as the state's social policy regarding the dissemination of standards (including economic ones) of eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportunities. However, this is not a critical analysis of the discourse, but a contextual review of the thematic threads in the field of combining disability and economics. At the same time, the purpose of the undertaken analyses is to present the "economics of disability" present in the title, as a complex and ambiguous concept, whose proper meaning is in fact dependent on the effect of the discourse analysis and its contexts.

³ M. Garbat, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

“Whose life is the hardest?”,⁴ contexts of economics of disability

The title of the report based on research conducted in July 2018 by the CBOS encourages reading the content of the study with its linguistic form. The question always stimulates curiosity, and a professionally prepared statistical summary is an important context for qualitative discourse analysis. In this case, information should be expected that would directly relate to the identification and arrangement of factors affecting “life difficulties” in the opinion of the respondents⁵, which the authors of the report associate with marginalization, exclusion, worse treatment and lower social acceptance of selected groups of people, which causes that they have fewer opportunities to satisfy their needs.⁶ The basic question asked to respondents was as follows: “Which of the mentioned groups, in your opinion, are in the worst situation and face the greatest difficulties and limitations in society?” Replying to it, the respondents could choose no more than three such groups. The highest number of indications was given to the disabled (43%), then the poor (37%) and the elderly (27%). The mentioned survey has the value of a longitudinal study because it is a repetition of the study conducted 5 years earlier, in 2013. The comparison of the results of both studies illustrates a clear change in the respondents’ perception of factors determining life difficulties. In 2013, the disabled received 28% of responses, the poor 53%, while the elderly 28%.⁷ The exchange of positions between disability and poverty should

⁴ See. Komunikat z badań CBOS, *Komu żyje się najtrudniej?*, no. 106/2018 (ed. by M. Omyła-Rudzka).

⁵ “The study “Current Problems and Events” („Aktualne problemy i wydarzenia”) (338) was conducted by means of computer-assisted face-to-face interviews (CAPI) in the period from 28 June to 5 July, 2018 on a representative sample of 952 random adult Polish residents.” After: Komunikat z badań CBOS, *Komu żyje się najtrudniej?*, op. cit.

⁶ See *Ibidem*, p. 1.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

not surprise in the context of the Polish economic situation in recent years, or steady economic growth, a decrease in unemployment, an increase in salaries and government family support programs. At the same time, it can be presumed that the participation of people with disabilities and their families in positive economic changes is small, and the combination of disability with the broadly defined mechanisms of social exclusion has been clearly strengthened and established.

In extensive quantitative studies on the global approach to disability and poverty, these phenomena are treated as interdependent, or they are a mutual cause and effect.⁸ However, problems associated with estimating the impact of disability on poverty level, including a situation when the issue of the economic functioning of households with people with disabilities is considered, are indicated. Referring to quantitative data from two countries (Bosnia and Vietnam) regarding the scale of poverty, and obtained on the basis of measuring the level of consumption and functioning of people with disabilities (according to the WHO ICF model), the authors of the mentioned study assumed that "ignoring disability significantly reduces the importance of both poverty and the impact of disability".⁹

This opinion corresponds to the thought referred to by Michael Palmer¹⁰ in his review of theoretical assumptions common to the issue of poverty and disability: "The most dangerous and widespread threat to people with disabilities comes from a less dramatic, so widespread that increasingly less perceived source, poverty."¹¹ In

⁸ J. Braithwaite, D. Mont, *Disability and poverty: A survey of World Bank Poverty Assessments and implications*, "ALTER, European Journal of Disability Research" 2009, vol. 3, p. 230.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 230. All translations from English were made by the author of the article.

¹⁰ See M. Palmer, *Disability and Poverty: A Conceptual Review*, "Journal of Disability Policy Studies" 2011, vol. 21, no. 4.

¹¹ A. Ghai, *Marginalization and disability: Experiences from the Third World*. In M. Priestley (ed.), *Disability and the life course*, Cambridge University Press (pp. 26-37). Cambridge 2001, p. 28.

the study of the Australian researcher, the issue of the cost of disability was raised as not only an economic problem, but also an unambiguous association established in the public consciousness, which has the effect of specifically expanding the area of the negative, medical image of disability to include economic helplessness, unproductivity and constant reporting on financial support needs. Palmer postulates clarifying the definition of poverty in the context of disability, noting the differentiation of consequences depending on the adopted concept of poverty. Namely, he proposes that the economic situation of people with disabilities should be analysed in the context of three definitions of poverty, based in on an approach considering basic needs, capabilities and economic resources, respectively. Only the combination of aforementioned factors creates the possibility of a full overview of the relationship between disability and economic situation, which has also been reflected in the latest models of studies on disability, postulating a departure from analyses focused exclusively on the situation of people with disabilities in the rich countries of North America and Europe and expanding disability studies by global South studies. In this approach, disability is associated with the historical consequences of colonialism, which results the interdependent phenomena of a greater number of people with disabilities in former colonies and the structural economic exclusion of countries, whose human and material resources had been exploited for years.¹²

The problems of developed countries are, in turn, reduced to the consequences of neoliberal politics and economics, under which disability becomes both a cause of socioeconomic exclusion and an object of market formatting in the context of the offer of services and goods. Goodley says directly:

¹² Zob. M. Miles, *Disability on the Different Model. Glimpses of an Asian Heritage*, "Journal of Religion, Disability and Health" 2002, vol. 6, no. 2-3, pp. 89-108; A. Ghai, *Disabled Women: An Excluded Agenda of Indian Feminism*, "Hypatia" 2002, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 49-66; A. Ghai, *Marginalization and disability: Experiences from the Third World*, op. cit.

People with disabilities may suffer from socioeconomic difficulties. In rich countries, people with disabilities are economically threatened by the expansion of the free market, population growth, the scale and professionalization of social and educational services, as well as growing needs for “intellectual ability” and “physical ability” to work.¹³

In Polish literature no less radical approaches to this issue can be found. Namely, Aleksander Lipski writes about the “problem of disabled people under the conditions of the discourse of neoliberal economics”¹⁴, from the position of an economist convincing readers on the basis of the examples that

therefore, the issue of social environments such as people with disabilities, hence to a certain extent and sense excluded and marginalized in the social system, covers not only their commonly known psychophysical concerns and problems, but also the much less frequently perceived problem of their state of consciousness and their ability to analytically and critically interpret reality.¹⁵

The cited text draws attention to the paradox of emancipation by marketization of one’s own body, which the author illustrates by a specific situation of women with disabilities taking part in beauty contests, modelling, advertising or dance tournaments. Referring, on the one hand, to the dominance of neoliberal ideology, and on the other hand, to the discursive categories of dramatization and aestheticization of reality, and especially the power-knowledge of Michel Foucault, Lipski combines the “axionormative order of modern society” with “adaptive and integration programs” identified with “symbolic violence of the social system”.¹⁶ The aestheti-

¹³ D. Goodley, *Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*, Sage Publications Ltd., London 2011, p. 2.

¹⁴ A. Lipski, *Problem osób niepełnosprawnych w warunkach dyskursu ekonomii neoliberalnej*, „Problemy Edukacji, Rehabilitacji i Socjalizacji Osób Niepełnosprawnych” 2018, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 29-59.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 55.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 30-37.

zation of disability is an increasingly obvious example of the development of ableist hegemony, for which normality is no longer sufficient, because on the market it is necessary to constantly raise standards and set trends that are difficult to achieve also for able-bodied people.¹⁷ In this context, the intersectional complexity of the situation of women experiencing the socioeconomic consequences of disability as a result of damage to the body of their own or their children is significant. Referring to the voluntary and even desired aestheticization and marketization of the body, Lipski states:

The most striking and paradoxical at the same time in this procedure is not the practice of using women as these cultural products itself, but the fact that its participants themselves contribute to its maintenance and consolidation. As they confess, this situation not only does not bother them, but is even convenient for them, which is related to the shared responsibility attributed by Fraser to feminist movement representatives for the failure of its original program contesting discrimination of the weaker and social inequalities in the neoliberal social system. Therefore, by accepting and including the process of objectification and instrumental use as aesthetic exhibits, its participants themselves strengthen the neoliberal economic order.¹⁸

The presented position seems to be accurate, although in such complex issues there can always be some doubt when the key issues of feminism and disability are presented, even on the basis of convincing analytical arguments, from the perspective of an able-bodied man, which must be faced also by the author of this text. Therefore, the discourse analysis presented below will not be, as according to methodological principles it cannot be, free from author's subjectivity, which can be both a strengthening and cognitive limitation of the presented postulates.

¹⁷ Zob. D. Goodley, *Disability studies. Theorising ablistm and disablism*, Routledge, London 2014, pp. 21-34.

¹⁸ A. Lipski, *Problem osób niepełnosprawnych w warunkach dyskursu ekonomii neoliberalnej*, op. cit., p. 54.

Object and subject in the economic discourse of disability

In the analysis of the economic and media discourse of disability, the starting point is invariably the combination of disability and cost generation. The economic situation of a family with a child (children) with disabilities, adults with disabilities and the elderly seen from the angle of the gradual loss of psychophysical fitness, is clearly associated with the support system as a social response to the needs that selected groups of people are not able to satisfy only by their own efforts. In the general social dimension, it is important to what extent support contributes to building social cohesion and to what extent it can cause disintegration phenomena. Social cohesion is associated with economic discourse, as it is defined (by the Council of Europe in operational terms) as “the ability of modern society to ensure long-term well-being for all its members, including equal access to resources, respect for human dignity and diversity, personal and collective autonomy and responsible participation”¹⁹ In such a definition, the inclusion of economic issues in the global dimension of social policy, constituting not only the expression of certain theoretical assumptions, but also directly implemented by political groups in power at a given time and place, is clearly visible.

In turn, the issue of the disintegrative nature of support is associated with disregarding the principles that are aptly characterised by John Rawls’ theory of justice.²⁰ It is primarily related to the second principle of justice, called the difference principle, according to which the overriding principle of equality (social and economic) can be suspended only if the most disadvantaged (according to Rawls) benefit.²¹ In practice, this always means that eliminating inequalities

¹⁹ After: K. Wojnar, *Wpływ polityki spójności na spójność społeczną polskich miast – wnioski z badań ewaluacyjnych*, „Studia Regionalne i Lokalne” 2011, special edition, p. 71.

²⁰ See J. Rawls, *Teoria sprawiedliwości*, translated by M. Panufnik, J. Pasek, A. Romaniuk, the translation was reviewed and completed by S. Szymański, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2009.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 107.

must be combined with providing equal opportunities. Polish analyses devoted to this issue clearly indicate that support, implemented by assumption the difference principle, can also be a cause of social disintegration, because:

1. It was revealed that there is a relatively frequent lack of social support in the environments covered by the study (unemployment, addictions, old age, disability).
2. Help is more available to those less in need.
3. People seek help and receive support to guarantee the satisfaction of their important needs more often in informal circles, mainly in the family, than in institutions established to help those in need.²²

In the discourse presenting practical aspects of the location of people with disabilities (divided into the discourse of parents of minor and adult children with disabilities, adults with disabilities themselves and economists cooperating with non-governmental organizations) in the network of economic support, the disintegration effects of violating the principle of eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportunities can be easily perceived. An example of such discourse can be reportage presenting the everyday functioning of children with disabilities from the perspective of their mothers. A similar way of presenting economic issues can be seen in both shorter press forms²³, and in extensive book materials.²⁴ Namely, the pattern of combining reports on the personal economic situation with reference to the political and social conditions of the support system is repeated. In a short text from "Wysokie Obcasy" one can read:

What has recently happened in the government is one great hypocrisy. This refers to each party. All politicians go on populist slogans. They promise: "When we get the power, everything will change." What has

²² J. Grotowska-Leder (ed.), *Sieci wsparcia społecznego jako przejaw integracji i dezintegracji społecznej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UŁ, Łódź 2008, p. 7.

²³ See Z. Bukłaha, *Cieszę mnie małe rzeczy*, „Wysokie Obcasy” 2018, no. 37(1000), pp. 22-24.

²⁴ See J. Hołub, *Żeby umarło przede mną. Opowieści matek niepełnosprawnych dzieci*, Wydawnictwo Czarne, Warsaw 2018.

ever changed? Nothing, but people started talking about it. I do not feel the solidarity. All the more, even among parents of disabled children divisions are created. This is because of the ineffective system. At the beginning we were like children in the fog, we did not know that there were some foundations, that we could ask for immediate support. Now I get 1,470 PLN of attendance benefit that is spent on living. This is the payment for our work with the child. And even with that we have a good situation, because there are guardians of the disabled who get 520 PLN. In addition, 153 PLN of allowance for rehabilitation and medicines. (...) All that remains is the frustration and humiliation of mothers and fathers who work very hard to survive.²⁵

In Jacek Hołub's reportages with extensive biography, a similar pattern is included in each of the five stories presented in the book. In one of the cases, the impact of communication is strengthened by the fact that the mother of a disabled child is disabled herself (congenital absence of forearm), raises her daughter alone and works professionally, so she cannot receive child benefits.

I do not get any help from the state. I am not a mother having an attendance benefit, but a mother with salary. I get 153 PLN a month of attendance benefit for myself, because I am disabled and 153 PLN for my disabled child. This is all the support that a disabled working mother receives from the state, raising a disabled child alone.²⁶

At the same time, "stories of mothers of children with disabilities" testify to both the limitation of public finances in the field of eliminating barriers (providing equal opportunities) and the neoliberal excess of goods and services formatted for a consumer group, which is very sensitive in this regard, namely parents of children with disabilities.

This year I started to apply for a subsidy to remodel the kitchen, but we know what it is like: in the district 140,000 PLN was given for the

²⁵ Z. Bukłaha, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

²⁶ J. Hołub, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

so-called removing barriers and there are 70 applications. This has nothing to do with the needs.²⁷

I go with Jagódka to an osteopath. Rehabilitation supposedly consists in the fact that by touching the appropriate organs and points on the child's body, the flow of cerebrospinal fluid is unblocked. When I started reading about it, I immediately gave it up, as I did not want to think that it was complete nonsense. Of course, the therapy is private, we pay 150 PLN for twenty minutes. I thought that I would give it a try, I bought ten treatments and we will see. A drowning man will clutch at a straw. There are a lot of tricksters, but I believe that someone will help Jagoda.²⁸

The use of biographical reportage is a frequent journalistic procedure, which aims to present the current social problem based on the life history of a person who meets the assumed criteria. The issue of the economic situation of mothers-pensioners, who have looked after a disabled child for several dozen years, is thus illustrated by a specific case and its reference to thousands of analogous ones.

Jola is angry that the state treated her so unfairly. Her and 46,000 other parents, mainly women, who in the 1990s due to taking care of seriously ill children went on earlier but earned EWK pension (the name comes from the code of benefit according to Social Insurance). – We didn't give the children to an institution so that the state maintained them. We had drudged for 20 years to maintain them. When I lacked 5 months to 20 years, I cleaned the clinic at night, because I would not get anything. And today we have 600-700 PLN. And younger mothers who did not work for the sufficient number of years, but have quit their job to look after their ill child, get 1,300 PLN of attendance benefit. Is that fair? – she asks.²⁹

The rhetorical use of numbers is particularly meaningful in economic discourse, and numerous journalistic texts focused on the

²⁷ Z. Bukłaha, op. cit., p. 24.

²⁸ J. Hołub, op. cit., p. 91.

²⁹ L. Anannikova, *Gdyby leżał, toby nie żył*, „Duży Format” 2016, no. 38(1201), p. 22.

subject of disability are based on the scheme of presenting the disproportion between needs and economic possibilities. In this way, the traditional image of disability, which is much closer to the individual and medical model than the social one, is strengthened (probably also against the intentions of discourse creators). This also happens when the parental criticism of the system has a constructive dimension, as in this quote:

The disabled care system must be rebuilt. How? Officials and social workers should support such families. Maybe a legal way to earn some money would be a good idea? Within certain frames, so as not to fall out of the market. And a list of institutions and places that can help. And we err, abandoned with our tragedy.³⁰

Adults with disabilities often become co-authors of the dis-course, which finds its fullest expression in the form of a press interview. The interview with Karolina Hamer, a Paralympic player, is a review of personal experiences, which from the perspective of a person with a disability constitute an accumulation of factors sanctioning inequality and discrimination. There are not many purely economic threads in this interview, but more important is that they appear as an important element in the description of the oppressive system, which the co-author of the discourse experiences intersectively as a bisexual woman, a sportswoman with disability, taught and accustomed to constantly adapt to ableist-neoliberal mechanisms.

Before I decided to officially support the protest, I wondered for three days if this issue also concerned me. I am so used to patching up and adding resources to my disability that I could not see it right away. I was a victim of the belief that I must patch up everything myself. And now I think that the role of the state, however, is based on supporting people with disabilities. And we are talking here not only about dignity, but also about providing equal opportunities. As a woman close to forty years old, I am tired of having to organise everything myself, and

³⁰ Z. Bukłaha, op. cit., p. 23.

of always having to prove something. I would love to live peacefully. Sometimes. From the age of 20 I add 1,500 PLN a month to have a living standard of a fully able-bodied person. Hence my full support for the protesters.³¹

Strengthening the critical assessment of the economic situation of people with disabilities is a feature of the discourse, whose co-authors are people who are able-bodied, but combine in their professional and social activity economic knowledge and knowledge of the reality of everyday functioning of people with disabilities with a direct commitment to changing the adverse dimensions of these reality. Information presenting the person with whom the interview is conducted, who is not necessarily a well-known person, such as Anna Dymna or Jerzy Owsiak, is an important component of the discourse, which in the case of conversation is always co-created by all participating people. Therefore, following a particular discourse also enables the identification of journalists in the context of the thematic area with which they associate their activity in the field of discourse production. Within such a framework, it is therefore necessary to analyse. for example, an interview with Paweł Kubicki ("economist, works at the Warsaw School of Economics; a collaborator of non-governmental organizations working for the elderly and the disabled, including the group We Want All Life (Chcemy całego życia)",³² which was conducted by Ludmiła Anannikova, dealing with social issues, especially the marginalization and exclusion of disadvantaged groups, and Justyna Suchecka, who writes primarily about broadly understood education. The starting point of the conversation is the recurring issue of raising funds from one percent of tax in annual cycles, which triggers the critical potential of the external and at the same time professional view of this issue. In the economist's statement, a differently expressed view revealed both in

³¹ *Wyphywam na głębokie*. Interview of Karolina Domagalska with Karolina Hamer, „Wysokie Obcasy” 2018, 21(984), p. 14.

³² *Nasz jeden procent wyłącza państwo*, Ludmiła Anannikova and Justyna Suchecka interview Paweł Kubicki, „Gazeta Wyborcza” 2018, no. 87(9301), p. 18.

the confessions of parents of children with disabilities quoted earlier and in the conclusions of sociological research on support, can be found.

First of all, people who collect do not enjoy it at all. Many people perceive this as begging. Nicely packaged, colourful, smiling, but still begging. Begging, even when it comes to their child's health, is humiliating for most parents. We have created a system in which one has to abase oneself to get the support that in theory as taxpayers and citizens we should have.

This is "disability porn". To receive more, one should get rid of almost all privacy, one's own or of the child. (...) And additionally this "disability porn" destroys solidarity, a certain community of suffering. It turns even a tragic disease in which we should support each other turns into competition.

(...) The state is obliged to this help. After all, we pay contributions to receive support in a crisis situation. The social security system is based on such a promise. And in reality, when we are really on the razor's edge, it is not enough that we face pain, fear, life problems, as we also have to organise ourselves, obtain funds for rehabilitation, coordinate the collection of funds.

Those who succeed should not be treated as losers, and often this is how illness or disability is perceived, but as effective entrepreneurs.³³

A similar scheme of analysis should also be adopted for the second example³⁴; in this case, the interview was given by Maciej Augustyniak, the able-bodied founder of the Poland without Barriers (Polska bez Barrier) foundation, and the interview was conducted by Ewa Wołkanowska-Kołodziej, a journalist interested mainly in social issues, especially in the social approach to old age, illness and disability. The conversation concerned multiple aspects of the exclusion of people with disabilities, and economic issues were the leitmotif of criticism focused on disregarding this social group of

³³ Ibidem, p. 18.

³⁴ See *Do nas tacy nie przychodzą*, Ewa Wołkanowska-Kołodziej interviews Maciej Augustyniak from the Poland without Barriers (Polska bez Barrier) foundation, „Duży Format” 2018, no. 6(1271), pp. 20-22.

people in organizing public space, including the one that should assume compliance with equality principles of universal design and thoughtful spending of public money. At the same time, the language itself as the material of discourse deserves attention, being in this case in its bluntness and even vulgarity, not only an element of the speaker's characteristics, but also an expression of probably a more general need to name specific issues literally and bluntly.

I have a biting tongue. I can accuse an official of both the lack of competence and the ambition to increase this competence.

It drives me crazy that public money is spent on things that are not available to everyone.

E.g., in Warsaw, a wheelchair user can get into the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, but not through the main entrance, but from the side where there is no automatically opening doors.

In turn, at the Copernicus Science Centre in Warsaw, a person with visual impairment can smash their heads on protruding things. And the award-winning Szczecin Philharmonic? Everyone is delighted, and no one pays attention to such bullshit that a person of short stature or a wheelchair user will not deliver the jacket to the cloakroom because the counter is too high. We head towards high technology, it costs tons of money and the stupid fragment of the countertop could not be lowered? Good architecture should serve everyone.³⁵

The quoted statement opens several important thematic fields that contribute to the discourse built around the economic position of people with disabilities. These topics are bound by the slogan of accessibility, which on the one hand is a matter of changing attitudes towards key postulates of eliminating inequalities and providing equal opportunities, while on the other hand, concerns the economic and social dimensions of subjectivity in everyday relationships. Real empowerment is the opportunity to participate in making decisions that bind the private and public spheres. In this sense, arranging one's own room (apartment) to live comfortably and creatively (if this space is also a workplace) is the result of simi-

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 20.

lar decisions and proportional financial outlays as in the case of the design of public space, which by assumption is open and accessible to everyone.

The situation when the main creator of the discourse is a disabled person, can be considered an example of gaining subjectivity, especially when they act as an expert, e.g. in the field of modern technologies and business activities. A rather specific example is the article published in the weekly "Wprost", whose author is Adrian Furman, a disabled person, "The creator and president of the AF group, providing services related to modern technologies. It employs 30 people, including 23 with disabilities. He also has a company in the USA. One of the originators of the Accessibility plus (Dostępność plus) program".³⁶ The specificity of this example is related to the fact that the weekly "Wprost" is a liberal-conservative periodical, and therefore it does not include a critique of the free market or capitalism, which is why also disability appears in its pages as part of a typical model of the neoliberal economy. Therefore, paradoxically, although in fact it is obvious in this case, the economic subjectivity of people with disabilities has been revealed in the context of market success already achieved or expected. Therefore, the following beginning is not surprising: "We live in times when disability does not have to mean poverty or helplessness. It can even motivate".³⁷ The quasi-economic example of Nico Vujicic, a motivational speaker without arms and legs, is accompanied by the first of Furman's numerous examples based on measurable numerical value: "Another example is John Cronin's company. The man with Down syndrome came up with a brilliant idea of producing personalized socks with a unique design. And he personally promoted his company. In 2017, it had over 2 million dollars of revenue. This is an example of a business with a measurable financial result, carrying a message and social values that cannot be overestimated".³⁸

³⁶ A. Furman, *Niepełnosprawni na eksport*, „Wprost” 2019, no. 13, pp. 46-47.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

In the analysed text, the government program “Accessibility plus” (“Dostępność plus”) was compiled with the presentation of successes achieved by Polish startups, “related to the environment of disabled people”. Therefore, technological projects such as Migam (application for people with hearing impairment), Parrot-One (communicator for people with hand dysfunctions), Blumil (trekking trolley for people with mobility disabilities), WalkinVR (virtual reality technology for people with motor limitations) have been listed.³⁹ People with disabilities appear in these projects both as their originators and as the main recipients of goods and services created with full business understanding of market opportunities. The neoliberal narration has been extended to include a description of the government program, which is associated with the concept of *smart money*. The future of the business ventures of people with disabilities, compiled with market rules concerning all entrepreneurs, depended on properly formatted support.

However, there is something missing: capital and mentoring support. No two ways about it, to go beyond the design phase, more funding rounds are needed. (...) And here we come to what is necessary, i.e. building an investment fund for business environments of people with disabilities. A similar system solution is similar to the one proposed by the government by launching the “Accessibility plus” (“Dostępność plus”) program. (...) Now it is time to go further. And this is not about easy access to money, it is just about *smart money*. That is, subsequent investment rounds that allow the movement from concept to the development of a full value product or service.⁴⁰

The author of the last of the analysed texts perceives the image benefit that comes from promoting the business activity of people with disabilities, which significantly contrasts with the image of financial dependence, global poverty, “begging”, competition for greater suffering, support reduced to constant dependence on bene-

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 47.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 47.

factors and donors. Examples of economic successes of people with disabilities can be perceived in the context of libertarian optimism, which is reflected in the book published in 2011 by Matt Ridley, a British economic journalist, businessman and science promoter, entitled "The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves".⁴¹ This book is an objection to the catastrophic generalization of reports on the scale of poverty, hunger, social exclusion or biological threats as information that dominates not only in media coverage but also scientific studies. Expecting the worst and pessimism cannot stand the confrontation with data on a positive change in the quality of life in terms beyond the experience covering even one generation. Moreover, a broader view of the history of mankind creates the opportunity to determine growth factors of prosperity, and these include primarily a human tendency to exchange not only ideas (thoughts), but also goods and services. The Ridley's optimistic vision assumes that "cultural development accumulated and rushed forward, initiating economic development", and "exchange is to cultural evolution as sex is to biological evolution".⁴²

Summary

The presented examples of economic aspects of the media dis-course of disability are connected by the issue of systemic removal of barriers and providing equal opportunities. Even such a brief review revealed, however, differences that depend on consent to include disability in market mechanisms, which places people with disabilities and their families, as well as institutions acting on their behalf, in economically diversified positions of aid beneficiaries, desired customers or innovative entrepreneurs and employers. Therefore, the economics of disability remains a vague and ambigu-

⁴¹ M. Ridley, *The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves*, Fourth Estate, London 2011.

⁴² Ibidem.

ous term, and even internally contradictory, but definitely more often associated with the huge costs of everyday functioning and socio-professional exclusion, than with market attractiveness or economic success, which are entangled in the neoliberal context which is always dangerous in the case of disability.

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The selected premises for the reconfiguration of the disability model. The posthumanist perspective

ABSTRACT: Teresa Żółkowska, Karolina Kaliszewska, *The selected premises for the reconfiguration of the disability model. The posthumanist perspective*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 55-81. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.03>

In the contemporary special pedagogy, it is clearly seen, that we are dealing with a situation of passing over scholarly programmes that refer, i.a. to the medical and social model of disability. We remain in a *inter-paradigmatic transition period*, in which new views on disability are appearing. One of the most popular scholarly approaches is the posthumanism, the characteristics of which are, i.a.: the critique of humanism, the departure from anthropocentrism, the appearance of a new materialism, the direction of research towards objects, animals, as well as, the relations of people and non-people. The example of such posthumanist approach, that may constitute the context for the creation of new models of disability, is the *Actor-Network* theory developed by Bruno Latour and his associates.

KEYWORDS: disability, paradigm, posthumanism, the *Actor-Network* theory

Introduction

In the contemporary special pedagogy, similar to other disciplines, particularly social, we are increasingly facing changing scholarly approaches, perspectives, or tendencies. Some fade away,

while others reveal themselves in order to emblazon the changes occurring in the cultural, social and political structures and practices. According to Iwona Chrzanowska “in special pedagogy, similar to pedagogy in general, numerous changes in the approach occurred, according to which basic concepts, and theories were defined. While doing an overview of them, Krause indicates the historical paradigmatic transformations, that became the founding stone of not only definitional and terminological changes in special pedagogy, but also, in consequence, changes in scholarly and interpretation attitudes”¹.

Within the theoretical plane of special pedagogy, the paradigmatic reconfigurations appear, that determine the spheres of contemporary discourses regarding disabilities, the means of interpreting the phenomenon, and the fields of ground-breaking research². Cultural, social and political changes inspire pedagogues to undertake more and more modern theoretical and practical challenges, including constructing new models of disability.

Model – indication and function

In my inquiries, I consider model to be a paradigm³. According to Ireneusz Bobrowski⁴ it is a set of norms, rules of proceeding, known to every scientist who is dedicated to a given science. Paradigm (from the Greek *paradeigma*) is a term meaning example, pattern, a schematic model, having a didactic value, allowing for a clear and direct overview of the complex objects of the research⁵.

¹ I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Impuls, Kraków 2015, p. 397.

² A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*. Wydawnictwo Impuls, Kraków 2010.

³ T.S. Kuhn, *Struktura rewolucji naukowych*, (trans.) H. Ostromecka. Aletheia, Warszawa 2000, p. 248.

⁴ I. Bobrowski, *Zaproszenie do językoznawstwa*. Wydawnictwo Instytutu Języka Polskiego PAN, Kraków 1998.

⁵ S. Rainko, *Dwa paradygmaty*. Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa 2011, pp. 95-96.

According to Kazimierz Jodkowski, paradigm is an ambiguous term, often perceived as an assortment of universally adopted theoretical beliefs (philosophical, natural, or methodological), and the experimental methods. It is a scholarly tradition that shows a group of scientists, how they are supposed to approach phenomena, how to analyse them, what effects should be expected, and what methods must be applied. In other words, it is a way of seeing particular issues, it is a framework for the selection of the scholarly methods, and solution means⁶.

One of the first theoreticians, who defined the concept of paradigm is Georg Ch. Lichtenberg, who considered paradigms to be certain fundamental models of explanation in physical sciences, on which, networks of explanations are being built⁷. The term was also used by Ludwig Wittgenstein⁸ – in his studies regarding the regularities of the development of philosophical thought, and, in a broader context, as a way of understanding the role of models that act as models that shape and direct reflection in, at times, completely different directions⁹. Wittgenstein perceived the paradigm as a model, that serves the purpose of helping to understand the formation of concepts by exposing the examples, typical for a particular concept. According to the author, the catalogues of these examples, changes with time until the moment, when the catalogue becomes so narrow, that it cannot be reduced further, however, due to the acquisition of new knowledge, there is a possibility to expand the list of examples¹⁰.

⁶ K. Jodkowski, *Paradygmat*. file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/Jodkowski_Paradygmat_1987.pdf, p. 456 and others, Access: 12.04.2019 r.

⁷ S. Gurtowski, *Należć do wszechświata. Poszukiwania na pograniczu nauki i duchowości*, *Collectanea Theologica*, 1966, 66(4), pp. 207-211.

⁸ L. Wittgenstein, *Dociekania filozoficzne*, (trans.) B. Wolniewicz, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2004.

⁹ A. Motycka, *Relatywistyczna wizja nauki. Analiza krytyczna koncepcji T.S. Kuhna i S.E. Toulmina*. Wydawnictwo PAN, Wrocław 1980, p. 6.

¹⁰ M. Kępa, *Metodologiczne ujęcie paradygmatu jako metody badawczej na przykładzie koncepcji Thomasa Kuhna*. Wydawca: E-Wydawnictwo. Prawnicza i Ekonomiczna Biblioteka Cyfrowa, Wrocław 2015, p. 362.

The term paradigm, reached particular popularity at the turn of the 1950s and the 1960s. During this period, a theory of the development of knowledge appeared, presented by Thomas S. Kuhn¹¹. Kuhn's approach was used in physical sciences, as well as, in biology, social sciences, history of disciplines such as art, economy, anthropology, psychology, and political sciences. According to the author, during the development of the sciences, one faces brief periods of scientific revolution, as well as, longer periods, when science is developed within the framework of a paradigm¹². A paradigm, that Kuhn understood as certain accepted models of contemporary scientific practice, referring to laws, theories, applications, and technical equipment, that constitute the model determining a particular, coherent scientific tradition¹³.

In result of long-lasting works on the paradigm, Kuhn proposed its two levels: 1) model -paradigm is a solution to a particular problem, accepted by the scientific community, 2) the matrix of a scientific discipline. Kuhn assumed the elements of the matrix to be; a) symbolical generalisations, i.e. the laws of a theory in a mathematical form, simple to present in a logical, formal form, b) obligations regarding particular models, such as: heuristic models (analogies, comparisons, metaphors), and ontological models – beliefs regarding the ultimate structure, and the mechanism of an examined portion of reality, 3) scientific values, i.e. the rules that direct the scholars during making decisions in scholarly practice, bearing in mind, that the knowledge of these rules is distorted, “silent”, 4) models, i.e. solutions to particular problems, acquired by solving exercises and tasks, to which every new problem that found for the first time, is reduced¹⁴.

¹¹ T.S. Kuhn, *Struktura rewolucji naukowych*, (trans.) H. Ostromęcka. Aletheia, Warszawa 2001.

¹² K. Jodkowski, *Paradygmat*. file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/Jodkowski_Paradygmat_1987.pdf, p. 462 and others Access: 12.04.2019 r.

¹³ S. Kamiński, *Nauka i metoda. Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*. Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1992, p. 7.

¹⁴ T.S. Kuhn, *Struktura rewolucji naukowych*, tłum. H. Ostromęcka. Aletheia, Warszawa 2001, s. 304-305, s. 306; A. Pawłowski, *Paradygmat*. <http://logic.amu.edu>.

During own work regarding paradigm, Kuhn modified his views, and eventually adopted the classic, semantic version of the paradigm, as a certain model, or pattern¹⁵. Therefore, as Marcin Kępa notices, by his modernised way of perceiving the paradigm, Kuhn raised the meaning of the basic concepts, such as pattern and model, therefore, of that which organised the scientific practices, and created thought schemes¹⁶.

Realising the development of thought regarding the understanding of the paradigm, as well as, that the issue is broadly discussed in the source literature by Amadeusz Krause¹⁷, for the sake of this article, we shall remain with the narrower understanding of the concept, assuming that this is the understanding useful in the social sciences¹⁸.

Within the framework of the indicated sciences, the methodological aspect of the paradigm received particular significance¹⁹. Giorgio Agamben²⁰, directed his attention exactly at this understanding. The author thought that the paradigm is a hypothesis, or

pl/images/1/16/Paradygmat.pdf; Dostęp 11.04.2019 r. A. Pawłowski, *Paradygmaty nowoczesności*, 2014. Państwowa Galeria Sztuki w Sopocie, [www. Paradygmat.pdf](http://www.Paradygmat.pdf) 14.04.2019 r.; M. Kępa, *Metodologiczne ujęcie paradygmatu jako metody badawczej na przykładzie koncepcji Thomasa Kuhna*, http://www.repozytorium.uni.wroc.pl/Content/66140/23_Mateusz_Kepa.pdf. Access: 14.04.2019 r.

¹⁵ T.S. Kuhn, *Struktura rewolucji naukowych*, (trans.) H. Ostromęcka. Aletheia, Warszawa 2001, cap. 5.

¹⁶ M. Kępa, *Metodologiczne ujęcie paradygmatu jako metody badawczej na przykładzie koncepcji Thomasa Kuhna*. http://www.repozytorium.uni.wroc.pl/Content/66140/23Mateusz_Kepa.pdf. Access: 14.04.2019 r., p. 365.

¹⁷ A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*. Wydawnictwo Impuls, Kraków 2010.

¹⁸ S. Kamiński, *Nauka i metoda. Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*. Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1992, p. 174.

¹⁹ A. Motycka, *Relatywistyczna wizja nauki. Analiza krytyczna koncepcji T.S. Kuhna i S.E. Toulmina*. Wydawnictwo PAN, Wrocław 1980, p. 6; G. Musiał, *Paradygmat, prawo nauki, rozwój społeczny: ujęcie metodologiczne*. Akademia Ekonomiczna, Katowice 1997, p. 12.

²⁰ G. Agamben, *What is a paradigm?*, 2002, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/giorgio-agamben/articles/what-is-a-paradigm>. Access: 17.04.2019 r.

a presupposition, that is more understandable in practice, which allows to determine its certain (previously not assumed) principles. According to Agamben, in numerous theoretical and historical studies, we are not dealing with a previously assumed object of research. Therefore, the object of the analyses may be determined, and presented by paradigms²¹. The methodological approach to the paradigm is also presented by Imre Lakatos²². The author writes that "when theory lags behind the facts, we are dealing with miserable degenerating research programmes... Thus, in a progressive research programme, theory leads to the discovery of hitherto unknown novel facts. In degenerating programmes, however, theories are fabricated only to accommodate known facts"²³. Kuhn thinks in similar notes, writing, that a given paradigm functions, and is in motion until the occurrence of a crisis situation, caused by the inefficiency of a given scholarly tradition in the face of the appearing, new, unprecedented challenges. Then, during a time of an *inter-paradigmatic transition period*, a new paradigm is shaped, that sheds an entirely new light on the established scholarly tradition²⁴.

Referring the presented content to special pedagogy, one may notice, that currently, we are dealing with the degeneration of scholarly programmes, i.a. related to the medical and social model of disability²⁵. We remain in the *inter-paradigmatic transition period*,

²¹ G. Agamben, *What is a paradigm?*, 2002, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/giorgio-agamben/articles/what-is-a-paradigm>. Access: 17.04.2019 r.

²² I. Lakatos, *Nauka i pseudonauka*, (in:) I. Lakatos, *Pisma z filozofii nauk empirycznych*, (trans.) W. Sady. PWN, Warszawa 1995, pp. 360-361, p. 184 and others.

²³ I. Lakatos, *Nauka i pseudonauka*, (in:) I. Lakatos, *Pisma z filozofii nauk empirycznych*, (trans.) W. Sady. PWN, Warszawa 1995, pp. 360-361, p. 184 and others.; E. Piotrkowska, *Spoleczny konstruktywizm a matematyka*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2008, p. 9.

²⁴ K. Jodkowski, *Paradygmat*. file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/Jodkowski_Paradygmat_1987.pdf, p. 460. Access: 12.04.2019 r.

²⁵ I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do nowoczesności*, Impuls Kraków 2015, M. Chodkowska, Z. Kazanowski, *Socjopedagogiczne konteksty postaw nauczycieli wobec edukacji integracyjnej*, (in:) Z. Palak, Z. Bartkowicz (eds.) *Wsparcie społeczne w rehabilitacji i resocjalizacji*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMCS, Lublin

in which new approaches towards disability appear. Here, we are talking about approaches, as, in contemporary scientific inquiry, we face less and less coherent models, more often, we deal with various scholarly approaches, positions, or analysis directions²⁶.

The reconfigurations of scientific and scholarly approaches

In the 1990s, in social sciences, changes appeared, that were based on the critique of humanism, the departure from anthropocentrism, the emergence of a new materialism, redirecting the studies towards objects, animals, and relations between people, and non-people²⁷.

The critique of structuralism and poststructuralism was made visible. A clear departure from constructivism, popular since the 1970s, as it was deemed inadequate in regard to the current inquiries

2004, G. Drżałowska, *Integracja edukacyjna a integracja społeczna*, (in:) G. Drżałowska, H. Żuraw (eds.) *Integracja społeczna osób niepełnosprawnych*, Żak, Warszawa 2004, J. Głodkowska, *Między integracją a izolacją- jedność w zróżnicowaniu a oddzielenie w odmienności*, (in:) M. Orłowska (ed.) *Skazani na wykluczenie*, Wydawnictwo APS, Warszawa 2015, J. Kirenko, *Oblicza niepełnosprawności*, Wydawnictwo Akademickie WSSP, Lublin 2006, Cz. Kosakowski, *Węzłowe problemy pedagogiki specjalnej*, Akapit, Toruń 2003, M. Kościelska, *Oblicza upośledzenia*, PWN Warszawa 1995, A. Maciarz, *Integracja społeczna niepełnosprawnych*, WSiP, Warszawa 1987, D. Podgórska-Jachnik, *Glusi. Emancypacje*, WNWSP, Łódź 2013, T. Żółkowska, *Wyrównywanie szans społecznych osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, Inplus, Szczecin 2004.

²⁶ A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*. Wydawnictwo Impuls, Kraków 2010.

²⁷ M. Bakke, *Bio-transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka posthumanizmu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2010; J. Bednarek, *Emancypacyjna obietnica posthumanizmu. Praktyka teoretyczna*, 2014, 4(14), pp. 171-177; R. Braidotti, *Po człowieku*. Tłum. J. Bednarek, A. Kowalczyk. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2014. A. Kowalczyk, *Wspólnota poszerzona – spotkania ludzkich i pozaludzkich aktorów*. *Praktyka Teoretyczna* 2010, 1(1), pp. 94-115; K. Leszczyńska, K. Skowronek, *Wolność i wierność. O roli zurotów w humanistyce i naukach społecznych*, (in:) K. Leszczyńska, K. Skowronek (eds.) *Performatywne wymiary kultury*. Wydawnictwo Libron, Kraków 2012.

on the developing approach towards the subject, including materiality, bio-politics, etc.²⁸.

According to Ewa Piotrowska, constructivism is not a coherent, consistent structure, and the scholarly methods, cognitive premises, and views, are manifested in various forms and versions. The author writes that no coherent epistemology is in motion here, and one may even notice a certain terminological and evaluative chaos²⁹. Constructivism is an assortment of theories, approaches that are often characterised with borrowings from various cognitive sources, and displaying the influence of various scholarly orientations (postmodernist, structuralist, or poststructuralist). Obviously, the representatives of constructivism did not simply passively adopt various approaches that they found interesting; most often, they made changes, modifications, for the purpose of enriching the constructionist interpretation. What constructivists have in common is the search for the social principles of the genesis of the determinants of development of abstracted structures, as well as, of the influence and applications of science³⁰.

Indicating the decreasing usefulness of constructivism, one cannot question the achievements of the trend, particularly its significance for the politicising of science. Constructivism is a significant emancipation movement, involved in social and political matters. It was, and still is characterised by political activity, and ideological involvement. It allowed the scholars to unmask the actions of the

²⁸ K. Barad, *Posthumanistyczna performatywność: ku zrozumieniu, jak materia zaczyna mieć znaczenie*, (in:) A. Gajewska (ed.), *Teorie wywrótowe. Antologia przekładów*. Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 2012; *Feministyczne nowe materializmy: usytuowane kartografie*, O. Cielemecka i M. Rogowska-Stangret (ed.), Lublin, https://www.academia.edu/36656598/Feministyczne_nowe_materializmy_usytuowane_kartografie. Access: 22.04.2019 r.; B. Kuźniarz, *Goodbye Mr. Postmodernism. Teorie społeczne myślicieli późnej lewicy*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2011.

²⁹ E. Piotrkowska, *Spółeczny konstruktywizm a matematyka*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2008, p. 42.

³⁰ E. Piotrkowska, *Spółeczny konstruktywizm a matematyka*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2008, p. 9, 10.

government, reveal the ways of constructing reality, the social situation of selected social groups, etc. Constructivism was, and still is, of an interdisciplinary nature. It was employed by ethnic studies, gender studies, as well as, *disability studies*³¹.

Currently, the departure from the constructivist interpretation is postulated by the advocates of posthumanism. Posthumanism is a term introduced by Ihab Hassan³², who wrote that “the human form – including human desire and all its external representations – may be changing radically, and thus must be revised. We need to understand that five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that we must helplessly call posthumanism³³.”

Posthumanism is one of the most significant theoretical directions of the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. However, the “post” prefix does not mean breaking the connection with the humanist tradition, but indicates the need to take up a critique of humanism both from the external perspective, as well as, from the perspective of what is going on with humanism on the inside³⁴. Cary Wolfe³⁵,

³¹ B. Borowska-Beszta, *Wkład antropologii kulturowej w studia nad niepełnosprawnością*, Interdyscyplinarne Konteksty Pedagogiki Specjalnej, 15, 2016, I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Impuls, Kraków 2015, Z. Gajdzica, *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością w rezerwacie przestrzeni publicznej*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Kraków 2013, S. Sadowska, *Ku edukacji zorientowanej na zmianę społecznego obrazu osób niepełnosprawnych*, Akapit, Toruń 2005, A. Twardowski, *Disability studies jako przykład interdyscyplinarnego podejścia do niepełnosprawności*, maszynopis nieopublikowany, Poznań 2017, M. Wlazło, *Interdyscyplinarne studia nad niepełnosprawnością – sprzymierzeniec czy wróg pedagogiki specjalnej? Problemy Edukacji, Rehabilitacji i Socjalizacji Osób Niepełnosprawnych* 23/2, pp. 65-74, 2016.

³² I. Hassan, *Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture?* Georgia Review 1977, Winter, vol. 31, no. 4, p. 843.

³³ I. Hassan, *Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture?*, Georgia Review 1977, Winter, vol. 31, no. 4, p. 843; after: M. Bakke, *Bio-transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka posthumanizmu*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2012, pp. 18-19.

³⁴ N. Badmington, *Theorizing Posthumanism*, Cultural Critique 2003, Winter, no. 53, p. 11 and next.

³⁵ C. Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2010, file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/What%20is%20Posthumanizm.pdf. Access: 22.04.2019 r.

for whom posthumanism is the search for modern (not rooted in humanism) ways of presenting subjectivity, of speaking about men, and other lifeforms, presents a similar opinion³⁶. According to Wolfe, the essence is not, to depart from humanism entirely, but to develop a critical approach regarding the real contexts of the values considered as humanist: equality, tolerance, justice or liberty³⁷. In posthumanism, another highlight is made, regarding the fact, that no artificial hierarchic divisions should be made, such as: nature/culture, man/machine, man/animal, etc.³⁸. It is important to promote a post-anthropocentric approach, and to spread the knowledge which critically refers to man assuming the central position within the universe.

Among the representatives of the critical approach to anthropocentrism, were, i.a. Michel Foucault, who proclaimed the "death of man"³⁹, Jacques Derrida, who would write about the "end of man"⁴⁰, or Francis Fukuyama who predicted "our posthuman future"⁴¹. The authors listed, indicated the new placement of man, the departure from apprehending man as the guarantee of values and sense⁴². They exposed the passing of a particular construct, that made place

³⁶ C. Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2010, file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/What%20is%20Posthumanizm.pdf, s. xvi. Access: 22.04.2019 r.

³⁷ C. Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2010, file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/What%20is%20Posthumanizm.pdf, s. xvi. Access: 22.04.2019 r.

³⁸ M. Bakke, *Bio-transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka posthumanizmu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2010, p. 21.

³⁹ M. Foucault, *Interview met Michel Foucault*, Dits et Ecris: 1954-1988, (in:) M. Loba, *O śmierci podmiotu trzydzieści lat później*, (in:) S. Wysłouch, B. Kaniewska (eds.), *Człowiek i rzecz. O problemach reifikacji w literaturze, filozofii i sztuce*. Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Literacka, Poznań 1999.

⁴⁰ J. Derrida, *Kres człowieka*, (trans.) P. Piątek, (in:) B. Banasiak (ed.) J. Derrida, *Pismo filozofii*. Inter EssE Kraków 1993, p. 184.

⁴¹ F. Fukuyama, *Koniec człowieka. Konsekwencje rewolucji biotechnologicznej*, (trans.) B. Pietrzyk. Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2005, p. 20.

⁴² M. Loba, *O śmierci podmiotu trzydzieści lat później*, (in:) S. Wysłouch, B. Kaniewska (ed.), *Człowiek i rzecz. O problemach reifikacji w literaturze, filozofii i sztuce*. Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Literacka, Poznań 1999, p. 392.

for a new model, referring to the common man, not entangled in great historical narratives, but a particular, geographically located, historically situated man, a man who is socially and politically transparent, who may be marginalised, excluded, and forgotten⁴³. The new model of man, is also the posthuman, as described by Fukuyama. A construct built in result of the biotechnological revolution. Apparently, the drastic development of technology, dramatically affected the human condition⁴⁴. Biopower, found its interest in life, life as it is, and the biopolitical curiosity, was transferred from the body discipline, and population regulating, described Foucault, to the life in its biological aspect⁴⁵. Biopolitics is increasingly offensive (biometrics, birth control), and biotechnology provides us with newer and newer, genetically modified plants, animals, and even people.

The new model of the subject, is also a construct that questions the boundaries between people, and spreading visions about new human, and non-human relations, cross-species interdependencies apparent between men, animals, plants, objects, and technology. Bruno Latour writes about it, highlighting that the most important thing for the construction of a human subject, is to understand our constitutive relationality, that encompasses not only machines, but everything that is inanimate and non-human in general⁴⁶. The issue

⁴³ G. Agamben, *Homo Sacer. Suwerenna władza i nagie życie*, (trans.) M. Salwa. Prószyński i S-ka, Warszawa 2008; M. Bakke, *Bio-transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka post-humanizmu*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2010; B. Latour, *Nadzieja Pandory: eseje o rzeczywistości w studiach nad nauką*, (trans.) K. Abriszewski. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2013, p. 247, 254 and others.

⁴⁴ F. Fukuyama, *Koniec człowieka. Konsekwencje rewolucji biotechnologicznej*, (trans.) B. Pietrzyk. Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2005.

⁴⁵ R. Braidotti, *Po człowieku*, (trans.) J. Bednarek, A. Kowalczyk. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2014; M. Foucault, *Historia seksualności*, (trans.) B. Banaśiak, T. Komendant, K. Matuszewski. Czytelnik, Warszawa, 1995, p. 122; J. Lejman, *Człowiek a zwierzę. Biologiczne i kulturowe źródła antropocentryzmu*, *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny*, 2015, vol. XI.

⁴⁶ B. Latour, *Polityka natury*, tłum. A. Czarnaćka, M. Gdula. Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2009.

is taken up by Rosi Braidotti, proposing the reformulation of the human relations with the non-human relations. The author bases her inquiries on a materialist theory focused on the distinction between *bios* and *zoe*⁴⁷. *Bios* is the expression of life, of particular features, explicit, characteristic silhouette, that differentiates one being from the other. *Zoe* is the life of all living creatures, all indeterminate life, the biological aspect of it⁴⁸. Braidotti introduces *zoe* to the social theory, previously expelled from the humanist tradition, and visualises the possibility of reformulating the relations of humans and non-humans. She highlights that, the understanding of what lifeforms we are, and what are our interdependencies with other life forms, alone allows to connect *zoe* with *bios*. We saw, that the good life, i.e. *bios*, is the inherent element of our non-human (biological) lives⁴⁹.

Therefore, the paradigmatic reconfiguration within the social theory, indicates new aims of generating knowledge, new contexts, and new points of reference. New research issues, and new interpretation frameworks appear. The matter is perceived differently, as, in the new scholarly approaches, it is dynamic, unplanned, non-intentional of the activity of coming-to-be. The new materialism stood in opposition to constructivism, as, without eliminating the social aspect of knowledge, and not striving towards essentialism, it simply created material determinants. In the new approach regarding matter, notions are made about the necessity of the “communalisation” of nature. For nature is created both by humans and by non-humans. Donna Haraway writes, that we must finally realise, that not all actors are us, as not all of them are human, not all are organic, and not all are technological⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ R. Braidotti, *Po człowieku*, (trans.) J. Bednarek, A. Kowalczyk. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2014.

⁴⁸ K. Kerenyi, *Dionizos. Archetyp życia niezniszczalnego*, (trans.) I. Kania. Wydawnictwo Baran i Suszczyński, Kraków 1997, p. 16.

⁴⁹ R. Braidotti, *Po człowieku*, (ed.) J. Bednarek, A. Kowalczyk. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2014.

⁵⁰ D. Haraway, *The Promises of Monsters. A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others*, (in:) D. Haraway (ed.), *The Haraway Reader*, Routledge 2004, p. 105.

According to Łodyga and Włodarczyk, posthumanism is an approach of a polyphonic nature, and is not dedicated to the obsessed defining of own limits, and postulating a crisis of humanity, but it proposes a broad range of hermeneutic positions, from the perspective of which, we may anew conduct an overview of the complicated relations of animals, humans, nature, technology, and the borderline between the animate and the inanimate worlds⁵¹.

Towards a new model of disability

The examples of the posthumanist approaches that may determine the context for creating new models of disability, are, i.a.: the *Actor-Network* theory by Bruno Latour and associates⁵², Deleuze and Guattari's Rhizomatic theory⁵³ or the nomadic theory by Rosi Braidotti⁵⁴. The following article will be limited only to the first of the listed theories.

The *Actor-Network Theory* (ANT), developed by Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law⁵⁵ is based on posthumanist premises. According to Michał Wróblewski, it constitutes a very useful tool, that displays ambitions of more than just another theory that explains some phenomenon of modern science⁵⁶.

⁵¹ Z. Łodyga, J. Włodarczyk, *Wstęp*, (in:) Z. Łodyga, J. Włodarczyk (eds.) *Po humanizmie. Od technokrytyki do animals studies*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Katedra, Gdańsk 2015, p. 15.

⁵² K. Arbiszewski, *Wszystko otwarte na nowo. Teoria Aktora-Sieci i filozofia kultury*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2010.

⁵³ G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *Kłęczce*, (trans.) B. Banasik. *Colloquia Communia* 1988, no. 1-3.

⁵⁴ R. Braidotti, *Podmioty nomadyczne. Ucieleśnienie i różnica seksualna w feminizmie współczesnym*, tłum. A. Derra. Wydawnictwo Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2009.

⁵⁵ K. Arbiszewski, *Wszystko otwarte na nowo. Teoria Aktora-Sieci i filozofia kultury*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2010, p. 18.

⁵⁶ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne*, 2011, no. 4, p. 125.

ANT is a scholarly position, that introduced a number of interesting premises to social sciences, and inquiries regarding the reconfiguration of the models of disability⁵⁷. *First*, it allows for an analysis of a given phenomenon, in terms broader than within a given discipline. In regard to disability, it may be interdisciplinary studies (psychological, sociological, medical), as well as, those seemingly not related to disabilities at all, such as: political, legal, pharmacological, as well as, analyses from the areas of digital technologies, employers interests, or the benefits of persons with disabilities. *Second*, by applying ANT, one may verify the existing information regarding disabilities. g.g. those related to diagnosis, the understanding of the concept, classification, or therapy. However, it is not simply another description of an actual situation, but the cognition and the analysis of the factors, that shape and maintain given information. ANT allows to see many, even more subtle, legal, institutional, or economic displacements that may aid in changing the existing model of disability. *Third*, ANT postulates the transformation in apprehending the social phenomenon itself, i.e. – in the case that is interesting to us – the phenomenon of disability. It means, to transfer from the vertical to the horizontal plane, and to introduce the entangled relations, webs, or networks. In ANT, the vertical overview of reality, is subject to the posthumanist, horizontal theories of this reality, the horizontal way of reading the situation of the human, and his relations to non-humans⁵⁸. The horizontal model means to conduct extensive research, comparisons aiming at distinguishing the common ground for mediation for both humans, and non-humans. The vertical model in turn, is a profound case study⁵⁹. Piotr Sadzik thinks, that the introduction of horizontal

⁵⁷ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, Studia Socjologiczne, 2011, no. 4, pp. 122-153.

⁵⁸ J. Dolińska, *Sieci relacji a siódła opisu*, (in:) Z. Ładyga, J. Włodarczyk (eds.), *Po humanizmie. Od technokrytyki do Animal Studies*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Katedra, Gdańsk 2015.

⁵⁹ M. Bakke, *Bio -transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka posthumanizmu*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2012.

orientations was a sign of rebellion, the resistance of posthumanism, against all (not only capitalist) forms of exploitation, and the call to build relations, that would depart from vertical relations (of power), for the sake of horizontal relations (of solidarity)⁶⁰. Considering disability, from a vertical position related to power and otherness, may be helpful in unmasking selected approaches. The approaches, that Žižek describes as follows – a hierarchical thinking resulting from human arrogance, and anthropocentric premises, is violence against the other⁶¹. Derrida has a similar opinion, highlighting, that posthumanism shapes the political critique of harm done to various others, by the Western (humanistic)⁶². Braidotti writes in a similar sense, indicating that, the internal motor of the humanistic power of man, who turned the definition of difference on a hierarchical scale, into an instrument of governance, is the dialectics of otherness... All those “others”, as a negative, pathological deviation from norm, are sent to the domain of anomaly, deviation, monstrosity, and animality. The vertical approach towards disability may unmask the subjection of disability to economic factors, global control networks, and turning the persons with disabilities, along with their families, subordinate to market economy in all areas of personal and social functioning⁶³. Vertical orientation, also reflects the specie hierarchy that shows in the dominance of the persons with disabilities, over all non-human subjects, however, dependence on human subjects in the majority of spheres of functioning⁶⁴. Additionally, the vertical approach towards disability, allows to see the significance of the social and political hierarchy, influencing the terminology, the clas-

⁶⁰ P. Sadzik, *Nie-ludzka wspólnota równych*, Praktyka Teoretyczna no. 4(14), 2014.

⁶¹ S. Žižek, *Przemoc. Sześć spojrzeń z ukosa*, (trans.) A. Górny, Warszawskie Wydawnictwo Literackie Muza, Warszawa 2010.

⁶² J. Derrida, *Is There a Philosophical Language?*, (in:) L. Thomassen (ed.), *The Derrida-Habermas Reader*, Univesity Edinburgh, Edinburgh 2006.

⁶³ R. Braidotti, *Po Człowieku*, tłum. J. Bednarek, A. Kowalczyk, PWN, Warszawa 2010.

⁶⁴ M. Bakke, *Bio -transfiguracje. Sztuka i estetyka posthumanizmu*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2012.

sifications of disability, rehabilitation, the quality of life of the persons with disabilities, as well as, their social situation (marginalisation and exclusion). It also shows the significance of the scientific and economic hierarchy – where the ways of defining and classifying (e.g. DSM, ICD), serve as the basis for the selection of a therapy, which in turn, is a source of profit for a wide range of various specialists. The broadest significance of the vertical perspective is presented by Donna Haraway, writing that in a hierarchical system “Our authenticity is warranted by a database for the human genome. The molecular database is held in an informational database as legally branded intellectual property in a national laboratory with the mandate to make the text publicly available for the progress of science and advancement of industry. This is Man the taxonomic type become Man the brand”⁶⁵.

In turn, the considerations regarding the models of disability, taken from a horizontal position, refer to the mutual relations and connections that appear in the world of life. ANT is based on post-constructivist premises, it removes the epistemological relation, constitutive for constructivism, and replaces it with relational ontology. In a relational ontology, relation of transformation and affecting is key⁶⁶. According to Latour, constructing is not just social, it is a multidimensional process, often material and technical, occurring after the civilisation changes of the modern world, including the scientific and technological achievements. Latour gives examples of the constructed object, such as, i.a. radios, clocks, political

⁶⁵ D. Haraway, *Modest Witness @ Second_Millennium. FemaleMan_Meets_Onco_Mause*, London-New York 1997, p. 74.

⁶⁶ K. Arbiszewski, *Wszystko otwarte na nowo. Teoria Aktora-Sieci i filozofia kultury*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2010, p. 18; E. Bińczyk, *Praktyka, laboratorium, czynniki pozaludzkie. Najnowsze modele technonauki oraz wybrane tezy Ludwika Flecka*, 2009, <http://fleck.umcs.lublin.pl/teksty.htm>, Access: 15.04.2019 r.; T. Sikora, *Odmiernicy / śmieci. Kultura Współczesna. Teorie. Interpretacje*. Praktyka 2007, no. 4(54), pp. 45-62; A. Zybertowicz, *Przemoc i poznanie. Studium z nie-klasycznej socjologii wiedzy*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2005.

programmes, but also, the ozone hole, frozen embryos, data banks, or viruses⁶⁷. Based on Latour's theses, one may indicate, that, in constructing the model of disability, one should consider the relations determined by the network, relations of elements that vary ontologically, including social relations and non-human factors. To conceptualise disability from the ANT perspective, one must see three elements: material, conceptual, and normative, or organisational⁶⁸. In other words, the model of disability may be described by the relations occurring between people, things (e.g. rehabilitation equipment), scientific theories, institutions (school, social service centre), animals (e.g. a guide dog), the casual perception of the phenomenon, textbooks, procedures at the workplace, law, other persons with disabilities, expectations from the local communities, everyday items (cutlery, furniture), architectonic concepts, interests of the companies that produce the rehabilitation equipment, etc. *Fourth*, ANT grasps the objects and the collectivities through the prism of difference. Each human – being, has own identity that is an effect of his relation with other actors. ANT introduces relational ontology to replace essentialism. Beings have their identity not because of essential features (however they are not omitted), but due to their relations to other beings. The relations, differences, and their change, retain the primacy in the ontological plane, however, the essences are a result of establishing and stabilising a certain portion of a relation⁶⁹. The key attribute is the fact, that the network is a result of the relations between various beings, the strength of these connections being the most important. Strong connections are based on the result of scientific studies, or law, therefore, the areas that provide authority, and give strong, stable fixing that is not

⁶⁷ B. Latour, *Nigdy nie byliśmy nowoczesni. Studium z antropologii symetrycznej*, (trans.) M. Gdula. Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2011, p. 49 and others.

⁶⁸ B. Latour, *Polityka natury*, (trans.) A. Czarnačka, M. Gdula. Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2009.

⁶⁹ K. Arbiszewski, *Wszystko otwarte na nowo. Teoria Aktora-Sieci i filozofia kultury*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2010.

questioned⁷⁰. According to Latour, the actors create the hybrid connection networks the entire time, and they are „simultaneously real, like nature, narrated, like discourse”⁷¹.

Using the above premises for the construction of the model of disability, one may state, that ANT allows to see that every man – each person with a disability, has an identity defined by their relations with other humans and non-humans, is someone else, and differs from others. The person is defined by relations and beams of relations that appear in spheres such as biological, social and cultural, normative, material and organisational, scientific, practical, etc. Within the model of disability, it would be advisable to assume, that disability is a social phenomenon, a biological fact, coming into medical (diagnosis, treatment), and psychological (diagnosis, therapy) relations, the controversies about the causes of the disability, the casual knowledge regarding behaviour, scientific theories, textbooks, the interest of the medicine producers, attitudes in the natural environment, the interest from the media, the interests of professionals, school didactic aid, the theories of social participation, law, etc. Disability within the ANT approach, will be a phenomenon of hybrid-like nature, as an issue of science, medicine, law, politics, and institutions. Hybrid, as translation networks, that work, transform, and affect the social life⁷². Translation is such a relation between two elements, that transforms them. Disability will be an assortment of elements, where each of them plays a constitutive role regarding the whole, co-creates it and determines the actions regarding other phenomena. These would be as follows: a scientific theory, therapy workshops, disability classification, etc. Each ele-

⁷⁰ K. Arbiszewski, *Wszystko otwarte na nowo. Teoria Aktora-Sieci i filozofia kultury*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2010, M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne* 2011, no. 4, p. 127.

⁷¹ B. Latour, *Nigdy nie byliśmy nowocześni. Studium z antropologii symetrycznej*, (trans.) M. Gdula. Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2011.

⁷² B. Latour, *Nigdy nie byliśmy nowocześni. Studium z antropologii symetrycznej*, (trans.) M. Gdula. Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2011.

ment has its own way of working, of conceptualising the world, and of exercising influence⁷³. Hybrids may combine humans, social institutions, scientific research, discourses, etc. Therefore, the application of ANT gives the possibility of a precise description of the relations that shape, and maintain the models of disability. Adopting the premise about the hybrid nature of disability allows to consider the knowledge from various other scientific disciplines, from various material, social, organisational areas, etc. Creating the model of disability, it is important to not, that the translation networks are created due to the reception of data, and combining it in search of new regularities. As noted by Michał Wróblewski, that means that, from one set of elements, numerous wholes may be created, every time we emphasise differently, and explicate different elements. Writing a text is the same thing as weaving a network⁷⁴.

Fifth, a question may be important for the new model of disability: How is it, that despite the heterogeneousness of the elements that refer to disability, there is a coherence and a stability of the network, like in the case of the departing medical paradigm? Michał Wróblewski writes, that maybe, the causes of the coherence, stability, and the translation character, should be found in the localisation of these networks in objectivised areas such as law or science. According to the author, the area of law and administrative institutions, activates the lawyers, politicians, administrators, and, simultaneously by delegating particular values, the legal procedures and administration acts, that legitimise the coherence and the stability of the translation network. In the case of disability, the network is constituted by the following elements: doctors, psychologists, scholars that prepare textbooks; and, from the non-human side, the textbooks, laboratories, along with all the technical apparatus, psychological clinic along with psychometric instruments. One cannot un-

⁷³ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne* 2011, no. 4, p. 127.

⁷⁴ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne* 2011, no. 4, pp. 121-154.

derestimate the role of genes, the brain, as well as, cultural norms. At the level of therapy, the elements will be as follows: doctors, psychologists, pedagogues; and from the non-human side: textbooks, theories, medicine, rehabilitation room along with the entire equipment, the computer, biopolitics, etc. Wróblewski indicates, that each of the listed elements is characterised by a certain kind of effective impact, which cannot be reduced to a single meta-type. As the activity of the doctor cannot be compared to the work of a lawyer, or the effective impact of the psychology textbook. However, they all constitute a coherent translation network being the model of disability⁷⁵. *Sixth* the advantage of ANT in building the models of disability, is, additionally, creating the framework for examining this phenomenon in controversial situations such as: genetic modifications, diet (e.g. in selected groups of disorders), vaccinations, antibiotics, necropolitics, biopower, etc. According to Latour, ANT allows to grasp, describe, and interpret these controversies⁷⁶. As Bińczyk notes, the cause of these controversies is the fact, that science does not give us certainty, and does not provide clear answers. In consequence, men must face contradictory expertises, economical and social interests, and opposed scientific theories⁷⁷. Latour notes that economic and political interests have an impact on the formation of various phenomena in the current times dominated by globalisation and free-market economy. ANT shows and examines controversies, as they provide knowledge regarding subject that are uncertain and conflicting. They are contrary to continuity and stability. According to Latour we should get accustomed with controversy, because the complexity of the world will increase continually.

⁷⁵ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, Studia Socjologiczne 2011, no. 4, pp. 134-135.

⁷⁶ B. Latour, *Polityka natury*, (eds.) A. Czarnacka, M. Gdula. Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2009.

⁷⁷ E. Bińczyk, *Praktyka, laboratorium, czynniki pozaludzkie. Najnowsze modele technonauki oraz wybrane tezy Ludwika Flecka*, 2009, <http://fleck.umcs.lublin.pl/teksty.htm>, Access: 15.04.2019 r.

No expertise will allow us to save ourselves from a situation of uncertainty and risk, as the complexity and the global nature of the interdependencies extends far beyond our capabilities of a cognitive overview⁷⁸. Latour highlights, that controversies are the “essential resource to render the social connections traceable”⁷⁹. Following the traces of controversies aims at re-analyse the previously indicated connections, but now each element would be considered in a broader context, and with the aid of a larger group of acting ones⁸⁰. In the case of the model of disability, ANT may help finding various controversies. For example, it may indicate the meaning of non-progressive changes in defining the entire phenomenon. It may expose the economical and political interests, that affect the textbooks for diagnostics. ANT gives the ability to indicate numerous controversies regarding the etiology and the nature of disability. For ANT, there are no obstacles in analysing controversies regarding pharmacological substances, e.g. by juxtaposing the views presented by pharmacological companies, and scientists that present a different opinion. ANT may help in identifying the behind-the-scenes actions of groups, lobbying for beneficial legal and economic solutions, as well as, signal the abuse of the current regulations⁸¹.

To summarise, the selected premises, presented above, for the inquiries regarding the reconfiguration of the models of disability, one must indicate, that ANT may become a helpful instrument⁸². It is a scholarly orientation allowing to see that disability: a) may be considered as a hybrid, that combines factors such as the scientific,

⁷⁸ B. Latour, *Polityka natury*, (eds.) A. Czarnacka, M. Gdula. Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2009, p. 280.

⁷⁹ B. Latour, *Splatając na nowo, to co społeczne. Wprowadzenie do teorii aktora-sieci*, (trans.) A. Derra, K. Arbiszewski. Universitas, Kraków 2010, p. 44.

⁸⁰ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne* 2011, no. 4, p. 136.

⁸¹ M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne* 2011, no. 4, p. 137.

⁸² M. Wróblewski, *Choroba jako hybryda. ADHD w świetle Teorii Aktora-Sieci i Asocjologii*, *Studia Socjologiczne* 2011, no. 4, p. 134.

medical, legal, political, etc., b) it may be constructed by coherent and stable (rooted in science, and in law), translation networks, that combine scientific studies, people, social institutions, discourses, and law, that affect, transform and influence the phenomenon of disability, c) may be described with precision, by the relations and factors that shape and maintain the current models of disability, d) is constituted by heterogeneous elements, that have significant meaning for the whole, constitute it and indicate the actions regarding other phenomena, e) may be described with the use of a new language, with the use of terms such as: networks, relations, lines, relationships, dependencies, beams, translations, technoscience, etc⁸³, f) may be defined on the basis of numerous humans and non-humans. In relation to etiology, it will be the following: medical studies, laboratories, scientific theories, doctors, medical equipment, textbooks, etc. In the scope of the diagnosis the following will appear: specialists, textbooks, animals, clinics, legal procedures, etc. Constructing the model of disability, one must notice, that ANT is not a theory in the strict sense, but a certain methodological perspective. Its important premise, is the awareness, that an entire assortment of heterogeneous factors determine the specifics of a given social phenomenon⁸⁴. ANT offers an assortment of directives and models, aiding in studying the world in a new, more comprehensive way⁸⁵. It determines the methodological pointers, allowing the present the complexity of a phenomenon, as well as, its heterogeneous character.

⁸³ R. Braidotti, *Podmioty nomadyczne. Ucieleśnienie i różnica seksualna w feminizmie współczesnym*, tłum. A. Derra. Wydawnictwo Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2009; G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *Kłaczce*, tłum. B. Banasik. Colloquia Communia 1988, no. 1-3; B. Latour, *Polityka natury*, tłum. A. Czarnacka, M. Gdula. Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2009.

⁸⁴ B. Latour, *Splatając na nowo, to co społeczne. Wprowadzenie do teorii aktora-sieci*, (trans.) A. Derra, K. Arbiszewski. Universitas, Kraków 2010, pp. 89-122.

⁸⁵ B. Latour, *Polityka natury*, (trans.) A. Czarnacka, M. Gdula. Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2009.

Summary

Regardless of, which research and scholarly perspective we will employ, in building a model of disability, no doubt, the issues of disability are an essential element of the posthumanist afterthought.

Currently, the posthumanist approach is not a coherent theory, and, at least for now, is more recognised by its characteristic attributes, i.a.: antianthropocentrism, ecology, biotechnology, posthuman, non-human, etc. However, the dynamics of the development, the values that it introduces, the ontologies it employs, the epistemologies it creates, and the methodologies it adopts, indicates, that the posthumanist approach, is an announcement of a new paradigm. A paradigm directed at the human, his environment perceived in broad strokes, and the community-oriented forms of life. Within the paradigm, man experiences interpersonal and inter-species connections, connections with nature and with the community. He also has the feeling of safety, of belonging, but also – of independence. Additionally, the new paradigm is an important instrument of ethics, here – the ethics of care, the ethics of solidarity, respect, and mutuality⁸⁶.

The increased interest in posthumanism, and conducting research from this perspective, seems entirely justified both scientifically and practically. Posthumanism may contribute to the better understanding of the issues of disabilities, and have an impact on the social debate on the subject, and, particularly, on building a contemporary model of disability.

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The educational context of the Sejm protest by people with disabilities and their families

ABSTRACT: Magdalena Bełza-Gajdzica, Zenon Gajdzica, *The educational context of the Sejm protest by people with disabilities and their families*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 83-103. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.04>

This paper presents an analysis of the social reception of a protest by people with disabilities and their families (and guardians), with a special focus on its educational dimension. The protest took place in the main corridor of the Sejm complex in Warsaw in April and May 2017. The first part of the paper comprises the essential characteristics of social protests. The second provides a brief overview of media information about the discussed protest. The recapitulation of this part specifies the conditions that give the protest an educational dimension. From there, the analysis is narrowed to the reception of knowledge pertaining to the situation of the needs of people with disabilities and their families and the change in attitudes to this social group. The third part comprises a presentation of the research results on this issue. The research was conducted with the use of diagnostic polling—the questionnaire technique, applied to a group of 200 people. The research results show that the protest was a kind of information campaign and that it contributed to some changes in respondents' knowledge concerning people with disabilities and their families and the transformation of attitudes to their needs.

KEY WORDS: protest, resistance, disability, political debates, media messages

Introduction

The words “protest” and “education” paired in the title of this paper connote strong associations with the resistance of teachers (also academic teachers) against changes that serve rash, usually ill-considered and politically driven, reorganisation of education systems. Rightly so, they also bring to mind teachers’ strikes in defence of the dignity of the profession, for improvement in working conditions, or for higher remuneration. The issues addressed in this paper go beyond those connotations. The core of the deduction is constituted by an attempt to consider the protest as a process inscribed in the widely understood field of social education. In other words, we focus on viewing the confrontation and rebellion as less a factor of direct transformation of the social order and more as a source of experience and spreading of knowledge on the subjects and objects of the protests.

What contributed to this formulation of the topic is the protest by people with disabilities and their families that took place in the main corridor of the Sejm (Poland’s house of parliament) in April and May 2018. This protest became not only an event of social interest but also (or maybe even foremost) a political one and led to wide media coverage. Despite various political connotations, undoubtedly diluting the essence of the issue, the problems of persons with disabilities and their families made their way to the centre of multiple media reports. Thus, one can expect they were noticed and spread within the social sphere. They probably became an object of reflection and discussion in many Polish families, in social groups and milieus that haven’t been previously confronted with the problematics. Naturally, the education dimension of the protest may also have extended to the essence and consequences of the experience shared by the protest’s participants and by those to whom the protest was addressed. This aspect will be left outside of the focus of our study, however.

The aim of the study is a general characterisation of this protest, with particular attention paid to defining the conditions required

for the protest to have the effect of spreading knowledge about its purpose and the change of attitude towards the subject and object of the protest. As an empirical example of the undertaken problem, we present you with the result of the research – respondents' declarations on the indicated change.

The core of the protest

Social protests may take various forms and analysis of them may be entangled in a differentiated approach and expressed in numerous categories. Such protests are identified with a defined form of collective actions in which a protesting social group expressively presents its standpoint while referring to another subject's sense of responsibility¹. They fall into a wide formula of social restlessness that doesn't come up suddenly as a complete creation. On the contrary, these kinds of protests usually undergo a slow growth process until they develop into a defined form². As the basis of the protests, like in the distant times of the monarchy, is the ineffectiveness of the requests, the emptiness of promises made by rulers, and limited access to values. The accumulated anger of the protesters is always directed at those who represent the system³, or in practice, it is addressed to the group deciding on the distribution of goods and allocation of favours. The protest may be the result of decision-makers breaking laws, ignoring the rules of democracy, or, above all, unfairness and carrying out the particular will of interests associated with members of the group in power.

¹ N. Luhmann, *Risk: a sociological theory*, Walter de Gruyter New York 1995. Quoted after: P. Matczak, *Protest lokalny w Polsce*, „Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny” 2000, no. 3, p. 151 (pp. 151-160).

² H. Blumer, *Niepokój społeczny i protest zbiorowy*, [in:] *Obywatelska socjologia szkoły chicagowskiej*, ed. E. Hałas, RW, KUL, Lublin 1994, p. 97 (pp. 97-118). Transl. into Polish by E. Hałas.

³ M. Tendera, *Protest jako mechanizm równoważenia nierówności społecznych*, „Kultura i Społeczeństwo” 2013, no. 2, p. 111 (pp. 110-132).

Social protests are placed in the larger concept of resistance, which is related to relations of subordination, dominance, and conflicts. The essence of resistance is to oppose the external influence and impact⁴ and creates the basis for the event of a protest. In the case of people with disabilities and their parents, the grounds for the protest was resistance (disagreement) against the unfair distribution of goods (according to the protesters).

Protest is a form of disagreement with the existing social order (or economic, legal order) and in this sense, it fits into the category of non-conformist disobedience as far as following the norms of that order is concerned. One further form is civil disobedience. It is worth noting, however, that civil disobedience is an illegal act with symbolic meaning, in the sense of being overt, morally justified, devoid of violence, even if it may also happen to be an egoistic attempt to take advantage of the common good. The breaking of the law inherent in this type of disobedience constitutes a kind of message about the imperfections that require political rectification⁵. Nevertheless, breaking the law is not the effect of every protest. On the contrary, some actions use the entitlement given within the democratic system. Hence, not every protest takes the shape of typical civil disobedience in the literal sense. Protests treated as unconventional political actions may adopt diverse forms, from petitioning, to strikes and demonstrations, to even self-immolation⁶.

Every protest, however, is an expression of rebellion. In one of the most popular conceptions, considered within the aspect of so-

⁴ P. McLaren, *Rytualne wymiary oporu – błaznowanie i symboliczna inwersja*, „Nieobecne Dyskursy” 1994, no. 1; H.A. Giroux, L. Witkowski, *Edukacja i sfera publiczna. Idee pedagogiki radykalnej*, Impuls, Kraków 2010; E. Bielska, *Koncepcje oporu we współczesnych naukach społecznych. Główne problemy, pojęcia, rozstrzygnięcia*, UŚ, Katowice 2013.

⁵ M. Kaczmarczyk, *Nieposłuszeństwo obywatelskie a demokracja*, „Studia Socjologiczne” 2013, no. 1, p. 25 (pp. 22-40).

⁶ G. Ekiert, J. Kubik, *Protesty społeczne w nowych demokracjach: Polska, Słowacja, Węgry i Niemcy Wschodnie (1989-1994)*, „Studia Socjologiczne” 1997, no. 4.

cialisation, by Robert Merton, protest means an adaptation process in which there is the rejection of values formulated for social goals and of norms, that is, established and accepted methods of achieving those values⁷. Rebellion appears as a result of frustration and dissatisfaction, and usually it comes with a proposal for change, with an alternative suggesting the replacement of elements of the dominant culture by elements of another, dominated/alternative culture⁸. In practice, it is also an attempt to abolish the status quo of the economic, legal, or social order and a proposal for change.

Protests are often analysed in a political context. This is legitimate, as the intention of every protest is to incite a reaction from the political system and introduce more or less deep corrections. What lies at the source of every protest is conflict, in other words, a dispute between two or more interdependent parties. The parties believe that their goals are discordant and resources limited, and they claim that both parties reciprocally interfere with each other in accomplishing their own goals⁹. An important element of protest is demands¹⁰. They usually stir the greatest controversy and create an axis of conflict while also being the object of negotiations.

It is not possible to present a thorough list of characteristics of a theoretical protest within the limited framework of this paper, and besides, it has been done very accurately in the above-quoted works by authors specialised in the problematics of social confrontation. By evoking a short outline of relative categories that create diversified perspectives of a protest, we intend only to draw your attention to plausible paths of research and analyse its educational value.

⁷ R. Merton, *Teoria socjologiczna i struktura społeczna*, PWN, Warszawa 2002, pp. 221-222. Transl. into Polish by E. Morawska, J. Wertenstein-Żuławski.

⁸ P. Sztompka, *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Znak, Kraków 2002, p. 282.

⁹ W.W. Wilmont, J.L. Hocker, *Konflikty między ludźmi*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 32. Przeł. M. Höffner.

¹⁰ P. Matczak, *Protest lokalny w Polsce*, „Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny” 2000, no. 3, p. 152 (pp. 151-160).

Educational conditioning as it pertains to the Sejm protest by people with disabilities and their parents

A social/political protest as a process and phenomenon remains a particular area of interest for sociology, management science, and more rarely, of psychology or history. Thus, the problem of the educational dimension of a protest (in the sense of social learning) is rather absent from the scientific discourse. Nevertheless, every protest is a lesson, both for the governing side and the governed. It also constitutes an event that spreads given knowledge while promoting specific viewpoints, ideologies, ideas, or concepts. What remains at the centre of our interest is not the lesson that the political elites and protesters themselves 'receive' as a result of experiencing the protest, but foremost the question of knowledge spread by media on the topic and object of the confrontation. One can assume that spreading various perspectives of knowledge about the protesters' expectations may alter the public's view of them and their needs. This explains why an attempt to define the conditions for spreading knowledge presents itself as a nontrivial scientific problem, and its placement in the pedagogical perspective is justified by its practical educational impact. The protest that is the subject of our research also takes place amid the problematics of diagnosis and the creation of social attitudes towards people with disabilities, which makes it relevant from the point of view of special needs pedagogy and other disciplines of disability science.

The protest by people with disabilities and their families took place in the corridor of the Sejm complex in Warsaw. It started on 18 April and finished on 27 May 2018, lasting then for 40 days. Among its participants were people with disabilities (adults and children) accompanied by 18 parents (17 mothers and 1 father)¹¹.

¹¹ See: E. Górnikowska-Zwolak, *Słowo wprowadzające (o prawach osób z niepełnościami i o pracownikach nauki z niepełnosprawnością – edukacyjny wymiar pewne-*

According to the assumptions about protests explicated earlier, they usually aim to achieve specific goals. In this case, it was, above all, to improve the economic situation of families raising people with disabilities. The expectations were composed of two main demands and several additional ones: first, to equalise the person's social pension with that of the minimal pension owing to inability to work, and to introduce an allowance 'for living expenses', also called 'rehabilitation allowance', for disabled persons incapable of self-sufficient existence after reaching 18 years old and amounting to 500 PLN per month¹². It is worth noting that at the time of the protest, a period of intense economic growth in Poland was continuing, which was transpiring hand in hand with the improvement of the material situation of at least several social groups. This fact resulted in increased possibilities to support select social groups through public support programmes and in raising the remunerations of certain professional groups. In practice, the conditions awakened dormant expectations for support also in groups omitted from this process and created a sense of the unfair distribution of redistributable capital. This problem is illustrated by two rules of justice elaborated by John Rawls¹³. The consequence of his second rule is the assumption that regardless of how much the situation of a person improves, it doesn't matter as long as another person doesn't take advantage of it¹⁴. In other words, the rule of distributive justice consists of equally raising participation in goods' distribution, including par-

go zdarzenia), „Problemy Edukacji, Rehabilitacji i Socjalizacji Osób Niepełnosprawnych” 2018, vol. 27, p. 12 (pp. 9-18); K. Klinger, M. Topolewska, *Koniec protestu niepełnosprawnych: Niejednoznaczny bilans 40 dni spędzonych w Sejmie*, „Gazeta Prawna” 28.05.2018, <https://www.gazetaprawna.pl/artykuly/1126506,koniec-protestu-niepelnosprawnych-w-sejmie.html> (May 2018).

¹² „Wywalczyliśmy kolejny kamyczek”. *Protestujący rodzice spisali swoje postulaty* <https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/sejm-protest-rodzicow-dzieci-niepelnosprawnych-spisali-postulaty,831084.html> (February 2019).

¹³ J. Rawls, *Teoria sprawiedliwości*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2013. Transl. into Polish by M. Panafiuk, J. Pasek, A. Romaniuk.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 128.

ties that aren't direct consumers of the growth. People with disabilities and their families certainly belong to that group.

Testing the validity of this economic postulate, as usually happens in such cases, raised controversy. In general, however, among the media coverage, the dominant opinion concerned the legitimacy of the formulated expectations and comments expressing comprehension and support for the situation of the adults with disabilities and their families¹⁵.

As for the conditions of the educational role of the protest, it appears that the clear specification of the demands and their justification (in the context of the general economic situation and negligence on the part of the state in taking care of the needs of people with disabilities) constituted the first, initial requisite¹⁶. It was the rational justification of that specific rebellion that brought with it a considerable amount of knowledge about the social and economic situation of the protesters.

The second important requirement for spreading knowledge resulted from the form of the protest, and even more, the place of protest. It is worth noting that people with disabilities have limited means of protest: petitions and demonstrations are relatively benign for the ruling party. In these circumstances, taking over space in the main corridor of the Sejm complex was quite an uncomfortable solution for the governing elite and ensured media coverage of the confrontation. Thus, the second condition establishing the educational role of the protest was fulfilled: media broadcasts allowed it to reach a wide spectrum of viewers. The place of protest facilitated numerous direct reports revealing the everyday struggles of the

¹⁵ *Protest rodziców osób niepełnosprawnych w Sejmie trwa. „Nie wierzymy w polityków”*, <https://www.polskieradio.pl/7/473/Artykul/2101054,Protest-rodzicow-osob-niepelnosprawnych-w-Sejmie-trwa-Nie-wierzemy-w-politykow>; RON# za niezależnym życiem, <https://www.facebook.com/pg/RodziceON/posts/> (February 2019).

¹⁶ *Rodzice osób niepełnosprawnych wrócili do Sejmu. Stawiają twarde warunki*, <https://www.newsweek.pl/polska/spoleczenstwo/protest-rodzicow-dzieci-niepelnosprawnych-w-sejmie/5rck7es> (February 2019).

families raising people with disabilities. The reports revealed the difficulty of simple hygienic acts, moving, communicating with others¹⁷, and, which seems to be the most relevant, the emotions of the disabled people and their families at conducting these routine acts. It would be hard to overestimate the educational value of these messages¹⁸, which were included in reports by all significant Polish media.

The third condition for effective social education deduced from the protest is certainly a matter-of-fact debate about the demands and their entire economic and social context. This requisite, in our opinion, was not met. There was no shortage of statements describing the process as purely political in character¹⁹. In the debate, arguments distant from the real problems of people with disabilities and their families appeared, such as the purported unethical advantage of parents using their disabled children to accomplish their own political goals, verbal scuffles and sterile arguments about which government did more for disabled people, or, lastly, opinions contesting the need for financial support of this social group²⁰. As a result, irrational, extreme opinions flowed and blurred the essence of the protest (such as the financial consequences of the protest in

¹⁷ *Trwa protest opiekunów osób niepełnosprawnych. Jak wygląda ich życie na sejmowych korytarzach? „Będziemy walczyć. Mamy mnóstwo siły”*, <https://polskatimes.pl/trwa-protest-opiekunow-osob-niepelnosprawnych-jak-wyglada-ich-zycie-na-sejmowych-korytarzach-bedziemy-walczyz-mamy-mnostwo-sily/ar/13128666> (February, 2019).

¹⁸ *Protest w Sejmie. Kalendarium. Dzień po dniu*, <http://www.niepelnosprawni.pl/ledge/x/650943> (February, 2019).

¹⁹ *Apolityczny protest w Sejmie? „Zróbcie wszystko, aby nikt z PiS-u nie dostał się do samorządu”*, <https://www.tvp.info/37214676/apolityczny-protest-w-sejmie-zrobcie-wszystko-aby-nikt-z-pisu-nie-dostal-sie-do-samorzadu> (February, 2019); *Opozycja zapłaci za protest niepełnosprawnych w Sejmie? I to dosłownie*, <http://www.superstacja.tv/wiadomosc/2018-05-22/opozycja-zaplaci-za-protest-niepelnosprawnych-w-sejmie-i-to-doslownie/> (February, 2019).

²⁰ *Radykalna zmiana zdania? Polacy nie chcą już protestu w Sejmie, a przynajmniej tak twierdzą „Wiadomości” TVP*, <https://natemat.pl/238671,protest-niepelnosprawnych-w-sejmie-polacy-radykalnie-zmienili-zdanie> (February, 2019).

the context of parliament's work)²¹, thus distorting the authentic needs of the protesters. This dilution most certainly hindered the flow of dependable information about the life, needs, and possibilities of people with disabilities and their families.

As far as the educational balance of the protest is concerned, media statements by representatives of the political elites were also divided. The opinion that the introduction to the public debate of the problematics of disabilities and potential solutions had a positive impact. Politicians themselves 'made quite a lot of progress' as they had to be prepared for frequent questions from journalists concerning the problems of disabled people and possible actions to help them²². However, there were voices, especially expressed later on, that it was not a sufficient lesson for the governing party²³.

An incredibly pertinent evaluation of the educational dimension of the protest in relation to the larger part of society was expressed by Elżbieta Górnikowska-Zwolak:

'Even though the protesters did not see a large part of their demands fulfilled, the effort of resisting in protest did not go to waste; it had powerful educational value. During the protest, all of us, Polish society, representatives of various groups and circles, as well as individuals free in their decisions and responsible for taking action or restraining from it, had the opportunity to see ourselves in it like in a mirror. The picture we saw is multidimensional, ambiguous, but all in all, not quite reassuring'²⁴.

The mirror metaphor reflects Polish society's flaws²⁵: the inclination to depersonalise the weak by the strong, to push the weakest

²¹ *Kancelaria Sejmu podliczyła koszt protestu osób niepełnosprawnych*, <https://businessinsider.com.pl/wiadomosci/koszt-protestu-niepelnosprawnych-w-sejmie/7clbq53> (February, 2019).

²² K. Klinger, M. Topolewska, *Koniec protestu niepełnosprawnych...*

²³ „O osobach niepełnosprawnych się nie pamięta”. *Będzie protest po obietnicach PiS* <https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/protest-osob-niepelnosprawnych-i-ich-opiekunow-po-obietnicach-pis,912870.html> (May 2019).

²⁴ E. Górnikowska-Zwolak, *Słowo wprowadzające...*, pp. 12-13.

²⁵ Certainly also a base for relationship-building with people with disabilities and construction of the very disability. See: A., Gustavsson, E. Zakrzewska-Man-

off to the margins, the lack of support for them from academic elites, perfectly exemplified by the author's quote when referring to specific events and media statements²⁶. As a consequence, these flaws led to an uncontrite attitude among politicians and the lack of an authentic willingness to compromise.

Ambiguous opinions on the educational dimension of the protest and on the effects on attitudes towards people with disabilities encouraged us to pursue our own exploration and to attempt to formulate an opinion based on the conducted research, as we show below.

Research concept

The data presented below constitute an excerpt of larger research on the social reception of the protest. The research was conducted by means of a diagnostic survey—questionnaire technique. The survey was composed of seven closed-ended questions regarding various aspects of the perception of the protest and its effects, as well as a few questions aimed at a characterisation by the respondents. Below are presented statements regarding the change in the extent of knowledge about people with disabilities and declarations about the attitudes towards supporting them. The two research questions were:

- What is the link between the protest and the respondents' declarations about the change in their knowledge about people with disabilities?
- What is the link between the protest and respondents' declarations about the change in their support of people with disabilities and their families?

The number of people interviewed was 200, selected according to their availability; the questionnaires were distributed by the

terys, *Wprowadzenie: społeczny kontekst upośledzenia*, [in:] *Upośledzenie w społecznym zwierciadle*, eds. A. Gustavsson, E. Zakrzewska-Manterys, Żak, Warszawa 1997.

²⁶ E. Górnikowska-Zwolak, *Słowo wprowadzające...*, p. 13.

authors of the article in various milieus, with the exception of environments directly related to the disabled persons, including also special needs pedagogues and students of pedagogical science. The research was conducted in four districts: Bielsko, Cieszyn, Jastrzębie, and Żywiec. The group isn't entirely representative (because it doesn't reflect layers of the social structure by age, education, or declared political inclinations or interest in domestic politics), its size, however, gives grounds to outline the tendencies regarding the issue²⁷. The research was conducted in two waves (on other cohorts—in agreement with the assumption to avoid double questioning of respondents with the same questions) in June, immediately after the protest had ended (100 people), and half a year later in December (100 people). The goal of this strategy was to discover the durability of the presented declarations. We treat the problematics (located in 'social memory'²⁸) with distance, however, as the demographic structure of the examined cohorts was slightly different.

Due to the defined topic of the study, we limit the presentation of the results of our research to the question of a change of knowledge and support for people with disabilities and their families. The restricted frame of our study doesn't allow us to present a larger range of relations (variables differentiating the declarations). Nevertheless, we consider the presented results in the context of one independent variable, that is, the declaration of interest in political discourse. We are convinced that this seemingly prosaic juxtaposition allows us to depict the problem of the reach of media coverage to groups diversified as far as their interest in political and social affairs is concerned.

²⁷ According to the assumption that a large group of people (more than 100) reduces the demographic fluctuations and represents the population more accurately, raising the viability of the application. See: M. Łobocki, *Wprowadzenie do metodologii badań pedagogicznych*, Impuls, Kraków 1999, p. 172.

²⁸ Understood as a collection of memories of a collective's members about its past, its population and past events, as well as the methods of commemoration and transfer of knowledge that are considered to be obligatory equipment of the community member. See: B. Szacka, *Czas przeszły, pamięć, mit*, Scholar, Warszawa 2006, p. 41.

Educational dimension of the Sejm protest by people with disabilities and their parents: results of the research, presentation and comments

The data analysis indicates that for slightly more than a half of the respondents, the debates taking place around the protest were a reliable source of information entailing a change in their knowledge about people with disabilities and their families (see Figure 1). It is worthwhile to add that the research periods diversified the declarations only to an insignificant extent, which leads us to the conclusion that the protest remained in the immediate social memory, at least in the six-month perspective from the day it concluded.

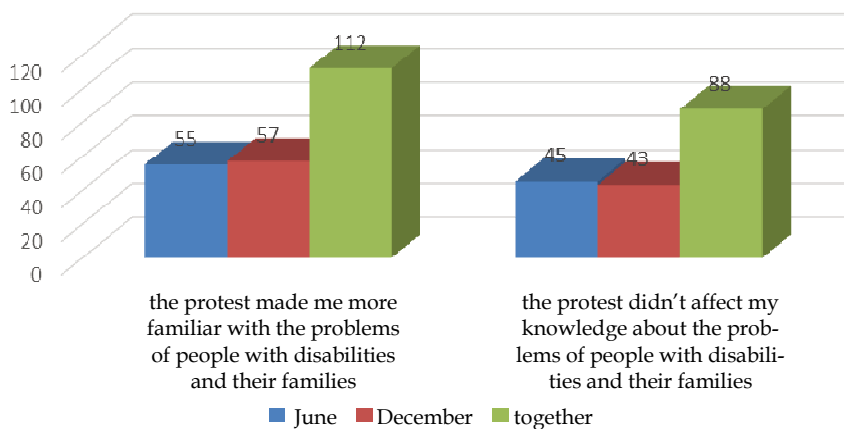


Fig. 1. Declaration of modification of knowledge about people with disabilities and their families after the protest (N=200)

Naturally, these declarations might be considered as two separate perspectives. The first one shows relevant change, as more than half of the respondents learnt something about the situation, needs, possibilities, and the everyday life of people with disabilities.

It's hard to think of any information campaign that would entail a change of this range. The other declaration demonstrates that the intensity and quality of the news didn't suffice to extend the knowledge of the strong majority of respondents. Possibly, the often politicised and, more often than not, sterile discourse (dominating at least some of the coverage) did not provide matter-of-fact information and, consequently, it didn't affect – in the case of almost half of the respondents – their level of knowledge. Another question raised is the departure point of the respondents' knowledge about the discussed topic. The group could have comprised a high percentage of respondents who already had at least a basic level of knowledge about the life of people with disabilities. Most of the information transmitted by media could have been for them merely repetition or reaffirmation of facts already known. Doubtless, also some respondents declaring their knowledge level had not increased, are not interested in the social and political discourse, and therefore didn't engage with the reports. The results of this relation are presented in Figure 2.

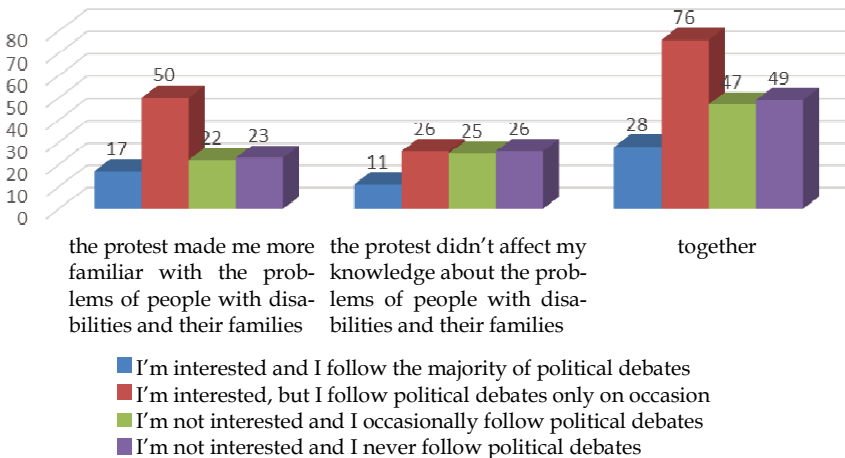


Fig. 2. Interest in politics vs declaration of modification of knowledge about people with disabilities after the protest (N=200)

Statistical data analysis ($\chi^2 = 6.45 / df=3 / , p = 0.091; ni.^{29}$) indicates that the relation between the analysed declarations is not statistically relevant³⁰. The strength of the relation ($C = 0.179$) is located in the range of 'almost irrelevant'³¹. These results may surprise, especially in the groups declaring no interest in politics, and none or little interest in following political debates. A common-sense thesis should assume a decisively lower percentage than in other groups of those declaring a change in their level of knowledge. These groups comprised nearly half of all the respondents, and the differences in the declarations of the two groups, when summed up, fit within the range of a few indications (with the majority of declarations being no change in knowledge). Slightly greater differentiation (in favour of declarations of a change in knowledge) concerns the indications in the group most interested in media-reported political news. An apparent differentiation, however, is characteristic for the group that declares having an interest in the debate and following it occasionally. We may, therefore, make an assumption that moderate involvement and occasional following of media coverage entailed the strongest declaration of the accomplishment of the educational dimension of the protest. In the remaining groups, this aspect followed the average. Possibly, the involved group was affected by tiredness, and the very reception of knowledge was diluted by political saturation. While in the groups weakly interested in political life, the intensity of following media wasn't sufficient to obtain a higher educational effect. This thesis, however, requires confirmation through additional study.

The research is comprised of the cognitive component of attitude. Knowledge about people with disabilities is bound to elimi-

²⁹ As the level of relevance in our work, we adopted the value of 0.05, the most common in the social science. See: W.P. Zaczyński, *Statystyka w pracy badawczej nauczyciela*, Żak, Warszawa 1997, p. 39.

³⁰ In this research, we omit the division into research periods.

³¹ Based on the convergence indicator of C. Pearson describing the degree of relation between variables. See: G.O. Ferguson, Y. Takane, *Analiza statystyczna w psychologii i pedagogice*, PWN, Warszawa 1997, p. 248.

nate stereotypes about them, and thus, help one to understand actions to their benefit and as a result to take up actions aimed at an improvement in the social and economic situation of the discussed group of people³². Declarations of support for people with disabilities are comprised within the affective component of attitude: endeavour to undertake specific actions for the sake of the subject of the attitude. Identification of the changes within the declarations of support constitutes a continuation of the problematics in question, the educational dimension of the protest.

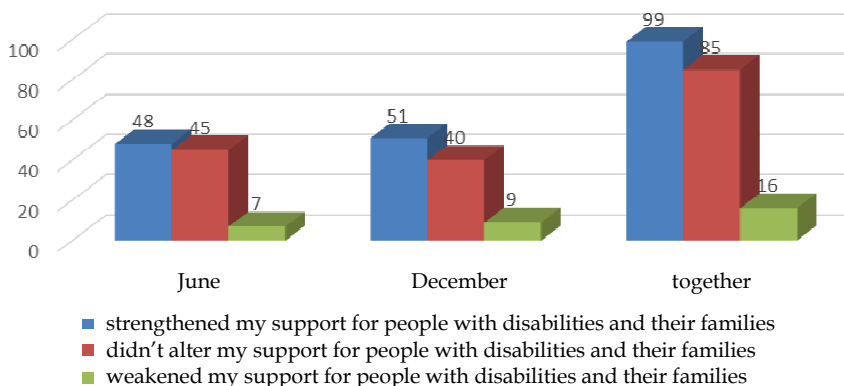


Fig. 3. Declaration of a modification in support of people with disabilities and their families after the protest (N=200)

The results of that research are presented in Figure 3. Analysis of the declarations demonstrates that more than half of the respondents modified their support towards people with disabilities and their families as a result of the protest. In this group, decisively most numerous are respondents who declared a change in a positive direction (strengthening)³³, only slightly more than 10 people

³² Por. I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Impuls, Kraków 2105, pp. 90-98.

³³ The emotional-judgmental component expresses the aspect of the attitude (positive or negative) towards the object of the attitude. That's how we can talk

chose the opposite direction of change. Nevertheless, both groups show a change in the indicator of the attitude in question, thus proving the educational dimension of the protest. Even though the weakening of support evokes negative connotations, it's beyond doubt that it results from the respondents' reception of the defined information presented in media.

Also, in the case of these results, the data was not differentiated by research period in a substantial way, although polarisation was detected: the number of declarations reporting strengthening and weakening support increased. Still, it would be hard to talk about a relevant change taking place after half a year gap. The results confirm the thesis about the relatively strong influence of the protest, as it remains in the respondents' memory. It is even more relevant as during the first and second research stage, the news about disabled people was quite incidental after the end of the protest, being pushed away from the main current of social, political, and economic problems.

Similarly, we compared these data with declarations about the following political debates. The results are presented in Figure 4. Statistical analysis of the data (like in the analogical comparison regarding the previously defined relation) did not prove any statistically relevant differences. ($\chi^2= 6.37 / df=6 / , ni.; C = 0.126$).

It's worthwhile to note the subtle differences, the first one being the indicator of the number of declarations of no change in support for people with disabilities in the group of people disinterested in political debates – this is the only group where it's higher from the number of indications of strengthened support. The other one is the relatively strongest percentage of indication of increased support in the contrasting group comprising people most interested in media news of a political character. It demonstrates that the educational role of the protest should not be depreciated, which appears to be obvious, particularly among people interested in the political discourse.

about positive or negative direction. See: M. Marody, *Sens teoretyczny a sens empiryczny pojęcia postawy. Analiza metodologiczna zasad doboru wskaźników w badaniach nad postawami*, PWN, Warszawa 1976, pp. 17-18.

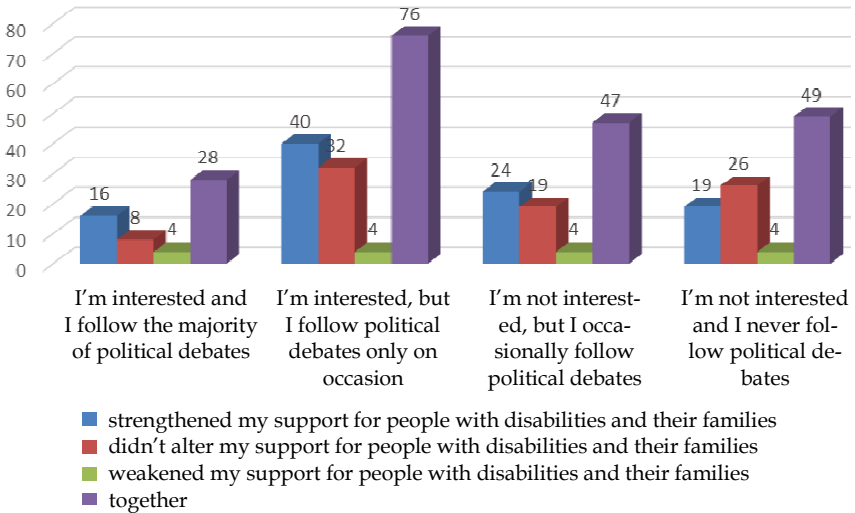


Fig. 4. Interest in political life vs declarations of change in support for people with disabilities and their families after the protest (N=200)

Conclusion

This short review of the effect of media news regarding the Sejm protest by people with disabilities and their families, presented in this paper, reveals several aspects of the protest action. Without doubt, the most crucial one from the protesters' point of view was the attempt of putting pressure on the authorities and obtaining economic benefits. Also, not only the demands themselves but also the place of protest provoked a lot of controversy, mostly in the political sense. This politicisation blurred the core goal of the demands and weakened the matter-of-fact debate about the authentic situation of people with disabilities. Nevertheless, this fact doesn't change our opinion that the protest's very resonance was conducive to spreading information about the subject while also provoking a debate outside of politics about the directions of change in this area. Media popularisation brought knowledge about the problems

of people with disabilities and at least partly fostered change in the perception of the need for support of the group in question. In a way, it was a specific information campaign, probably one of the most effective when it comes to the promotion of knowledge about the life and needs of disabled people. To that extent, we note the education value of the protest, which our research has confirmed. We may then state, that the protest (by definition regarded as a conflict, a social event with a negative connotation) bore benefits not only for the protesters but also for building a civic society, which certainly connotes the construction of a social culture of inclusion.

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Special pedagogy at a crossroads. Perspectives of contemporary special pedagogy

ABSTRACT: Grażyna Dryżałowska, *Special pedagogy at a crossroads. Perspectives of contemporary special pedagogy*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 105-125. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.05>

The article is an attempt to reflect on the difficult situation in which special pedagogy was found. It is more difficult than the crisis that took place after 1989, because the fascination with the idea of normalisation and integration is gradually decreasing, and there is no new concepts for the further development of special education as a scientific sub-discipline obliged to respond to modern challenges.

KEY WORDS: special pedagogy, crisis, contemporary challenges

The crossroads mentioned in the title of the article suggests that special pedagogy is in a difficult situation. In my opinion, this situation is a result of the lack of a concept of further development of special pedagogy as a scientific sub-discipline intended to respond to today's challenges. Although special pedagogy has been subject to significant changes (under the influence of normalisation and integration postulates) including an unprecedented in the history of development of special pedagogy change in education, early sup-

port for the development of children with disabilities, scientific potential and the importance of disability issues in the sub-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary discourse. So not only did the special pedagogy make up for a theoretical 'belatedness', but it also strengthened its significance in the development of humanistic thought. However, I feel that we still face the same dilemmas. We are equally helpless when we face discrimination, marginalization, exclusion, auto-marginalization of people with disabilities from different social living spaces and causes, as in the early stages of development and evolution of special pedagogy, but that without much hope for success, without believing that we currently have some influence on limiting the problems, that the proposed changes are not the building of sandcastles, a delusion that only seduces people with disabilities. And this situation is more difficult than the crisis that has affected special pedagogy after 1989, because today we have no longer a 'good' excuse. A lot of attention was devoted to this issue by Amadeus Krause¹ and Iwona Chrzanowska².

We have no good excuse when new challenges overlap the unresolved problems, and when fascination with the idea of normalisation and integration is gradually decreasing, and the practical fulfilment of the tasks covered by it proves to be more difficult and more complicated than it was assumed in the initial period of popularisation. Also today, when actions are taken – their assessments by various social organizations, institutions, persons with disabilities and their caregivers, as well as special pedagogy specialists, are still not fully satisfactory and where the dominant ostensible nature weakens the enthusiasm for their continuation, and there are no new, equally attractive, stimulative concepts.

Civilisational changes, political system changes, the processes of globalisation and European integration, the changes in social life

¹ A. Krause, *Człowiek niepełnosprawny wobec przeobrażeń społecznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków, 2005. *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2010.

² I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2015.

have become a special opportunity to reflect on the changes in pedagogy, which after the year 1989 attempted to engage in actions to support social change and building democratic social governance; creating a 'different' pedagogy, deprived of ideology, more effectively corresponding to social expectations. Building genuine democracy, a democratic society and the model of exercising it, where the most important task, as Zbigniew Kwiecieński wrote, becomes '*action for the right of each individual to fully develop its competences, to continuously go up, and to achieve happiness, the right to live actively in social groups and to participate in decision-making processes and civic activities at each level.*'³ And this is, as he claims, the task of the entire educational system, the whole raising society and its constituents. It is a special obligation of the education.

Fifteen years earlier, Heliodor Muszyński⁴ referred these tasks to the fundamental function of education, i.e. preparing the individual for full self-realization through various areas of life and activity, among which work takes an important place, but equally important is the preparation of each individual for the fullness of life, to give his whole life a quality that meets individual needs and aspirations.

Special pedagogy as a sub-discipline of pedagogy, to the same degree as pedagogy, took up this task after 1989, This is so as Maria Grzegorzewska⁵, in formulating the special goal of special pedagogy as a social revalidation of children and youth deviated from the norm, understood it again as development, general and vocational education, socialization of the pupil and the fullest possible inclusion in social life. The subsequent stages, first of development

³ Z. Kwiecieński, *Przyszłość edukacji i pedagogiki w świecie bez przyszłości. Ratujmy naszą młodzież*, [in:] M. Dziemidowicz, B.D. Gołębniak, R. Kwaśnica (eds.), *Przetrawianie i rozwój jako niezbywalne powinności wychowania*, Wyd. Nauk. DWSE TWP, Wrocław 2005 p. 17.

⁴ H. Muszyński, *System wychowania i opieki w szkole i poza szkołą. Raport tematyczny nr. 29*, Komitet Ekspertów do spraw Edukacji Narodowej, Warszawa-Kraków 1990.

⁵ M. Grzegorzewska, *Pedagogika specjalna*, PIPS, Warszawa 1964.

in the 1950s, then the evolution of special education in the 1960s and after 1973, i.e. after the publication of the *Guidelines for the Development of Special Education and Assistance to Children with Developmental Disorders* (*Wytyczne w sprawie rozwoju kształcenia specjalnego i pomocy dzieciom z odchyleniami i zaburzeniami rozwojowymi*) by the Ministry of Education, until now, have contributed to significant changes in the education of pupils with disabilities, but have not met these expectations.

Admittedly, as Wojciech Gasik stated: The guidelines were '*an important set of findings and assumptions, which in fact determined the directions of special education in Poland for many years forward*'⁶, but their postulative and even utopian character and the way they treat special education as a margin, an 'extension' of mass education, did not cause any significant changes in the practice of special education. Only integrated education, initiated in 1989 with the establishment of the first integrated kindergarten in Warsaw, legitimised by the Act on the Education System of 7 September 1991 (as amended) and dynamically developing thereafter, resulted in a change in the concept of education of students with disabilities, departing from segregated education to the popularisation of integrated forms of education.

It also had a significant impact on the academic special pedagogy. For many years, the idea of educational integration focused the attention of special pedagogy specialists. Many problems that had been overlooked or unnoticed took on a different meaning. The research on integration, its effects on social allocation, effective strategies for including people with disabilities in mainstream social life, organisation of the teaching process of strongly differentiated groups of students in common education, changes in social attitudes towards people with different types and degrees of disability at least at the declared level, have certainly set the way for the development of special pedagogy as a sub-discipline of pedagogy.

⁶ W. Gasik, *Ewolucja edukacji specjalnej*, [in:] (ed.) A. Hulek, *Edukacja osób niepełnosprawnych*, Upowszechnianie Nauki – Oświata 'UN – O', Warszawa 1993, p. 12.

Legitimising the presence of students with special pedagogical needs in mainstream education has brought pedagogy and special pedagogy closer. However, this rapprochement was for both parties of a forced character rather than resulting from the intentional cooperation of general and special educators in order to achieve the goal of integration education: the inclusion of people with disabilities in the community of non-disabled people. Antonina Ostrowska's research (2015)⁷ is undeniable proof of this statement.

Thus, the Alexander Hulk hopes of inclusive education, the approximation of general and special pedagogy, was not fulfilled. He expressed it in the article published in 1993: 'Podstawy, stan obecny i przyszłość edukacji osób niepełnosprawnych' (The foundations, current state and the future of education for people with disabilities).

He wrote: '*Common assumptions and objectives of general and special pedagogy (...) will be brought closer, and on certain sections they will become the same, especially in solving practical tasks and through comparative studies on the education of non-disabled and disabled people*', '... although mutual relations between general and special education will represent a complex picture, the cooperation between them will grow⁸. The convergence of the two systems will be affected, on the one hand, by '*the further process of individualizing teaching in common schools (schools for all) and, on the other hand, opening special education to the environment and eliminating 'specific', objectively unjustified problems*' (pp. 39).

Meanwhile, instead of individualising the learning process, we have a curriculum and focus on specific problems and specialised assistance as a basic precondition for educating children and young people with disabilities in integration schools and public schools, including special ones.

The persistent recognition of special needs as the most important ones has reduced the common teaching to institutional inte-

⁷ Antonina Ostrowska, *Niepełnosprawni w społeczeństwie 1993-2013*, Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, Warszawa 2015.

⁸ A. Hulek, *Podstawy, stan obecny i przyszłość edukacji osób niepełnosprawnych*, [in:] (ed.) A. Hulek, *Edukacja osób niepełnosprawnych*, Upowszechnianie Nauki – Oświata UN – O', Warszawa 1993, p. 24, 39.

gration and decided on the weakness of inclusive education in achieving the objective of this form of education – their social integration (G. Szumski 2010)⁹. Ordinary schools are not, and probably still will not be schools for all. Therefore, neither the expectation placed on inclusive education and the real convergence of general and special pedagogy, nor the integration of children and young people with disabilities and the school community, and their inclusion in the community in adulthood, were fulfilled. Numerous evidence confirming this finding is easily found in the results of studies and statistics on the level of education, employment, unemployment, social allocation of persons with disabilities.

Eventually, the core curriculum and equalisation of educational opportunities for students with disabilities, focused on special needs, determined the superficiality of actions taken in this respect. This fact was repeatedly emphasized by A. Krause in his publications. While, as he states, *'activities to support people with disabilities in the traditional sense are well mastered by various sub-disciplines of special pedagogy, the effectiveness of activities promoting their integration and normalisation of the environment in which they live, also in regular school, is rather superficial, and preparing them to the functioning in a dynamically changing reality – insufficient'*.¹⁰

On the direction of the development of special education

The dynamically changing reality poses new challenges before special education. They were described in detail by A. Krause in eight chapters of his monograph published in 2005, each of them ending with a sub-chapter: Implications for special pedagogy. I will quote selected fragments from each of them.

⁹ G. Szumski, *Wokół edukacji włączającej: Efekty kształcenia uczniów z niepełno-sprawnością intelektualną w stopniu lekkim w klasach specjalnych, integracyjnych i ogólnodostępnych*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warszawa 2010.

¹⁰ A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2010, p. 79.

- *'adequate response of the theory and practice of special pedagogy to signalled changes, both positive and negative: assistance to the disabled so that despite difficult conditions (being encumbered with the disability, need for help) he or she can realize himself/herself as a person and, regardless of his/her abilities, became a productive member of communities of the disadvantaged' (p. 41)*
- *'adaptation of the support and care system for people with disabilities to the new conditions of individual functioning. (...) the style of upbringing, socialisation and revalidation of disabled people, and in particular representing the 'transmission of open and liberating the autonomy of the individual, enabling his/her as an entity, conscious participation in the process of one's own revalidation' (p. 63)*
- *'response to changes in the conditions of social functioning of a disabled person and perception of him/her in their surroundings. Such response in theoretical areas would aim at analysing the discussed processes in the context of the direction of development and tasks of special education, with particular emphasis on the threats and opportunities to which these processes contribute. Thus, by pointing out the threats and methods of counteracting them, one would expect a response from the pedagogical practice in the form of specific neutralising, protective and stimulating actions.' (p. 87)*
- *'debates on the normalisation of the community of disabled people, which have been mainly focused on school, education, work, home, partnership and leisure activities, etc., should be extended to further areas of 'equal rights' (...) it is possible to expect changes in the attitude to people with disabilities, but also understanding the person with disabilities in special pedagogy itself.' (p. 99)*
- *'In the context of transformational changes, it should therefore be assumed that the upbringing of the disabled goes far beyond the scope of tasks that were topical in the sixties and seventies, both in their content, extent and implemented forms. This means, firstly, a qualitative change in the conditions to which a disabled individual has to prepare to meet the demands of social life. (...) the concepts, theories and educational practice of the previous years must be subject to constant verification and supplementation. (...) the change in*

the content of the education process is closely related to the changes in its scope and form.' (pp. 166, 167)

- *'due to changes in the institutional system of care for the disabled and in order to change the socio-economic conditions of their lives, the manners of implementation of the function of special pedagogy must be re-examined and updated (...); the questions concern the possibility of participation of special pedagogy in the construction of a 'new' security system for persons with disabilities, that is its participation in preventive, activation, supportive, informative and educational activities, with countering the processes of marginalisation, isolation and stigmatisation at the same time. (...) the question about the real chances of special education in countering the consequences of the systemic transformation and the changes in the style of the government's care towards people with disabilities.'* (p. 184)
- *'clarification of the relationship between normalisation and integration. Integration can only precede normalisation of the community of people with disabilities in declarative and ideological form. (...) (...) its implementation as an idea is only possible after a number of standardisation conditions have been fulfilled. This is because it is illusory to believe in the success of integration processes only on the basis of the socially declared acceptance of its assumptions. (...) Integration (...) is primarily non-discrimination and non-exclusion. (...) Living in normalised surroundings opens the way to the integration process, but is not tantamount to it: at the same time, the lack of normalised surroundings rules out social inclusion. (...) two basic tasks of special pedagogy emerge. The first is to prepare people deviating from the norm, as far as possible, to new professional conditions: the second is the participation in organising a new, protective and at the same time activating employment system.'* (pp. 204, 208, 209)
- *'adaptation of special education to changes that have just been initiated, which are both a response to the post-modern and global situation, taking into account the phenomena of globalisation, individualisation, rationalisation or creation of cyberspace.'* (p. 219)¹¹

¹¹ A. Krause, *Człowiek niepełnosprawny wobec przeobrażeń społecznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2005, pp. 41, 63, 87, 99, 166, 167, 184, 204, 208, 209, 219.

They should have been in place, but they were not used by special educators, they did not even provoke discourse on these, already outlined, directions of the development of contemporary theoretical academic special pedagogy and the necessary solutions that would make their practical implementation real. They did not initiate the *'developing of a new philosophy that could define the priorities of special pedagogy for the years to come'*.¹² Also, they did not find any reflection in practical solutions: changes in the design of education goals, development of curricula and methods used in rehabilitation, improvement and education of students with various types and degrees of disability in both integrative and special forms of education. Moreover, special education, under the pressure of developing integration education, has become, for a long period of time (almost four decades), a marginal problem both in theory and in the practice of special education. I raised this problem in an article published in 2017.¹³

It seems that despite the above statements, currently the chance of bringing the above-mentioned goals of general and special pedagogy closer together is significantly greater than ever before in each of the periods of development and evolution (after World War II) of Polish special pedagogy, at least for several reasons.

First of these reasons: according to A. Krause, *'special pedagogy makes up for the theoretical backlog after a period of 'digging in' revalidation issues, looks for its scientific identity at the intersection of many disciplines, reaches for inspirations far beyond 'effective repair' of a human, breaks away from didactic and therapeutic domination. It can be said that a new special pedagogy is being created, voluntarily giving up the sweet privilege of being a hermetic 'backyard', the locality of comprehending and interpreting, holding on to a concrete thing, camouflaging the lack of competence with the specificity of disability.'*¹⁴

¹² Ibidem, p. 122.

¹³ G. Dryżałowska, *Integracja edukacyjna z innej perspektywy*, Interdyscyplinarne Konteksty Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2017, no. 16.

¹⁴ A. Krause, *Teoretyczne implikacje pedagogiki specjalnej – pedagogika krytyczna*, 'Studia Edukacyjne', 2013, no. 25, p. 8.

However, it is worth noting that special pedagogy has never explicitly stated that the correction, improvement, correction of disorders and functional limitations is not the most important objective of its influence. Important one, but limited to the auxiliary function in the process of restitution and recognition of people with disabilities, respect for human dignity, the right to autonomy and equal treatment, despite the fact that for many years the goal of rehabilitation has been changed from maximum normalisation to the normalisation obtainable in a given individual case. In the social dimension, it did not advocate the extension of the limits of 'normality' and tolerance for other ways of carrying out tasks at a certain stage and level of development of people with disabilities.

Another reason is changes in approaches, which, similarly as in pedagogy, took place in special pedagogy *'according to which basic terms were defined, theoretical concepts were described, (...) historical paradigmatic transformations, which became the foundation of changes not only in definitions and terminology in special pedagogy, but also consequently the basis of research and interpretation, the emergence of new problems not explored so far, often inconvenient, often inconvenient or even embarrassing, but aimed at unambiguous legitimisation of the issue as socially significant'*¹⁵. Yes, but ... their impact on the universal perception, meanings determining the 'habitus' of people with disabilities is still rather limited in scope, because special pedagogy still participates little in the construction of the 'new' social security system due to insufficient involvement in preventive, activating, supportive, informational, educational activities and activities to counteract processes of marginalisation, isolation and stigmatisation of people with disabilities, and has extremely little influence on the changes in the criteria of social selection.

The next and most important reason, 43.2% of school students with different types of disabilities are covered by integrative and inclusive education. Others benefit from special forms of education.

¹⁵ I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2015, p. 397.

Therefore, there is a common goal of education for general and special educators – preparation for the fullness of life – common didactic and educational problems, common responsibility for solving them and educational results, for the development of non-disabled and disabled students, for their successful and satisfying life. Low effectiveness of integrative and special forms of education in including people with disabilities in the main stream of social life points, I believe, to a lack of coherence between the objectives set and the activities undertaken – the superficial nature of activities undertaken in this respect.

Therefore, the potential for change is significantly greater than in each of the earlier development periods, the evolution of special pedagogy and general pedagogy, but a new impetus is needed for its effective use in designing and implementation of changes in special pedagogy. Bringing educators together, it broadly understood social movements and government institutions in pursuit of coherence of objectives and actions for normalisation, integration and participation in the collective life of people with disabilities.

Although the idea of integrative education has not changed substantially, the evolving social reality, new challenges, knowledge and experience show that its continuation requires new solutions, clear answers to many difficult questions including the most important one: Who the teacher is supposed to be in modern school, when 'uncle Google' took over the functions of promoting knowledge among the 'common' people (the main task of the teachers of 'old' school), while the world, in the 'global village' became available at your fingertips and when the modern days call for creativity, self-realization, self-determination and self-development, and competences enabling cooperation/interoperability in diverse, also culturally diverse, teams. When socially desirable programmes (so far neglected, although always present in school) for raising the young generation 'call', through various, unfavourable, sometimes horrific (school) events, for attention, consideration, their serious treatment and implementation. Questioning the legitimacy of emphasizing, at least in relation to selected groups of school students with disabili-

ties, of the traditionally dominant (main in school) cognitive development programme focused on equipping the students with knowledge divided into study subjects and its effective acquisition, vis-a-vis the education of the younger generation, understood as *'a conscious and deliberate pedagogical action aimed at achieving relatively stable effects (developmental changes) in the personality of the pupil'*¹⁶ in schools, also those which educate students with disabilities, is almost absent and rather delegated to parents. Thus, the school, an institution responsible for the preparation of the younger generation to undertake and responsibly fulfil the roles of adulthood considered itself released from this obligation.

And the second, equally important question, about the implications of the changes in the preparation of teachers for special education during five-year-cycle studies, intended to serve their better preparation for fulfilling the objectives of special education, but nobody exactly knows which ones. It is difficult to clearly state whether these objectives are aimed at compensation for deficits, as was assumed by M. Grzegorzewska 1964¹⁷, or the normalisation of the lives of people with disabilities as expected by A. Hulek 1977¹⁸, social integration according to Aleksandra Maciarz 1999¹⁹ and Władysław Dykcik 1997.²⁰

However, regardless of these doubts, several questions can be formulated: will the dividing of teacher training into the 3-year cycle and the 5-year cycle of study enhance the wide perception of special pedagogy as a special school pedagogy, will it emphasize

¹⁶ Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika. Podręcznik akademicki*, vol. 1, PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 22.

¹⁷ M. Grzegorzewska, *Pedagogika specjalna*, PIPS, Warszawa 1964.

¹⁸ A. Hulek, *Wspólne i swoiste zagadnienia w rewalidacji różnych grup z odchyleniami od normy*, [in:] A. Hulek (ed.), *Pedagogika rewalidacyjna*, PWN, Warszawa 1977.

¹⁹ A. Maciarz, *Z teorii i badań społecznej integracji dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 1999.

²⁰ W. Dykcik, *Problemy autonomii i integracji społecznej osób niepełnosprawnych w ich środowisku życia*, [in:] W. Dykcik (ed.), *Pedagogika specjalna*, Wyd. Nauk. UAM, Poznań 1997 b.

again the distinctness of special pedagogy, will it contribute to the re-marginalisation of disability issues in general education and consequently will it divide the community of educators into so-called integrative pedagogy specialists and special pedagogy specialists, despite this not being the purpose of these changes. What philosophy of education, education and care should constitute the basis for the curricula for training teachers for inclusive and special forms of education? What about the idea of integration in special education, what programme and based on what model of disability it should be designed?, what does this mean to the definition of the role of teacher, educator, tutor in special education, the list of necessary competences to be acquired by teachers and educators in special education centres, and inclusive forms of education. What are the implications of these changes for theory, research and practice in pedagogy and special pedagogy? This entails the question about the overriding goal of inclusive and special education, and if it is still a common goal, then there is a question how to achieve it, what conditions are to be met for responsible, effective implementation in two different situations of teaching people with disabilities.

To be answered, these questions require a reflection and a balanced decision because these answers, supported by the authority of the people who form them, decide about the changes, their scope and the consequences, the responsibility for the construction of social governance and the organisation of education of children and young people with disabilities, building an inclusive society or strengthening exclusive mechanisms, creating legal, administrative and organisational criteria according which such divisions can be/will be created.

Special pedagogy or inclusive pedagogy?

The most important thing remains, the crossroads referred to in the title of this study. The changes that have already took place in special pedagogy and those to be made in the future require

answers to the following questions: is the name of the sub-discipline of pedagogy 'special pedagogy' still adequate?, are the educational and assistance activities being undertaken still rely on it, or rather is it or does it become a specific trap that strengthens the former divisions, criteria for classification and social selection, an obstacle to the development of discipline as the science responsible for preparing disabled children, young people and adults to broadly understood social participation: shaping skills and competences to new challenges in a dynamically changing and increasingly complex reality, to undertake diverse, accessible roles and tasks assigned to them, life activities within the various groups and institutions covered by the organisation of collective life.

The last change of the discipline's name from traditional 'therapeutic pedagogy' to 'special pedagogy' took place in 1957. Probably it was related to the reissue, at that time, of the M. Grzegorzewska's textbook 'Pedagogika lecznicza' (Therapeutic Pedagogy) under the title changed title to 'Pedagogika specjalna (Special Pedagogy), and the 'special school pedagogy' reactivated by her.

Considering the evolution and current challenges of the modern world faced also by Polish special pedagogy, it seems that currently a more appropriate name would be inclusion pedagogy or inclusive pedagogy.

Inclusion and inclusive education have in recent years become extremely popular terms in special pedagogy, also in pedagogy and education studies. They are often used as synonyms of inclusive education (cf. Szumski, 2010, 2011).²¹

Inclusion, according to Rozalia Ligus (2012, p. 319), *'not only does it take into account disabled adults and children, but also undertakes the challenge of expanding public space for the benefit of real rather than os-*

²¹ G. Szumski, *Wokół edukacji włączającej: Efekty kształcenia uczniów z niepełnościami intelektualną w stopniu lekkim w klasach specjalnych, integracyjnych i ogólnodostępnych*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej, Warszawa 2010; Szumski G. (2011), *Teoretyczne implikacje koncepcji edukacji włączającej*, [in:] Z. Gajdzica (ed.), *Uczeń z niepełnościami w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, Sosnowiec: Oficyna Wydawnicza *umanitas'*.

tensible exercise of human rights, which applies to broadly understood cultural, ethnic and social diversity'²². The need to include these latter problems in the field of special education was postulated by A. Hulek as early as in 1993, although, at that time, the problem of migrants was not as common as it is today.

Inclusive education, in its beginnings, was a revolutionary project, a project of fundamental paradigmatic change. Hopes were pinned on it for deep reconstruction of schools and education, its transformation so as to reflect and represent diverse identities in the entire school surroundings. Speaking in Roger Slee's words, inclusive education is becoming a field of cultural politics aimed at social reconstruction.²³

However, this did not happen in Poland. Inclusive education has become established only as a synonym of integrated education, reduced to a modified organisation of education of disabled students, acceptance for the presence of individual cases in every school and public class without any social reconstruction R. Slee wrote about.²⁴ It also failed to meet the hope for the reconstruction of schools and education. It did not contribute to the development of new, more effective instruments for 'equalising educational opportunities' of this group of students, e.g. solutions regarding flexibility of curricula, time of education, manners and methods of supporting and making the process of social acceptance more dynamic, and ultimately the social inclusion of disabled people both during education and afterwards in adulthood.

Therefore, the core curriculum and IPET (individual educational and therapeutic programme), are still applicable, as they do in in-

²² R. Ligus, *Pedagogika inkluzji i zarządzanie piętnem – znaczenia, interpretacje, praktyki*, [in:] P. Rudnicki, M. Starnawski i M. Nowak-Dziemianowicz (ed.), *Władza, sens, działanie: studia wokół związków ideologii i edukacji*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej, Wrocław 2012, p. 319.

²³ R. Slee, *The Inclusion Paradox. The Cultural Politics of Difference*, [in:] M.W. Apple, W. Au, L.A. Gandin (eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Critical Education*, Routledge, London–New York 2009, p. 180.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

clusive education. Which means that we are still teaching all students the same, according to the same curricula, with the same standards for assessing their educational progress and in the same time frame. Those who have outstanding potential, those with medium cognitive development potential, and those who fall into the category of weak students, students at risk or students experiencing educational failures. The effects of such action are, as a rule, predictable. *'As long as the class or school, according to A. Hulk, work in accordance with the rule that all students should learn the same, at the same time and under the same conditions, the obstacle to integration will not be the student's characteristics, but the functioning of the school'*.²⁵ Therefore, not only did inclusive education fail to fulfil its task, but also, ignoring, as it seems, its own idea, failed to undertake it in a responsible manner.

The idea of equal social participation of various groups, included in the concept of inclusion, suggests considering changing the name 'special pedagogy' to 'pedagogy of inclusion' proposed by R. Ligus²⁶ (2012, p. 319). It seems that after 62 years, the time has come for a change. The argument here is *'the directions of changes in which special pedagogy should engage'* specified by A. Krause²⁷ and his deliberations on the need to change contemporary paradigms in the field of terminology, diagnosis, social arrangements on disability and knowledge of people with disabilities built on their basis. This includes changes in the integrative paradigm, which he reduces cautiously to *'disseminating consent to the coexistence of non-disabled and disabled people'*, which he explains as an unequivocal taking of

²⁵ A. Hulek, *Podstawy, stan obecny i przyszłość edukacji osób niepełnosprawnych*, [in:] (ed.) A. Hulek, *Edukacja osób niepełnosprawnych*, Upowszechnianie Nauki - Oświata 'UN - O', Warszawa 1993, p. 34.

²⁶ R. Ligus, *Pedagogika inkluzji i zarządzanie piętnem - znaczenia, interpretacje, praktyki*, [in:] P. Rudnicki, M. Starnawski i M. Nowak-Dziemianowicz (red.), *Władza, sens, działanie: studia wokół związków ideologii i edukacji*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej, Wrocław 2012, p. 319.

²⁷ A. Krause, *Człowiek niepełnosprawny wobec przeobrażeń społecznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2005, p. 221.

*'a position on specific empirical, but also theoretical or even ideological-and-philosophical consequences (and) means adopting the concept of integration as consent to the coexistence of a diverse, equal community whose members are interconnected and have specific responsibilities one to another'*²⁸. He also points out, referring to Józef Sowa and Franciszek Wojciechowski, to *'the need to develop a leading philosophy that could set priorities for action in the years to come'*²⁹ (as cited in: A. Krause, 2005 p. 222). A philosophy based on recognition of the natural rights of the human person and strict, objective ethical criteria.

An additional and perhaps even the main argument is the humanisation of social life, in which *'the entity's subjectivity, its right to self-development and self-determination, respect for human rights have gained particular significance, and the process of individualisation has initiated change in objective living conditions and above all attitudes and the manner how individuals think of their own lives, including thinking about their own fate by people who are not fully capable and now better educated owing to the dissemination of integrative forms of education, an more conscious of their rights and ready to enforce them.'*³⁰ Claiming for their own place in the social space.

The inclusion takes up the challenge of widening the public space for the real, not ostensible, exercise of human rights. So it seems to meet expectations to designate and support further directions of development: the evolution of special pedagogy.

There is a need for change because, as stated by A. Krause *'The universal scope of integration is not supported by direct contacts in the natural surroundings and the elimination of the distance of otherness seems to be small. (...) It is illusory to believe in the success of integration processes only on the basis of the socially declared acceptance of its as-*

²⁸ A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2010, p. 154.

²⁹ A. Krause, *Człowiek niepełnosprawny wobec przeobrażeń społecznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2005, p. 222.

³⁰ G. Dryżałowska, Dryżałowska G., *(Nie)konieczne zmiany w pedagogice specjalnej*. Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny 2013, no. 4(230), p. 7/8.

*sumptions*³¹. I think that the special pedagogy's responsible reaction to the old, still unsolved problems and these new challenges of the modern world without the transformation of the discipline itself is also illusory. The very complexity of the problems of special education, the contexts and the criteria of social governance in which they are taken poses a difficulty here. It is a vast knowledge, a new experience, incomparable to that of the 1950s or even the 1990s. It requires a different systematisation, including new classification criteria. Such attempts are already visible in the still applicable special education handbook edited by W. Dykcik³² and very clearly visible in the latest I. Chrzanowska's book³³, and also in journals issued by leading universities in Poland 'Niepełnosprawność. Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej' (Disability, Discourses of Special Pedagogy) of WUG, 'Interdyscyplinarne Konteksty Pedagogiki Specjalnej' (Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy) of WUAM, 'Człowiek Niepełnosprawność Społeczeństwo' (Man. Disability. Society) of APS and such publishing series as: 'Miejsce Innego we współczesnych naukach o wychowaniu' (The place of the Different in modern sciences on education) or earlier 'Roczniki Pedagogiki Specjalnej' (Special Pedagogy Yearbooks).

The change of name would, perhaps, be a new impetus capable of effectively using the current potential of special education to engage in activities supporting social change and building a democratic social order and creating a 'new' pedagogy, more effectively responding to the social expectations of disabled children, young people and adults, including their carers.

The decision on whether, when, how and what name will be adopted will affect the new concept, academic and practical, of spe-

³¹ A. Krause, *Człowiek niepełnosprawny wobec przeobrażeń społecznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2005, p. 206.

³² W. Dykcik, *Problemy autonomii i integracji społecznej osób niepełnosprawnych w ich środowisku życia*, [in:] W. Dykcik (ed.), *Pedagogika specjalna*, Wyd. Nauk. UAM, Poznań 1997.

³³ I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Impuls', Kraków 2015.

cial pedagogy: the theories, research, methods, diagnosis of needs, developmental and functional problems, forms of education, but also solutions supporting employment of people with disabilities. Solutions that will be in force in the future decades.

I believe that a kind of decision is urgently needed so that from an uncertain position at the crossroads of dilemmas, both academic and practical special education can choose the right paths of development to better serve disabled people, diagnosis of their needs, various assistance programmes and, above all, its practical dimension: the organisation of education and the ways of 'equalising educational opportunities' of disabled students because they critically affect or may affect the social allocation of people with disabilities. They will largely influence the vision and models of education of children and youth with disabilities, the system of care and support delegated to socially weaker units, their participation in social life and the level of social integration or marginalisation, exclusion, alienation; and finally, the evaluation of activities aimed at the implementation of the basic and unchangeable goal of special pedagogy, including the contemporary one. The question remains: is special education ready for such a change?

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Inclusive education in the opinion of the teachers from special pre-schools, regarding the chances of success of the inclusive actions towards particular groups of students, education participants, and teachers' seniority

ABSTRACT: Iwona Chrzanowska, *Inclusive education in the opinion of the teachers from special pre-schools, regarding the chances of success of the inclusive actions towards particular groups of students, education participants, and teachers' seniority*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 127-149. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.06>

Within the context of the implementation of the inclusive education model, it seems important to learn the opinions of the teachers, particularly those teachers that are experienced in working with a child/student with a disability, regarding the chances of success of inclusive actions, both in the context of the type, and the level of severity of the developmental disorder, the hazard of the developmental disorder, as well as, regarding the remaining participants of inclusive education, i.e. students without or with special educational needs, however, displaying certain aptitudes. The text focuses on the teacher from the pre-school level of education, as well as, refers to the determination of their attitudes towards the realisation of the model of inclusive education, as related to their seniority.

KEY WORDS: Inclusive education, special educational needs, seniority of pre-school education teachers

Introduction

Change seems to have been the most essential slogan dedicated to education in Poland, for quite some time. We are talking about the changes in the education system, however, including those related to the implementation of inclusive education as well. The necessity of introducing the idea of inclusive education is a direct effect of Poland's obligations, related, e.g. with adopting the *Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (Konwencja o prawach osób niepełnosprawnych)*, ratified in 2012¹. However, the issue with implementing changes is, that at least a part of them does not seem to be well planned, or discussed with its main recipients. Therefore, they cause concern and, at times, objections. Bogusław Śliwerski, while writing about educational policies, indicates the lack of the democratisation of Polish education, that has lasted in the process of centralisation and of monopolisation of solutions for years².

Additionally, in the case of the title issue of the inclusive education, for the success of the actions in this area, it is essential, whether the conditions for the realisation of the idea were created on the system level.

Inclusive education, as a postulate of changes in the educational system, is the effect of a process which is still in motion, and focuses on the change of the approach towards disability, including the education of persons with disabilities, and with special educational needs. Additionally, the matter of special educational needs, the awareness that they may vary depending on the developmental and real-life situation of the child/student, has been present in the inquiries of theoreticians and practitioners, at least since the 1970s³. In

¹ *Konwencja o prawach osób niepełnosprawnych*, Dz.U. RP z 25 października 2012 r., poz. 1169, www.isap.sejm.gov.pl [access: 15 February 2019].

² B. Śliwerski, *Edukacja (w) polityce. Polityka (w) edukacji. Inspiracje do badań polityki oświatowej*, OW Impuls, Kraków 2015, p. 26.

³ M. Warnock, *Special Educational Needs. Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education of Handicapped Children and Young People*, London: HMSO 1978.

turn, since the half of the 1990s, due to the arrangements made in the *Salamanca Statement for Action and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*⁴, regarding to the directives in the area of special educational needs, a process has begun, dedicated to the prevention of educational exclusion, which, in short, led to the ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in 2006⁵. The actions were made possible due to discarding the medical model of disability for the sake of constituting a social model. The aforementioned changed not only the way of defining the key terms within the matter, in order to reduce stigmatisation, but, primarily, to identify the needs, and to support, educate, and realise the social roles of persons, i.a. with disabilities. Formally, in Poland, the trend has begun, i.a. in the educational practice, however, a moment later, since the half of the 1990s⁶. Even later on, the education of staff at the level of higher education began to answer the needs in this area.

The project of own research

The research results, presented here, are a part of a broader project dedicated to the opinions of teachers from various educational establishments, and from various phases of education, regarding the inclusive education.

⁴ *Deklaracja z Salamanki oraz wytyczne dla działań w zakresie specjalnych potrzeb edukacyjnych*, UNESCO 1994 <https://rownosc.info/.../deklaracja-z-salamanki-oraz-wytyczne-dla-d...> [access: 8.02.2019].

⁵ *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, United Nations New York: United Nations 2006, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml> [access: 20.02.2019].

⁶ E.g. The 4 October 1993 MEN Regulation No. 29 on the rules of care regarding students with disabilities, their education in mainstream and integrated public pre-schools, schools and establishments, as well as, establishments special education, Journal of Laws No. 19, pos 167 (Zarządzenie Nr 29 MEN z dn. 4 października 1993 r. w sprawie zasad organizowania opieki nad uczniami niepełnosprawnymi, ich kształcenia w ogólnodostępnych i integracyjnych publicznych przedszkolach, szkołach i placówkach oraz organizacji kształcenia specjalnego, Dz.U. No. 19, pos. 167).

The aims of the project presented here are as follows:

1. to learn the attitudes and the opinions of the teachers on varying levels of seniority, from special pre-schools, regarding the benefits resulting from inclusive education for the generalised groups of the participants of the process of education, i.e. children: without special needs, and with special needs, however, displaying certain aptitudes;
2. to identify, whether essential statistical differences exist in the opinions of teachers, determined by their seniority, regarding the chances of the success of the inclusive actions for twelve homogeneous groups of children with disorders and development disruptions: intellectual disability, hearing-impaired, deaf, blind, with autism, with the Asperger syndrome, with a physical disability, a multiple disability, communication disorders, as well as, with a chronic condition.

The selection of the control group – among the teachers from special pre-schools -within the context of the considerations regarding inclusive education, can be substantiated.

First – it results from the experience of the teachers of special establishments, regarding the cooperation with a child/student with a disability. Teachers from establishments of different kinds, e.g. integrated and mainstream ones, possess no such experience. In combination with the second argument – larger, at least in the formal sense, competencies regarding the profiled education regarding special pedagogy (the formal requirement for the employment in a particular type of an educational establishment)⁷, one may assume that the teachers from special establishments possess a more comprehensive knowledge regarding the needs and educational capabilities of this group of children/students, than the mainstream establishments' teachers, which is confirmed by the analyses per-

⁷ The 1 March 2019 regulation of the Minister of National Education, changing the regulation regarding detailed qualifications required from the teachers, Journal of Laws - 11 March 2019, pos. 465. (Rozporządzenie Ministra Edukacji Narodowej z dnia 1 marca 2019 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie w sprawie szczegółowych kwalifikacji wymaganych od nauczycieli, Dz. U. z dnia 11 marca 2019 r., poz. 465.)

formed, i.a. by Zenon Gajdzica⁸, or Grzegorz Szumski⁹. Therefore, knowing their opinions may help in recognising the necessary areas of supporting the child/student, and its launch as soon as possible (an argument for the realisation of research among the group of pre-school education teachers), in order to optimise the chances of success of the actions.

Another determinant is, as it seems, related to the scepticism in the evaluation of inclusive education as a systemic solution, in education of children/students with disabilities, and special educational needs; scepticism that is higher in comparison to teachers from other educational establishments¹⁰. Meanwhile, one of the rational determinants of the success of every action, especially performed on a macro-scale, is the consent regarding its reasonableness, its benefits, an agreement and cooperation in striving to overcome the possible barriers, that must always be taken into account, the capabilities of children/students, as well as, the conditions, the assets of educational establishments, and, often, the environmental conditions of their functioning. There is an additional, significant reason for learning the special pre-school teachers' opinions, regarding the chances of success of the inclusive education for students with disabilities, or special educational needs – it is a specific “mapping” of the fields of necessary support for children/students with disabilities, as well as, for their parents, and the teachers, already at the initial phase of educational actions, for the purpose of realising, with success, a finalised process of educational inclusion, and the collective

⁸ Z. Gajdzica, *Opinie nauczycieli szkół ogólnodostępnych na temat edukacji włączającej uczniów z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym w kontekście toczącej się reformy kształcenia specjalnego*, [w:] *Uczeń z niepełnosprawnością w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, red. Z. Gajdzica, OW „Humanitas”, Sosnowiec 2011.

⁹ G. Szumski, *Wokół edukacji włączającej. Efekty kształcenia uczniów z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w stopniu lekkim w klasach specjalnych, integracyjnych i ogólnodostępnych*, współpraca A. Firkowska-Mankiewicz, Wydawnictwo APS, Warszawa 2010.

¹⁰ I. Chrzanowska, *Nauczyciele o szansach i barierach edukacji włączającej*, PWN, Warszawa 2019, p. 129 and further.

education of students within the inclusive classroom/school space. Additionally, it is worth referring directly to why it is worth, or even necessary recognising the attitudes, beliefs or opinions of teachers regarding inclusive education in regard to children/students with disabilities. In order to show, that it is not based on the author's belief, one may recall the constatation of, e.g. Zenon Gajdzica, who indicates that "at the level of implementation (of the idea - ed.), the most important element determining the efficiency of the designed changes is the teachers. It is their involvement and beliefs, that decide on the eventual success, and the manifested opposition explicitly impedes, or even prevent the effective implementation of reforms"¹¹.

The teachers' seniority was included among the essential variables of the performed analyses. It seems essential to recognise this determinant, i.a. within the context of the aforementioned essential changes that, in recent years, have become the basis for recommending and implementing the solution which is inclusive education. The commitment of the *Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (Konwencja o prawach osób niepełnosprawnych)*, ratified in 2012, obligates to undertake decisive and efficient actions related to creating conditions for the realisations of the inclusive policies, also in the educational sector, which indubitably, is an effect of the paradigmatic change in the approach towards disability¹².

It would be incorrect to infer, that teachers with lower seniority do, whereas the teachers with higher seniority do not, possess an awareness of the change of the theoretical model of the inquiries regarding disability, or special educational needs; as one should remember, that teaching is among professions that require continuous supplementation and expansion of competencies, as well as,

¹¹ Z. Gajdzica, *Opinie nauczycieli szkół ogólnodostępnych na temat edukacji włączającej uczniów z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym w kontekście toczącej się reformy kształcenia specjalnego*, [w:] *Uczeń z niepełnosprawnością w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, (ed.) Z. Gajdzica, OW „Humanitas”, Sosnowiec 2011, p. 60.

¹² A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*, OW Impuls, Kraków 2010.

acquisition and update of knowledge. Additionally, one should remember about the determinants of the attitudes, among which the scholars list: knowledge, sex, age, cultural influence, as well as, the influence of the basic social groups¹³. In accordance with the established knowledge, within the context of identifying the determinants of shaping opinions, beliefs, or attitudes, one must refer to three key components: behavioural, affective, and cognitive¹⁴.

No doubt, that which differentiates both groups of teachers participating in the research, is age and experience, probably larger among persons that have remained in their profession longer.

The determinants listed above allow to pose a thesis regarding a possible diversity of attitudes towards the idea of inclusive education, among teachers, depending on their seniority. Within the context of the inquiries posed here, it is essential to realise that the attitudes and beliefs regarding inclusive education regarding children with disabilities, manifested by special pre-school teachers depending on their seniority, are worth identifying. In the case of teachers with a shorter work time, it is a determinant of a potential, perennial perspective of shaping the reality of the realisation of the idea of joint education. In the case of the more experienced teachers (with longer seniority) - it is essential from the viewpoint of the support of inclusive education.

Two research instruments were used. The first one, a proprietary questionnaire, referred to the opinions of teachers regarding, whether they find inclusive education to be a beneficial educational solution for all the participants of the process of education, therefore, the children/students: able ones; with special educational needs resulting from developmental disorders and disruptions; with special educational needs - but gifted. The examined could check

¹³T. Mądrzycki, *Psychologiczne prawidłowości kształtowania się postaw*, WSiP, Warszawa 1997.

¹⁴S. Mika, *Psychologia społeczna*, PWN, Warszawa 1987; T. Mądrzycki, *Psychologiczne prawidłowości kształtowania się postaw*, WSiP, Warszawa 1997; L.R. Aiken, *Attitudes and Related Psychosocial Constructs. Theories, Assessment and Research*, Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, London-New Delhi 2002.

one of the three answers: yes, no, I do not know/I do not have an opinion. The inference in this area was based structure indicators. The second instrument was dedicated, in an expanded way, to the students with developmental disorders and disruptions, in inclusive education. Twelve homogeneous groups were distinguished, and among them, children/students with: mild intellectual disability, moderate and severe intellectual disability, hearing-impaired, deaf, visually-impaired, blind, with autism, with the Asperger syndrome, with physical disability, with multiple disabilities, with communication disorders, and with chronic conditions, regarding to which, the examined were tasked to express their own opinions regarding the chances of success of the inclusive education. The answers were set on a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 meant - very high chances of the success of the actions, 4 - high chances, 3 - moderate, 2 - low chances, 1 - no chances of success of inclusive actions.

127 special pre-school teachers participated in the research, mostly from the areas of the Voivodeships: the Greater Poland Voivodeship, the Masovian Voivodeship, the Łódź Voivodeship, and the Lower Silesia Voivodeship. The rather unusual division of seniority groups into teachers with 10 or less years of experience, and teachers with more than 10 years of experience, demands an explanation. In reality, one could present it in quite a different configuration: teachers with 10 or less years of experience, and teachers with more than 20 years of experience, as these two groups definitely prevailed among the examined, selected, what is essential, randomly (after expressing their consent regarding the participation in the research). The first option was chosen in order to present the opinions of all the teachers participating in the research, among which c. 94.5% were women.

It turns out that in the analyses performed on a much larger scale, such distribution of seniority was not surprising. Scholars indicate, that the age profile of the teachers is an increasingly severe issue in education, surely not in Poland only. The results of the data gathered from 25 EU countries, show that almost in a number of countries, the prevalent number of teachers are of pre-retirement

age, or are soon to receive privileges in that aspect. Therefore, in numerous educational systems, on many positions, teachers are already replaced by the representatives of similar professions, realising various roles at schools¹⁵. Obviously, an issue appears, regarding their preparation for working with students, but also another, more significant of an axionormative nature. It is of particular importance regarding pedagogues/teachers who work at special establishments, i.e. with children/students with severe developmental disorders. As indicated by Piotr Plichta, who refers to the analyses of Debra W. Emery and Brian Vandenberg¹⁶ the special teacher-pedagogue profession is a specific risk profession. It is unique, as the situations which the pedagogues-teachers face at work, are unique as well. The professional contact with unique persons, complex issues, atypical behaviour, and coexisting dysfunctions, is such a rare experience, that the persons who perform this type of work seem to experience a certain kind of isolation, or decide to isolate by themselves. In certain situations, as indicated by Plichta, "at times it is really difficult to answer the question: How's work?"¹⁷. It seems, that special pedagogues-teachers still arouse interest with their "specific" profession. Despite the increasing presence of the issues of disability within the social areas, many, including teachers, have not encountered students with disabilities at work, and, with high probability, with a student with a severe or complex disability. Therefore, the special pedagogues carry an exceptional responsibility for both their professions, but, primarily, for the persons they work with. For only through the promotion of a positive image of a person with a disability, it is possible to increase his/her chances of participating in the social life. The spe-

¹⁵ European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, *Kształcenie nauczycieli przygotowujące do edukacji włączającej w Europie – Wyzwania i szanse*, EAREU ze SPE, Odense, Dania 2011, p. 76.

¹⁶ D.W. Emery, B. Vandenberg (2010) after: P. Plichta, *Wypalenie zawodowe i poczucie sensu życia pedagogów specjalnych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza ATUT – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2015, p. 26.

¹⁷ P. Plichta, *Wypalenie zawodowe i poczucie sensu życia pedagogów specjalnych*, OW ATUT – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, Wrocław 2015, p. 26.

cifics of this profession lie in its interdisciplinary nature. It is not solely a didactic work with a student, but also a continuous work on own competencies, as the student most often requires constant support, complex rehabilitation, working on social inclusion for the normalisation of own life situation. Many times, it is related to the necessity of supporting the family and the environment, working or the cooperation with specialists. This sketchy characteristic already indicates, that in order to responsibly and efficiently cooperate with a child/student with a disability in the process of education, a number of high end extant competencies are required, including, particularly, the personal competencies related to a specified system of values and strong inner motivation.

Additionally, one should realise that currently, it generally applies to all teachers, as the theory of inclusive education assumes, that in mainstream schools, the presence of students with developmental disorders will be even higher than until recently. There is one conclusion – the best graduates should be recruited for the teacher-pedagogue profession, only the best candidates should be admitted to universities, and the main indicator should not be the sum of points of high-school examination, but also other competencies. The aforementioned occurs in certain countries. Few, as they are the most wealthy, as it requires excellent work conditions.

In the majority of cases, the issues that the countries face during recruitment, education and staying within the profession of the staff, are similar. They are reduced to a constatation, that the teacher's profession should rebuild its status and social respect, bringing back the image of a pedagogue as the leading intellectual, and not simply a "provider of someone else's ideas". Anne Moran indicates, that teachers who concentrate solely on the methods of teaching and the standards of education, without involving in social and moral issues of their time, reinforce the „impaired“ image of a teacher, and their profession¹⁸.

¹⁸ A. Moran, *Can a competence or standards model facilitate an inclusive approach to teacher education?* „International Journal of Inclusive Education“, 13(1), pp. 58-59, 45-61.

The specific deprecation of the teacher-pedagogues profession results partially and paradoxically from the enrolment rate increase. In 1990, it was 9,8%, to reach 40,9% in 2009¹⁹. The trend, initiated in the 1990s, related to the ability of gaining higher education beyond public universities, resulted in a dynamic increase of the number of universities in Poland. According to the data of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyzszego - MNiSW), of 2009/2010, there were more than 450 (457) universities at the time, with 326 private ones. In comparison, in 1992/1993 there were 124 universities, including 18 private ones. Pedagogy was the third degree, in terms of popularity, chosen by c. 12% of students. Pedagogy was present at 17 Universities, 6 Pedagogical Higher Education Schools, as well as, at Universities of Technology (e.g. the Koszalin Institute of Technology, or the Radom Institute of Technology)²⁰. As a degree, it was held at 97 higher-education schools (i.a. The Schools of: Economy, Trade, Mercantile, Security, Strategical Planning)²¹. Special pedagogy was less popular, at the time it was present at 10 higher education schools (amounting to a 3,1%). This way, a large amount of pedagogues appeared on the market, including many teachers, and not everyone could find employment in accordance with their education. Of course, there were bright sides about this, regarding the interest of the educational establishments, as truly one could choose the best candidate. A different question is, what happens within the area of the competencies of the pedagogical degrees' graduates during such a dynamic increase in the interest in this degree, resulting - from staff shortages (of academic teachers) - in the increase of the number of class groups, not to mention the lectures, which were often held for several-hundred groups.

¹⁹ *Szkolnictwo wyższe w Polsce*, Ministerstwo Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyzszego, Warszawa 2013, p. 6.

²⁰ <http://mmkoszalin.eu/artukul/nowy-kierunek-pedagogika-na-politechnice-koszalinskiej-180164.html>; <http://www.uczelnie.info.pl/index.php?mod=uczelnie&pokaz=288>

²¹ (<http://www.nauka.gov.pl/szkolnictwo-wyzsze/system-szkolnictwa-wyzszego/uczelnie/uczelnie-niepubliczne/wykaz-uczelni-niepublicznych/>)

Currently, a different issue of teacher education in Poland is the decreasing number of students, related to the population decline. Since 2006/2007 the number of students in Poland has dwindled systematically²². The MNiSW data indicate, that the decrease will last at least until 2025, and in 2034 it will reach a level comparable to that from 2016/2017 (c. 1 million 480 thousand).²³ Additionally the analyses indicate that a systematically decreasing number of candidates will apply for pedagogical degrees. In the 2007-2011 period, their number decreased by 2,8%, and it was the third greatest decrease among educational subgroups (following: defence and security, and economy and administration)²⁴.

Within the context of the previous thesis, regarding the necessity of recruiting for the degree and to recruit the best candidates and graduates to the profession, it is worth noting, that among the 19 most popular degrees chosen by the winners of the high-school contests in the academic year 2012/2013, pedagogy was not present²⁵.

Research results, discussion

Within the context of the first aim of the research – identifying the opinion and beliefs determined by the seniority of the special pre-school teachers, regarding whether inclusive education is a beneficial solution for all groups of children/students, the participants of the process – one may indicate, that in reference to all groups, teachers with lower seniority, are a larger group that perceives inclusive education as a beneficial solution.

In the case of children/students without special needs, 76,5% teachers from the pre-school education phase, from special establishments, with seniority of 10 or less years, and 67% of teachers

²² *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2014 r.*, Warszawa, GUS 2015, p. 26.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

²⁴ *Szkolnictwo wyższe... 2013*, p. 17.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

with more than 10 years, acknowledge, that inclusive education is a good solution. However, simultaneously, twice as many teachers with higher seniority, perceive this theory as unfavourable to the student (respectively: 11: 11,8% – teachers with 10 or less years, and 22,4% teachers with more than 10 years of experience). Almost equinumerous groups of examined are unable to formulate an explicit opinion on the matter. A slightly larger difference of opinion, can be observed in the results of the research regarding the same issue, but within the context of gifted students. 76,5 of teachers participating in the study, with 10 or less years of experience, and 60,5% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience, evaluate the proposition of joint education positively, regarding the benefits that the gifted student may gain. The differentiation of opposing opinions is even more explicit than in the case of the previous group, respectively: 11,8% – teachers with a seniority of 10 or less years, and almost $\frac{1}{4}$ of the seniority group above 10 years.

Table 1. The opinions of special pre-school teachers regarding the educational opportunities of particular student groups in inclusive education, and the seniority (values given in %)

Seniority	Child in inclusive education								
	Child without special needs			Child with SEN (except a gifted child)			Child with SEN - gifted child		
	Y	N	IDK	Y	N	IDK	Y	N	IDK
10 or less years (Y=51)	76,5	11,8	11,7	76,4	11,8	11,8	76,5	11,7	11,8
More than 10 years (N=76)	67,1	22,4	10,5	38,2	60,5	1,3	60,5	26,3	13,2

Description: Y – yes (inclusive education is a good solution for the child); N – no (inclusive education is not a good solution for the child); IDK – I don't know, I don't have an opinion (whether inclusive education is a good solution for the child)

The largest differentiation, however, is related to the education within the framework of inclusive education of children/students with special needs, endangered with or displaying development disorder. In the case of the teachers from the first seniority group,

the benefits for the student are noted by 76,4% of the teachers, with only 38,2% of the teachers that are more experienced. Additionally, the teachers of higher seniority, are exceptionally explicit in their opinions. Only a bit over 1% of the teachers could not form a clear opinion between *yes* and *no* for inclusive education for students with special educational needs, endangered or displaying developmental disorders and disruptions. More than 60% of special pre-school teachers is against inclusive education regarding this group of children/students.

One should remember, that in accordance with the letter of law, among the children/students with special educational needs, there are also those that have severe disabilities, and multiple disabilities. More experienced teachers (more than 10 years) seem to say a clear *no* to the "total" inclusive education, regardless of the type, and particularly, the level of disability.

A confirmation of the fact may be found in the case of the analysis of the results of the research related to the opinions of teacher regarding the educational opportunities within the framework of common learning for particular groups of students with developmental disorders and disruptions, determined by their seniority.

First, one should notice, that the teachers with 10 or less seniority, see opportunities in inclusive education as very high, however, solely in reference to children/students with physical disability. The six following groups: with mild intellectual disability, hearing-impaired, visually-impaired, with the Asperger syndrome, with communication disorders, and with chronic conditions - as high, while the remaining five groups, including: with moderate and severe disability, deaf, blind, with autism and with multiple disability - as low. The lowest results were achieved in reference to children/students with moderate and severe intellectual disability and students with autism.

The opinions of teachers with higher seniority present differently. First of all, no group was evaluated as very high. Eight groups were indicated by teachers with more than 10 years of experience, as having high chances of success of the inclusive actions. These include

children/students: with mild intellectual disability, hearing-impaired, visually-impaired, with autism, with the Asperger syndrome, with physical disability, with multiple disability, and with a chronic condition. The chances of the remaining four groups were evaluated as low. The highest score, indicating the highest opportunities within the framework of inclusive education (adequately to the range of average results) was noted in the case of students with a chronic condition, the lowest in the case of students with moderate and severe intellectual disability.

Looking at the range of results, one may assume that the opinions of teachers from both groups are similar. Teachers of lower seniority

Table 2. The opinions of special pre-school education teachers regarding the chances of success of inclusive actions regarding various groups of children/students with developmental disabilities and disruptions, and the seniority

	Seniority 10 or less years (N=51)		Seniority more than 10 years (N=76)		Student's <i>t</i> -test	p.i
	M	S	M	S		
Mild intellectual disability	3,65	0,88	3,0	1,22	3,283	0,001
Moderate and severe intellectual disability	2,53	0,89	1,89	1,06	3,232	0,001
Hearing-impaired	3,65	0,74	3,29	0,62	2,687	0,01
Deaf	2,88	0,65	2,13	0,86	4,808	0,001
Visually-impaired	3,49	0,75	3,13	0,55	2,835	0,01
Blind	2,65	0,88	2,41	0,93	1,319	n.is
Autism	2,53	0,7	3,2	0,97	-3,851	0,001
Asperger syndrome	3,22	0,8	3,87	1,02	-3,476	0,001
Physical disabilities	4,22	0,64	3,87	0,94	2,108	0,05
Multiples disability	2,77	1,06	2,89	1,33	-0,489	n.is
Communication disability	3,14	0,86	3,04	1,18	0,472	n.is
Chronic condition	3,55	0,91	3,95	0,99	-2,094	0,05

Description: the explanations regarding the interpretation of the results: results in the 1-1,99 range - no chances of success in inclusive education regarding the given group of students, 2-2,99 - low chances, 3-3,99 - high chances, 4-5 - very high chances; M - Arithmetic Mean; S - Standard Deviation

evaluated the chances of one group as very high, which was not present in the other group. However, it was the more experienced teachers who selected more groups of children/students as having low chances, than the teachers with lower seniority (respectively: 4 and 5 groups).

Only the comparison of the study results reveals that there appear, and in the majority of cases are significant, differences in the opinions among the examined teachers. These relate to children/students: with mild intellectual disability, with moderate and severe intellectual disability, hearing-impaired, deaf, visually-impaired, and with physical disability - in these cases the teachers with lower seniority are more optimistic in foreseeing the chance of success of the inclusive actions. In reference to the three remaining groups of children/students: with autism, with the Asperger syndrome and with a chronic condition, it is the teachers with higher seniority that seem to see the chances of these groups of children/students with special educational needs in inclusive education, as higher. There are no statistically significant differences, meaning both groups agree in the case of the evaluation of the chances of the children/students: blind, with multiple disability and with communication disorders. Generally, one should also highlight, that the higher consistency of opinions can be seen between teachers with lower seniority, the standard deviation in reference to nine out of twelve groups of children/students is lower, than in the case of the teachers from the other group.

Summary

- Special pre-school teachers with 10 or less years of seniority seem to see more chances in inclusive education, than the more professionally experienced teachers.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ (c. 75%) of the examined teachers working for 10 or less years, assume that inclusive education is a beneficial solution for every group of students: without special needs, with special

needs endangered with, or displaying developmental disorders and disruptions, as well as, students with special needs that display aptitudes.

- Teachers with higher seniority are more sceptical to each of the listed groups. The smallest differences are associated with the students without special needs. Only less than 10% percent of teachers with higher seniority, than those of the lower seniority, evaluate the inclusive education as a beneficial solution for this group of students. In the case of the remaining two, the increased scepticism of the teachers with higher seniority is already clearly visible, particularly in reference to the students with special needs endangered with, or displaying developmental disorders and disruptions. Only 38% of the examined special pre-school teachers (within this seniority group) find inclusive education to be a beneficial solution for schooling children/students with developmental disorders and disruptions.
- A detailed analysis in reference to the distinguished groups of students with special needs, displaying developmental disorders confirms their higher scepticism related to the expectation, that the participation in common education is an opportunity for the child/student.
- In the case of six groups of students, it is the lower seniority teachers who assume the chances of students as higher (that applying to persons: with mild intellectual disability, moderate and severe intellectual disability, hearing-impaired, deaf, visually-impaired, with physical disorders), in three cases the higher seniority teachers are more optimistic (that applying to persons: with autism, with the Asperger syndrome, and with a chronic condition), while in the remaining three groups, the examined teachers' opinions do not differ significantly.

There are too few reports regarding research that would focus on the spectrum analysed here, and in reference to the special pre-school teachers and their seniority. Most often, within the context of inclusive education, the mainstream establishments teachers' opin-

ions, attitudes and beliefs were recognised. An overview of such research can be found, e.g. in a publication by Beata Cytowska²⁶. Searching for explanations for the increased scepticism of teachers with seniority higher in comparison with the second group, one may think that it might result from the lack of faith in actual changes, after the announcements of their implementation. For many years, the educational sector has been underfunded. In comparison with the requirements and the professional strain the wages and the expenditures in support of the student and the teacher are low. In comparison to international studies, the Polish teachers have an average lower feeling of being supported in their professional development, that also being related to their own costs of professional training²⁷. A range of modifications introduced in education, within the context of inclusion, starting with the creation of classes and integrated units, did not meet the expectations. At least a part of the children/students with developmental disorders and disruptions, after some time at integrated and inclusive establishments, still return to special schools. The aforementioned is supported by research results, e.g. Institute of Educational Research (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych - IBE) 2014 study indicating that there is an outflow of children, with opinions regarding the necessity of special schooling, from mainstream and integrated schools, to special schools²⁸. The parents change the schooling establishment of their child as well, and that being already during the pre-school education. Among the most common reasons are, e.g. the establishment not being adjusted to the needs of the child (19,9%), the lack of support for the children and his/her poor relations with the peers (10,9%)²⁹.

²⁶ B. Cytowska, *Przegląd badań empirycznych nad inkluzją w edukacji*, „Problemy Edukacji, Rehabilitacji i Socjalizacji Osób Niepełnosprawnych” 22/1, 2016, pp. 189-213.

²⁷ K. Hernik, K. Malinowska, R. Piwowarski, J. Przewłocka, M. Smak, A. Wichrowski, *Polscy nauczyciele i dyrektorzy na tle międzynarodowym. Główne wyniki badania TALIS 2013*, IBE, Warszawa 2014, p. 27.

²⁸ P. Grzelak, P. Kubicki, M. Orłowska, *Realizacja badania ścieżek edukacyjnych niepełnosprawnych dzieci, uczniów i absolwentów. Raport końcowy*, IBE, Warszawa 2014.

²⁹ P. Grzelak et al., 2014, p. 42.

One may assume, that during a longer period of time working within the profession, the teachers face such situations more often than if they had remained at their position for less time. Additionally the prolonged period of working in the profession, gives teachers the opportunity to observe the trends, subsequent "ideas" to cope with marginalisation, educational exclusion, e.g. due to the fact of disability. If they are inconspicuous, if little changes despite the announcements and promises – one shouldn't wonder at the scepticism of the teachers.

One may also consider, whether the difference in the attitudes of the special pre-school teachers should be explained e.g. by the professional burnout phenomenon. The results of Piotr Plichta's studies show that the level of the emotional exhaustion of special pedagogues grows along with their seniority, similar as the feeling of achievement. In the case of depersonalisation, the lowest rates occur in cases of special teachers-pedagogues with the highest seniority, while the highest occur among teachers with the middle-range seniority³⁰. Therefore, maybe the special teachers and pedagogues with higher seniority perform a certain transfer of own experiences, which may be of significance for their own opinions and attitudes regarding inclusive education and its realisation although mainly, the teachers from mainstream establishments will be more prone to them. Within the context of emotional exhaustion, growing with every year of own work, special teachers and pedagogues may fear that the teachers from mainstream establishments will be much more prone to it. The aforementioned may be supported by the fact that, as indicated by the studies' results – the teachers from mainstream schools believe that their competencies are low, insufficient for working with a student with a disability³¹. Therefore, the feeling of competency will not "protect" the inclusive establishments'

³⁰ Seniority groups in P. Plichta's study: 8 years or less, 8 years to 21 years, and more than 21 lat, P. Plichta, 2015, pp. 116-117.

³¹ E.g. G. Szumski 2010, Z. Gajdzica 2011, M. Chodkowska, Z. Kazanowski, *Socjopedagogiczne konteksty postaw nauczycieli wobec edukacji integracyjnej*, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2007.

teachers in the case of the feeling of achievement. It may also further the depersonalisation of students. Of course that is, to a large degree, speculation. Other explanations of the least beneficial study results among the special pre-school teachers with higher seniority, regarding inclusive education. Within the context of inclusive education, one should assume two solutions. First – the success of the idea, causing that all children will be able to educate themselves successfully, in a pre-school/school that is in the closest proximity of their home, most often meaning a mainstream school, regardless of whether they experience or do not experience disabilities/special educational needs, which in time would result in shutting down integrated and special educational establishments. The second solution – the fiasco of the idea and, as a result, remaining with the current solution – the existence of various types of pre-schools/schools, including those dedicated to children/students with a particular type, or even a particular degree of disability. In the first case, shutting down special schools is a potential threat of unemployment to the teacher, particularly when the potential systemic proposals for this professional group are unknown. If, and how many teachers of current special current establishments will find employment in mainstream schools, and at what position? What will be their professional status? Teachers with higher seniority may perceive it as a threat to their own professional stability. The experience of the still unfavourable situation of a student with disability in the social environment, including the educational one, and resulting from social attitudes, the lack of understanding, and the lack of acceptance for being different, may also be significant for the scepticism of the teachers with higher seniority. The very fact of the appearance of an idea of common education, provides evidence that the issue of the marginalisation of persons with disabilities is noticed, however, there are still numerous stereotypes associated with disabilities and with the persons that experience them. From this perspective – the slow change of attitude – the teachers from special schools may fear, that the student, in result of common education in a mainstream school, may experience antipathy from his peers, and even isolation,

or rejection. The scientific studies in this area, clearly indicate such a threat³².

The study results confirmed the differentiated opinions of the examined special pre-school teachers of varying levels of seniority, regarding inclusive education, within the presented context. Additionally, it seems that the analyses should be expanded with profound studies of their causes, at least these mentioned above. Unfortunately, it was not accomplished in the presented project, and maybe they would aid us in explaining the varying attitudes, therefore, diagnosing the necessary areas of support both for the child/student, and the teacher in the process of education.

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³² E.g.: M. Chodkowska, *Problemy pedagogicznego wsparcia uczniów z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w zakresie społecznego funkcjonowania w klasie szkolnej*, in: *Wsparcie społeczne w rehabilitacji i resocjalizacji*, (ed.) Z. Palak, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2004; K. Ćwirynkało, M. Wójcik, *Integracja osób pełno- i niepełnosprawnych a postawy nauczycieli wobec integracji*, w: *Integracja osób niepełnosprawnych w edukacji i integracjach społecznych*, (eds.) Z. Kazanowski, D. Osik-Chudowolska, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2003; A. Maciarz, *Integracja edukacyjna w świetle doświadczeń i oczekiwań dzieci niepełnosprawnych*, in: *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w ekosystemie*, (eds.) W. Pilecka, A. Ozga, P. Kurtek, Wydawnictwo AŚ, Kielce 2005; A. Maciarz, *Stosunki społeczne między uczniami pełnosprawnymi i upośledzonymi umysłowo*, w: *Wychowanie, kształcenie i przygotowanie do życia dzieci upośledzonych umysłowo. Materiały z konferencji naukowej (Kraków 16-17 maja 1984)*, (eds.) J. Baran, J. Pilecki, Wydawnictwo WSP, Kraków 1985.

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The teachers' self-efficacy and its importance for inclusive education

ABSTRACT: Zuzanna Narkun, *The teachers' self-efficacy and its importance for inclusive education*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 151-176. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.07>

The aim of this article was to describe the teachers' self-efficacy, self-efficacy for the purpose of inclusive practices, and to show its importance for the development of inclusion. Issues related to the self-efficacy of teachers (the definitions, the sources of self-efficacy, and the measurement of teachers' self-efficacy) have been described. The resulting findings of the research on teachers' self-efficacy, its antecedents and consequences have been presented. Moreover, connections between self-efficacy and effective implementation of inclusion have been discussed.

KEY WORDS: self-efficacy, inclusive education, teacher, students with special educational needs

Introduction

The teachers' self-efficacy, has been an issue examined by scholars since the 1970s. At that time, Albert Bandura, the founder of the social and cognitive theory, characterised the construct of the self-efficacy, and described it in the article titled *Self-efficacy: Toward*

a *Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change*¹. During a similar period, the American non-profit organisation called *Research And Development (RAND)*, dedicated to conducting scientific research, i.a. within the area of education, drawing from the works of Julian Rotter, supplemented their questionnaire for teacher, with two sentences regarding the self-efficacy. The teacher's self-efficacy, is his belief regarding to what degree he is able to affect the behaviour and the school achievements of students, including those displaying various difficulties². In the course of a several dozen years of research regarding the teachers' self efficacy, it was demonstrated, that it remains in correlation with numerous variables, such as vocational stress, or satisfaction drawn from work³. The teachers that display stronger self-efficacy, are more involved in the process of teaching, and, as a result, their students achieve better scholarly results⁴.

The analyses of the self-efficacy of the Polish teachers, are scarce⁵. The self-efficacy of the teachers within inclusive education, which is an increasingly discussed issue among foreign scholars⁶, is

¹ A. Bandura, *Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change*, "Psychological Review" 1977, 84, pp. 191-215.

² A.I. Friedman, E. Kass, *Teacher Self-efficacy: a classroom-organization conceptualization*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2002, 18, pp. 675-686.

³ G.V. Caprara, C. Barbaranelli, L. Borgogni, P. Steca, *Efficacy beliefs as determinants of teachers' job satisfaction*, "Journal of Educational Psychology" 2003, 95, pp. 821-832; E.M. Skaalvik, S. Skaalvik, *Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations*, "Teacher and Teacher Education" 2010, 26, pp. 1059-1069.

⁴ C.K. Herman, J. Rosa-Hickmon, M. W. Reinke, *Empirically Derived Profiles of Teacher Stress, Burnout, Self-Efficacy and Coping Associated Student Outcomes*, "Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions" 2018, 20, pp. 90-100.

⁵ Ł. Baka, *Skala poczucia własnej skuteczności nauczycieli-psychometryczne właściwości polskiej wersji narzędzia*, „Medycyna Pracy” 2017, 6, pp. 743-754; M. Chomczyńska-Rubacha, K. Rubacha, *Test poczucia skuteczności. Podręcznik pracowni narzędzi badawczych Komitetu Nauk Pedagogicznych PAN*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, Toruń 2016; E. Kulawska, *Poczucie własnej skuteczności nauczycieli edukacji wczesnoszkolne*, „Forum Pedagogiczne” 2017, 2, pp. 237-251.

⁶ O.P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, J. Xu, *Beijing in-service teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2012, 28, pp. 526-534; H. Savolainen, P. Engelbrecht, M. Nel, O.P. Malinen, *Understanding*

absent within Polish research. The following article aims at characterising the self-efficacy of the teachers, and explaining, why it is of such importance for the effective implementation of inclusive education in educational practice. Next, we shall discuss the determinants of a teacher's self-efficacy within inclusive education, as well as, its consequence for the effects of education, i.e. the scholarly achievements of the students.

The self-efficacy

The self-efficacy may be understood as a belief of a person, regarding their capability of performing a particular task⁷. The belief, in a sense of a cognitive process, is the basis of taking action, including that, the circumstances of which are unknown, or considered as stressful to the individual⁸.

By presenting the social and cognitive theory of personality, the understanding of the construct of the self-efficacy will be more profound, as this is the original source of the term. The social and cognitive theory of personality (previously defined as the social learning theory), with its leading representative Albert Bandura, assumes, that man acquires skills by means of modelling, i.e. observation of other people⁹. Observational learning may occur due to four constitutive processes: attention, retention, motor initiation,

teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusive education: implications for pre-service and in-service teacher education, "European Journal of Special Needs Education" 2012, 27, pp. 51-68; A. Yada, H. Savolainen, H., *Japanese in-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and self-efficacy for inclusive practices*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2017, 64, pp. 222-229.

⁷ A. Bandura, *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2015.

⁸ J. Strelau, D. Doliński (red.), *Psychologia. Podręcznik akademicki*, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2008, Volume 1, pp. 712-716.

⁹ L.A. Pervin, O.P. John, *Osobowość. Teoria i badania*, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2001, pp. 467-527.

and motivation¹⁰. The observation of a given behaviour may be initiated, only if a person turns its attention to it. The process does not take into account solely the quality of the observed situation (e.g. its clarity, or incidence), but also the features of the observer himself (his abilities, his attitude). An individual would be unable to recreate a given activity, if not for the initiation of the processes of memorising, which allow the retention, in memory, of the patterns of behaviour in an imaginary or verbal manner. Apart from creating symbolic representations, exercise and repetition of the given actions are also of importance, allowing to perpetuate the aforementioned. Another factor, being a component of modelling, is the motor initiation, i.e. the process of transferring the remembered pattern into an actual action. Apart for the previously shaped symbolic representations, for the final model of behaviour to take shape, the individual requires corrective activities, acquired by means of self-observation, or coming from external factors (feedback). However, a person will not initiate an observed action, if deprived of sufficient motivation. Moreover, the person will be more eager to realise types of behaviour, that will yield particular benefits¹¹.

The key premise of the social and cognitive theory is the analysis of the behaviour through the viewpoint of reciprocal determinism. Reciprocal determinism assumes, that the actions of people should be examined, while considering a number of factors that affect each other mutually, i.e. cognitive, environmental, and those related to the behaviour itself. Each of these determinants affects the others in some way. Therefore, Bandura discarded the previous theories, that treated behaviour solely as a result of the interaction between the personal features of a person, and the situation, in which the person found himself/herself. It is worth noting, that the cognitive factors within the reciprocal determinism theory, are taken

¹⁰ A. Bandura, *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2015.

¹¹ A. Bandura, *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2015.

dynamically and encompass the human personality, i.e. the structure of his „I”, and the expectations regarding own efficacy¹².

Bandura clearly differentiated between the expectations regarding efficacy, from the expectations regarding the result of a given behaviour, positive or negative, estimated by the individual¹³. The division has become a subject of critique. It is claimed, that the expectations regarding a result are essential for initiating a particular action. Moreover, if a person believes, that they can accomplish a certain action, then surely they must expect a positive result¹⁴. Bandura tackled these arguments, demonstrating, that often, certain factors that influence the accomplishment of a task, remain partially or entirely beyond the control of an individual. The behaviour of a given person will be estimated better, by the judgements regarding own efficacy, rather than the expectations of a result of behaviour. However, they are not equivalent to initiating action – if a person is assured of its negative result, despite the high self-efficacy, the action will not be taken¹⁵.

The self-efficacy affects such aspects of human functioning as emotions, thinking, and acting¹⁶. Additionally, one may state, that the self-efficacy does not remain without any influence regarding the motivational sphere of an individual. A person with a higher self-efficacy is more mobilised to take action, and puts more effort into it, in comparison with a person of a low self-efficacy. The individuals characterised by lower self-efficacy will be inclined to a lesser

¹² S.C. Hall, G. Lindzey, J.B. Campbell, *Teorie osobowości*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2008, pp. 572-607.

¹³ A. Bandura, *Teoria spotecznego uczenia się*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2015.

¹⁴ L.A. Pervin, O.P. John, *Osobowość. Teoria i badania*, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2001, pp. 467-527.

¹⁵ P.K. Oleś, *Wprowadzenie do psychologii osobowości*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Scholar”, Warszawa 2003, pp. 210-216; L.A. Pervin, O.P. John, *Osobowość. Teoria i badania*, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2001, pp. 467-527.

¹⁶ L.A. Pervin, O.P. John, *Osobowość. Teoria i badania*, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2001, pp. 467-527.

involvement in the actions undertaken, much earlier frustration with failures, as well as, displaying higher degrees of fear and stress. Based on the judgements regarding self-efficacy, a person establishes aims, that they are willing to achieve. One may assume, that a person with a high self-efficacy may choose more ambitious aims, than a person with a low self-efficacy¹⁷.

As self-efficacy is not a general feature, natural to man, but various, depending on the area of the human functioning, one may speak of a teachers' self-efficacy.

The teachers' self-efficacy

There are two types of approach in the understanding of the self-efficacy: the RAND organisation approach, based on the works of Julian Rotter, and Bandura's approach. Within the first approach regarding the self-efficacy of teachers, self efficacy is perceived as a two-dimensional construct, which includes a general, and a personal self-efficacy. The general self-efficacy of the teacher refers to his beliefs regarding to what degree, generally, the teachers are capable of influencing students, considering the factor that are beyond their, and the school's control (e.g. the house environment of the student). However, personal self-efficacy consists of the teacher's beliefs regarding his own capabilities of affecting the process of learning¹⁸. Bandura considers the self-efficacy, as a certain subtype of the self-efficacy¹⁹. The definition by Thomas Guskey and Perry Passaro, fits the approach, started by Bandura, well, as they defined the teacher's self efficacy, as a belief regarding how much he can

¹⁷ P.K. Oleś, *Wprowadzenie do psychologii osobowości*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe „Scholar”, Warszawa 2003, pp. 210-216; L.A. Pervin, O.P. John, *Osobowość. Teoria i badania*, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2001, pp. 467-527.

¹⁸ J.A. Ross, *The impact of an in-service to promote cooperative learning on the stability of teacher efficacy*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 1994, 10, pp. 381-394.

¹⁹ A. Bandura, *Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change*, "Psychological Review" 1977, 84, pp. 191-215.

influence the school achievements of a student, even the student who is demotivated, or displays certain difficulties in the educational process²⁰.

The self-efficacy is considered to be a multi-dimensional construct that encompasses such aspects of efficacy as: classroom management efficacy, teaching efficacy, efficacy in motivating and encouraging students, efficacy in cooperating with other specialists and parents²¹.

Bandura saw the sources of the self-efficacy in four factors, i.e. mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional/physiological states²². These factors, in reference to the person of a teacher, are presented in table no. 1.

Table 1. The sources of teacher's self-efficacy

The sources of self-efficacy	Characteristics
Mastery Experiences	The successes and failures of the person as a teacher, his professional experience. It is especially important in regard to teachers with long experience.
Vicarious Experiences	Observing other teachers during work, e.g. inspections, student practices.
Verbal Persuasion	Information regarding the teacher's abilities, provided by other persons, e.g. "You will be a great teacher. You know how to maintain the group".
Emotional/Physiological States	The observation of the organism's reaction, in stressful situations.

Source: own research.

²⁰ T.R. Guskey, P.D. Passaro, *Teacher efficacy: A study of construct dimensions*, "American Educational Research Journal" 1994, 31, pp. 627-643.

²¹ O.P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, J. Xu, J. *Beijing in-service teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2012, 28, pp. 526-534.

²² A. Bandura, *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2015.

The most important factor for the forming of self-efficacy are the mastery experiences, that refer to the personal experiences within an area of a particular action. However, the correlation may be referred to the pedagogues with long experience. In terms of younger teachers, who do not possess significant experience in professional practice, the remaining factors will play a much more important role, i.e. vicarious experiences, acquired via inspections, or student practices, as well as, verbal persuasion as information coming from other sources, e.g. the school principal²³. Therefore, it is constantly important, to provide the candidates for the teaching profession, as well as, young teachers, as many models worth imitating, as possible, e.g. by allowing them to realise work practice in establishments with highly qualified staff. Comparative research conducted in Japan and Finland, regarding the teachers' self efficacy in inclusive education, and its sources, show, that it is the mastery experiences that are its strongest predictor²⁴. It was also noticed, that the influence level of the remaining sources, varied in both countries. Verbal persuasion correlated negatively with the self-efficacy of the Japanese teachers, and the emotional/physical states were much more significant for the efficacy of the Finnish pedagogues. The aforementioned demonstrates, that analysing self-efficacy and its sources, one must consider the cultural context. The expectation of own efficacy, emphasising on the personal beliefs of a person regarding the beliefs about their capabilities in accomplishing a task, is closely tied to individualistic cultures, where the independence of an individual is highlighted. However, Bandura thought, that self-efficacy is equally important in collectivist cultures, as even there, a person

²³ M. Tschannen-Moran, A.Woolfolk Hoy, *The differential antecedents of self-efficacy beliefs of novice and experienced teachers*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2007, 23, pp. 944-956.

²⁴ A. Yada, A. Tolvanen, O.P. Malinen, K. Imai-Matsumura, H. Shimada, R. Koike, H. Savolainen, *Teachers' self-efficacy and the sources of efficacy: A cross-cultural investigation in Japan and Finland*, "Teacher and Teacher Education" 2019, 81, pp. 13-24.

doesn't lose their personal beliefs²⁵. Klassen²⁶, while conducting an overview of self-efficacy among people in various countries, notes that the persons from individualistic cultures evaluate their self-efficacy higher than the persons from collectivist cultures. What is interesting, is that the persons from collectivist cultures, despite evaluating their self-efficacy lower, they do it more adequately to their actually possessed capabilities. Fulgini²⁷, while conducting research about the education of the children of immigrants, demonstrated that Americans of Japanese descent have evaluated their self-efficacy lower than Americans of European descent, however, they were the ones who were more successful in school evaluation.

It was demonstrated, that the self-efficacy of a teacher, during the first year of his work, is unstable and subject to manipulation. The research conducted by Woolfolk Hoy and Burke Spero²⁸, demonstrated directly the increase in self-efficacy of the respondents during the pedagogical studies, and its decrease following the first year of work as a teacher. The scholars explain the phenomenon somewhat as a "clash with reality". The initial optimism decreases, when it comes to face the actual role and the tasks that come with it.

A teacher's self-efficacy works like feedback. A teacher with a high self-efficacy will be more involved in the process of teaching students, therefore, he will be more effective. The student's successes, in turn, will contribute to the level of the teacher's self-efficacy, but also the student's²⁹. The interdependence highlights the im-

²⁵ A. Bandura, *Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change*, "Psychological Review" 1977, 84, pp. 191-215.

²⁶ R.M. Klassen, *Optimism and realism: A review of self-efficacy from a cross-cultural perspective*, "International Journal of Psychology" 2004, 39, pp. 205-230.

²⁷ A.J. Fulgini, *The academic achievement of adolescents from immigrant families: The roles of family background, attitudes, and behavior*, "Child Development" 1997, 68, pp. 351-363.

²⁸ A. Woolfolk Hoy, R. Burke Spero, *Changes in teacher efficacy during the early years of teaching: A comparison of four measures*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2005, 21, pp. 343-356.

²⁹ M. Tschannen-Moran, A. Woolfolk Hoy, W.K. Hoy, *Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure*, "Review of Educational Research" 1998, 68, pp. 202-248.

portance of the teacher's beliefs regarding his efficacy. Not only knowledge regarding methodology, and the theory of teaching, are the decisive factors that determine the work of the teacher, its effects. His belief in the efficacy of his teaching is also of significance. While the studies' curricula aim at equipping the future students with the appropriate knowledge regarding pedagogy, the support of self-efficacy, as an element of preparing them for the profession, seems to be an omitted area.

In recent years, in response to various trends regarding the education of persons with special educational needs, analyses are being conducted, regarding the self-efficacy of teachers within inclusive education³⁰. The self-efficacy of a teacher in inclusive education, may be perceived as his belief, regarding his capabilities of teaching in an inclusive classroom, of being able to deal with difficult behaviour, and of the possibility of cooperation with other teachers, specialists, and parents. A teacher, who displays low self-efficacy within inclusive education, will be convinced, that he is unable to teach in a varied group of students, including persons with special educational needs, and various difficulties³¹. Additionally, one must pay attention the the previously mentioned differentiation between the expectations regarding efficacy, and the result of the action. A teacher may possess high self-efficacy regarding teaching students with disabilities, and at the same time, assume that the process of their education will be ineffective. The aforementioned comes from the fact, that a number of factors appear, that cannot be

³⁰ O.P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, J. Xu, *Beijing in-service teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2012, 28, pp. 526-534; H. Savolainen, P. Engelbrecht, M. Nel, O.P. Malinen, *Understanding teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusive education: implications for pre-service and in-service teacher education*, "European Journal of Special Needs Education" 2012, 27, pp. 51-68; A. Yada, H. Savolainen, *Japanese in-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and self-efficacy for inclusive practices*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2017, 64, pp. 222-229.

³¹ U. Sharma, T. Loreman, Ch. Forlin, *Measuring teacher efficacy to implement inclusive practices*, "Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs" 2011, 12, pp. 12-21.

controlled entirely, e.g. access to specialist means, or the attitude of able-bodied students.

The next section of the text will contain approximate determinants and consequences of self-efficacy of teachers in inclusive education. In a situation, where such analyses, *stricte* dedicated to the self-efficacy in inclusive education, have not yet been conducted, studies regarding the self-efficacy of teachers in general will be presented. Inquiries will be undertaken, regarding, how the results of this research can be referred to working in a diverse classroom.

Self-efficacy of teachers in inclusive education: its determinants and consequences

The teacher's self-efficacy remains in a relation with various variables, that play an important role in the process of teaching, as proven in numerous empirical studies, and theoretical analyses³². As already mentioned, one may also note an increasing number of studies regarding self-efficacy in inclusive education³³.

The factors related to the self-efficacy of a teacher, can be divided into two groups. The first group refers to the variables related to the teacher himself, therefore, the determinants of his self-efficacy, both personal (i.a. the attitudes towards inclusive education, work experience, experience in working with students with disabilities), and supra-personal, mostly related to the preparation for working

³² R.M. Klassen, V.M.C. Tze, S.M. Betts, K.A. Gordon, *Teacher efficacy research 1998-2009: Signs of Progress or unfulfilled promise?*, "Educational Psychology Review" 2011, 23, pp. 21-43; M. Zee, Y.M.H. Koomen, *Teacher Self-Efficacy and Its Effects on Classroom Processes, Student Academic Adjustment, and Teacher Well-Being: A Synthesis of 40 Years of Research*, "Review of Educational Research" 2016, 86, pp. 981-1015.

³³ C. Forlin, U. Sharma, T. Loreman, *Predictors of improved teaching efficacy following basic training for inclusion in Hong Kong*, "International Journal of Inclusive Education" 2014, 18, pp. 718-730; A. Yada, A. Tolvanen, H. Savolainen, *Teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy on implementing inclusive education in Japan and Finland: A comparative study using multi-group structural equation modelling*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2018, 75, pp. 343-355.

with students with special educational needs. The other area, are the consequences of self-efficacy – the results of education, here, taken as students' school achievements.

Inclusive education is currently one of the priorities of the educational policies in the entire world³⁴. Attitudes regarding the non-segregated education of students is one of the key factors of implementing the idea of inclusion to the educational practice³⁵. The Meijer and Foster³⁶ research shows, that the teachers with high self-efficacy, more often than the teachers with low self-efficacy, think, that an ordinary classroom is an appropriate educational space for both children with, or without disabilities. The correlation was confirmed by Soodak and Podell³⁷, in the analyses conducted among New York leading and special teachers, as well as, by Weisel and Dror³⁸, on a control group of Israeli teachers. The analyses in this area were conducted also while *stricte* examining the self-efficacy of the teachers in the inclusive education. Savolainen et al.³⁹ have demonstrated, that the teachers with a higher self-efficacy in inclusive education, are more inclined towards the non-segregated education of students with special educational needs. This correlation was confirmed by Malinen et al.⁴⁰, as well as, Yada and Savo-

³⁴ M. Ainscow, M. César, *Inclusive education ten years after Salamanca: Setting the Agenda*, "European Journal of Psychology of Education" 2006, 21, pp. 231-238.

³⁵ B. Norwich, *The relationship between attitudes to the integration of children with special educational needs and wider socio-political views: a US-English comparison*, "European Journal of Special Needs Education" 1994, 9, pp. 91-106.

³⁶ C.J.W. Meijer, S.F. Foster, *The effect of teacher self-efficacy on referral change*, "Journal of Special Education" 1988, 22, pp. 378-385.

³⁷ L.C. Soodak, D.M. Podell, *Teacher efficacy and student problem as factors in special education referral*, "Journal of Special Education" 1993, 27, pp. 66-81.

³⁸ A. Weisel, O. Dror, *School climate, sense of efficacy and Israeli teachers' attitudes toward inclusion of students with special needs*, "Education, Citizenship and Social Justice" 2006, 1, pp. 157-174.

³⁹ H. Savolainen, P. Engelbrecht, M. Nel, O.P. Malinen, *Understanding teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusive education: implications for pre-service and in-service teacher education*, "European Journal of Special Needs Education" 2012, 27, pp. 51-68.

⁴⁰ O. P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, J. Xu, J., *Beijing in-service teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2012, 28, pp. 526-534.

lainen⁴¹, in their research. As was already highlighted, self efficacy affects human thinking, emotions, and action⁴². These areas, transfer respectively to the aspects of attitudes: cognitive, affective and behavioural⁴³. Therefore, one may assume, that a teacher's high self-efficacy, implies his positive attitude to the common education of children with disabilities and without them, and not the other way around⁴⁴.

The mastery experiences are the most important of factors that shape self-efficacy. However, one should remember, that not only master experience will form the high self-efficacy⁴⁵. Teachers with longer experience are characterised by higher self efficacy in inclusive education⁴⁶. However, this correlation is not always observed. The positive relation of the self-efficacy in inclusive education, and work experience, was revealed in a control group of Japanese and Chinese teachers, however, it was not observed among the teachers from Finland or South Africa⁴⁷. It seems that these discrepancies

⁴¹ A. Yada, H. Savolainen, H., *Japanese in-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and self-efficacy for inclusive practices*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2017, 64, pp. 222-229.

⁴² L. A. Pervin, O. P. John, *Osobowość. Teoria i badania*, Wydawnictwo UJ, Kraków 2001, pp. 467-527.

⁴³ B. Wojciszke, *Człowiek wśród ludzi*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2009, p. 181.

⁴⁴ O.P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, J. Xu, J., *Beijing in-service teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education* "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2012, 28, pp. 526-534.

⁴⁵ A. Bandura, *Teoria społecznego uczenia się*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2015.

⁴⁶ A. Yada, A. Tolvanen, H. Savolainen, *Teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy on implementing inclusive education in Japan and Finland: A comparative study using multi-group structural equation modelling*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2018, 75, pp. 343-355.

⁴⁷ O.P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, P. Engelbrecht, J. Xu, M. Nel, N. Nel, D. Tlale, *Exploring teacher self-efficacy for inclusive practices in three diverse countries*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2013, 33, pp. 34-44; A. Yada, A. Tolvanen, H. Savolainen, *Teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy on implementing inclusive education in Japan and Finland: A comparative study using multi-group structural equation modelling*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2018, 75, pp. 343-355.

may be caused by cultural differences. In countries such as Japan or China, elders, people with more experience, are given more respect, and that may explain, why the self-efficacy increases accordingly to work experience⁴⁸.

Such experiences of working with students with disabilities, positively affect the level of self-efficacy in inclusive education. The research conducted by Yada et al.⁴⁹, demonstrated that the teachers, who declared higher experience in working with students with disabilities, at the same time, displayed a higher level of self-efficacy in inclusive education. The correlation is also confirmed by the research performed among teachers from Finland, China and South Africa, where the experiences of teaching children with disabilities, functioned as the most significant predictor of own self-efficacy in inclusive education⁵⁰.

A variable, positively correlating with the teachers' self efficacy, is their preparation for working with students with special educational needs. Forlin and his associates⁵¹, demonstrated that, after completing a course on inclusive education, the self-efficacy of the teachers in inclusive education increased. Therefore, including the contents regarding the education of persons with disabilities in educational curricula of the future teachers, is necessary and important, not only of the obvious reason of equipping them with knowledge

⁴⁸ A. Yada, A. Tolvanen, H. Savolainen, *Teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy on implementing inclusive education in Japan and Finland: A comparative study using multi-group structural equation modelling*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2018, 75, pp. 343-355.

⁴⁹ A. Yada, A. Tolvanen, H. Savolainen, *Teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy on implementing inclusive education in Japan and Finland: A comparative study using multi-group structural equation modelling*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2018, 75, pp. 343-355.

⁵⁰ P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, P. Engelbrecht, J. Xu, M. Nel, N. Nel, D. Tlale, *Exploring teacher self-efficacy for inclusive practices in three diverse countries*, "Teaching and Teacher Education" 2013, 33, pp. 34-44.

⁵¹ C. Forlin, U. Sharma, T. Loreman, *Predictors of improved teaching efficacy following basic training for inclusion in Hong Kong*, "International Journal of Inclusive Education" 2014, 18, pp. 718-730.

on the subject matter. The information regarding inclusive education in academic curricula, may also aid the formation of a high self-efficacy of teachers working in inclusive classrooms.

The experienced stress, related to the work, that, when experienced in long-term, may lead to professional burnout, is one of the issues, which the teachers must tackle⁵². The negative relation between professional burnout, and self efficacy, is indicated by Brown⁵³ in his overview article, and by the meta-analysis of Aloe and associates⁵⁴. Schwarzer and Hallum⁵⁵, demonstrated, that the teachers with lower self-efficacy are more prone to the experience of professional stress and, in consequence, to the professional burnout. The analyses conducted by Skaalvik and Skaalvik⁵⁶, demonstrate that the self-efficacy remains in relation to the symptoms of a professional burnout: depersonalisation and emotional exhaustion. The analyses, using the method of structural equations, conducted on a group of 2249 Norwegian teachers, revealed that both the emotional exhaustion, as well as, depersonalisation, are negatively correlated with self-efficacy. Additionally, the study revealed, that the self-efficacy is positively correlated with the satisfaction drawn from work. The negative relation of the professional breakdown and self-efficacy is also indicated by the research presented by Evers, Brouwerse and Tomic⁵⁷, conducted among Dutch teachers from secondary schools.

⁵² H.K. Jennett, S.L. Harris, G.B. Mesibov, *Commitment to philosophy, teacher efficacy, and burnout among teachers of children with autism*, "Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders" 2003, 33, pp. 583-593.

⁵³ C.G. Brown, *A systematic review of the relationship between self-efficacy and burnout in teachers*, "Educational and Child Psychology" 2012, 29, pp. 47-63.

⁵⁴ A.M. Aloe, L.C. Amo, M.E. Shanahan, *Classroom management self-efficacy and burnout: A multivariate meta-analysis*, "Educational Psychology Review" 2014, 26, pp. 101-126.

⁵⁵ R. Schwarzer, S. Hallum, *Perceived teacher self-efficacy as a predictor of job stress and burnout: Mediation analyses*, "Applied Psychology" 2008, 57, pp. 152-171.

⁵⁶ E.M. Skaalvik, S. Skaalvik, *Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations*, "Teacher and Teacher Education" 2010, 26, pp. 1059-1069.

⁵⁷ A. Brouwers, W. Tomic, *A longitudinal study of teacher burnout and perceived self-efficacy in classroom management*, "Teacher and Teacher Education" 2002, 16, pp. 239-253.

The positive correlation between satisfaction drawn from work and self-efficacy was demonstrated in the analyses conducted among Italian teachers, by Caprara and associates⁵⁸. What is worth mentioning, Malinen and Savolainen⁵⁹, in a longitudinal study of the teachers from Finland, demonstrated that the self efficacy, and being able to deal with difficult behaviour (one of the aspects of self-efficacy in inclusive education) was a predictor of both the professional burnout, as well as, satisfaction drawn from work.

Studies dedicated to the stress at work, and satisfaction drawn from work, were referring to the self-efficacy of the teacher in general, and not self-efficacy in inclusive education. However, a decision was made to include the results of these studies, as the analysed factors are essential, within the context of accomplishing inclusive practices. One may assume, that the stress associated with work in an inclusive classroom is higher than in a classroom without the student with special educational needs. This may constitute a high-risk factor regarding the professional burnout. Additionally, achieving high satisfaction, while working in an inclusive classroom, may prove difficult. Students with intellectual disabilities, or autism-spectrum disorders, due to their limitations, are often unable to meet certain requirements, which in turn may negatively affect the feeling of satisfaction for the teacher. Moreover, the OECD (*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*) report demonstrates, that the teachers who have students with behavioural problems in their classroom, display a lower level of satisfaction drawn from work⁶⁰.

⁵⁸ G.V. Caprara, C. Barbaranelli, P. Steca, P.S. Malone, *Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level*, "Journal of School Psychology" 2006, 44, pp. 473-490; G.V. Caprara, C. Barbaranelli, L. Borgogni, P. Steca, *Efficacy beliefs as determinants of teachers' job satisfaction*, "Journal of Educational Psychology" 2003, 95, pp. 821-832.

⁵⁹ O.P. Malinen, H. Savolainen, *The effect of perceived school climate and teacher efficacy in behavior management on job satisfaction and burnout: A longitudinal study*, "Teacher and Teacher Education" 2016, 60, pp. 144-152.

⁶⁰ OECD, *Talis 2013 results: An international perspective on teaching and learning*, OECD Publishing, Paryż 2014.

Considering the described relations between self-efficacy, stress, professional burnout, and work satisfaction, one may assume, that self-efficacy in inclusive education may be lower than self-efficacy of a teacher in general.

Allinder⁶¹ studied the self-efficacy of the teachers that work directly with students, and those that only served as consultants. The analyses demonstrated, that the teachers with a higher self-efficacy were open to new methods of teaching, involved in the process of education, as well as, just, and decisive in difficult situations. Additionally, it was demonstrated that the self-efficacy, affects the way he perceives his professional role, the way he teaches, and his relation with the students. These relations were observed in both studied groups. Although the research did not refer to self-efficacy in inclusive education, but self-efficacy of the teacher in general, that indicates a very important relation for the purpose realising inclusive practices. Working in a non-segregated classroom is an enormous challenge for the teacher. He must adjust his methods to varying needs, and capabilities of the students, as well as, the teacher more often faces difficult behaviour, and conflict situations in the classroom. As Allinder's study demonstrated, a high self-efficacy will allow the teacher to better deal with such situations.

A separate area of the research regarding the teachers' self-efficacy is the one related to the accomplishments of students. Unfortunately, there is yet to be an analysis on the relation of own self-efficacy in inclusive education to the results in the students' results in such classrooms. Thus, a decision was made to include the results of the studies regarding the self-efficacy of teachers in general. The conclusion coming from these studies, indicates the existence of a positive relation between the teacher's self-efficacy, and the students' accomplishments. In a study on the American, fifth-grade teachers,

⁶¹ R. M. Allinder, *The relationship between efficacy and the instructional practices of special education teachers and consultants*, "Teacher Education and Special Education 1994, 17, pp. 86-95.

Guo and associates⁶², demonstrated that the teachers with high self-efficacy, create a more friendly environment for learning, they are emphatic and supportive, and their students achieve better results in linguistic skills. Additionally, the analyses conducted by Ross⁶³, on history teachers, indicate a positive relation between the teacher's high self efficacy, and the students' achievements. A study conducted by Herman et al.⁶⁴, aimed at creating profiles of teachers, due to their stress levels, their ability to handle themselves, their professional burnout, and their self-efficacy. Additionally, relations between individual types of teachers, and the school achievements of their students, taken as scholarly results, and behaviour, were analysed. The analyses showed, that the students, whose teachers displayed lower self-efficacy, and handling themselves, along with a high degree of stress, also displayed lower results in education, and worse behaviour. What is interesting, the majority of the studied teachers (93%) declare a high level of professional stress experienced.

In the aforementioned, longitudinal studies conducted by Caprara and associates⁶⁵, apart from the relation between self-efficacy and the satisfaction drawn from work, the results of students, who finished the phase of compulsory education, were also examined. Although it was demonstrated, that the teacher's self efficacy is a predictor of the student's results, a different, interesting correlation was shown. It was demonstrated, that the earlier achieve-

⁶² Y. Guo, C. McDonald Connor, Y. Yang, A.D. Roehring, F.J. Morrison, *The effects of teacher qualification, teacher self-efficacy, and classroom practices on fifth graders' literacy outcomes*, "Elementary School Journal" 2012, 113, pp. 3-24.

⁶³ J. A. Ross, *Teacher efficacy and the effect of coaching on student achievement*, "Canadian Journal of Education" 1992, 17, pp. 51-65.

⁶⁴ C.K. Herman, J. Rosa-Hickmon, M.W. Reinke, *Empirically Derived Profiles of Teacher Stress, Burnout, Self-Efficacy and Coping Associated Student Outcomes*, "Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions" 2018, 20, pp. 90-100.

⁶⁵ G.V. Caprara, C. Barbaranelli, P. Steca, P.S. Malone, *Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level*, "Journal of School Psychology" 2006, 44, pp. 473-490.

ments of the students, had an influence on the later self-efficacy of the teachers. The result confirms the premises made by Bandura⁶⁶, who highlighted, that the mastery experience is the most important factor for forming self-efficacy. Additionally, the study serves as a great example, that confirms the actions of self-efficacy of teachers, based on the feedback principle.

The definitions of teachers' self-efficacy highlight, that it also refers to the influence on the behaviour and scholarly results of those students, who display various kinds of difficulties, or low motivation⁶⁷. A teacher that works in a non-segregated classroom, most definitely encounters such students. Therefore, it seems that the study results, as described above, may translate to an inclusive classroom. On the other hand, thinking of self-efficacy in inclusive education, and its level, one may assume, that it will be lower than the self-efficacy of a teacher in general. Students with special educational needs may cause the teacher to have a more difficult time experiencing the success of his work, and success, as is known, is imperative for forming high self-efficacy.

The study results shown below, as well as others that fit the inquiries, are presented in table no. 2.

Table 2. Teachers' self-efficacy: its determinants and consequences.

Variable	Example studies	Primary conclusion
The determinants of the teachers' self-efficacy		
Attitudes towards a non-segregated education of students with special educational needs	Malinen et al. 2012; Meijer, Foster, 1988; Savolainen et al., 2012; Soodak, Podell, 1993; Weisel, Dror, 2006	Teachers with higher self-efficacy are more inclined towards inclusive education.
Work experience	Malinen et al., 2013; Yada, Tolvanen, Savolainen, 2018	Teachers with more experience declare higher self-efficacy.

⁶⁶ A. Bandura, *Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change*, "Psychological Review" 1977, 84, pp. 191-215.

⁶⁷ T. R. Guskey, P. D. Passaro, *Teacher efficacy: A study of construct dimensions*, "American Educational Research Journal" 1994, 31, pp. 627-643.

Variable	Example studies	Primary conclusion
The determinants of the teachers' self-efficacy		
Experience in working with students with disabilities	Malinen et al., 2013; Yada, Tolvanen, Savolainen, 2018	Experience in working with students with disabilities is positively correlated with the teacher's self-efficacy.
Preparation to work with students with disabilities	Forlin, Sharma, Loreman, 2014	Being prepared in terms of special pedagogy is positively correlated with self-efficacy.
Application of innovative educational methods	Allinder, 1994	Teachers with higher self-efficacy are more eager to apply innovative educational methods.
Professional stress	Herman et al., 2018; Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008	Teachers with lower self-efficacy are more prone to experience work stress.
Professional burnout	Brouwers, Tomic, 2000 Evers, Brouwers, Tomic, 2002; Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008; Skaalvik, Skaalvik, 2007, 2010	Teachers with higher self-efficacy are less prone to professional burnout.
Satisfaction drawn from work	Caprara et al., 2003, 2006; Skaalvik, Skaalvik, 2010	Teachers with high self-efficacy draw more satisfaction from work.
The consequences of the teachers' self-efficacy – the educational results		
Students accomplishments'	Bandura, 1993; Caprara et al., 2006; Gibson, Dembo, 1984; Goddard, Hoy, Woolfolk, 2000; Guo et al., 2012; Herman et al., 2018; Midgley et al., 1988; Ross, 1992; Skaalvik, Skaalvik, 2007	Students, whose teachers display higher self-efficacy, achieve better results in education.

Source: own research.

Analysing the available studies on the teachers' self-efficacy in inclusive education, it is also worth attempting to indicate the additional areas of further analyses regarding the phenomenon. The studies on the teacher's self-efficacy in inclusive education, and on the educational results, seem to be particularly important. The studies regarding the accomplishments of students in non-segregated (and segregated) forms, always arouse much interest, and their rela-

tion with self-efficacy in inclusive education is, without a doubt, an interesting area of further analyses in the subject. The educational results are another important area of future studies, however, considered within the social functioning of the students. An analysis of the inclusive classroom environment would be worth conducting, as they are the place of social integration of students with special educational needs, and determine, whether the teacher with higher self-efficacy in inclusive education, is able to create a more friendly atmosphere in the classroom, and efficiently prevent any type of school bullying in the classroom. It seems, that the factors, tied to the person of the teacher himself, are well examined. However, we still lack longitudinal analyses, that would allow for determining the direction of the correlation between the teacher's self-efficacy in inclusive education, and the particular personality variables.

Summary

The departure from the segregated education of students with disabilities for the sake of including them in the mainstream of education, draws from the ideas of social normalisation and integration, as we can see in legal acts, effective in European countries, including Poland. The Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN in 2006, and ratified by the Polish government six years later, serves the purpose of guaranteeing this group of persons, the ability to receive education in an environment, where they develop by providing them with an "inclusive education system"⁶⁸. On the other hand, as noted by Grzegorz Szumski⁶⁹, one may observe a certain crisis in the implementation of the inclusive practices, with the examples being, i.a. a low quantitative increment of mainstream establishments that include students

⁶⁸ Konwencja o prawach osób niepełnosprawnych, Dz. U. RP z dn. 25 października 2012 r., poz. 1169.

⁶⁹ G. Szumski, *Edukacja włączająca – niedokończony projekt*, „Ruch Pedagogiczny” 2014, 4, pp. 127-139.

with disabilities, or the lack of systemic reforms for integration. The rejection of the idea of inclusive education carries severe consequences for the persons with disabilities, limiting their access to the full participation in social life, for special pedagogy, by impeding its development, and finally, for the entire educational system, making it closed to diversity, and strengthening the social differences. Considering the above aspects, taking action for the promotion of inclusion, seems extremely important. No doubt, the effective realisation of the premises of inclusive education, also requires practitioners, that are properly trained, and favourable towards students with special educational needs. Not only special pedagogy knowledge, and the know-how regarding the methods of educating persons with special educational needs, is necessary, in order for the teachers to be able to effectively teach in inclusive classes. What is needed, is a belief that they can accomplish this task. This belief is self-efficacy in inclusive education. Teachers' self-efficacy is correlated with numerous variables, that are of significant importance for the success of the process of education. A direct relation, referring to the idea of inclusion, is the one, that indicates, that the teachers with higher self-efficacy are more favourable to non-segregated education of students with special educational needs. Moreover, a teacher with high self-efficacy is usually more eager to dedicate himself to his work, which affects the students' scholarly results, including the students displaying various kinds of difficulties. Therefore, in the educational curricula of the future teachers, apart from elements regarding special pedagogy, attention should be turned to building self-efficacy. It may be achieved by providing high quality models of implementing inclusive education, so that young pedagogues could acquire vicarious experience, allowing them to develop high efficacy in education, including inclusive education. However, one must highlight, that in order to develop high self-efficacy, much care should be placed on ensuring, that the teacher will be able to enjoy success at work. Therefore, the transformation of schools into inclusive establishments, and providing teachers with the proper support in their work with students with special educational needs, is of such importance.

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(Non)integrated culture in Polonia Maior elementary schools – from the perspective of the teachers of integrated classrooms

ABSTRACT: Matylda Pachowicz, *(Non)integrated culture in Polonia Maior elementary schools – from the perspective of the teachers of integrated classrooms*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 177-196. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.08>

The Activities of Polish educational authorities are aimed at eliminating special education in Poland, for the development of integrated and inclusive education, following a model of certain European Union countries. Due to the new trends, the demand for special pedagogues in mainstream schools is increasing. Thus, the nature of both mainstream schools and mainstream pre-schools, as well as, special education establishments, is changing. Education of children with various types of development disorders has become a general educational problem. Not only does a narrow group of specialists deal with it, but it has also resulted in a change within the educational culture of Polish schools. In regard to the above, the school's culture towards the Different, can be either pro-integrated or anti-integrated. A very important role, in the process of shaping a specific school culture, is played by teachers, their motivation to work, their professional preparation and the way they perceive the development of students with disorders.

KEY WORDS: special education, students with disability, integration and inclusive education, main and assistant teacher, universal and special education culture

The universal and the special educational culture in Polish schools

Facing the social changes, that have occurred in the recent years, there is an increasing number of activities for marginalised persons, that aim at the process of integration, and normalisation. Kowalik finds, that, just recently, the dependency of the persons with disabilities on the course of their education, has been noticed¹. Previously, in the majority of the European countries, the dominant view was, that the children with disorders should not go to mainstream schools, as they would have to bear too much of a cost regarding the fact, experiencing psychological trauma in result of the feeling of inferiority, and of rejection from the group. A belief was universally held, that a student with a disability, in a mainstream school, would negatively influence the development of his able-bodied peers, making the process of education more difficult. For many years, the educational policies justified the activities that would discriminate the good of the able-bodied children, and the children with disabilities. In result, a separate system of educational institutions was founded, adjusted to the special needs of the students with various kinds and degrees of disability, however, it was of a segregated nature. The opponents of such a solution (mainly, the parents of the children with disabilities), had begun a struggle against a universal integration, titled *the same school for everyone (taka sama szkoła dla wszystkich)*².

One of the priorities of modern education is the inclusion of children with special educational needs, to mainstream education³.

¹ S. Kowalik, *Integracja uczniów niepełnosprawnych z uczniami pełnosprawnymi*, [in:] *Psychologia ucznia i nauczyciela*, (ed.) S. Kowalik, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 276.

² Ibidem, p. 277.

³ In Poland, the process of integrated education was initiated by the 7 September 1991 "On the educational system" („O systemie oświaty”) act, and regulated by the 4 October 1993 MEN regulations. It was a breakthrough moment, when a dramatic change was made, regarding the educational policies for persons with disabili-

A child with a disability, that attends integrated classrooms, expands own participation in social life, however, simultaneously, is threatened with rejection and discrimination, both from peers and the teachers⁴. The teachers see the causes of difficulties, experienced in the areas of integration, either in the features of the student, in his family, or in the insufficient support, or the lack of the appropriate conditions of integrated education. However, they often do not take any actions, that would expand their competencies, helpful in solving these difficulties. Also, the cooperation of the teachers (leading and support teachers⁵), often assumes inappropriate forms, leading to the fact that, "the integrated classrooms seem like combined classrooms: a *normal* and a *special classroom*, with different teachers, different curricula, and different courses of lessons"⁶.

Therefore, the positive effects of integrated education, depend not only on the features of the student with a disability (the type and the degree of his disability), or his family situation. The proper material and organisational conditions of the school, do not guarantee positive changes regarding integration as well. Teachers themselves, play a key role in this process, as their attitude towards integrated education, and their assumed work scheme in the classroom, with students with disabilities. Additionally, the independence of

lities. See: 9 July 2017 MEN regulation on the conditions of schooling, education, and the guardianship of children and adolescents with disabilities, socially maladjusted, and threatened with social maladjustment (Journal of Laws 2017, no. 0, pos 1578).

⁴ S. Kowalik, *Integracja uczniów niepełnosprawnych z uczniami pełnosprawnymi*, [in:] *Psychologia ucznia i nauczyciela*, (ed.) S. Kowalik, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 288.

⁵ The support teacher may also be defined as: supportive, subsidiary. Currently, the term in motion is: *co-organising the educational process*; see: Z. Gajdzica 2011b, p. 59. For the purpose of the article, I remain with the following terms: support and leading teacher (i.e. a teacher of a particular subject/early school and pre-school education), that functioned in the school environment, at the moment of conducting research for the dissertation.

⁶ A. Kobylańska, *Wypalenie zawodowe u nauczycieli pracujących w klasach integracyjnych – próba badań*, [in:] *Dyskursy Pedagogiki Specjalnej. Od tradycjonalizmu do ponowoczesności*, (eds.) E. Górniewicz, A. Krause, Wydawnictwo UWM, Olsztyn 2002, p. 302.

the teacher is also important, regarding his choices, e.g. whether he wants to work in an integrated classroom. Otherwise, all educational reforms will be superficial, they will not encompass the preferred values, attitudes, or personal beliefs of all the participants of the process. "Understanding the biography of a particular teacher, and the classroom and school contexts, and cultures, is, therefore, essential for the successful proceeding of the process of change".⁷

The theory of inclusive education, and the accompanying dilemmas, are discussed in detail by Zamkowska (2013). Full inclusion assumes, that each school should be able to accept all students, regardless of their disorders. Regarding this approach, a child with a disability, must not prove their readiness to begin education in a mainstream school (as in an integrated education). The school has the duty to accept this group of students and provide them with the appropriate conditions, so that they could feel, that they belong to the school community.⁸ "The requirement of proving the «readiness» of participating in a mainstream school, used by the advocates of integrated education was an essential argument for not accepting, or excluding a particular group of children, that did not meet certain requirements. The above was motivated by the concern regarding the educational success of the child with impeded development, that required prior rehabilitation, so that the child could handle the requirements and the pace of an integrated classroom".⁹

Within the context of these educational changes¹⁰, a number of sceptical voices appear, regarding accepting all children, particular-

⁷ Ch. Day, *Od teorii do praktyki. Rozwój zawodowy nauczyciela*, GWP, Gdańsk 2008, p. 150.

⁸ A. Zamkowska, *Edukacja włączająca – wybrane dylematy*, [in:] *Racjonalność oraz uwarunkowania procesów terapeutycznych osób niepełnosprawnych*, (ed.) A. Klinik, vol. 16, Impuls, Kraków-Katowice 2013, p. 70; see: G. Thomas, *Inclusive school for an inclusive society*, *British Journal of Special Education* 1997, no. 24(3).

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 70-71.

¹⁰ A detailed analysis of the education of children with disabilities, at the legal level, may be found in M. Gołubiew-Konieczna, *Integracja w edukacji – ewaluacja założeń integracyjnych w praktyce szkolnej*, [in:] *Edukacja integracyjna i włączająca w doświadczeniach pedagogów i nauczycieli*, (ed.) Z. Janiszewska-Nieścioruk, Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, Zielona Góra 2012, pp. 14-34.

ly, with severe or multiple disabilities, to mainstream schools. In a report by Warnock (1978), on the educational policies regarding the schooling of children with special educational needs, such process is referred to as “positive discrimination”¹¹. The lack of an appropriate facilitation of mainstream schools¹² and the specifics of the process of learning of many students with severe intellectual disabilities, often cause the parents to choose special establishments, as those that would meet the educational, and social needs of their children¹³. Zamkowska, referring to A. Vlachou (2004), highlights that inclusive education, has not yet become a part of a broader educational policy, and, within the proclaimed educational reforms, is not treated as an essential matter, but as an additional change introduced under certain circumstances¹⁴.

The implementation of the premises of inclusive education, faces numerous barriers, not only financial ones. Most often, the mainstream schools discourage the parents of children with disabilities, informing them of numerous difficulties in ensuring their children with appropriate aid, and with the inability to provide for their specific needs regarding education. Teachers, deprived of a systemic support, as well as, of specialist qualifications, wish not to take responsibility for the education of a child with a disability. In such a situation, the most often suggested form of schooling, is individual education¹⁵.

¹¹ H.M. Warnock 1978, p. 121; after: A. Zamkowska 2013, p. 71.

¹² See: A. Zamkowska 2013, p. 73; see: D. Jankowska, L. Legierska, *Prawo a rzeczywistość kształcenia uczniów ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi*, [in:] *Racjonalność oraz uwarunkowania procesów terapeutycznych osób niepełnosprawnych*, (ed.) A. Klinik, vol. 16, Impuls, Kraków-Katowice 2013, pp. 80-81.

¹³ A. Zamkowska 2013, p. 71; see: G. Szumski, *Funkcje szkół specjalnych w proinTEGRACYJNYM systemie kształcenia – analiza doświadczeń zachodnioeuropejskich*, *Rocznik Pedagogiki Specjalnej* 2000, vol. 11.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 72; see: A. Vlachou, *Education and inclusive policy-making: implications for research and practice*, *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 2004, no. 8(1).

¹⁵ J. Oleksy, *Edukacja inkluzyjna – pomiędzy szansą a zagrożeniem*, [in:] *Uczeń z niepełnosprawnością w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, (ed.) Z. Gajdzica, Humanitas, Sosnowiec 2011, p. 42; see: Z. Sękowska, *Wprowadzenie do pedagogiki specjalnej*, Wydawnictwo WSPS, Warszawa 1998, p. 32 and p. 40.

In result of the numerous difficulties related to the expansion of inclusive education, one may observe two distinct attitudes among the teachers, and the parents: a critique of the idea of integrated schooling, and the call to return to the special system, as well as, a call to reform the entire educational system, so that it would become more friendly towards children with disabilities¹⁶. However, introducing the educational reforms in Poland, one should not transfer the established models from other countries, without considering the specific social, political, and economical situation of our country. Holding to the established models (without considering the unique cultural factors, as well as, the economic development, and the distinct social experiences of a given country), may cause the occurrence of the so-called equivalence error. Using the established models, without considering the specifics of a given country, results in lowering their efficiency and usefulness¹⁷.

Integrated education in the experiences of teachers – the methodological basis of own research

Integrated education is subject to continuous modifications and changes, as its effects are far from those assumed. The analysis of the results described in source literature, indicates, that the integration effort in Polish education, lasting for more than twenty years, did not yield the expected results regarding the idea of integration. Therefore, an important, and prevailing subject is the barriers and limi-

¹⁶ S. Kowalik, *Integracja uczniów niepełnosprawnych z uczniami pełnosprawnymi*, [in:] *Psychologia ucznia i nauczyciela*, (ed.) S. Kowalik, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 280.

¹⁷ Z. Gajdzica, *Opinie nauczycieli szkół ogólnodostępnych na temat edukacji włączającej uczniów z lekkim upośledzeniem umysłowym w kontekście toczącej się reformy kształcenia specjalnego*, [in:] *Uczeń z niepełnosprawnością w szkole ogólnodostępnej*, red. Z. Gajdzica, Humanitas. Sosnowiec 2011, p. 57; see: G. Szumski, *Integracyjne kształcenie niepełnosprawnych. Sens i granice zmiany edukacyjnej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 15.

Table 1. The primary aims and issues during the subsequent phases of the studies

Phase of the study	Study aims	Primary issues	Type of study
I <i>The organisational and material aspect of integrated study</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To diagnose the material and organisational aspect of integrated education, realised in Polonia Maior elementary schools To recognise the difficulties experienced by the principals of the Polonia Maior elementary schools that execute integrated education. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How is the integrated education organised in Polonia Maior elementary schools? What are the difficulties experienced by the principals, regarding organising an integrated educational? 	quantitative
II <i>Various aspects of the teachers' work in integrated classrooms</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To determine the features of teachers working in integrated classrooms To determine, how the teachers in integrated classrooms perceive the school reality (the selected features of the situations) To examine, how the teachers in integrated classrooms perceive the students with disabilities To distinguish and characterise the three various categories, in which a student with a disability may be perceived 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the features of the teachers in integrated classrooms? How the teachers in integrated classrooms perceive the school reality (the selected features of the situations)? How the teachers in integrated classrooms perceive the students with disabilities? 	quantitative
III <i>The narratives of the teachers that perceive students with disabilities differently</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To characterise the teachers who perceive the students with disabilities differently To explain the possible causes of these differences among teachers, that result from their particular features 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What are the features of the examined teachers? How the examined teachers perceive the school reality (the selected features of situations)? How the examined teachers perceive students with disabilities? 	qualitative
IV <i>The parents of students in integrated classes on integrated education</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To determine how the parents of students in integrated classrooms perceive the school reality (the selected features of the situations) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How the parents of students in integrated classrooms perceive the school reality (the selected features of the situations)? 	quantitative

tations regarding the implementation of the idea of integration within Polish schools. The object of my research (within the framework of my dissertation)¹⁸, are the features of the Polonia Maior elementary schools, with their integrated units, as well as, the features of the teachers that work there. Various participants of integrated education – principals, teachers, and parents, were included in the study, in order to present their own experiences and opinions regarding this form of educating children with disabilities. Considering various scholarly perspectives, required the application of both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research conducted, is an example of a triangulation of methods. Table 1 presents, in a general overview, the scholarly aims and the issues that appear in the subsequent (four) phases of the study.

The following article will present the conclusions from the second phase of the studies (aiming at learning the various aspects of the work of teachers in integrated classrooms, such as: features of the teachers and their school situation). Information regarding this subject was gathered due to the questionnaire directed both at the leading and support teachers, working in Polonia Maior elementary schools (that participated in the first phase of the studies).

Leading and support teachers – similarities and differences

The characteristic feature of integrated education is the network of special aid in a mainstream school. The distinct (specific) feature of this type of education, is the person of the support teacher, whose role to support not only the students and their parents, but also the leading teachers. An important factor determining the proper

¹⁸ The following study was conducted in the 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 school years, within the framework of a dissertation titled: “Integrated education in the experiences and the opinions of teachers and parents” written under the supervision of professor S. Dylak. The dissertation was reviewed by prof. I Chrzanowska, and prof. Z. Gajdzic.

course of integrated education is a type of relation between the leading and the support teachers, and their way of working with the students in the classroom. The information regarding various aspects of the work of the teachers in integrated education, was gathered from leading and support teachers from 24 elementary schools, that execute integrated education in Polonia Maior¹⁹. The feedback questionnaires were collected in schools that, during the first phase of the study, received high scores as they provided the proper material and organisational conditions for integrated education. Therefore, one may assume, that the gathered data regarding the teachers' work in integrated classrooms, better reflect the situation of establishment adjusted for integrated education.

Analysing the number of acquired questionnaires from leading (93) and support (80) teachers, it is noticeable, that the rate is almost 1:1, despite the fact, that many more leading teachers work in 4-6 grade elementary school classrooms, than support teachers. The situation may result from the fact, that the questionnaires were filled primarily by early grade classrooms, while, in later grades (4-6), primarily by leading teachers, as educators of integrated classes, and support teachers. Therefore, one may assume, that the gathered data on the work of the teachers in integrated classrooms, better reflect the situation of those teachers who are involved in the process of education of children with disabilities in mainstream schools (they spend more working hours in these classes, therefore they may have a greater sense of responsibility for them)²⁰.

¹⁹ The study regarding various aspects of the work of the teachers in integrated classrooms (their features, their perception of the school situation, and of the students with disabilities), was conducted in the 2008/2009 school year. The information was gathered using questionnaires directed at leading and support teachers. Feedback questionnaires were collected from teachers from 24 elementary schools, executing integrated education in Polonia Maior, being two-thirds (66%) of the establishment encompassed by the diagnostic study on the organisational and material aspect of this form of education (I phase of study).

²⁰ The estimative analysis shows, that the support teachers participated in the study in higher quantity, as c. three-fourths (73%) teachers employed in establishments encompassed by the study, filled the questionnaire. The situation is

The factor that internally differentiates the group of leading and support teachers, is their preparedness for working with students with disabilities. Half of the examined leading teachers (50%), graduated various post-diploma studies dedicated to working with children with intellectual disabilities. No less than 78% of the leading teachers, were educated in oligophrenic pedagogy. The analysis of the information regarding the support teachers background, provides rather surprising data. A strong majority of support teachers (76%) turned out to be teachers educated within the field of special pedagogy. Almost one-fourth of them (23%), are people that possess high-education in the subject matter. The remaining teachers from this group, possess basic pedagogical education (77%). In order to become a support teacher, these individuals received additional education in special pedagogy, most often attending studies in the field of *oligophrenic pedagogy* (53%). The graduates of the 5-year studies in special pedagogy, were a minority (24% of the examined support teachers). Half of them expand their specialist competencies regarding working with children with developmental disabilities.

Additionally, the leading and the support teachers vary regarding motivation that drove them to work in an integrated classroom. In terms of leading teachers, the role was enforced on them (they resulted from the decision of their superiors), therefore, the influence of external factors was dominant in this group. Circa two-thirds of the teachers, were directed by external motivation, adjusting to the changing educational offer, and the capabilities of a given establishment. The issue is quite different in the case of support teachers, as their motives were much more varied. The prevailing motives, were related to the features of the teachers (their education, vocational predispositions, beliefs, or earlier experiences). The external factors played a much lesser role in this group.

The difference between the aforementioned groups is also visible in the evaluation of their readiness to work in an integrated

different, regarding the leading teachers - a little below half of them (46%) filled the questionnaire.

class, received during studies. Half of the leading teachers, and two-thirds of support teachers assumed, that they were well prepared to work in an integrated class. The difference may come from a fact, that the support teachers (contrary to leading teachers) are required to have a specialist background. This group of teachers is also distinguished by the broader extent of their activities regarding acquiring additional education, and expanding their vocational competencies. The support teachers more often utilise various forms of vocational self-improvement, and their activities in this aspect are much more varied. The specifics of the supportive role, placing much more responsibility on teachers, regarding working with students with disabilities, motivates them to expand vocational competencies, and search for solutions to the varying issues experienced at work.

Analysing the declared principles of the cooperation between the teachers of a given integrated classroom, in many situations, one may notice a clear division of responsibilities, between the leading, and the support teacher. Only one in five of leading teachers, involves himself in creating the proprietary, and less than a half leading teachers prepare didactic aid for all the students, along with the support teacher. In half of the studied establishments, the situation of incomplete support occurs, where the support teacher is present only at a selected portion of classes. Depending on the strategies of handling such situations, assumed by the leading teacher, it may encourage him to include the students with disabilities into the main course of the lesson, but also, may lead to an unfavourable situation, where these students, without the help of a support teacher, will participate in class, but only passively.

The groups of the examined teacher, perceive the way of working with a student with a disability in class, in a similar manner. The similarity, probably results from the fact, that a particular way of a student's work in class, in an integrated classroom, reflects the assumed principles of cooperation between the teachers. More than a half of the leading and the support teachers assumed, that the students with disabilities perform the same tasks, along with

the rest of the class, but for half of the work time. The remaining study subjects admitted, that this group of students either works together with others (performing the same tasks), or they attend individual rehabilitation activities, during the time of the lesson for the class. Considering the criteria, established earlier, one may state, that the excluded way of working with this group of students, is dominant. Both the clear division of tasks between the teachers, as well as, varying activities of the students with disabilities in class, do not help the integration of the children in a group, but strengthen the differences between them.

The view, that not all children with disabilities should attend mainstream schools, is dominant among the examined teachers. A majority of them advocates conditional integration, presenting an opinion, that only the students with a mild degree of disability have a chance for integration in mainstream establishments, and the remaining ones should attend special establishments, where their optimal conditions of development are ensured. At times, the presence of students with intellectual disabilities (including mild intellectual disabilities) in integrated classrooms, is also questioned. Few examined teachers assumed, that the issue regarding which child should be taken into integrated education, should be discussed individually, and the decision should be made after a detailed evaluation of the capabilities of the child, the school, and the conditions within the family. Support teachers approached the problem more thoughtfully, mentioning the complexity, and the numerous determinants of the problem.

The analysis of the data, also indicated that the support teachers know the students with disabilities better, and they are better prepared to work with this group of children, which is probably a result of their support role in class. This disproportion, between the competencies of the teachers that are co-responsible for the process of integrated education, may be the reason, why in one out of five integrated classes, a strict distinction of responsibilities between the teachers, exists. The situation of the lack of common activities between the teachers (the leading teachers are primarily responsible

for working with able-bodied students, and the support teachers, for working with students with disabilities), causes the integrated class to be divided into two separate groups. However, such activities fail to aid the integration of the students in the classroom.

Apart from having a better background, the support teachers group is also characterised by more positive, and less negative work experiences. These teachers feel better in the role of an integrated classroom teacher, despite the fact that they, to a larger degree, experience various difficult situations related to their role in the classroom. Having broader competencies and more expert skills, helpful in handling various different situations in the classroom, they feel better and more confident in the role of a teacher of an integrated class. The specifics of the support role (with larger responsibilities for working with students with disabilities, being placed on the teacher), motivates them to expand their vocational competencies, and search for solutions of the varying problems experienced at work.

The analysis showed, that the varying roles, played by the teachers working together in one class, implicate certain problems and difficulties for each of them. Leading teachers, responsible for the main course of the lesson, are experiencing a feeling of the lack of comprehensive (full-time) support from the support teacher. Working in an integrated classroom, reveals their insufficient theoretical background regarding working with students with disabilities, and the lack of earlier experiences in the area, additionally impedes the realisation of the process of integrated education. The problem, related to the low number of hours dedicated to revalidation activities, also affects the leading teachers as well, as being responsible for holding class, they have no capability of working with each student with a disability individually. By analogy, too many students in an integrated class, may become burdensome for a teacher responsible for holding the class.

Support teachers, responsible for working with students that experience various problems with studying, to a higher degree, experience the lack of specialist study aids, for students with disabilities, and the insufficient material and organisational background

of the integrated education establishment. The leading teacher is offered an entire array of support, primarily from the second teacher, co-responsible for the process of integrated education. However, the support teacher, as a person that is competent and dedicated to provide help, is much more prone to experiencing the lack of support from other specialists, or teachers that work in a given school. The support teacher is also more responsible for the cooperation, and providing help to the parents of children that manifest various difficulties in studying, often with behavioural disorders, and sometimes, children from families burdened with certain pathologies. The cooperation with children with various difficulties is particularly important, as its lack may be considered as a large impediment in the work of a teacher in an integrated class.

However, the majority of the respondents, present positive opinions regarding the cooperation with the second teacher co-responsible for the process of integrated education, highlighting its enormous significance in the process of integration of all the students in the classroom. However, one in three teachers, claims that the cooperation is based on the *explicit division of responsibilities between the two*, which does not benefit the integration of the children in school. The work method, based on the clear division of tasks between the teachers, may cause an unfavourable situation, in which the leading teacher feels responsible only for the education of the able-bodied students, while the support teacher, responsible for the education of the students with disabilities.

Specific issues resulting from the organisation and the realisation of integrated education

Integrated classes display specific characteristics. One of them is the expanded support network, directed not only at the students with disabilities, and their parents, but also, at the leading teachers that face new professional challenges. The experiences of the respondents show, that the leading teachers receive help primarily

from other individuals, employed in the particular school, mostly, from the support teachers that work with them in one class. The respondents feel little support from various specialist establishments, or establishments working beyond their own school.

The analysis of the factors that limit the efficiency of integrated education, had revealed the insufficient background of some leading teachers, for working with students with disabilities. Additionally, the lack of previous vocational experiences in the area, handicaps (according to the leading teachers), the realisation of the process of integrated education. Also, the examined respondents from both groups, notice numerous difficulties related to the material and the organisational aspect of integrated education, listing, i.a.: flawed selection of students, too many students in class, too much variety among students with a recommendation for special education, regarding the type, and the degree of their disability, as well as, able-bodied students displaying certain deficits. The entire array of experienced issues is related to the insufficient funds, dedicated to the functioning of such integrated classes.

Secondly, the respondents from both groups list those factors that limit the efficiency of integrated education, related to the students with disabilities. The teachers describe the difficulties, which result from the features of these students (their intellectual or emotional limitations, or their low level of ability, and self-sufficiency). Often, in an integrated class, appear problems related to the disordered behaviour, or social inadequacy of some children with disabilities, that impedes the work during the lesson, and discourages able-bodied children from coming into contact with these students. Increasingly, the teachers undermine the reason for accepting children with intellectual disabilities, to integrated classes, assuming, that this group of students has little chances of integrating with a group, particularly in higher grades (IV-VI). The situation of these students in school is also worsened by their regular absence, or the school's distance from their place of living (in consequence, leading to the fact, that the commuting children, cannot maintain close relations with their friends, after school). Individual respondents raised

the issue of able-bodied students that attend integrated classes, highlighting that the inadequate selection of able-bodied children may reduce the efficiency of this form of education.

The specific nature of problems that appear in integrated education, i.a. results from the fact, that the realisation of this form of education of children with disabilities, causes the occurrence of a particular network of relations, absent in other forms of special education. The relations between teachers (the leading and the support teacher), between the students (able-bodied and with disabilities), as well as, parents, is characteristic of integrated education. The specific nature of issues resulting from the organisation of special education in mainstream schools, is also apparent in the difficulties faced by teachers in the process of establishing cooperation with parents.

The key role in this form of education, seems to be played by the support teacher, whose purpose is to provide specialist help to a student with disability, to his family, as well as, to the leading teacher. The varied support activities are conducted in order to include the child with a developmental disorder, to the mainstream of class activities, to the highest degree possible, so that the child has the opportunity for full participation, both in the educational, and the social aspects. In order for the process of education to be conducted properly, the class should not be clearly divided into two groups of students (able-bodied and with disabilities). In result, there should be no division of tasks and responsibilities between the teacher working in class. The lack of common activities between the teachers, does not benefit the integration of students in class, and may even strengthen certain differences between the children. Therefore, wrongly perceived support provided by the support teacher to the leading teacher, leads to the deformation of the idea of integrated education, as it causes a situation, in which the leading teacher is primarily responsible for the education of health children, while the support teacher is responsible for children with developmental disorders.

The mutual responsibility of teachers, for the education of all students in the integrated class, is key. The activities of teachers,

aiming at the inclusion of students with disabilities into the common course of the lesson, and the efforts aimed at aiding these students, so that they would not depart from the rest of the group, serve the purpose of integrating all children in class. As the gathered data shows, the cooperation of teachers is based on mutual activities and mutual responsibility, occurs rarely. In the majority of integrated classrooms, the excluded model of working with students with disabilities, is dominant²¹. Both the clear division of tasks between the teachers, as well as, the separate activities of the students with developmental disorders, fail to aid the integration of the children in the group, only to strengthen their differences.

Another issue that impedes the development of integrated education in Poland, is the dominant belief among the teachers, that not all children with disabilities should attend mainstream schools. The majority of respondents, advocates for the conditional integration, presenting an opinion, that only the students with a mild level of disability, have a chance for integration in mainstream schools, and the remaining ones should attend special establishments, where their optimal conditions for development are ensured. At times, the very presence of the students with intellectual disabilities (including mild levels) in integrated classrooms, is questioned. Few respondents assumed, that the issue regarding which children should be taken for integrated education, should be considered individually, and that the decision should be made after a detailed evaluation of the capabilities of the child, the school, and the conditions within the family. The conditional approach, dominant in thinking of integration (based on the division of the features of the children with developmental disorders – “*fit*” and “*unfit*” for integration) causes the integrated education to be based on a selection process (instead of a detailed analysis of all the aspects of the situation, the diagnosis

²¹ The following criterion was applied in the study: if a student with a disability, works with other children for the majority of time, performing the same tasks, than this type of working with a group of students is “inclusive”. However, if the time of separate activities is greater than the time of common work (50% or less), than this way of working with that group of studies is „excluding”.

regarding the type and degree of disability is the dominant factor). Therefore, integrated education becomes discriminant, contrary to the initial (however idealistic) premises of the promoters of “*the same school for everyone*” ideal.

To summarise, about the pro-integration culture of the school

The new, pro-integration trends in Polish education, show, that the education of children displaying certain developmental disorders, has become a general pedagogical issue, outside of a narrow group of specialists. The introduction of integrated and inclusive education to Polish schools, cause the change of the educational culture. Therefore, one may distinguish a culture of school towards the Other, assuming a pro-integration, or an anti-integration form. A very important role, in the shaping of a particular school culture, is played by the teachers, their motivation towards work, their professional background, as well as, the way they perceive the students with developmental disorders²².

In relation to the changes, that have appeared in education, and within the school culture, it becomes necessary to introduce organisational and didactic changes to universities. The university curricula, should be modified, to prepare the students of pedagogical degrees for working at a modern school, to the best of possibility. Creating a pro-integration culture of a school, requires this vocational group to not only have a broader knowledge, but also, to acquire new social skills/competencies. Without the proper preparation of the teachers, the integrated and inclusive education, assumes, and will assume various, distorted forms. The change of the school culture, resulting from the increase of the number of students

²² More of the subject may be found in an article by M. Pachowicz, titled: *Uczeń niepełnosprawny widziany oczami nauczycieli klas integracyjnych*, [in:] *Miejsce Innego we współczesnych naukach o wychowaniu. W poszukiwaniu pozytywów*, (eds.) I. Chrzanowska, B. Jachimczak, K. Pawelczak, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań 2013.

with disabilities and various developmental deficits, in mainstream schools, caused the issue of the Other, to be more than just marginal. Considering all the above, it would be advisable to approach the education of pedagogical degrees' students (of various specialities), in an interdisciplinary, and holistic way.

Changes related to the education of future teachers, cannot focus solely on the issues regarding providing the adequate knowledge to students. In the aspect of integrated and inclusive education, special attention must be directed at the shaping of an appropriate attitude of the future teachers, towards the Other in schools. Referring to two scales of culture - micro and macro²³, these changes should encompass the system of values and obligations, with, simultaneously, seeing the individual plane of constructing meanings and realities, by the individuals that participate in culture. Referring to the book by J. Bruner "*The culture of education*" ("*Kultura edukacji*"), one may assume that "school itself is culture, and not only a way of preparing to participate in it"²⁴, and that the particular activities of students and teachers, and their mutual relations create the school culture.

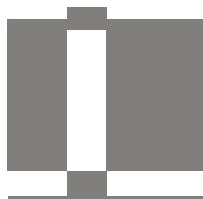
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²³ J.S. Bruner, *Kultura edukacji*, UNIVERSITAS, Kraków 2006, p. 27.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 140.

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The improvement of partnership of family and school – in the light of evaluation research

ABSTRACT: Karol Bidziński, *The improvement of partnership of family and school – in the light of evaluation research*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 197-227. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.09>

Humanistically oriented, qualitative educational studies allow learning about and supporting the processes of social change, including the development of schools directed towards the implementation of the idea of inclusive education. Evaluation research seems to be particularly useful for achieving this goal. The results presented in the article are a part of the extensive material collected in field research, which was conducted in the years 2015-2018 in eight schools of Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship. The aim of the study was to describe school community activity and the subjective and intersubjective structure of the meaning of entities creating space for the implementation of students' educational needs. The article presents the beliefs of parents and teachers on the educational partnership of schools and family, as well as barriers in its development, reconstructed on the basis of data originated from group discussions conducted in one of the schools that participated in the research.

KEY WORDS: school and family partnerships, inclusive education, evaluation research

Introduction

The implementation of the idea of inclusive education consists in introducing profound changes in contemporary school and organizing educational activities in such a way that each student can find there an optimal environment for learning and harmonious development. Parents of the students can play a special role in the internal development of the school. Building a community in which school employees and parents work together on a partnership basis is one of the indicators of creating an inclusive school culture and thus an important element of implementing the idea of inclusive education¹. Among the nine requirements established for the Polish school by the state, listed in the relevant regulation, ² is the requirement "Parents are school partners". The manifestation of this partnership is the co-decision of parents in matters of the school or institution and participation in the undertaken activities, as well as the cooperation of the school with parents to support the development of children.

For many years, psychologists, sociologists, and especially educators have been studying the role of the family in educational processes and its impact on child development. Currently, in the educational considerations, the theory and practice of family and school relationships, the issues of integration of family and school educational interactions; caring-providing and educational connections; problems of democratization and humanization of family and school relationships, as well as the position of a child/student in the model of partner relationships are discussed³. Numerous studies

¹ *Przewodnik po edukacji włączającej rozwój kształcenia i uczestnictwa w życiu szkoły*, eds. T. Booth, M. Ainscow, Editor: Olimpiady Specjalne Polska, Warsaw 2011 (re-edition 2012), p. 46.

² Regulation of the Ministry of National Education of 11 August 2017 on the requirements for schools and institutions, Journal of Laws of 2017, item 1611

³ A. Janke, S. Kawula, *Stosunki rodziny i szkoły. Integracja i syntonía*, [in:] *Pedagogika rodziny: obszary i panorama problematyki*, ed. S. Kawula i inni, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2006, pp. 219-262.

have proven the existence of a relationship between family activities and student's development, and level of their school, and social-emotional skills⁴.

In the literature on the subject, various terms for the relationship of the student's family and school can be found, namely, cooperation between parents and teachers, cooperation between family and school, acting for the child in consultation with parents and others. Parents are defined as allies of the school, teacher's partners and allies, customers, co-workers etc. It is not without significance which terms are used to describe this relationship which is important from the perspective of child/student development. Do we consider parents and teachers, or are the entire family system and all subjects of school reality, as subjects of this relationship? It seems that considering the processes of humanization and democratization of family and school relationships taking place in the area of education, it is most accurate to describe this relationship with the term partnership and to examine to what extent the actual cooperation of the student's family with the school community approaches this ideal state. "The partnership assumes a formal alliance and a contractual agreement aimed at working towards common goals and sharing the profits or benefits of mutual action"⁵. In the case of family and school, the partnership consists in establishing an equal, parent and teacher relationship based on mutual understanding and respect, in which both parties jointly make educational decisions regarding the child/student and act for their good.

However, it is worth remembering that this is an alliance of two environments important for the child development: the family system and the school as a social educational space. Mutual overlapping of the influences of these two environments on the develop-

⁴ K. Lasater, *Parent-Teacher Conflict Related to Student Abilities: The Impact on Students and the Family-School Partnership*, "School Community Journal", 2016, Vol. 26, No. 2 p. 237-262, <http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx> [29 July 2018].

⁵ J.L. Epstein, *School and Family Partnerships. Report No. 6*, Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 1992, p. 11-14. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED343715.pdf> [23.07.2018].

ment of a person is well described by the systemic model developed by the creator of ecological psychology, U. Bronfenbrenner (1979). According to the assumptions of the model, "human mental development always takes place in the specific context of the relationship with the environment (-). The environment constitutes a complex system of relationships in the area of individual subsystems, as well as between them"⁶. Family and school belong to the environments closest to the child. They interact and depend on each other. Systems of environmental interactions determine the child development, but also the course of the child development affects the nature of these interactions. Disability or other reasons for which the child experiences serious learning difficulties set special requirements for them and their immediate surroundings. "The way in which a child and their closest ones meet these requirements will determine the quality of their development"⁷.

The theory of educational partnership of family, school and local community was developed by Joyce Epstein. In Poland, this model was popularised by M Mendel⁸, and describing this concept, she proposed the following definitions of six types of partnership cooperation: parenting (supporting parents in their parenting tasks); communications (two-way school-home information flow); parental volunteering (activities of parents for the school); learning at home (organization of learning at home); decision making (involving parents in making decisions on children's educational matters) and collaborating with community (creating local coalitions for education and the environment). The Epstein's model verified in numer-

⁶ Wł. Pilecka, *Perspektywa systemowo-ekologiczna*, [in:] *Dziecko ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w drodze ku dorosłości*, eds. Wł. Pilecka, M. Rutkowski, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Cracow 2009, pp. 22-23.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

⁸ M. Mendel, *Jak organizować współpracę z rodzicami*, [in:] *Klocki autonomiczne w szkole*, ed. M. Mendel, Gdańskie Forum Oświatowe, Gdańsk 1999, pp. 39-42.

M. Mendel, *Nauczyciel z uczniem, rodzicami i lokalną społecznością. Koncepcje partnerstwa edukacyjnego*, [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnoszkolna – dyskursy, problemy, rozwiązania*, ed. D. Klus-Stańska, M. Szczepska-Pustkowska, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warsaw 2009, pp. 185-223.

ous studies has become the basis for creating family and school partnership programs in the United States. In the conducted studies, the impact of family and community involvement on student achievement was analysed; the effectiveness of various strategies for building partnerships of schools, families and communities was assessed, and the participation of parents and representatives of the local community in activities aimed at improving the quality of school work was examined⁹.

Family and school partnerships can be implemented at two levels: institutional one, which includes activities targeted at all student families and personal one, which is based on a direct partnership between the teacher and the specific student's family. It is particularly difficult to establish a personal partnership with a parent whose child faces serious learning difficulties, and providing support is a complex problem for the school and family. One of the possible sources of conflict may be a different understanding of the possibilities and needs of the student by their parents and teachers, as well as a lack of agreement regarding the undertaken activities. A number of barriers to establishing a family and school partnership have been identified, which can have both structural and psychological nature and be located in each of the interacting environments and at their interface¹⁰.

Methodological assumptions of the presented study

The paper presents fragmentary research results obtained under the individual project entitled *Primary school as a community of activi-*

⁹ F.L. Van Voorhis, M.F. Maier, J.L. Epstein, Ch.M. Lloyd, The Impact of Family Involvement on the Education of Children Ages 3 to 8: A Focus on Literacy and Math Achievement Outcomes and Social-Emotional Skills, MDRC. 2013. http://dev.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/The_Impact_of_Family_Involvement_FR.pdf [10 May 2019].

¹⁰ S.L. Christenson, *The Family-School Partnership: An Opportunity to Promote the Learning Competence of All Students*. "School Psychology Review", 02796015, 2004, Vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 83-104.

ties and subjective and intersubjective meanings of entities creating space for the implementation of special educational needs of students (Szkoła podstawowa jako wspólnota działania oraz subiektywnych i intersubiektywnych znaczeń podmiotów kreujących przestrzeń realizacji specjalnych potrzeb edukacyjnych uczniów). The project was implemented in the years 2015-2018, an in-depth analysis of the obtained material is currently being performed.

In qualitative research, interpretative orientation was adopted, constructivist grounded theorizing according to Kathy Charmaz¹¹. The sociological origin of grounded theory directs the researcher first and foremost to what can be called the “supra-individual dimension of reality”. A specific school as a “social system settings” is a good place to conduct research, and collect data from “social units” (the educational space of this school, its symbolic, intersubjective, subjective dimension). The exploration of the sociological dimension of educational phenomena allows a better description of the complexity of educational situations and forms the basis of humanistically oriented educational research¹².

The aim of the project was to describe and attempt to explain the complexity of the educational situation in the public primary school space, in which students with different/special educational needs complete their compulsory education.

The analysis allowed highlighting and explaining both fixed patterns and stability in the activities undertaken by the school supporting students in satisfying their needs, as well as internal change processes initiated to respond to new challenges and enable learning about the individual and intersubjective sphere of meanings constructed by the “actors” of the studied educational space (students, parents, teachers, school specialists, headmaster), exposure of contradictions, ambivalence and lack of connections.

¹¹ K. Charmaz, *Teoria ugruntowana. Praktyczny przewodnik po analizie jakościowej*, PWN, Warsaw 2009.

¹² D. Kubinowski, *Jakościowe badania pedagogiczne. Filozofia. Metodyka. Ewaluacja*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2010.

The study covered 8 primary schools, in which activities of the nature of internal evaluation with the researcher as a critical friend were conducted in consecutive two years. The subject of the evaluation was the fulfilment by the school of the requirement: *The school or institution supports the development of students, taking into account their individual situation.*

Evaluation research conducted in order of action allowed learning about the organization, implementation as well as internal and external conditions of psychological and educational support, activities in the field of educational support and support provided to students with special educational needs in public schools. Thanks to adopting specific criteria and indicators, the attempt to assess the effectiveness of assistance/support activities was possible. The results obtained in the study became the starting point for team formulation of postulates in the form of recommendations: reports for schools, indications for working with students (study of individual cases)¹³.

Moreover, the research constituted an attempt to discover the values present in everyday practice; by starting a hermeneutic discourse and common learning of the sense of undertaken actions, recreating the subjective and intersubjective structure of meanings (agreeing positions), dialogue of all interested parties (understanding one's future, support), empowering the implementers.

Intersubjective significance of family and school partnership, analysis of research results

The article describes the beliefs of parents and teachers on the educational partnership of schools and family, as well as barriers in its development, reconstructed on the basis of data originated from

¹³ K. Bidziński, *Naukowo-metodyczne wspieranie rozwoju szkoły – urzeczywistnianie idei edukacji włączającej*, [in:] *Człowiek w przestrzeni edukacyjnej współczesnego świata*, ed. E. Asmakovets, S. Koziej, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jana Kochanowskiego, Kielce 2017, pp. 120-132.

two group discussions conducted in one of the schools of Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship that participated in the project.

Data were obtained during:

- A focus group interview, (FGI)¹⁴ conducted among parents of students of the second stage of education;
- discussions with the use of metaplan, with teachers, headmasters and school specialists.

The focus group interview was a classic single session in which a group of ten parents of students from grades IV-VI participated. They were people who accepted the invitation to participate in the discussion about opportunities and limitations in the development of family and school partnership in activities for students. Parents participating in the meeting know one another well because they have been accompanying their children at the consecutive stages of education for several years. Prior acquaintance of the participants and the community of goals made it easier to discuss topics that are not discussed in a group of unknown people. This was possible thanks to the high sense of security and openness characterizing this parent group. In the focus study, an important role was played by moderators who, thanks to their actions, dynamised the group process and minimised negative group effects¹⁵ In the session the role of a moderator was played by a guidance counsellor, a person known to parents, recognised and trusted, and a researcher who has the competence to moderate the group process.

The second source of information presented in the article was a discussion with the use of a metaplan about family and school partnership in educational activities. The classic form of the method was adopted, in which the respondents, working in teams, answered four questions: How it is? How should it be? Why is it not as it should be? What should be done to make it as it should be? For answering the first question, data collected in previous evaluation

¹⁴ J. Lisek-Michalska, *Badania fokusowe. Problemy metodologiczne i etyczne*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2013, pp. 14-23.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

activities was used (e.g. data from focus discussions and questionnaire surveys conducted among parents of children of grades IV-VI).

The basis of the discussion in both groups was the J.L. Epstein's partnership model, in which the following areas of cooperation were distinguished: parenting, communications, parental volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community¹⁶.

The collected material has been transcribed and coded¹⁷. Categories were created, which were ordered in the form of identified impediments to partnership and identified causes of difficulties. Partnership development directions created by the team were also presented.

As it results from the relationships between teachers and parents, their mutual contacts usually proceed in a way that is satisfactory for both parties, however, the discussion focused primarily on identifying barriers in building a school and family partnership, and searching for new forms of cooperation.

The results are of individual nature and cannot be generalised, but they illustrate some problems arising in the area of partnership and the way of their interpretation by school entities of parents and teachers.

Parenting

In group work, the following understanding of this area was adopted.

Parenting, is an area of cooperation between family and school, which involves providing various forms of support to parents and families in order to create an optimal home environment for developing children. This is done mainly by helping parents to broaden their knowledge and improve parental skills needed to understand children's needs and provide them with healthy and safe development conditions.

¹⁶ J.L. Epstein, *School...*, op. cit., pp. 11-14.

¹⁷ K. Charmaz, op. cit.

Table 1. Strong and weak sides of family and school partnership in the area of "parenting"

PARENTING	
STRONG SIDES	WEAK SIDES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents can count on advice from teachers, school specialists, headmasters regarding raising a child and organizing learning at home. - Many teachers and school specialists have extensive psychological and pedagogical knowledge, thanks to which they can provide valuable advice to parents of students. - Many teachers and parents managed to establish a mutual partner relationship. - Parents have access to the Internet and through the school website can use a rich set of educational materials on effective parenting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack or delayed reaction of the school and other institutions to manifestations of parental neglect or problems experienced by the child and family. - Parents of students experiencing educational or learning problems usually avoid contact with the school. - Not all parents want to benefit from the help proposed by the school to improve their parenting and solve educational problems. - Sometimes the nature and severity of family problems considerably exceeds the possibilities of school help.

Source: own research

Forms of cooperation used in school in the area of "parenting":

- *parenting interactions*, which aim to shape students' respect for their parents,
- *individual advice* for parents of students regarding solving everyday parenting problems,
- *systematic provision of information to parents* about the didactic and educational situation of their children,
- *meetings of students' parents with specialists* from outside the school,
- *popularising educational and informational materials* for parents on effective parenting, through various media,
- *informing parents about various non-school forms of help* to improve parenting,
- *annual organization of consultation points of*: probation officer, social worker of the City-County Social Welfare Centre (MGOPS) (representing the municipal team for the prevention

of domestic violence, an addiction therapist or a mediator of the District Family Social Service Agency (PCPR)).

Strong and weak sides of partnership in this area, selected in discussions, are listed below.

Conclusions formulated by the team to improve partnership in the area of "parenting"

- *What is needed is even greater than before common concern of teachers and parents to build a partner relationship. The shared belief in the common goals and values may serve this purpose (for both entities, the child and their optimal development are the essence and sense of cooperation).*
- *Meetings of parents with school and non-school specialists should be made a natural situation that involves all parents, not just those who experience educational difficulties. Plan together a strategy for activities that support the optimal development of each student. It is good if students also actively participate in these meetings.*
- *Systematic information for parents about school and non-school forms of parenting improvement, encouraging them to use this form of support.*
- *Appreciate, more than before, parenting effort, show parents of the students great understanding and provide them with support. Appreciate especially those parents who are critical partners and very involved in the matter of child education.*
- *Quickly react to parental neglect by starting school or non-school interventions.*
- *Show parents the impact the family situation has on the child's educational achievement, help recognize barriers on the family side and support their elimination.*

According to conversations with teachers and parents of students, public awareness of the importance of parenting in supporting child development is increasing. This is evidenced by the statements of parents in which they declare readiness to develop educational competence and signal the need to look for methods to optimise the educational role of the home environment. A certain group of parents perceive in school a natural ally in building effec-

tive parenting and turn to teachers and school specialists for help in solving educational problems. However, according to teachers' statements, the school often does not have sufficient potential to effectively support parents. However, the biggest problem is a fairly large group of parents who, despite serious life and upbringing difficulties, do not turn to school for support and reject any forms of help.

Communications

In group work, the following understanding of this area was adopted.

Communications, this type of cooperation focuses on all forms of searching for an effective, two-way flow of information between the school and home, in the scope of the school's curriculum offer and progress in the development of children.

In the school, numerous forms of two-way communication are used:

- *general meetings in classrooms,*
- *individual meetings of a school representative with a parent,*
- *open school, meetings during which a parent can meet with all school staff involved in education,*
- *prophylactic parent teacher meetings, cyclical training for parents conducted by external specialists,*
- *problem-related meetings, initiated by parents or a form master, which concern a form problem, or a problem involving more than one student. It is often an opportunity to establish a common strategy of actions,*
- *librus system, an electronic grade book, contains various options for informing parents about learning outcomes and attendance (e.g. SMSInfo service),*
- *information for parents posted on information boards in the area of school, intended for students of different age groups,*

- *informing about individual successes of students, regularly, every semester, the board at the entrance is used to promote students achieving the highest academic achievement.*
- *information for parents posted on the school's website.*

Strong and weak sides of partnership in the area of communications, selected in discussions, are listed below.

Table 2. Strong and weak sides of family and school partnership in the area of "communications"

COMMUNICATION FAMILY - SCHOOL	
STRONG SIDES	WEAK SIDES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers are characterised by a good knowledge of the local environment, teachers - parents contacts are personal. - Many effective forms of parent-teacher communication have been developed. - New communication opportunities are continuously searched for, also using new technologies (electronic grade book, school website with a rich set of educational and informational materials). - Honesty and reliability in providing information about the child. - Mutual trust of parents and teachers (not applicable to all parents). - Focus on the successes of students (parents are happy to receive positive information about their child). - Parents commonly have access to the Internet and often learn about school's activities through the website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The attendance of parents at meetings is various (sometimes only 50% of parents are present). The absence of parents means that it is impossible to adopt solutions acceptable to everyone. - Teachers do not always want to listen to parents' opinion. - Sometimes the parents of the students do not reveal the problems to the form master, hide the difficulties and their causes. - In school practice, meetings with parents related to the learning or behaviour difficulties of the child dominate. - The initiator of the meetings is usually school, parents rarely signal the need for conversation. - Discussing the student's issues can be superficial and is accompanied by rush and indifference or is very emotional with elements of verbal aggression. - A certain group of parents does not use modern information carriers.

Source: own research

Conclusions formulated by the team to improve partnership in the area of “communications”

- *Both parties, parents and teachers, should demonstrate even greater communication mindfulness in building mutual authority in the eyes of the child/student.*
- *The basis of effective cooperation parents – teachers is honest and open communication, skills in effective communication and organization of group work should be improved.*
- *Comments on mutual relationships should be passed directly to each other, and difficult matters should also be discussed.*
- *It is necessary to ensure appropriate conditions, in which the parent is informed about the difficult behaviour of their child (preferably during individual conversations, at the right time and place).*
- *Certain educational problems of students, after obtaining the consent of their parents, should also be discussed in the presence of other parents from a given form, so that they understand better the didactic situation (e.g. differences in assessing students with dyslexia).*
- *It is worth looking for a new formula for organizing meetings with parents, abandoning traditional form meetings for meetings in a less formal atmosphere.*
- *If this is not possible “building a fully cooperating parent group”, it is worth focusing the effort on forming good, safe relationships of the form master with each parent individually. Group meetings should be limited to the necessary minimum, and more time and energy should be dedicated to the individual contact teacher – parent.*
- *It is necessary to look for more ways to persuade some parents to attend school meetings and increase their activity in discussing their child’s problems.*
- *Greater consequence of parents and teachers when implementing jointly agreed arrangements concerning students is necessary.*
- *It is expedient to involve students, especially older students more closely, in parents’ and teachers’ conversations about the school situation.*
- *Meetings with specialists from outside the school require very good organisation, proper selection of the subject (important matters rele-*

- vant for parents), appropriate level of speakers (specialist, but also a person who can organise a proper meeting); ensuring full prior notification of parents about the meeting (its date, duration, issues raised). It may be worth collecting a declaration of readiness to attend meetings from parents before the meeting. If the parents do not declare their participation, it is better to quit organizing the meeting.*
- It is worth publishing a school newsletter for parents and sending it online (via e-mail or to download on the website). The newsletter could contain information about current events, advice for parents, etc.*
 - It can facilitate contact between parents and school staff via a website (e.g. online question box; parent discussion forum; chat with the headmaster).*

Effective communication is an essential element of successful partnership and affects its quality. Care for communication efficiency should be shared by both partners, but teacher as a professional should demonstrate more responsibility. They should, thanks to the use of communication skills, adapt their style (level of openness, confidence, choice of vocabulary) to the needs and capabilities of a partner.

The attempt to organize parent teams so that they over time become a kind of support group, a place where one can speak openly about the experienced difficulties, counting on support in various dimensions, requires form masters to possess further competence. These are: the ability to moderate group work, understand group mechanisms, methods to support the group process to lead the group to the cooperation phase (high sense of security, high openness, acceptance, readiness to cooperate). According to teachers' opinions, not all parent teams are ready to take on this challenge. In such cases, it is better to create a support group only for interested parents.

An interesting idea is to invite students to the teacher-parent discussion. Thanks to this, the student could feel more subjectively, their responsibility for the obtained results and the help obtained from adults would increase. Thanks to a direct meeting of all interested persons, communication could be more open and honest.

A child in the presence of adults who are important for them could talk about both successes and difficulties experienced, seek understanding and ask for help and support.

Student's learning at home

In group work, the following understanding of this area was adopted.

Learning at home, this type of partnership comprises providing parents with information and ideas, including helping children with homework and all after-school activities related to the implementation of the school curriculum, but also creating opportunities for children to participate in valuable educational experiences (developing interests). The school suggests parents how they can help their children organise learning at home, provides information on developing children's skills which facilitate learning and methods to deal with limitations and encountered difficulties.

Table 3. Strong and weak sides of family and school partnership in the area of "learning at home"

STUDENT'S LEARNING AT HOME	
STRONG SIDES	WEAK SIDES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The vast majority of parents is interested in the educational situation of their children and a relatively large group of parents systematically cooperate with the school. - Parents can count on advice from teachers, school specialists, headmasters regarding raising a child and organizing learning at home. - A large group of students is covered by psychological and educational help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents sometimes do not know how to help a child learn, in the following years of education the problem increases. - Some parents have unrealistic expectations of the school and the child as a student. - Some parents have little knowledge about the curriculum, requirements standards, and assessment methods. - Numerous children must attend additional language classes and private lessons of other subjects.

Source: own research

The following forms of activity are used in school to organize student's learning at home.

- *Parents are obliged to help children do their homework, control their preparation for classes.*
- *Parents' task is to provide children with necessary accessories and didactic aids.*
- *The school day room relieves parents of the need to organise learning at home, many students do their homework during the day room classes, under the supervision of teachers.*
- *There is peer support at school, but the youngest children need parental involvement, e.g. bringing a child to such a lesson when they leave school earlier and this is not practised.*

Strong and weak sides of partnership in this area, selected in discussions, are listed below.

Conclusions formulated by the team to improve partnership in the area of "student's learning at home"

- *Conduct classes for parents on effective ways to organise students' learning at home.*
- *Develop together, with the participation of the student, parent, form master and teacher of a given subject, a common strategy to provide help in learning a given subject. Prepare appropriate materials for the student, which facilitate their homework, give instructions to parents how to support the student in catching up.*
- *Contribute together to the increase of the students' educational aspirations, show them the value of school education, develop motivation and focus on school tasks.*
- *Appreciate the effort of children to try to overcome school difficulties, even if it does not bring the expected results.*
- *Individualise the tasks set for students even more clearly, adapt the requirements to the capabilities of students.*
- *Do not compare individual learning outcomes. Limit the presentation of differences between the results achieved by children (refrain from comparing the average of grades for classes, for students).*
- *Appreciate other, not only didactic, successes of students.*

- *Reduce the amount of given homework.*
- *Adapt the degree of difficulty of given homework to the skills and abilities of individual children.*

Contemporary school is still looking for effective ways to support parents in organising learning at home for their children. The traditional understanding of how to implement this role is changing. In the past, parents were expected to adopt the role of “a home teacher”, whose task was to ensure that children were carefully prepared for school lessons by doing so-called “homework” and acquiring appropriate knowledge. Correct fulfilment of these tasks required parents to have rich interdisciplinary school knowledge and didactic skills. These expectations were unrealistic and many parents did not manage to perform these tasks or gave up their practice. Nowadays, the understanding of the role of parents in organising homework for their children is changing. It is assumed that the school should be a place of the main educational activity of the child, and the home space should be a sphere of rest, recreation and developing extracurricular interests. Currently, a parent is expected to perform mainly a function of motivating and inspiring a child to undertake various activities, which have educational value. He will become an ally of a child in organizing the learning process, a source of support in overcoming school difficulties, and an organiser of extracurricular learning space.

As the discussion shows, a large group of parents is well oriented in the child’s school situation, is interested in the tasks they undertake, knows their strengths, analyse obstacles and limitations, appreciate the effort and enjoy success, and skilfully support their child in difficult situations. These parents use the advice and tips from the form master and other teachers, they look for effective ways of motivating the child and organising extramural educational experiences.

According to the participants of the discussion, many parents still traditionally understand their role as organisers of learning at home for their children and encounter serious difficulties in its prac-

tice. These people, using inefficient ways of organising learning, based on personal school experience, duplicate these strategies and unconsciously obstruct their children from carrying out school tasks. A serious mistake of a certain group of parents is that they excessively help or completely relieve their child of homework and thus release them from responsibility for school results.

Some parents complain that they are unable to provide substantive assistance to children in performing school tasks and do not know how to motivate them to work independently. Every year, they experience increasing difficulties in organizing learning at home for children and over time they abandon this task.

Among a certain group of parents, there is a belief that educational success is not possible without organizing specialized, extramural didactic support for the child. These parents decide to pay for additional language classes and private lessons of other subjects.

Another group of parents is characterised by a total lack of interest in child education and low educational aspirations.

To summarise, parents need more information about the child's cognitive possibilities and limitations, their motivation and educational aspirations, but at the same time data on the essence of the learning process and its psychological and sociological conditions, which will allow a more complete understanding of the school situation. The belief of all: students, parents and teachers that experiencing learning difficulties is something natural. They should discuss them calmly, searching together for their sources and ways to overcome. Particular attention should be paid to identification of causes of educational difficulties of students inherent in the family environment and manners of conducting school education. Parents and teachers have the greatest impact on eliminating these factors. It is worth undertaking an open conversation between teachers and parents about family and school conditions of the learning process. It is necessary to consider together what parents and teachers can do to become more effective allies of learning children.

Decision making of family and school

In group work, the following understanding of this area was adopted.

Decision making, this type includes involving parents in deciding about all matters related to school life and developing parental representation.

Table 4. Strong and weak sides of family and school partnership in the area of "decision making"

DECISION MAKING	
STRONG SIDES	WEAK SIDES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents' comments regarding the organization of school learning are taken into account by the headmaster and teachers. - Parents decide on all educational and support activities addressed to their child. - Parents approve the Individual Educational and Therapeutic Program (IPET) and other programs designed for their children. - A certain group of parents got involved in the work of bodies representing parents (form trios). - A certain group of parents gets involved in providing opinions on school documents (curricula). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents are not always involved in the work of educational teams planning a strategy to help in learning, as well as seeking and eliminating the causes of difficulties. - Many parents avoid participating in the work of bodies representing parents (parent's association). - Low parent attendance at meetings. - The school not sufficiently recognizes the possibilities of parental support.

Source: own research

The following forms of decision making were listed:

- *the school invites parents to work in school bodies such as a parent's association or form trios;*
- *some parents take part in planning school work (upbringing and preventive program);*
- *parents take part in the work of problem solving and advisory teams;*

- *parents make important decisions about children's education and therapy;*
- *parents of students from the same form participate in planning special events, trips.*

Strong and weak sides of partnership in this area, selected in discussions, are listed below.

Conclusions formulated by the team to improve partnership in the area of “decision making”

- *Make parents aware of their rights to influence the functioning of the school, both in terms of curricula and organization.*
- *Together with parents, define the limits of their influence on educational decisions regarding their child and school policy.*
- *Appreciate parents who get involved in the work of problem solving teams.*
- *Create more opportunities to undertake decision-making activities and provide parents with the skills they need.*

For many decades, parents had not been treated as equal partners of the school, their influence on the organization of didactic and educational processes was severely limited by the state. It was only after the systemic transformation in our country that the provisions regarding the participation of parents in decision-making processes were changed. It takes time for parents to learn and appreciate the rights to decide on the program and organizational functioning of the school. Greater parent participation in planning the school's educational policy brings hope for their greater responsibility and concern for the school's future.

Volunteering

In group work, the following understanding of this area was adopted.

Volunteering, includes all activities aimed at acquiring and organizing help and support of parents for children studying at school, their teachers and the school as an institution.

In the study school, volunteering takes the following forms:

- *financial and material support of the school by parents,*
- *parents' participation in organizing and conducting school trips, special events,*
- *participation of parents as experts during certain lessons at school or during trips (e.g. to the parent's place of work),*
- *cleaning works in the classroom,*
- *other, depending on the needs, considering parents' competence, e.g. legal advice, environmental lobbying for the school.*

Strong and weak sides of partnership in this area, selected in discussions, are listed below.

Table 5. Strong and weak sides of family and school partnership in the area of "volunteering"

VOLUNTEERING	
STRONG SIDES	WEAK SIDES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A large group of parents, especially of younger children, is eager to engage in various form and school activities. - Parents have a variety of personal and material resources that can serve the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A certain group of parents avoids school activities. - School expectations towards parents can sometimes be difficult to fulfil.

Source: own research

Conclusions formulated by the team to improve partnership in the area of "volunteering"

- *Inviting parents to get involved in the school activities requires a good orientation in the resources they have.*
- *The school's expectations for parents should be clearly defined.*
- *It is necessary to create conditions for parents to be able to propose forms of activities for the school according to their possibilities.*

Parents are perceived by teachers/form masters as an important source of support. Teachers count on parents as a source of infor-

mation about a child, they need their help in planning and practising educational activities. It is important that parents have the opportunity to perform various activities for the school and be appreciated for undertaking this effort.

Collaborating of school and family with community

In group work, the following understanding of this area was adopted.

Collaborating with community, this type of cooperation between school and parents includes all forms aimed at recognizing and integrating remedial actions and services provided by the local community for schools, families and children. The school helps families in obtaining information about institutional resources of the local community, which can help improve home conditions and facilitate children's learning and development.

Table 6. Strong and weak sides of family and school partnership in the area of "collaborating with community"

COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY	
STRONG SIDES	WEAK SIDES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the school environment there are many institutions working for the child and their family. - The school effectively cooperates with various institutions working for the child and their family, helps parents in establishing cooperation and coordinates support activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents sometimes reject the offer of specialist help, e.g. support from the employees of psychological and pedagogical counselling centre, social assistance. - A long waiting time for help from some institutions, e.g. to obtain a decision or opinion in a psychological and pedagogical counselling centre. - Hindered flow of information between the school and various institutions working for the child and their family.

Source: own research

Cooperation in this area takes the following forms:

- *mediation between the family and institutions supporting the child's education (psychological and pedagogical counselling centre, mental health outpatient clinic),*
- *mediation between family and social welfare institutions (District Family Social Service Agency (PCPR), City-County Social Welfare Centre (MGOPS), judicial institutions (family court, probation officer),*
- *mediation between family and non-school educational institutions (cultural centre, sports club).*

Strong and weak sides of partnership in this area, selected in discussions, are listed below.

Conclusions formulated by the team to improve partnership in the area of "collaborating with community"

- *In the case of students with a complex didactic and educational situation, early and quick specialist diagnosis is needed. Parents of these students should be encouraged to undergo examinations in a psychological and pedagogical counselling centre and inform the school about the results of the diagnosis.*
- *Care should be taken to update specialist student information at the appropriate time (current opinion). In the event of a change in the student's situation, e.g. the intensification of the student's difficulties, new circumstances in their life, apply for a diagnosis without waiting for the customary two years between consecutive tests.*
- *In the case of complex family problems, it is necessary to build a coalition of various specialist institutions working for the child and the family, and quickly take coordinated intervention measures.*
- *Strengthening cooperation with the environment (parents, supporting institutions). Creating a local network of institutions, and organizations working together with the school for the child and their family. Establishing in-depth cooperation.*

The search for a model of local collaboration for the child and their family is underway. In this model, the school could be a central point where all activities are combined. Currently, it is expected

that various institutions from the local environment, in cooperation, will support school and family in the performance of caring and educational tasks.

Based on the analysis of the statements of teachers and parents of students, factors that hinder building a family and school partnership were identified. The barriers selected in the study were combined into the following categories, based on their sources.

Barriers on the side of the student's family hindering partnership building:

- Lack of time experienced by many parents, absorbing parents' professional activity (work abroad, shift work, overtime work), domestic and family responsibilities (caring for younger children and others).
- A certain group of families experiences very serious problems in the form of: financial insufficiency, chronic illness of a family member, social maladjustment (alcoholism, domestic violence), neglect of emotional needs of children and others. It includes families covered by the "Blue Card" procedure, supervision of a probation officer, family assistance, using various forms of support, but also those that hide internal problems and do not use institutional support.
- A small group of parents experiences digital exclusion, those people do not use modern information and communications technologies and are thus deprived of access to relevant information about education transmitted in this way.
- In the case of one family (a bicultural family), a specific style of upbringing caused by cultural differences and specific parental attitudes were identified.

Barriers on the side of the school and education system hindering partnership building:

- The incidental and intervention nature of the parents' interaction with the form master and school specialists prevails, the action is taken only in response to a serious crisis.
- A deficiency of teacher's communication skills and support of group processes in parental teams.

- Lack of competence of the school staff and legal and organizational possibilities to undertake specialist support activities addressed to the family system of the student being in crisis. Some parents expect the school to be ready to undertake such interventions.
- Lack of organizational solutions to establish and continue systematic cooperation between the school and various institutions acting for the child and their family.
- Hindered flow of information on the student's family situation and actions taken by various institutions for the benefit of the child and their family (e.g. the problem of personal data protection).
- Lack of full recognition by the school of the resources and possibilities of parents to undertake activities for the school.

Beliefs and emotional attitudes of a certain group of parents about cooperation with school hindering partnership building:

- Underestimation or overestimation by parents of school as a source of support in situations of experiencing serious family problems.
- Parents' belief that a visit to a non-school specialist is necessary only if the child experiences very serious educational difficulties.
- Parents' beliefs that their opinions or postulates regarding school activities will not be considered by teachers and headmasters.
- Beliefs of a certain group of parents that their commitment to school is not needed or is not possible.
- A belief that the parents' interest in the course of the child's education and its effects is not welcomed by teachers and the headmaster.
- The reluctance and distrust of a certain group of parents to school as an institution, which may be the result of previous unfavourable experiences (including those from school times).
- The use of help and advice is associated by some parents with acknowledgement of their upbringing failure and thus the source of experiencing shame.

- Reluctance of some parents to take responsibility for decisions regarding their child's education and school work.
- Fear that teachers perceive the parents' great involvement in the child's affairs as an attempt of excessive interference in the school's activities.

Beliefs and emotional attitude of a certain group of teachers hindering the establishment of a partnership with parents:

- Fear of critical assessment on the part of parents regarding undertaken educational activities.
- A belief that a certain group of parents is too demanding towards the school.
- Expectation of parents, not taking into account their individual resources, that they will professionally help their children with homework.
- Lack of trust in some parents, showing distance with them.
- Feelings of pity and powerlessness towards families that neglect the needs of children.
- Feeling of loneliness and helplessness in the face of complicated family problems of students.

Summary

The idea of building a partnership between family and school presented in the paper is not new. It has long been known that teachers should have a good understanding of their students' family environment and include family and environmental learning contexts in their activities. It is expected from parents and teachers to become partners of their children in the learning process. However, this postulate is now gaining special significance in connection with the school's ambitious task of enrolling all children in a public school and organising and performing personalised education. Creating education tailored to the student is only possible in a partner alliance with their family, based on the resources of the local environment, with the high involvement of all school staff.

During the research process, factors conditioning the implementation of family and school partnership in activities for the benefit of child development were identified. The external and internal conditions of parents and teachers relationships in creating the partnership were determined.

External conditions of a relationship.

- The cultural context of the importance of family and education for human development, including various concepts of mutual influence of both environments (the perspective of separate, sequential, systemic impact and the perspective of overlapping zones of influence¹⁸).
- Legally guaranteed (the Constitution¹⁹, the Educational Law Act²⁰ and others) dominant/superior role of the family in raising a child.
- The Polish education system provides support of school for the educational role of the family; school's statutory task is to cooperate with the student's family and the local community²¹.
- Schools have developed various forms of implementing partnerships (in terms of supporting parenting, mutual communication, organization of learning at home, decision making, parental volunteering and collaboration of the family and school with the local community²²). Constant search for new solutions in this area is underway.
- Systemic and organizational solutions require various institutions working for the child and their family to establish close cooperation with the school.
- Parents and teachers are limited by time and available environmental and individual resources in the creation of partnerships.

¹⁸ J.L. Epstein, *School...*, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

¹⁹ The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, art. 48, Journal of Laws of 1997, no. 78, item 483 as amended.

²⁰ The Educational Law Act, Journal of Laws of 2017 item 59 as amended.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² J.L. Epstein, *School...*, op. cit., pp. 11-14.

Internal conditions of a relationship:

- Community of values; the best interests of the child and their optimal development are most important for the family and school. Awareness of the community of values can provide a solid foundation for building a partnership.
- Different, sometimes contradictory understanding of the essence of these values, and especially the way to implement them, can be a source of serious conflicts in the performance of daily tasks by the parents of the student and the teachers. It is necessary to reveal these conflicts and try to resolve them.
- Beliefs of parents and teachers about the role of both environments (family and school) in raising a child and their mutual dependence. A condition for a satisfying relationship is to learn about each other's beliefs and try to make expectations real.
- Emotional (from hostility to mutual respect) attitude of entities towards each other. The intensification of negative emotions can prevent or seriously hinder establishing and maintaining a partnership. Self-awareness of entities in terms of experienced emotions and their sources, as well as the impact on the shaped relationship is important for building a partnership.
- The communication competence of entities serving for the exchange of information and mutual intentions combined with readiness to engage in dialogue are a tool for building a partnership of parents and teachers.

Modern researchers of school reality are expected not only to reveal the imperfections of school practices and formulate normative recommendations, but above all to conduct positive research to strengthen the participating entities and support them in the process of change.

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Towards a radical life. The social and aesthetic themes in Helen Keller's activity in defence of humanity¹

ABSTRACT: Edyta Nieduziak, *Towards a radical life. The social and aesthetic themes in Helen Keller's activity in defence of humanity*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 229-254. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.10>

The article is an attempt to describe three biographical motifs of H. Keller, referring to aesthetic experiences (R. Ingarden) caused by various experiences: tactile in contact with sculpture, haptic in contact with music, and literary. The starting point to consider, however, is the category of humanity in the sense of M.S. Archer. The reflexivity characteristic of humanity, combined with the aesthetic experience, makes the themes describe the non-aesthetic experiences of H. Keller. In the analysis, the author used H. Keller's correspondence, her works, biographical sources, photographs and video recordings.

KEY WORDS: humanity, H. Keller, aesthetic experience, disability culture, disability, haptic aesthetics

¹ The article was created as a part of a research project titled "Towards a radical life. The social and political, as well as, social and aesthetic themes in Helen Keller's activity", conducted along with dr Sabina Pawlik at the University of Śląsk in Katowice.

Introduction

If we adopt the category of humanity as one aiding the description of typically human phenomena and actions, differentiating us from other beings, then using it in the characteristic of cultural activity and, more precisely, artistic activity, both active – meaning the creation of the works of art, as well as, passive, related to the reception of the aforementioned, it appears almost necessary and difficult to replace with other categories. All the more, if we intend to reveal the mutual dependence between culture and art, and the social phenomena, particularly those, that shape the human being, i.e. the educational phenomena. Let us add, that the category of humanity has been present almost since the beginnings of the pedagogical thought, particularly in the theory of education and general pedagogy. Currently, the category demands reconstruction and a new take, particularly within the context of post-modern views². The category is also useful, for the new understanding of Helen Keller's activity, who, at least on the grounds of the Polish pedagogical literature, is associated with the miracle child, or, as a precursor of new therapeutic and educational methods in working with persons with disabilities³. However, it is not the sole life of the famous woman that is interesting here, but, above all, the coherence of her views regarding culture and art with social issues.

Within this context, I perceive humanity not as a differentiating property of men, giving them a morally privileged status that humanity⁴, nor as a feature of contemporary social conscience lost in freedom and a relativism of values⁵, but, as described by Margaret

² M. Lipowicz, *Człowieczeństwo jako (nie)zbędna kategoria refleksji pedagogicznej? O ponowoczesnym kryzysie teorii wychowania w obliczu wyzwania trans- i posthumanizmu*, „Studia z Teorii Wychowania” 2017, no. 2(19).

³ Cf. *Edukacja i rehabilitacja osób głuchoniewidomych*, (eds.) Cz. Kossakowski, M. Zaorska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego, Olsztyn 2002.

⁴ Por. *Człowiek – wychowanie – kultura. Wybór tekstów*, (ed.) F. Adamski, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 1993.

⁵ Cf. T. Nakoneczny, *Ponowoczesność czyli człowieczeństwo zdegradowane*, „Rocznik Teologii Katolickiej” 2014 vol. XII/1, pp. 81-103.

S. Archer, as the "pillar of agency"⁶, as a combination of the following planes: the self, the person, the subject of action and the actor. As stated by Markieta Domecka in reference to M.S. Archer's views "Humanity as a whole, constitutes an anchorage both for the person, the subject of action, as well as, the actor. It is of fundamental meaning, as it allows to unify many varying life experiences, structural determinants, reflexive reworking and the normative expectations in one human being"⁷. Therefore, it creates the potential to grasp the life activity of H. Keller as an example of actions, that may be ascribed to other individuals as well, rather than simply from the point of view of her exceptional life itself. This way, one may present her life not as a monument, ideal model to follow, but as an activity, that may be ascribed to other people and for other people.

M.S. Archer assumes, that the particular feature of humanity is reflexivity, that serves the purpose of something as a buffer zone between men and society, allowing the to remain themselves, while at the same time, be subjected to the influence of social forces, and be an active agent of the transformations that occur in the society. "[Reflexivity] performs this mediatory role by virtue of the fact that we deliberate about ourselves in relation to the social situations that we confront, certainly fallibly, certainly incompletely and necessarily under our own descriptions because that is the only way we can know anything"⁸. Therefore, the way we perceive and understand the world is tainted with our subjective, own way of thinking, feeling, through the prism of which, men attempt to make a change. M.S. Archer explains, that the mediatory function of reflexivity creates the opportunity to refer to two ontologies: the objective - specific for "social emergent properties" and subjective - characteristic

⁶ M.S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo. Problem sprawstwa*, Zakład Wydawniczy „NOMOS”, Kraków 2013.

⁷ M. Domecka, *Wprowadzenie do polskiego tłumaczenia książki Margaret S. Archer „Człowieczeństwo. Problem Sprawstwa”* [in:] M.S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo...*, op. cit., p. XLIII.

⁸ M.S. Archer, *Morfogeneza społeczeństwa: gdzie pasuje „Człowieczeństwo”?*, [in:] Eadem, *Człowieczeństwo...*, op. cit., pp. LXIV-LXV.

for “agential emergent properties. What is entailed by the above is that subjectivity is (a) real, (b) irreducible) and (c) possesses causal efficacy”⁹. Exactly such approach, accepting both the personal, private perspective of the human, as well as, the perspective of the subject becoming a part of social phenomena, which the subject intends to influence consciously, however, by virtue of a filter of own experiences, proves helpful in the attempt to grasp the activity of H. Keller. Writing about her, one cannot omit the issue of disability, that essentially characterised her personal identity and world experience, however, at the same time, examine her as a person involved in social actions, sensitive to the unrest and the issues of the world, that she experienced through the prism of her own, different functioning, different reception. That does not mean however, that it was of a lesser sort. I use the term „different”, consciously, as it is precisely that difference, that often becomes a path, the means to show how the mankind, despite its heterogeneity caused by various factors, including disability, remains similar in fundamental matters regarding values such as, beauty, goodness, and sensitivity, in other words, that which makes us aware of our presence in the world.

One matter remains, that may be helpful in the description of the activity of aesthetic nature. It is the matter of one of the essential experiences, irremovable in contact with the works of art, culture, contact with nature, i.e. the matter of aesthetic experience. The experience is described extensively by Gorgias, Jacques Maritain and Irena Wojnar herself¹⁰, in the Polish source literature, it was promoted i.a. by Roman Ingarden. The author of the book titled “*Experience, Artwork and Value*” (“*Przeżycie – dzieło – wartość*”) a work fundamental for the understanding of the category of aesthetic experience, defined it as a value of particular significance, which

⁹ Ibidem, pp. LXV-LXVI, Cf. M.S. Archer, *The Ontological Status of subjectivity: the Missing Link Between Structure and Agency*, [in:] *Contribution to Social Ontology*, (eds.) C. Lawson, J. Spiro Latsis, N. Martins, Routledge, Abingdon 2007, pp. 17-31.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Lach-Rosocha, *Pedagogia przeżycia estetycznego w wychowaniu człowieka jako osoby*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków 2013.

appears "against a perceived or solely imagined object (thing, process)", and it "does not allow the experiencing subject to remain "cold", but puts him in a particular state of affection"¹¹. Due to limited space, I shall not characterise the subsequent phases of the aesthetic experience in detail, encouraging those interested to read the author himself. However, one should remind, that the aesthetic experience causes the subject to experience numerous different psychological states from the so called "initial emotion", i.e. „initial emotion", that is the aforementioned emotion or astonishment, through the phase of a certain tuning out from the "natural course of everyday life" to the change of attitude towards an "aesthetic apprehension", characterised not by focusing on actual facts but on qualitative creations¹². Therefore, an aesthetic object is constituted, which "cannot be identified with anything that is real", however, this notion of the realistic object could initiate the entire process of the aesthetic experience¹³. Although R. Ingarden notes, that not every aesthetic experience leads to such far-fetched consequences, i.e. to the birth of an aesthetic object, when it actually happens, the process of experiencing is not yet finished. "In the last phase [...] a particular moment is included [...] of stating, and rooting in a being a constituted aesthetic object"¹⁴. That means a certain return to reality, or even the everyday life, that contains new qualities, previously unseen.

Here, I will make a bold move of correlating the category of aesthetic experience with the M.S. Archer's understanding of reflexivity as a feature that defines humanity. The author writes that "in a nutshell, it will be maintained that the individual, as presented here in his or her concrete singularity, has powers of ongoing re-

¹¹ R. Ingarden, *Przeżycie - dzieło - wartość*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1966.

¹² R. Ingarden, *Przeżycie estetyczne i przedmiot estetyczny*, [in:] *Teoria wychowania estetycznego. Wybór tekstów*, (ed.) I. Wojnar, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1994, pp. 52-53.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 51.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 55.

flexive monitoring of both self and society, which enables this subject to make *commitments* in a genuine act of solidarity. These are far outside the register of 'Modernity's Man', who remains shackled to his own individualistic preference schedule. In parallel, this subject is also capable of authentic *creativity*, which can transform 'society's conversation' in a radical way, one which is foreign to 'Society's Being' who is condemned to making conventionally acceptable permutations upon it¹⁵„. In other words, I assume that the aesthetic experience may be one of the experiences that make men an executive, creative being, that expands beyond conventional models. Moreover, reflexivity, in combination with the aesthetic experience, may cause this "authentic creativity", which M.S. Archer refers to, to manifest in the sphere of social and not just artistic actions, however the latter may be or even are the starting point of the aesthetic experience. Thus, when we read about the radical life of H. Keller¹⁶, I mean not only her radical views, determined and uncompromising, but here primarily, I am thinking of her strive for significant changes in the social and the political life, which she described within the context or in combination with the description of aesthetic experiences.

Let us add, following Maria Popczyk, that the Ingardenian understanding of the aesthetic object is of ontological nature, his being depends on the experiencing subject, his or her acts of cognition. "The work of art is a schematic creation possessing potential place. The role of the recipient revolves around the process of instantiation, i.e. the complementation and the actualisation of underdetermined places"¹⁷. This complementary character of the aesthetic experience gains particular significance in reference to the specifics of the reception of the works of art by persons with disabilities. One should highlight, that the aesthetic experience is determined by the

¹⁵ M.S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo...*, op. cit., p. 297.

¹⁶ Por. K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller. (The History of Disability)* New York University Press, New York 2004.

¹⁷ M. Popczyk, *Przeżycie estetyczne a struktura dzieła sztuki w ujęciu Mikela Dufrenne'a i Romana Ingardena*, „Folia Philosophica” 1992, no. 10, pp. 36-37.

contemplation of the qualities of sensual things¹⁸. Due to H. Keller's legacy, we know that the dysfunctions of the sense organs turn out to be the "semaphores of a new path of the reception of the works of art and its experience" and not a barrier that keeps the persons with disabilities away from the plane of aesthetic values.

Therefore, the aim of the following article is to perform an analysis of the three biographical themes in H. Keller's life, that combine the social activity with the experience of art, referring to the aesthetic experiences produced by tactile, haptic and literary experience. I evaluate them within the theory of humanity by M. Archer and the theory of the aesthetic experience by R. Ingarden. The reflexivity, characteristic of men, as described by M. Archer, in comparison to the aesthetic experience, allows these themes to describe supra-aesthetic experiences as well. The preserved rich epistolographic, photographic, video sources, biographical materials and H. Keller's own works, became the basis for the historical analyses presented below. The more valuable, as they were based on sources previously unexamined and not translated in Poland.

The sculpting theme (visual-haptic)

While speaking of the accessibility of the works of art to persons with sensory disabilities, sculpture is often given as an example of the potential contact with visual arts. This simplest, as it seems, way of experiencing art, directed by touch was not uncommon to H. Keller herself. Numerous photographs have been preserved showing how she examined the sculptures: H. Keller examining the miniature copy of the Greek Nike¹⁹, H. Keller accompanied by the sculptor Jo Davidson and the journalist Ernie Pyle, studying the surface of the E. Pyle bust made by J. Davidson with her fingers²⁰,

¹⁸ *Słownik pojęć i tekstów kultury*, (ed.) E. Szczęsna, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warszawa 2002, p. 60.

¹⁹ <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/450078556482987801/> [16.02.2019].

²⁰ Helen Keller studies the surfaces of sculpture, 1944 photograph by Alfred Eisenstaedt <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/1759287324825949/> [16.02.2019].

H. Keller judging her own bust made by J. Davidson²¹, the incredibly emotional photo of H. Keller, touching her own face made by Yousuf Karsh²², H. Keller touching the antique door²³, etc. However, photos are not the source of the most information regarding how she experienced the contact with the works of art. Her epistolographic works from various periods of her life, are a particularly valuable source. Already as a young girl, in a letter to John Hitz from 3 February 1899, she had written: "...I had an exceedingly interesting experience last Monday. A kind friend took me over in the morning to the Boston Art Museum. She had previously obtained permission from General Loring, Supt. of the Museum, for me to touch the statues, especially those which represented my old friends in the "Iliad" and "Aeneid". Was that not lovely? While I was there, General Loring himself came in, and showed me some of the most beautiful statues, among which were the Venus of Medici, the Minerva of the Parthenon, Diana, in her hunting costume, with her hand on the quiver and a doe by her side, and the unfortunate Laocoon and his two little sons, struggling in the fearful coils of two huge serpents, and stretching their arms to the skies with heart-rending cries. I also saw Apollo Belvidere. He had just slain the Python and he was standing by a great pillar of rock, extending his graceful hand in triumph over the terrible snake. Oh, he was simply beautiful! Venus entranced me. She looked as if she had just risen from the foam of the sea, and her loveliness was like a strain of heavenly music. I also saw poor Niobe with her youngest child clinging close to her while she implored the cruel goddess not to kill her last darling. I almost cried, it was all so real and tragic"²⁴. This

²¹ Helen Keller with her portrait by Jo Davidson – black and white photography <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/570549846517704875/> [16.02.2019].

²² Photography of H. Keller taken by Yousuf Karsh <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/716494621948191121/> [16.02.2019] Y. Karsh (1908-2002) a Canadian of Armenian descent, one of the leading and acknowledged portrait photographers worldwide.

²³ http://mediastore.magnumphotos.com/CoreXDoc/MAG/Media/TR2/a/1/a/0/PAR198304.jpg?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Pinterest [16.02.2019].

²⁴ H. Keller's letter to Mr. John Hitz, February 3, 1899 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1967, pp. 188-189.

moving description of the aesthetic experience of a young girl, shows not only her sensual sensitiveness, but also her knowledge regarding the culture of ancient Greece, her emotions and astonishment – emotional states that cause aesthetic experience and its development up until the constitution of the aesthetic object. This experience of the contact with the works of art aroused H. Keller's dream to go to Europe even more. These dreams were fulfilled i.a. in 1946, when Keller visited Greece, France, Italy, England, Ireland, and the Vatican²⁵. The continent, destroyed by the war, caused reflection and outreach activity, rather than simply, aesthetic experiences. The beauty and the monumental nature of the Forum Romanum in the French Orange is mixed with the thought regarding the role of men in the shaping of the world. The manifestation of such profound aesthetic and social deliberations may be found i.a. in the correspondence with J. Davidson²⁶.

Additionally, this part of the epistolographic work of H. Keller should be noted due to the fact that J. Davidson²⁷ was an artist, therefore, the references to the areas of culture and art are much more justified. Moreover, the sculptor was also a person involved in political activity, which caused the a significant number of references to the current and past social events, in letters of both correspondents. As written by K.E. Nielsen "Sculptor Jo Davidson was

²⁵ K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller...*, op. cit., p. xiii.

²⁶ Por. *Letter from Helen Keller to Jo Davidson, June 19 1944*, [in:] *H. Keller. Selected writings*, K.E. Nielsen, H.J. Kaye (eds.), New York University Press, New York 2005, pp. 227-229.

²⁷ J. Davidson (1883-1952) was an American sculptor specialising particularly in creating busts. He is especially known as the author of busts and monuments of known individuals of the world of politics, e.g. D.D. Eisenhower, the world of art, e.g. J. Conrad, and science, e.g. A. Einstein. He was a left-wing political activist and a chairman of the Independent Citizens Committee of Artists, Scientists, and Professionals (ICCASP), an organisation that supported the policies of F. Roosevelt. He was involved in movements for racial equality, economic justice, and civil liberties. The artists created two works that presented H. Keller, her bust and a sculpture of her hands. Cf. J. Davidson, *Between Sittings: an informal autobiography*, The Dial Press, New York 1951.

one of the most important of these friends and political dueling partners. Jo provided friendship and uncompromising access to the politics, intellectual debates, beauty, and joy of the rest of the world. For example, while the two were in Italy, he arranged for Helen to do a tactile „viewing” of Michelangelo and Donatello’s sculptures. With him she debated theology, politics, art, and literature. Unlike many others, he dared to disagree with her outright and bluntly. When they spoke, she said, ‘his whole soul flew to his tongue’. Jo characterized knowing her as ‘a rich adventure’²⁸. From their correspondence we can learn about numerous travels, during which Keller visited art galleries, museums and antique cities. They also had mutual plans to see Israel. In one of her letters, Keller wrote “our discussions over a glass of wine and hors d’oeuvre or at a tea-time or dinner about human nature, freedom, art and the nemesis of the Roman Catholic Church were to me a mine of independent thinking”²⁹. Reading the aforementioned gives access to the personal experiences of different degrees, however, the social and political themes are constantly present. A good example may be the letter of 24 January, 1951, where we read: “The present world situation does not look favorable for peace, and I am much worried over the censorship of news from Korea, but I hope against hope that Great Britain, India and the large peace party in France may steer our storm-tossed earth-ship into quiet waters. As you know, some say that the Korean war cannot be localized, but history gives me reason to think it can. A military man of unusual intelligence once told me that after Napoleon had been banished to St. Helena in 1811 everybody talked long and anxiously about the imminence of a general war which never broke out for a hundred years. So I hold fast to my belief that the United Nations is still ‘a platform where,’ as you say, ‘men of different races and languages can meet and be

²⁸ K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller....*, op. cit., p. 73.

²⁹ H. Keller to “Dear Jo and Florence,” July 24, 1950, Papers of Jo Davidson, Library of Congress, in: K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller....*, op. cit., p. 101.

heard,' and ultimately avert a third world war"³⁰. Despite the content of the letter being different from that describing the Boston Museum experiences, a similar sensitivity emanates from it, with references being made not to mythology, but to historical events, an anxiety equally „real and tragic“ as during examining the ancient Nike or the Laocoon group. One must add, that the letters are set apart by more than fifty years. It is difficult to expect a mature woman to express the enthusiasm of a nineteen-year-old. However, both these, only exemplary, fragments share the same feature of the author, that I dare to call reflexivity.

M.S. Archer wrote that “human properties and powers do not stay frozen throughout life – they do not remain just as they were at the time of their emergence”³¹. Such transformation may be observed exactly during reading H. Keller's letters: from youth astonishment combined with comprehensive historical and cultural knowledge, to the reflections regarding the contemporary social and political situation, combined with the need of the praxis of acting for social change. Additionally, let us add that it was a need realised on high political levels. In her correspondence with J. Davidson, information regarding high political officials appear often. Both describe, e.g. their own direct meetings with the president Franklin Delano Roosevelt or the vice-president Henry Wallace³².

It is obvious, that the aforementioned results from the involvement of both authors in the local and worldwide events of the time. However, as noted by M.S. Archer, not everyone becomes an active agent. This becoming a self-aware being, capable of reflexive reference to self and to own surroundings requires time and practice, as “humanity enters society through the maternity ward doors and we immediately acquire the properties of Primary Agents through belonging to particular collectivities and sharing their privileges or

³⁰ A transcription of H. Keller's letter to J. Davidson <https://www.afb.org/HelenKellerArchive?a=p&p=helenkellerdocumentdisplay&d=A-HK01-03-B052-F10-004.1.4&e=-----en-20--1--txt-----3-7-6-5-3-----0-1> [16.02.2019]

³¹ M.S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo...*, op. cit., p. 297.

³² Cf. K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller...*, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

lack of them – as males/females; blacks/whites; foreigners/indigenous; middle class/working class”³³, and, in the context of this article, one may also add, as able/disabled. However, the Author of *Becoming Human*, notes that, although we enter this world as “privileged” or “unprivileged”, therefore, equipped with life opportunities differently, despite this specific determinism, or, as the author would prefer, the price that we must pay, as self-aware individuals we subject own situation to reflection and we are capable of changing it. If H. Keller hadn’t demonstrated the intent to change own, former situation, maybe she would remain one of the many graduates of Perkins’s school, requiring the sense of touch only to read Braille. However, the urge to change her own social „unprivileging” led her to become a social actor, who could translate the experience of beauty for the sake of good, and extend her aesthetic sensitivity to social sensitivity.

„Infant Agents have a long way to go before they become mature Actors. Nevertheless, the kind of Agents that they start out being without any choice, due to parentage and social context, profoundly influences what type of actor they can choose to become”³⁴. Fate threw H. Keller to find herself among a group of social individuals, to which some privileges and information had become inaccessible. However, she had the courage to pay the price in order to acquire access to these privileges. One of them was the effort of learning the world, as it is and as it allows to be learned without the use of sight and hearing. Additionally, additional aid came from the activist’s social surroundings and her country of birth, which to this day is considered as a pillar of world peace, as well as, social progress.

The musical theme (audio-haptic)

Helen Keller’s way of listening to music was, one may say, typical for deaf people – touch and air vibrations remained the main

³³ M.S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo...*, op. cit., p. 262.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 286.

receptive medium. However, her receptive reactions indicated an exceptional relation to music. She felt it with her entire body. In one of the oldest records of own musical experiences, Keller wrote: "I stood in the middle of the church, where the vibrations from the great organ were strongest, and I felt the mighty waves of sound beat against me, as the great billows beat against a little ship at sea."³⁵ Thus, the aesthetic that she had experienced at the time was of a nature much greater than tactile, it was corporeal, haptic, but in a particular meaning: received by the haptic system, i.e. the system comprising of skin, muscles, joints, tendons, and receptors scattered across all of them. James J. Gibson describes the haptic system as that, which allows the human being or the animal to feel the surrounding environment by the virtue of own body, or its remote members. The system is comprised not only of the pressure on the skin, or the kinaesthetic sensations, but also all information regarding the environment or own body: the relations of a given object to the body, and in reverse, the body to the object³⁶. This indicates, that the haptic system is not only a passive receptive system, but a complex active construction allowing to stay "in touch"³⁷, i.e. in contact with the surroundings. The preserved video records showing H. Keller listening to music, are exactly a symptomatic example of such haptic listening to music. In one of the videos, Keller is listening to Jascha Heifetz³⁸, and she said, that the experienced vibrations awoke feelings of sadness, happiness, as well as, loneliness in her. She described the singing of the mezzo-soprano opera singer Gladys Swarthout³⁹ as as beautiful as everyday prayer. One must add, that Keller, while standing by the piano, would listen to the opera singer while touching her face, and so she was able to deci-

³⁵ H. Keller's letter to Mrs. Laurence Hutton, 2 January 1900 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia...*, op. cit., p. 198.

³⁶ J.J. Gibson, *The Senses Considered as Perceptual System*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston 1966, pp. 97-98.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 98.

³⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZxHxSrLqqU> [17.03.2019]

³⁹ Helen Keller „Listens“ to Gladys Swarthout Sing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdOKL7KZeos> [17.03.2019]

pher at least a part of the lyrics sung, which actually were a prayer. Among the singers, that H. Keller listened to, were Enrico Caruso, Lauritz Melchior, and, beyond the world of the opera, Benny Goodman. However, that which remains particularly interesting, is the external reception of the musical aesthetic experience, expressed in motion, facial expression and the body movement of the listener. A careful observation of even brief fragments of the records of the reception of the musical pieces indicates, how the expression changed accordingly to the changes in the musical qualities of the piece. H. Keller's motion creates a harmonic unity in accordance with the changes in pace, the flow of the pieces' dynamics, pitch scale, and the accompaniment. Additionally, the records of the emotional reactions of H. Keller play the role of indisputable evidence for her musical sensitivity, and for her ability to establish contact with music for deaf persons in general. Moreover, the aforementioned constitute an essential argument against those who doubt the authenticity of the experience, which H. Keller described in her letter to the New York Philharmonic, written in March 1924, after she had listened their performance of the Beethoven's Ninth. Then, she wrote: "[...] I could feel, not only the vibration, but also the impassioned rhythm, the throb and the urge of the music! The intertwined and intermingling vibrations from different instruments enchanted me. I could actually distinguish the cornets, the roil of the drums, deep-toned violas and violins singing in exquisite unison. How the lovely speech of the violins flowed and plowed over the deepest tones of the other instruments! When the human voices leaped up thrilling from the surge of harmony, I recognized them instantly as voices more ecstatic, upcurving swift and flame-like, until my heart almost stood still. The women's voices seemed an embodiment of all the angelic voices rushing in a harmonious flood of beautiful and inspiring sound. The great chorus throbbed against my fingers with poignant pause and flow. Then all the instruments and voices together burst forth – an ocean of heavenly vibration – and died away like winds when the atom is spent, ending in a delicate shower of sweet notes. [...] the tones and harmonies conveyed to me moods of great beauty and majesty. I also sense, or thought I did, the tender

sounds of nature that sing into my hand-swaying reeds and winds and the murmur of streams. I have never been so enraptured before by a multitude of tone-vibrations.”⁴⁰. The beautiful description of the aesthetic experience, that Beethoven's music had produced, is not simply something that awakes emotions. It also shows the variety of sensual experiences of received vibrations and meanings given to them, notabene consistent with the piece's composition, that is difficult to imagine for a hearing person. It is a description of a haptic pleasure, caused by the world of sounds, received as vibrations. Listening to the Ninth Symphony by the speaker's membrane, had come as a surprise to the listener, a surprise that the deaf persons could actually participate in experiencing music in other ways than the live performances.

This way of coming into contact with art (music), new for the time, evokes a supra-aesthetic aspect to the theme, related to technology and education. On the one hand, it suggests that the technological achievements may open new areas, previously inaccessible, for persons with disabilities, however, on the other hand, it shows the human helplessness in regard to varying educational strategies, particularly the traditional ones, aiming at likening of the functioning of persons with disabilities to the way it occurs in a society dominated by able persons. Let us begin with supplementing the musical theme with some biographical information about H. Keller. It seems, that the interest in music is included in her general nature, being the curiosity regarding the world, therefore, music would interest her in varying aspects. Both receptive and creative. In a letter describing the experiences from visiting the World's Fair, Keller mentioned that “the queer-looking Japanese musical instruments, and their beautiful works of art were interesting”⁴¹. However, it was not just the reception of music that would fascinate H. Keller.

⁴⁰ Helen Keller Letter on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony Goes Viral, <https://www.afb.org/blog/entry/helen-keller-letter-beethovens-ninth-symphony-goes-viral> [1.03. 2019].

⁴¹ Helen Keller's letter to Miss Caroline Derby, August 17, 1893 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 168.

We know, that she took piano lessons at the Perkins' School. In one of her letters to Caroline Derby, she wrote: "I enjoy my singing lessons with Dr. Humason more than I can say. I expect to take piano lessons sometime..."⁴². The experimental instrument playing lessons turned out to be a failure, closing the path to musical performance, at least at an amateur level. However, one should add that given H. Keller's enormous motivation to come in an active contact with music, now such a chance would not go forfeit. Within the circles of contemporary music therapists, the application of various techniques of coming into contact with music, also active, based on using musical instruments while working with deaf persons, even with a severe hearing deficiency, is practised universally. Moreover, the surdo music therapy, apart from training hearing, also contributes to the development of such aspects as speech and language⁴³.

Obviously, the development of therapeutic methods based on art, including music therapy, and their broad applications in working with persons with disabilities as well as able persons is dictated, i.a. by a paradigmatic change, accepting the heterogeneous nature of the human population, and even by adopting the cultural paradigm⁴⁴. Such approach was not universal in the 19th century, and even the second half of the 20th century, resulting, i.a. in promoting the oral method as the most effective and the best method for educating deaf persons⁴⁵. Despite the fact, that H. Keller loved the

⁴² Helen Keller's letter to Miss Caroline Derby, October 23, 1894 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 171.

⁴³ K.E. Gfeller, *Music therapy in the treatment of sensory disorders* [in:] *An Introduction to Music Therapy: Theory and Practice*, (eds.) W.B. Davis, K.E. Gfeller, M.H. Thaut, McGraw-Hill College, Dubuque 1999, pp. 189-193. Cf. A. Darrow, H. Grohe, *Music therapy for learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing* [in:] *Models of Music Therapy interventions in school settings*, (ed.) B. Wilson, Silver Spring, American Music Therapy Association 2002, pp. 291-304; A. Flis, *Muzykoterapia jako wsparcie rozwoju dzieci niesłyszących*, „Polskie Pismo Muzykoterapeutyczne” 2015, no. 2, pp. 23-49.

⁴⁴ Cf. A. Krauze, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków 2010; I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków 2015, pp. 387-421.

⁴⁵ L. Crow, *Helen Keller: Rethinking the Problematic Icon*, "Disability & Society", 2000, Vol. 16, No. 6, p. 7, 15.

“singing lessons” and considered the possibility to study at the Wright-Humason School for the Deaf, the lessons were primarily aimed at increasing the strength of her voice, teaching her to speak, and developing the ability of lip-reading⁴⁶.

However, on the other hand, one should consider the essential question whether the emphasis on speech use by deaf persons contributed to the construction of such inventions as auditory apparatus and cochlear implants. We must remember, that it was exactly the attempts to find a way of contacting with deaf persons, that inspired Abraham Bell to create a prototype of the invention, which would later become the modern telephone. Following this trail, one cannot forget about the use of the aforementioned radio and disc records in the education of blind persons. She argued for that, but not exactly due to the fascination with technology. She saw the record industry as the path to promote literature, particularly, among those who had difficulty with mastering the Braille alphabet, e.g. due to the insufficient tactile sensitivity of the fingers, caused, e.g. by age or profession. The records could introduce children who wouldn't be able to read yet, to the world of literature. Finally, a no less significant argument: a record weighs less and is smaller than a book written in Braille.

The literary theme

Regardless of how one looks at H. Keller's education, it must be said that she received thorough schooling in humanities. The reading of classical literature was the basis of her learning, shaping reflexivity, and her natural way of looking at social phenomena. However, one must add, that the results she achieved, were supported with hard work. Both in the *Story of My Life*, as well as, in the letters from the schooling period, we shall easily find numerous information in her effort of acquiring knowledge, e.g. “I am afraid

⁴⁶ K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller....*, op. cit., p. 7.

this letter savors too much of books-- but really they make up my whole life these days, and I scarcely see or hear of anything else! I do believe I sleep on books every night! You know a student's life is of necessity somewhat circumscribed and narrow and crowds out almost everything that is not in books..."⁴⁷. The access to literature was no doubt made possible to Keller, due to her extraordinary language skills. She would read Braille in both English, French, German, as well as, classical languages – Latin and Greek. About the last of the mentioned languages, she had written that: "If it is true that the violin is the most perfect of musical instruments, then Greek is the violin of human thought"⁴⁸. Moreover, the teachers and subsequent friends of H. Keller, Anne Sullivan and Polly Thompson, were much aid to her, as they would read books and papers, and Keller could understand the contents by lip-reading and finger-spelling. The list of works is quite substantial, however, let us take note of those most mentioned: Homer and his *Iliad*, as well as, the *Odyssey*, the *Aeneid* and the *Eclogues* by Virgil, works by Cicero and Homer, Jean de La Fontaine's *Fables*, drama works by Aeschylus, Pierre Corneille, Moliere and William Shakespeare, the works of Joseph Rudyard Kipling, e.g. the *Kitchener's School*, Francis Bacon's *Essays*, and *A History of the English People* by John Richard Green⁴⁹. This initial list of lectures already suggests, that H. Keller's schooling and later self-learning curriculum was of a classical nature. One must add, that some of the selected works were H. Keller's own choice. However, while remembering that she possessed a thorough knowledge regarding history and the culture of the countries of origin of the selected works, her interpretations included social thoughts, rather than personal. While, in one of the letters, an eighteen-year-old student allowed herself to make a rather romantic

⁴⁷ H. Keller's letter to Mr. John Hitz, February 3, 1900 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 199.

⁴⁸ H. Keller's letter to Mrs. Laurence Hutton, February 20, 1898L [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 182.

⁴⁹ H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit.; Cf. H. Keller. *Selected writings*, (eds.) K.E. Nielsen, H.J. Kaye, op. cit.

comparison of the *Aeneid* and the *Iliad* to a beautiful maiden, living in a palace, surrounded by a magnificent court (*Aeneid*) and to a brilliant young man has had the earth for his playground (*Iliad*)⁵⁰, just a few months later she would write: "The *Iliad* tells of almost nothing but war, and one sometimes wearies of the clash of spears and the din of battle, but the *Odyssey* tells of a nobler courage--the courage of a soul sore tried, but steadfast to the end. I often wonder, as I read these splendid poems why, at the same time that Homer's songs of war fired the Greeks with valor, his songs of manly virtue did not have a stronger influence upon the spiritual life of the people. Perhaps the reason is, that thoughts truly great are like seeds cast into the human mind, and either lie there unnoticed, or are tossed about and played with, like toys, until, grown wise through suffering and experience, a race discovers and cultivates them. Then the world has advanced one step in its heavenward march"⁵¹. The social attitude in experiencing the part of the works, reading them through the prism of the history of a group, a nation, rather than, through the prism of individuals, even as heroic as Achilles, Agamemnon, Odysseus is characteristic for H. Keller's way of treating literary works, and not only in her youth. Jo Davidson would mention, how he secured the Braille translations of Anatole France's *Penguin Island* and the *Revolt of Angels*, as well as, Voltaire's *Candide*⁵². In reply, and one must note that she was seventy-years old, Keller wrote: "It was more than I could have hoped, having you there [in France - ed.] while I read them and hearing your comments upon their significance and their influence upon France"⁵³. However, if the way of Keller's aesthetic experience of the literary works was not complemented by actual social activity, it could pos-

⁵⁰ H. Keller's letter to Mrs. Laurence Hutton, October 23, 1898 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 185.

⁵¹ H. Keller's letter to Dr. David H. Greer, May 8, 1899 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 191.

⁵² K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller...*, op. cit., p. 101.

⁵³ HK to "Dear Jo and Florence," July 24, 1950, Papers of Jo Davidson, Library of Congress, after: K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller...*, op. cit., p. 101.

sibly be considered as childish or simply utopian. Meanwhile, the activist who analysed literature within the aspect of its influence on the society, had become one of the most significant persons who would involve themselves in the fight for the rights of women, persons with disabilities, or in the activity for world peace. It was a result, as she herself states, from one of her characteristic features – optimism⁵⁴. In a small book, an essay of the same title, while referring to Shakespeare's drama works, she wrote: "Shakespeare is the prince of optimists. His tragedies are a revelation of moral order. In *Lear* and *Hamlet* there is a looking forward to something better, some one is left at the end of the play to right wrong, restore society and build the state anew. The later plays, *The Tempest* and *Cymbeline* show a beautiful, placid optimism which delights in reconciliations and reunions and which plans for the triumph of external as well as internal good"⁵⁵. Obviously, it would be too far a fetched, and a simply wrong simplification to state, that H. Keller looked at the world through the prism of literature: mythology, fiction, and drama. Most definitely not. The radicalism of some of her beliefs, e.g. regarding eugenics, public health care, and poverty, suggests that she had both her feet well on the ground⁵⁶. She was also aware of her own difficulties related to breaking the stereotypes regarding disabilities on the one hand, and the stereotypes of a wonder child. However, it was the literature, particularly classical, in combination with her historical knowledge, that shaped her way of understanding social phenomena. Possibly, it may have contained some part of the youthful belief in that one can change the world, and that it may be given an aesthetic form.

In one of her letters, Keller wrote: "Some of my friends tell me that I am very foolish to give so much time to Greek and Latin; but I am sure they would not think so, if they realized what a wonderful world of experience and thought Homer and Virgil have opened up

⁵⁴ Cf. H. Keller, *Optimism: an essay*, Bottom of the Hill, Memphis 2011 (original, 1903 edition).

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

⁵⁶ Cf. K.E. Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller...*, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

to me"⁵⁷. One must add, that it was not a type of fable wonders, filled with the world of "knights [...], fairies, dragons and all sorts of strange creatures"⁵⁸, which H. Keller saw as grotesque, however, beautiful. The wonder of the world of Homer and Virgil is the basis of the Euro-American, dominant culture, in which H. Keller, as we all, lived.

Summary

The attempt to describe the selected social and aesthetic themes in the activity of H. Keller, as presented above, in no way exhausts the entirety of the subject. However, I intend to propose, hopefully so, a different view on her biography. A look, in which I have consciously attempted to escape the barriers denoted by chronology, historical events, or the political activity of the article's heroine. My attempt was to present her as a person of great aesthetic sensitivity, experiencing the contact with art in an emotional, reflexive way. However, I did not want for this sensitivity to obscure the activity which H. Keller established as her life purpose. Already in 1901 she would write that "I am deeply interested in politics. I like to have the papers read to me, and I try to understand the great questions of the day; but I am afraid my knowledge is very unstable; for change my opinions with every new book I read. I used to think that when I studied Civil Government and Economics, all my difficulties and perplexities would blossom into beautiful certainties; but alas, I find that there are more tares than wheat in these fertile fields of knowledge..."⁵⁹. However, H. Keller faced the challenge related to social activism and the involvement in politics, and so she went

⁵⁷ Helen Keller's letter to David H. Greer, May 8 1899 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego zycia*, op. cit., p. 191.

⁵⁸ Helen Keller's letter to John Hitz, February 3, 1900 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego zycia*, op. cit., p. 199.

⁵⁹ Helen Keller's letter to the honourable George Frisbie Hoar, November 25, 1901 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego zycia*, op. cit., p. 199.

down in history, but in this aspect, she is better known to the United States and the Great Britain societies, rather than to the Poles.

The gathered epistolographic sources, partially translated to Polish, partially original, visual sources (photographies) and audiovisual (video records), as well as, English-language source literature that presents H. Keller's life in the period following the *Story of My Life*, as well as, publications of H. Keller herself, provoked me to focus on the themes, where the author is speaking of herself, and presents the world from a personal perspective, determined by the alternative experience thereof. I use the word "alternative" as, due to the descriptions of H. Keller's aesthetic experiences, the contemporary directions of aesthetic pursuits are no longer a surprise. Touching the visual art, haptic music listening, listening to literature rather than reading it, are becoming more and more universal, not only in the spheres reserved for people with disabilities. However, what does an experience of beauty have in common with social activism? H. Keller provided an answer herself: "A gentleman asked me what BEAUTY meant to my mind. I must confess I was puzzled at first. But after a minute I answered that beauty was a form of goodness--and he went away"⁶⁰.

Placing the analysis presented above, within the contemporary theory of M. Archer's humanity, shows how beautifully these two aspects of H. Keller's life, i.e. the aesthetic and the social, are intertwined. It allows to avoid an often occurring, but stereotypical premise, that people sensitive to beauty and works of art, are equally sensitive to social phenomena. The examples of Adolf Hitler and Hermann Göring belie that belief. Therefore, not stopping on the category of an aesthetic experience, but combining it with the theory of humanity, particularly with the characteristic of reflexivity, allowed to reveal the more intricate relations. The childhood experience, the personal traits, a combination of sensory and intellectual sensitivities, with an extraordinary knowledge regarding history,

⁶⁰ H Keller's letter to Mrs. Kate Adams Keller, April 13, 1893 [in:] H. Keller, *Historia mojego życia*, op. cit., p. 165.

and the awareness of the surrounding social changes, allow to see the life work of H. Keller also as Archer's "pillar of agency", i.e. this unity of the self, the person, and the subject. It is extremely important, particularly in the current time, with one of the dominant themes are questions regarding the future of mankind, as well as, its transhumanist or post-humanist nature. The analysis of Helen Keller's biographical themes suggests, that the problems regarding mankind cannot be limited to the analysis of the human body, even if we assume, after R. Ingarden, that cognition begins in the processes of receiving impressions and perception processing. The philosopher argues how such process is developed, and the records of H. Keller's experiences, preserved to this day, greatly specify the course of these processes.

If the task of the human reflexivity is to refer refer both to subjective and to objective beings, as assumed by M. Archer's theory, then the themes presented above reveal the coherence of these two ontologies. However, usually in the works regarding the artistic and the cultural activities of persons with disabilities, there is a lack of such coherence. Numerous attempts of describing the participation of persons with disabilities in culture are made, however, from the perspective of able persons. It comes from the fact that the subjective perspective of such activities of the persons with disabilities is still not publicised enough. We still know too little about how they experience it both on the sensory level, of the aesthetic experience, and of the following consequences, related, e.g. with creating a new reception of the works of art.

H. Keller's legacy has practical implications in numerous projects combining artistic and social activities. A number of art therapy project may serve as examples, such as *Between water and words: Reflective self-awareness and symbol formation in art therapy*, *Destiny Lofts-In Memory of Helen Keller* regarding space design, motivational speaker inspiration (Sonny Melendrez), as well as, the development of haptic aesthetics, or the research regarding the disability culture. However, the material collected by the author of the article, abundant in numerous examples, deserves to be presented in a separate

publication, one that is prepared in the project titled *Towards a radical life. The social and political, as well as, social and aesthetic themes in Helen Keller's activity (W stronę radykalnego życia. Społeczno-polityczne i społeczno-estetyczne wątki działalności Helen Keller)*, for which this article serves as the theoretical part.

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[16.02.2019]

Fotografie

Photography of H. Keller taken by Yousuf Karsh <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/716494621948191121/> [16.02.2019]

Helen Keller studies the surfaces of sculpture, 1944 photograph by Alfred Eisenstaedt <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/1759287324825949/> [16.02.2019]

Helen Keller with her portrait by Jo Davidson - black and white photography <https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/570549846517704875/> [16.02.2019]

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Helen Keller „Listens” to Gladys Swarthout Sing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdOKL7KZeos> [17.03.2019]



The careers of graduates of special schools – different faces of adulthood among people with mild intellectual disabilities

ABSTRACT: Izabella Kaiser, *The careers of graduates of special schools – different faces of adulthood among people with mild intellectual disabilities*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 255-273. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.11>

The source literature lacks a precise vision of an adult with an intellectual disability. The dominant view, in which the life of people with intellectual disabilities is perceived, is the indication of health, architectonic, employment, and educational barriers, or of the lowered social competencies required for the proper fulfilment of social roles. Is that right? The fates of the graduates of one of the special schools in Poznań, are an attempt to answer that. The subjects include both professionally active and unemployed graduates, women who have established families, and fulfil the roles mothers and wives, as well as, an adult man receiving pension benefits. The stories of Justyna, Patryk, Ania and Kamil, prove that people with mild intellectual disabilities consider vocational work as one of the basic attributes of adulthood. Simultaneously, they imply the need for urgent changes in special vocational education, aimed at minimising the observed discrepancies between the vocational competencies acquired by people with disabilities, and their fitness regarding the modern labour market. The fates of two adult women, Beata and Magda, confirm that marriage and family are values held in high regard, remaining an important aspect in the life plans of people with intellectual disabilities. Szymon's story is an example of a man who, due to somatic disorders accompanying intellectual disabilities, and the overprotective attitude of his parents, is unable to act as a fully mature person. Therefore, the adulthood of persons with mild intellectual disabilities has many faces. It seems important to monitor the situation of special school graduates sys-

tematically, as, in the constantly changing reality, it will allow them, to be more rationally prepared for the fulfilment of their social life.

KEY WORDS: adulthood, intellectual disability, vocational education

Introduction

Man is perceived as the maker of his own life, who constructs his biography by himself, formulates individual projects and aims by selecting the proper course in life and making attempts to maintain it. In consequence, man is responsible for selecting a particular "life project", taking the risk of potential fiascos and failures.

One of the factors that determine the adult functioning, and the creation of personal development paths, is the intellectual disability which, to a large degree, impedes or even prevents the fulfilment of developmental tasks. Only a few years ago, the adulthood of persons with partial intellectual ability was a subject rarely challenge in research activities and scholarly afterthought. "One may seem – writes A. Krause, that the persons with intellectual disabilities, after finishing the last phase of education, vanish not only from the area of interest of special pedagogy, but they also «disperse» in various institutions, often conceptually, organisationally, and structurally unprepared to work with these people"¹. Currently – as D. Wolska demonstrates – "the discussions, whether a person with an intellectual disability may become an adult, have ceased. While currently, no one denies them that right, and the time of the "eternal children" is no more, still, one still does not know, how to prepare such a person to enter the adult life, and whether all its aspects will be accessible"².

¹ A. Krause, *Problemy opieki rewalidacji osób dorosłych z upośledzeniem umysłowym – niedobór rozwiązań w teorii i praktyce*, [in:] *Dorosłość, niepełnosprawność, czas współczesny. Na pograniczach pedagogiki specjalnej*, (ed.) K. Rzedzicka, A. Kobyłańska, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2003, p. 220.

² D. Wolska, *Wpływ prawidłowego przystosowania społecznego na jakość życia osób dorosłych z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Dorośli z niepełnosprawnością intelek-*

The dominant view, in which the adult life of people with intellectual disabilities, is the indication of barriers: health, architectonic, employment and education, or the lowered social competencies essential for the proper fulfilment of social roles. Additionally, A. Ostrowska indicates "a certain limitation of the process of socialisation of the persons with disabilities, as their closest environment, from fear of future frustrations and potential failures, implant them with a minimalist life orientation. It limits the aims, which are worth pursuing, and fails to equip with the means necessary for achieving those aims. Cultivating this passive attitude is, in a long-term perspective, equivalent to incapacitation and helplessness – therefore, features more fitting for a child, rather than an adult person"³.

The source literature still lacks a precise vision of an adult person with an intellectual disability. According to B. Tylewska-Nowak "the barrier seems to be the stereotypes in perceiving this group of persons, existing not only in the broadly understood society, but also among the specialists. The established model of care, in which the parent, the guardian, the teacher, or the therapist assume responsibility for the person under care, and satisfy the needs, who, to their understanding, are the most essential for persons with disabilities, contributes to a learned helplessness, submission, and passiveness"⁴. In consequence, the adulthood of persons with intellectual disabilities is often considered within the category of – using the words of S. Kowalik – "the sphere of lost development"⁵.

tualną w labiryntach codzienności. Analiza badań – krytyka podejść – propozycje rozwiązań, (ed.) B. Cytowska, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2011, p. 44.

³ A. Ostrowska, *Kompetencje społeczne osób niepełnosprawnych – bariery dorosłości*, [in:] *Dorosłość, niepełnosprawność, czas współczesny. Na pograniczach pedagogiki specjalnej*, (ed.) K. Rzedzicka, A. Kobyłańska, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2003, p. 52.

⁴ B. Tylewska-Nowak, *Wypełnianie zadań rozwojowych przez osoby dorosłe z umiarkowaną i znaczną niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Dorośli z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w labiryntach codzienności. Analiza badań – krytyka podejść – propozycje rozwiązań*, (ed.) B. Cytowska, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2011, p. 19.

⁵ S. Kowalik, *Psychologia rehabilitacji*, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2007, p. 52.

Is that right? The stories of the graduates of one of the special schools in Poznań, are an attempt to answer that question.

The methodological basis of own study

The aim of the undertaken study, was the identification of the current situation of young adults with mild intellectual disabilities, who, in 2013, graduated the Special Vocational School no. in Poznań (Zasadnicza Szkoła Zawodowa Specialna nr 2 w Poznaniu). The main study issue was formulated in the form of a question: what are the occupational and life fates of the graduates, regarding their educational and occupational choices. The detailed issues were dedicated to the learned vocation and the current occupation, their labour market status, the means, and potential difficulties related to finding employment, the causes of not taking a job, as well as, the current family situation of the subjects. In order to gather the factual sources, qualitative studies were performed, with the application of the in-depth narrative interview method, based on the paradigm of symbolic interactionism, according to which “people are capable of reflecting upon their lives, allowing the scholars to understand its object”⁶. Each interview lasted c. 30 minutes and was recorded via a voice recorder, and afterwards, subjected to verbatim transcription. The interviews were done in January 2019, with eight graduates who signed an informed consent to participate in the exploration study.

The stories of the special school graduates – the adulthood of persons with mild intellectual disabilities – the results of own research

In 2010, in the Special Vocational School no 2 in Poznań (a part of the John Paul II Special School Complex no 102 – Zespół Szkół

⁶ U. Flick, *Projektowanie badania jakościowego*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2010, p. 139.

Specjalnych Nr 102 im. Jana Pawła II), the 10-person first grade began their education. All of the students had mild intellectual disability certificates. For three years, they have been educated for the vocation of assistant employees of hotel service. They were preparing to work in hotels, motels, guest houses, excursion hotels, and other lodging establishments. During their vocational education, the subjects would acquire skills regarding performing supplementary works related to guest service, such as: preparing guest rooms, luggage transportation, the use of cleaning equipment and appliances in the vicinity of the hotel, as well as, landscaping maintenance. The practical vocational education was conducted in Poznań hotels such as Hotel Rzymiski, Campanille Poznań, Hotel Andersia or Hotel Dorian.

The subjects have graduated in 2013. They all successfully passed their theoretical and practical exams confirming their vocational qualifications.

Six years have passed. The former students are between 26 and 29 years old, i.e. they are in the period of the so-called, early adulthood, or emerging adulthood⁷. Their fates vary greatly.

Justyna⁸ was an exemplary student. She graduated the vocational school (as previously, the intermediate school) with distinction. The achievement is even more significant, as the girl had to combine her school responsibilities with raising a daughter, born when Justyna was 15. Justyna and her child lived with her partner, and his parents. However, the most significant aid regarding caring for the daughter was provided by her grandmother, to whom she would take little Patrycja every day. After graduating, Justyna took up employment in her vocation, in one of Poznań hotels. However, after a few months, she resigned. Justyna explained that the reasons for her resignation were low wages, difficult working conditions,

⁷ A.I. Brzezińska, K. Appelt, B. Ziółkowska, *Psychologia rozwoju człowieka*, [in:] *Psychologia. Podręcznik akademicki*, (eds.) J. Strelau, D. Doliński, Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2008, pp. 95-292.

⁸ The names of the subjects were changed.

very unstable working hours, as well as, expectations of full availability. Her remarks are symptomatic:

When I was going to apprenticeship, I really liked working in the dining room, or at the reception, a job of attending guests. But, when I started to work, I always had to clean hotel rooms, change the sheets, clean the bathroom, and carry huge pots. It was very hard. I worked for almost 10 hours, when some important guests would arrive, or an organised trip, my superior ordered me to come to work, even when I was supposed to have a day off. Well, and they really paid poorly...

For a number of months, Justyna was unemployed, a fact that she remembers unpleasantly:

I was at home, bored, because how much can you clean? Each day, I would get up, and not know what to do with myself. Later, it was even worse – there was not enough money for anything. Bartek [the partner] yelled, that he spends so much on food and clothes for Pati [the daughter]. It was tough, my grandmother helped a little.

Currently Justyna works at a trade market.

Patryk – the second graduate, showed little interest in the vocation that he was learning. Already during his education, he worked part-time as a security officer in a shopping centre. Currently, he has full-time employment. The man is very happy with his work, he feels accepted and appreciated. Patryk did not start a family, he lives with his parents.

Ania was a very ambitious and a hard-working student, however, not always did it yield results in the grades received (Ania's intellectual disorder was diagnosed as the lower end of the mild disability category). However, the girl displayed significant cognitive needs, wide interests, further positively stimulated by her family environment. After graduating the vocational school, Anna continued her education in a Secondary School for Adults. She has secondary education, however – despite two attempts, she failed the secondary school exam. Ania finished a cosmetics course, and currently, works as a helper at a beauty parlour. She is fully satisfied with her employment, which can be seen in the following statement:

Work is great! Calm, silent, clean, the ladies are so nice, they praise me often. I can even do my own make-up when I go out somewhere. I love going to the parlour.

The girl lives with her parents, and does not plan to start a family.

The conversations, conducted with the three young people, confirm how important the capability to perform work and earn income, to be a worker, is for the persons with intellectual disabilities, as a significant aspect of adulthood.

For Justyna and Patryk, employment is necessary, as it provides them with income, required to satisfy their everyday needs. Patryk's position is clear:

I'm an adult, I cannot keep on taking money from my parents, I have to earn a living myself.

Similar conclusions are formulated by A. Krause, A. Żyta, and S. Nosarzewska⁹, demonstrating, that in the case of persons with mild intellectual disabilities, the lack of employment may implicate financial difficulties, as they are not eligible for an allowance.

Moreover, one must clearly highlight, that the vocational activity has a significant influence on the development of the psyche, the personality and the course of life of persons with intellectual disabilities. B. Jachimczak highlights, that "often, employment is the only possibility of social participation for the person with a disability. [...] Work, exactly due to the fact of being a continuous activity, gives the possibility of satisfying the need for self-accomplishment, necessary to draw satisfaction from life. Additionally, it provides a chance to accomplish other important needs: respect, acknowledgement, and belonging"¹⁰. A similar opinion is expressed by A. Krause, who indicates that "the vocational activity of persons

⁹ A. Krause, A. Żyta, S. Nosarzewska, *Normalizacja środowiska społecznego osób z niepełnosprawnościami intelektualną*, Wydawnictwo Akapit, Toruń 2010.

¹⁰ B. Jachimczak, *Spółeczno-edukacyjne uwarunkowania startu zawodowego młodych osób niepełnosprawnych. Studium empiryczne z regionu łódzkiego*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2011, p. 59.

with intellectual disabilities is essential for their psychological health. Social situations that come with it, e.g. complaining about your superior, a difficult day at work, no jobs at the company, or the contentment related to success, a promotion, an accomplished schedule, an announced raise, etc., provide an optimal method of revalidation, i.e. evidence, that we all live by the same problems and joys, and that, regardless of our potential, we are all the same"¹¹.

On the basis of the conducted interviews, one may formulate a thesis, that Justyna, Ania, and Patryk successfully entered their surrounding reality, and in result, they are not recognised as persons with intellectual disabilities.

All three graduates are employed, but none of them work in their learned vocation. Therefore, the following issues become essential: why do the aforementioned do not work in the vocation that they had learned at school? Additionally, is the vocational offer for students with intellectual disabilities, adequate to the market demand?

It seems that a significant number of special schools did not adjust to the new labour market, and in result, their graduates work in other vocations, or, are „introduced” to planned unemployment by their schools. The list of proposed vocational options has not changed for years, this often being the result of the surplus of vocations that the fully able persons are not interested in. Therefore, J. Hućik rightly states, that the vocational education “should lead to employing the person with intellectual disabilities in order to successfully place the person within the labour market”¹². This would lower the negative effects of the Polish transformation, that the persons with disabilities felt the most, moreover, as, according to E. Wapiennik “there is a complete lack of lifelong education di-

¹¹ A. Krauze, *Integracyjne złudzenia ponowoczesności (sytuacja ludzi niepełnosprawnych)*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2000, p. 155.

¹² J. Hućik, *Czynniki warunkujące przygotowanie do zawodu osób niepełnosprawnych umysłowo*, [in:] *Między wsparciem doraźnym a wspieraniem racjonalnym, czyli o uwarunkowaniach socjalizacji społecznej osób niepełnosprawnych*, (ed.) Z. Gajdzica, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2008, p. 77.

rected at persons with intellectual disabilities, which shows the organisational deficits of the educational system”¹³.

In search for the reasons of the vocational school graduates resignation from seeking employment in accordance with the learned vocation, it is worth quoting Patryk’s words:

I was not interested in working as hotel help, it is such a strange vocation, completely not for me. During the apprenticeship, I would always say, that something hurt me, that I was feeling bad, that I was tired, and someone would always do something for me. I will surely not go to work in the hotel industry, because I don’t like it.

When asked about the reasons behind his choice of employment, the man replies:

My parents and the school pedagogue came up with the idea, besides, there was not much choice.

B. Cytowska’s observations are similar, as she indicates the “«deadly sin» committed in vocational profiling, i.e. disregard regarding the psychophysical capabilities of the youth. Therefore, further abandonment related to considering own interests and passions while choosing a vocation, come as no surprise”¹⁴.

Kamil – an another graduate, is currently unemployed, however, he is seeking employment intensively, and is ready to undertake it. The man took up work many times: he cleaned rooms in a local gym, he arranged the wares in a warehouse, he prepared packages for a courier company, he was an assistant construction worker. However, he would lose his job quickly, because, as he explains:

They treated me badly there, the boss was always angry with me, I always got the most work, everyone would put all the work on me, and the pay was poor.

¹³ E. Wapiennik, *Prawa osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Dostęp do edukacji i zatrudnienia. Raport. Polska, Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym*, Warszawa 2005, p. 86.

¹⁴ B. Cytowska, *(Nie)przygotowanie osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością w rezerwacie przestrzeni publicznej*, (ed.) Z. Gajdzica, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2013, p. 164.

Kamil lives with his parents, who, due to their age and health, require constant care. The man is still seeking work, as for him, it is one of the basic attributes of adulthood.

Kamil's story is a type of unemployment that the people with disabilities face, being, according to B. Wołoskiuk (2012) the most discriminated of group. E. Zakrzewska-Manterys is even more outright in her opinion, stating, that the people with limited intellectual abilities "practically, do not exist in the labour market"¹⁵ in Poland.

The unemployment of persons with disabilities is a serious issue from the perspective of the disrupted revalidation process. The fact is mentioned by B. Wołoskiuk, who writes that the lack of employment "impedes the development of personality, may cause the lowering of intellectual capabilities, and the decline of the qualifications and skills acquired during education, leading to breakdowns and depression, and lowering life and vocational ambitions"¹⁶.

The presented biographies of the four young people with intellectual disabilities: Justyna, Patryk, Ania, and Kamil, lead to a reflection, that the optimal model should be, on the one hand, providing help in entering the open labour market to those individuals with disabilities, who want it, and are prepared for this challenge, while on the other hand, provide work in sheltered conditions, to those persons with intellectual disabilities, who fail to locate themselves within the open labour market.

W. Łukowski and D. Wiszejko-Wierzbicka indicate the barriers that impede, or at time, prevent the persons with disabilities from finding their way in the sphere of employment. The authors indicate the situation, in which the person with a disability must not only struggle against own limitations, but, additionally, overcome

¹⁵ E. Zakrzewska-Manterys, *Wykształcenie a sytuacja zawodowa osób niepełnosprawnych*, [in:] *Młodzi niepełnosprawni o sobie. Rodzina, edukacja, praca*, (ed.) E. Giermanowska, Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2007, p. 63.

¹⁶ B. Wołoskiuk, *Kształcenie zawodowe osób z niepełnosprawnością*, [in:] *Kształcenie zawodowe i ustawiczne a potrzeba rynku*, (eds.) B. Wołoskiuk, M. Nowak, Wydawnictwo PSWJPiI, Biała Podlaska 2012, p. 238.

the negative stereotype of being perceived solely as beneficiaries of allowance, and social assistance.

Sheltered employment is often criticised for segregation and minor therapeutic efficiency, as well as, as a significant expense for the state. However, in some circumstances, it appears to be the only solution. Such belief is expressed by W. Łukowski and D. Wiszejko-Wierzbička, who state that "it would be difficult to expect everyone to be prepared to undertake the designing of own vocational career in current conditions. The lack of adequate competencies, education, and skills, impede that ability"¹⁷. However, improvements are necessary, regarding the quality of the offered employment, and the degree of adjusting it to both to the possessed qualifications and competencies, as well as, special needs and limitations of persons with disabilities.

Another possibility is supported employment, as a method of working with persons with disability, or persons from other groups endangered with exclusion, regarding the access and maintaining a paid employment in the open labour market. The "job coaching" support model is based on the mutual work of the work coach, or his assistant, with the person with a disability designated, as presented by B. Cytowska, by means of three principles: "first place the person in their appropriate workplace, then train them within the framework of performing particular worker's activities, and lastly, support them in maintaining employment"¹⁸. The last principle seems to be of most significance, which may be supported by the aforementioned story of Kamil, who, without support, lost his job quickly. Within this context, it is worth mentioning the project titled "The employers assistant - innovative support in employing persons with disabilities" ("*Asystent pracodawcy - innowacyjne wsparcie*

¹⁷ W. Łukowski, D. Wiszejko-Wierzbička, *Wizerunek aktywności zawodowej osób z ograniczeniami sprawności*, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Psychologii Społecznej „Academica”, Warszawa 2008, p. 66.

¹⁸ B. Cytowska, *Trener pracy - nowy zawód(?) w zatrudnianiu wspomaganym osób z niepełnosprawnością*, [in:] *Osoby niepełnosprawne w drodze ku dorosłości*, (ed.) D. Wołska, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, Kraków 2014, p. 274.

zatrudniania osób niepełnosprawnych”), designed by the Time Space Identity Association (Stowarzyszenie Czas Przestrzeń Tożsamość) tested in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. According to the premise of the project, the task of the employer’s assistant is to support entrepreneurs in an effective conducting of the process of employing persons with disabilities, as well as, consulting support during the time of cooperation.

Another character – Szymon – due to his health issues, is on allowance. He works part-time, at his father’s company. He distributes advertising flyers and performs cleaning work. During a conversation, he admits:

It’s ok. I have a lot of time for myself, I can watch TV, get some sleep, sometimes I go to the store or take a walk. I have nothing to worry about.

The man lives with his parents and his younger sister.

Szymon’s biography indicates that “for some persons with disabilities, the certificate about their inability to take up work, and using social allowances, is, at times, the only solution allowing to function in the reality of the «late modernity». The need for an independent creation of own future, and taking responsibility for the potential erroneous choices, in the situation of the growing risk awareness, may turn out to be too much of a challenge to some”¹⁹. Szymon seems unprepared for such challenges, and he lacks adequate competencies and social skills, that would allow him for a more independent, constructive, or more “adult” way of solving the incoming issues.

Analysing Simons biography, it is worth mentioning the issue of the family attitude towards the vocational activity of its members with disabilities. The man’s parents assume, that their adult son should not work due to the neurological afflictions (epilepsy, balance problems, vertigo), and a speech disorder, co-occurring with

¹⁹ W. Łukowski, D. Wiszejko-Wierzbicka, *Wizerunek aktywności zawodowej osób z ograniczeniami sprawności*, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Psychologii Społecznej „Academica”, Warszawa 2008, p. 65.

his intellectual disability. The story of Szymon is supported by the opinion of K.D. Rzedzicka and A. Kobyłańska, that often "due to own state, or in the result of the limitations, or overprotection of family members, the person with intellectual disability is incapable of becoming a fully adult person"²⁰.

Another graduate – Beata, is a mother of two, does not work, and takes care of home. She lives with her husband and two daughters in a village near Poznań. She presents her situation as follows:

I can manage the house, I cook well, and I do the cleaning. Only with the children, my mother helped at first. Now I know how to take care of them myself. Well, sometimes there's a little mess, sometimes I don't do the laundry, and make dinner in time. Maybe, sometimes I would like to go to work, but for now, I don't think about it.

Beata's husband is fully able-bodied, he works as a driver for a small local enterprise. The woman may be happy with her current situation, she feels fulfilled as a mother, which can be confirmed by her statement filled with warmth and happiness:

You know, my girls are great! So polite, so lovely, and sweet... Sure, sometimes they make a ruckus, they run around, scatter their things all over the place, total commotion... In September, Zuza will go to pre-school, so there will be some more peace and quiet.

Taking care of own household, an entirely intellectually able partner, and motherhood, allowed Beata to build a positive self-assessment, and feel like a fully valuable person. One may assume, that her neighbours do not even notice, that she graduated a special school.

Magda also started a family. She has a little son. The woman is also taking care of her twin sister with a moderate intellectual disability. Magda is not very eager to talk about herself. She lives with her son's father, but she speaks of him in ill words, that:

²⁰ K.D. Rzedzicka, A. Kobyłańska, *Dorostłość, niepełnosprawność, czas współczesny – na pograniczach pedagogiki specjalnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2003, p. 117.

he drinks a lot, sometimes he gives me no money, he doesn't work full-time anywhere, he just takes some part time jobs, at constructions, or to help in the field, but he gets bored quickly, and quits. Good thing that I have allowance, Aśka has it too; I get some from help and the life goes on somehow.

The biographies of Magda and Beata contradict the opinion of B. Cytowska, who claims that “for people with intellectual disabilities, enjoying marriage, parenthood, living alone, or autonomy, is still of little probability”²¹. Marriage, and starting a family, are highly valued by persons with intellectual disabilities, they constitute significant elements of their life plans, as supported by, i.a. the studies of K. Materny (2003) conducted among the Special Vocational School students ranging 17 and 20 years of age²².

The interview conducted with Magda, and, particularly, her statements about the atmosphere at home, her relation to her son and her husband, arouse concern regarding her pedagogical capabilities. This is, what the woman says of her three-year-old son:

Brajanek [the son] does not listen to me at all. If we are at the store, and he wants a toy, a lolly pop, or something else, I buy it, because otherwise he will start yelling, throwing himself on the floor, and I don't want people to say that I am a bad mother. So I buy it, and then Mateusz [the husband – ed.] makes a scene, that I spend money on foolish stuff. I tell you, ma'am, It is not easy.

Similar observations regarding the everyday life of persons with mild intellectual disabilities were presented by M. Grütz, who concluded that, “bad material conditions were going along with pedagogical inefficiency, and in some cases, children would be placed in educational care facilities (...). Additionally, it is not a rare case, when the parents' rights are taken away from persons with intellec-

²¹ B. Cytowska, *(Nie)przygotowanie osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Człowiek z niepełnosprawnością w rezerwacie przestrzeni publicznej*, (ed.) Z. Gajdzica, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2013, p. 155.

²² K. Materny, *Wizja rodziny i koncepcje małżeństwa młodzieży z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Dorosłość, niepełnosprawność, czas współczesny. Na pograniczach pedagogiki specjalnej*, (eds.) K. Rzedzicka, A. Kobyłańska, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2003, p. 422.

tual disabilities, despite the fact, that they hadn't been given any previous support in raising their children"²³.

The last of the graduates – Kasia, went to Germany with her mother, to work. She does not remain in contact with the others.

Summary and conclusions

As shown above by the described biographies, the adulthood of persons with mild intellectual disabilities has many faces.

One of the key issues is, without a doubt, to take up vocational activity. The varying stories of the graduates, presented in the article, provide us with information allowing us to formulate accurate developmental recommendations regarding the system of professional education, leading to a reflection that, "swift solutions need time, when the young people with mild intellectual disabilities end their systematic school education – they are no longer students, and so they can, and they should take up work"²⁴. After considering the unquestionable limitations (difficulties in social communication, knowledge acquisition, gaining complicated vocational skills, the independent work planning, or the social-vocational adaptation), the workers with intellectual disability are capable of performing particular activities, vocational tasks, and even some vocations efficiently, and achieve results in accordance with the employers' expectations²⁵. This requires identifying their vocational capabilities

²³ M. Grütz, *Osoby z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną jako partnerzy, małżonkowie i rodzice – dotychczasowe doniesienia badawcze*, [in:] *Dorośli z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w labiryntach codzienności. Analiza badań – krytyka podejść – propozycje rozwiązań*, (ed.) B. Cytowska, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2011, pp. 177-178.

²⁴ D. Baraniewicz, *Poczucie dorosłości osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w stopniu lekkim w różnych przestrzeniach*, [in:] *Osoby niepełnosprawne w drodze ku dorosłości*, (ed.) D. Wolska, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, Kraków 2014, p. 40.

²⁵ T. Majewski, *Problem zatrudnienia osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, [in:] *Dorośli z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w labiryntach codzienności. Analiza badań – krytyka podejść – propozycje rozwiązań*, (ed.) B. Cytowska, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2011, pp. 89-105.

instead of focusing solely on their disability and barriers. Therefore, changes in special vocational education are necessary, in the directions indicated by A. Krause (2005). The first of them is related to the necessity of developing general social and technological competencies while resigning from presenting the students with a simplified and often useless vocational knowledge. The second task is the "participation in organising a new, sheltered employment system, with the use of the previously tested Western-European models"²⁶. It is advisable, that the special vocational schools take action directed at increasing the quality of preparing the student for further education, including the development of individual needs and talents; at analysing the adequacy of vocational education in the school with the actual labour market requirements, considering the factors that affect the student, who makes a choice regarding his vocation, with the consideration of his individual capabilities and needs; as well as, at organising the support for the graduate in searching for work.

Simultaneously, one must add, that regardless of the objective educational barriers that limit the capabilities of acquiring vocational education and later employment, often, one may observe a lack of motivation among persons with disabilities, to create their own lives, and the difficulties with using their opportunities "even when they appear in a clear, and a tangible way"²⁷.

Additionally, it is advisable to observe the functioning of the families started by persons with intellectual disabilities and providing them with more than just social support.

In conclusion, what seems to be important, is the systematic monitoring of the stories of the special school graduates, as this will allow for a more rational "equipment of the persons with disabili-

²⁶ A. Krause, *Człowiek niepełnosprawny wobec przeobrażeń społecznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2005, p. 209.

²⁷ A. Ostrowska, *Kompetencje społeczne osób niepełnosprawnych – bariery dorosłości*, [in:] *Dorosłość, niepełnosprawność, czas współczesny. Na pograniczych pedagogiki specjalnej*, (eds.) K. Rzedzicka, A. Kobyłańska, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2003, p. 52.

ties with the necessary social competencies, adjusted to the changing conditions, and requirements of modernity, that would ensure their increased efficiency of actions, and an effective participation in the life of a modern society"²⁸.

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²⁸ Ibidem.

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Deaf sociocultural identity and experiencing symptoms of depression – a preliminary study of adult CI users with prelingual deafness

ABSTRACT: Joanna Kobosko, *Deaf sociocultural identity and experiencing symptoms of depression – a preliminary study of adult CI users with prelingual deafness*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 275-295. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.12>

Deaf sociocultural identity of the deaf is an important issue from the point of view of their psychological and social functioning. The present study was focused on people with prelingual deafness using cochlear implants (CI) demonstrating high skills in oral Polish language. The research question concerned the relation between the aforementioned identity and symptoms of depression, as well as the age, sex and age at cochlear implantation. The study included 28 prelingually deaf CI users aged between 18 and 40 and was conducted using N. Glickman's DIDS, PHQ-9 and an information questionnaire. Deaf sociocultural identity is similar in terms of proportion of types of identities of the deaf to the results obtained in other studies, i.e. hearing and bicultural identities turned out to be predominant in the study group. The marginal identity only coexists with the presence of depression symptoms.

KEY WORDS: deaf sociocultural identity, cochlear implant, prelingual deafness, depression

Introduction

In the era of cochlear implants, the deaf sociocultural identity is also considered from the following perspective, the impact they can have on the psychosocial functioning of the deaf, including the formation of their personal, social and cultural identity. On the one hand, researchers still discuss the question of how it is possible that such a small device, whose purpose is to enable or amplify hearing in its users, was able to “achieve” such a revolutionary breakthrough in the life and capabilities of deaf people¹, both those born in hearing families, and increasingly often also representatives of Deaf communities treated as a linguistic (sign language) and cultural (Deaf culture) minority².

On the other hand, the presently obvious facts include the importance of CI in the subjective perception of its users with prelingual deafness³. The statements⁴ indicate benefits in the sphere of

¹ I.W. Leigh, *A lens on deaf identities*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York 2009.

² The spelling with the use of the capital D letter means that deaf people are treated as a linguistic (sign language) and cultural (Deaf culture) minority, while the small d letter refers to deaf people with severe or profound hearing loss. It should be added here that there has been a tendency in the world to depart from this spelling distinction as outdated and not reflecting the complex social, family, educational, identity or cultural conditions in the population of deaf people - see M. Marschark, I. Zettler, J. Dammeyer, *Social dominance orientation, language orientation and deaf identity*, “Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education” 2017, no. 3, p. 269–277.

³ E.g. A. Wheeler, S. Archbold, S. Gregory, A. Skipp, *Cochlear implants: The young people’s perspective*, “Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education” 2007, no. 3, p. 303–316; J. Zębik, *Tożsamość osoby zaimplantowanej – czyli o sobie*, [in:] *Tożsamość społeczno-kulturowa głuchych*, ed. E. Woźnicka, Polish Association of the Deaf, Department in Łódź, University of Humanities and Economics in Łódź, Łódź 2007, p. 233–49.

⁴ The quoted statements are original and their analysis was conducted elsewhere: J. Kobosko, A. Pankowska, A. Geremek-Samsonowicz, H. Skarzyński, *Implant ślimakowy z perspektywy osób dorosłych z głuchotą prelingwalną – badanie jakościowe*, „Nowa Audiofonologia” 2018, no. 3, p. 29–41.

auditory perception, speech and communication with the environment (“Thanks to the implant I can hear and communicate with my family and other people in my environment. Thanks to the fact that I can hear, I can also speak, a woman, 24 years old, CI at the age of 5), through the association of CI with personal development, positive emotions (“I am glad that I can wear an implant, hear individual sounds from the environment”, a woman, 20 years old, CI at the age of 3 and a half), to generalizations having the character of assessing the role of CI as very significant, and CI itself of great importance (“Without an implant I am practically deaf. Therefore, the implant and processor constitute my only ear that allows me to function in the world of the hearing, a woman, 39 years old, CI at the age of 29). At the same time, there questions about the relationship between the identity of deaf people, including those using CI: a personal, social and cultural one, and psychological variables such as self-esteem⁵, mental well-being⁶ and depression⁷ appear.

Deaf sociocultural identity

The deaf sociocultural identity as a research subject is usually treated with an emphasis on the cultural aspect, i.e. the culture of the Deaf, contrasted with the culture of the hearing, or on the social aspect in which the essence is a sense of community and belonging to a group of people: deaf for the deaf and hearing for the hearing.

⁵ M. Hintermair, *Self-esteem and satisfaction with life of deaf and hard-of-hearing people – A resource-oriented approach to identity work*, “Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education” 2008, no. 2, p. 278–300; S.L. Cornell, K.P. Lyness, *Therapeutic implications for adolescent deaf identity and self-concept*, “Journal of Family Therapy” 2005, no. 3, p. 31–49.

⁶ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, *The significance of deaf identity for psychological well-being*, “Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education” 2017, no. 2, p. 187–194.

⁷ M.J. Carter, D.C. Mireles, *Deaf identity and depression*, [in:] *New directions in identity theory and research*, ed. J.E. Stets, R.T. Serpe, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2016, p. 509–538.

The definitions of social and cultural identities are interrelated. In the cognitive psychology approach, social identity is “a set of self-definitions, consisting of relevant grades [i.e. having such properties, the loss of which causes that a given thing or phenomenon stops being itself], by which the individual describes their own person without differentiating between I and We, and at the same time differentiating between We and Other people, in terms of We versus non-We (They)”⁸. In turn, cultural identity is a variation of social identity in which one identifies with “a specific cultural system, and especially a set of ideas, views and beliefs shared by members of a given group”⁹. Consequently, researchers analysing the cultural identity of deaf people also describe their social identity, indicating groups of people with whom they identify as deaf people, and thus created because of the dimension important from the point of view of their identity: deafness v. hearing. This is for them a dimension of perception of their own distinctiveness in comparison to other people, as well as similarity to those perceived as belonging to the same group. For the purposes of the undertaken research, the term of sociocultural identity was recognised to be the term best suited to the specificity of the studied population of deaf people with CI¹⁰, because the main area of the study will concern social relationships created due to deafness v. hearing, accompanied by elements of the Deaf culture or hearing culture (e.g. attitude to deafness, as well sign and spoken language).

⁸ A. Bikont, *Tożsamość społeczna – teorie, hipotezy, znaki zapytania*, [in:] *Studia nad spostrzeganiem relacji Ja-Inni: Tożsamość, indywiduacja, przynależność*, ed. M. Jarymowicz, The Ossolineum, Wrocław, Warsaw 1988, p. 15–36.

⁹ L. Monaghan, R.J. Senghas, *Signs of their times: Deaf communities and the culture of language*, “Annual Review of Anthropology” 2002, no. 31, p. 69–97; after: P. Tomaszewski, K. Kotowska, P. Krzysztofiak, *Paradygmaty tożsamości u g/Głuchych: przegląd wybranych koncepcji*, [in:] *Edukacja niesłyszących – wczoraj, dziś i jutro*, ed. E. Woźnicka, Wydawnictwo Akademii Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej w Łodzi, Łódź 2017, p. 111–156.

¹⁰ P. Wojda, *Język migowy a tożsamość społeczno-kulturowa młodzieży głuchej w Polsce*, “Audiofonologia” 2010, no. 26, p. 29–33.

Neil Glickman as one of the first researchers of the Deaf cultural identity¹¹ proposed a model in which, based on the stages of racial identity development, he distinguished 4 stages of its development and the corresponding types of the Deaf cultural identity: (1) culturally hearing stage, deaf people being at this stage consider deafness as a dysfunction or disability in accordance with their adopted medical perspective, and consequently recognize the world of the hearing and hearing as the standard of normality and health they aim at; they value oral methods of communication (spoken language), they recognize the use of residual hearing as a value; (2) culturally marginal stage, deaf people at this stage experience themselves as placed between the worlds of the hearing and of the Deaf, but they do not feel well in any of them; (3) immersion stage, deaf people having this identity present a positive attitude towards the Deaf, as well as identify with them; (4) bicultural stage (of a deaf person), deaf people at this stage of the development of cultural identity identify with both Deaf and hearing people. A few years later, Deborah Maxwell-McCaw (2001)¹² used the concept of acculturation to the culture of the Deaf, the hearing, the Deaf and the hearing to describe the formation of the cultural identity of the Deaf, enriching its description with a behavioural dimension in five separate spheres: psychological identification with a selected group, involvement, preferences, language competences, knowledge about the culture of the Deaf and the hearing.

Deaf sociocultural identity with an emphasis on its social aspect, expressed by a sense of community and belonging to one of the groups distinguished based on deafness v. hearing dimension, was studied by Madeleine Chapman and Jasper Dammeyer (2017)¹³.

¹¹ N. Glickman, *The development of culturally Deaf identities*, [in:] *Culturally affirmative psychotherapy with Deaf persons*, ed. N. S. Glickman, A. Harvey, Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ 1996, p. 115–153. The spelling with the capital D letter was retained according to the original notation used by N. Glickman in his works.

¹² D. Maxwell-McCaw, M.C. Zea, *The Deaf Acculturation Scale (DAS) Development and validation of a 58-item measure*, "Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education" 2011, no. 3, p. 325–342.

¹³ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, op. cit.

It appeared that among the study deaf people with moderate to profound hearing loss (including those using CI who constituted 32.5%), dual social identity was indicated by 34.5% of respondents, deaf identity by 33.5%, while 25.5% indicated hearing identity, and 7% of the study participants was characterised by deaf marginal social identity.

Deaf sociocultural identity and cochlear implant

The results of research on the cultural or/and social identity of people with prelingual deafness who are CI users, considering the dimension of deafness v. hearing, indicate the predominance of identities of the hearing in this group¹⁴, also compared to deaf people without CI¹⁵. Some researchers have demonstrated that the mere fact that prelingual deaf people have CI allows for a more likely belief that people in this group will be characterised by the identity of the hearing¹⁶. However, from a psychological point of view, it still remains an open question whether a deaf person can have the identity of the hearing, being “essentially” a deaf person, without triggering defence mechanisms, such as denial¹⁷. Irene W. Leigh,

¹⁴ M. Hintermair, op. cit.; J.S. Moog, A.E. Geers, C. Gustus, C. Brenner, *Psychosocial adjustment in adolescents who have used cochlear implants since preschool*, “Ear and Hearing” 2011, 1 suppl, p. 75S–83S; S. Rich, M. Levinger, S. Werner, C. Adelman, *Being an adolescent with a cochlear implant in the world of hearing people: Coping in school, in society and with self identity*, “International Journal of Pediatric Otorhinolaryngology” 2013, no. 8, p. 1337–44; A. Wheeler, S. Archbold, S. Gregory, A. Skipp, op. cit.

¹⁵ R.L. Wald, J.F. Knutson, *Deaf cultural identity of adolescents with and without cochlear implants*, “Annals of Otology, Rhinology and Laryngology” 2000, no. 185 (Suppl), p. 87–89.

¹⁶ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, op. cit.

¹⁷ N. Glickman, op. cit.; M. Zalewska *Dziecko w autoportrecie z zamalowaną twarzą. Psychiczne mechanizmy zaburzeń rozwoju tożsamości dziecka głucheego i dziecka z opóźnionym rozwojem mowy*. J. Santorski i CO Wydawnictwo, Warszawa 1998; M. Zalewska, *Mechanizmy zaburzeń tożsamości u młodzieży głuchej mającej słyszących rodziców – kliniczne studium głuchego chłopca*, [in:] *Młodzież głucha i słabosłysząca*

a research expert on the identity of deaf people, considers the identity of the hearing to be their “artificial” identity (“artificial” hearing identity)¹⁸.

Depression and prelingual deafness

In people with prelingual deafness a greater intensity of depression than in the general hearing population is observed¹⁹. The causes of depression may be similar to those in the general population, but deafness from birth or early childhood is considered an additional risk factor. Furthermore, sources of presence in the perception of oneself and the world of the so-called “cognitive triad”: negative views about yourself, the world and the future²⁰, usually reach back to experiences in family relationships, when as the only deaf child they could experience “being outside” what was happening in the family, isolation, misunderstanding among loved ones, frustration of the need for the sense of community and belonging²¹. It has been shown that depression of deaf people in adulthood is associated with difficulties in understanding what parents, especially of the same sex, communicated to them at the basic level²². Still

w rodzinie i otaczającym świecie – dla terapeutów, nauczycieli, wychowawców i rodziców, ed. J. Kobosko, “Hear the World” Foundation, Warsaw 2009, p. 78-83.

¹⁸ I.W. Leigh, *Reflections on identity*, [in:] *The Oxford handbook of deaf studies, language, and education*, ed. M. Marschark, P.E Spencer, vol. 2, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2010, p. 195–209.

¹⁹ Among others: J. Fellingner, D. Holzinger, R. Pollard, *Mental health of deaf people*, “The Lancet” 2012, no. 379(9820), p. 1037–1044; M. du Feu, C. Chovaz, *Mental health and deafness*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014.

²⁰ A.T. Beck, *Depression. Causes and treatment*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA 1970.

²¹ E.g. M. du Feu, C. Chovaz, *Mental health and deafness*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014.

²² P. Kushalnagar, S. Bruce, T. Sutton, I.W. Leigh, *Retrospective basic parent-child communication difficulties and risk of depression in deaf adults*, “Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities” 2017, no. 1, p. 25-34.

little can be said about the depression in prelingual deaf people who have been provided with CI. It is known that they experience a greater psychosocial distress, but a lower severity of depression symptoms than those who have lost their hearing postlingually, progressively or suddenly²³, and that they tend to experience more severe depression symptoms compared to the hearing²⁴.

Deaf sociocultural identity of the deaf with a cochlear implant and depression – aim of the study

So far, only the relationship between the deaf personal identity and depression has been studied²⁵, but it is not known whether the study participants included deaf people with CI. It was found, among others, that difficulties in being oneself as a deaf person in various social situations correlate significantly with a higher level of depression. In the undertaken study, a question was asked concerning the definition of the deaf sociocultural identity of deaf adults with CI, and a relationship between this identity and depression symptoms, as well as gender, age and age at the time of CI implantation.

Methods of the study

The research was conducted by a correspondence method. Questionnaire packages were sent to people who met the adopted criteria, including high competence in the Polish spoken language according

²³ M.S. Shin, J.J. Song, K.H. Han, H. J. Lee, R.M. Do, B.J. Kim, S.H. Oh, *The effect of psychosocial factors on outcomes of cochlear implantation*, "Acta Oto-Laryngologica" 2015, no. 135, p. 572–577.

²⁴ J. Kobosko, *Doświadczanie objawów depresji u osób dorosłych z głuchotą prelingwalną korzystających z implantu ślimakowego a strategię radzenia sobie ze stresem i samoocena*, "Nowa Audiofonologia" 2014, no. 1, p. 34–45.

²⁵ M.J. Carter, D.C. Mireles, op. cit.

to the assessment of deaf speech and language therapist and deaf educators knowing those people from all over Poland. The response rate was 40%.

Participants of the study

The study involved adults ($n = 28$) aged from 18 to 40 ($M = 26.5$; $SD = 7.02$) with profound or severe prelingual deafness, including 71.4% of women. The subjects have used CI since their childhood, adolescence or adulthood, i.e. they received the first CI in the range from 2 to 33 years of age, on average at 14.57 years of age ($SD = 9.13$). The duration of CI use in the years was on average $M = 12.42$ ($SD = 4.75$) and ranged from 2 to 22 years. At the time of the study, 15 people used one CI, one person was implanted on both sides, 11 used both a CI and a conventional hearing aid in the unimplanted ear.

7 people declared good and very good knowledge of sign language, and the others according to their own assessment knew sign language "a little" ($n = 6$), "poorly" ($n = 5$) or not at all ($n = 9$). 32.1% were married or had a partner, including 7.1% in a relationship with a deaf/hard of hearing person. 57.1% had higher education, 3.6% semi-higher education, while 39.3% had secondary education. Employed persons constituted 35.7%, and those working and receiving a benefit, 10.7%, 39.3% learnt or studied, while 14.3% were unemployed. In the case of 8 people (28.6%), someone from the immediate family could not hear or was hard of hearing, including only one person who had deaf parents, others having hearing ones.

Research tools

The *Deaf Identity Development Scale* (DIDS) by N. Glickman²⁶ is used to describe the cultural identity of the Deaf. Its original version consists of 60 statements. Linguistic adaptation: translation into

²⁶ N. Glickman, op. cit.

Polish and linguistic adaptation (simplification) were made for the needs of previous studies of deaf youth²⁷ The DIDS has 4 scales, describing 4 types of cultural identity: bicultural identity (Bicultural scale) in which identification both with Deaf people as a linguistic and cultural minority, as well as with hearing people and their culture occurs; hearing identity (Hearing scale), in which identification with the hearing occurs; Immersion identity (Immersion scale), in which identification with the Deaf occurs, and marginal identity (Marginal scale), which characterises those deaf people who do not identify with neither the Deaf nor the hearing. Answers in the DIDS are scored from 5 to 1, and the result of each scale expresses the mean of all responses assigned to it. In the present study, the DIDS was used to describe the deaf sociocultural identity of deaf people, the vast majority of whom had profound or severe hearing loss, and similar deafness experiences (e.g. hearing and speech rehabilitation).

Therefore, in the Polish version of DIDS applied for the study the spelling "deaf" with the small d letter was used. For individual DIDS scales, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients were obtained: Hearing (0.65), Marginal (0.8), Immersion (0.6), Bicultural (0.78).

A sense of belonging to a social group selected because of deafness: the one of the hearing, the hearing and the deaf, the deaf, neither hearing nor deaf, responding to the statement: "I have most in common with..." serves to assess the social identity as a deaf person. The study person chooses one out of 4 possibilities indicating a sense of their group belongingness. This method of measurement was adopted from Danish researchers²⁸ of the issues of deaf identity.

²⁷ J. Kobosko, *Tożsamość macierzyńska słyszących matek młodzieży głuchej i jej znaczenie dla rozwoju osobowej tożsamości tej młodzieży*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Warsaw, Warsaw 2007; J. Kobosko, *Osoba głucha (słabosłysząca), to znaczy kto? – tożsamość osobowa młodzieży głuchej i słabosłyszącej rodziców słyszących*, [in:] *Młodzież głucha i słabosłysząca w rodzinie i otaczającym świecie – dla terapeutów, nauczycieli, wychowawców i rodziców*, ed. J. Kobosko, "Hear the World" Foundation, Warsaw 2009, p. 19–35; J. Kobosko, *How do deaf adolescents experience themselves? Deaf identity and oral or sign language communication*, "Cochlear Implants International" 2010, 11 (suppl. 1), p. 319–322.

²⁸ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, *op. cit.*

Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), serves to assess the presence and severity of depression symptoms. It consists of 9 statements about various problems that may occur in the study person (e.g. feeling of fatigue and lack of energy), whose task is to answer whether and how often in the last two weeks they suffered from one of them on a scale from 0, *I did not suffer at all*, until 3, *I suffered nearly every day*. The maximum number of points is 27²⁹.

The information survey included questions about socio-demographic variables, as well as those related to deafness and cochlear implant.

Results of the study

Deaf sociocultural identity of the deaf with a cochlear implant (CI)

In the study, two measures to describe the deaf sociocultural identity was used. The first one was to indicate the identity category (*Survey*), defined by a sense of community and belonging to a group of people: (a) deaf, (b) hearing, (c) hearing and deaf, (d) neither deaf nor hearing, which allowed for the assessment of this identity primarily in the social aspect. The second way to measure deaf sociocultural identity was the N. Glickman's DIDS scale.

It appeared that belonging to the hearing group was indicated by 53.6% of the study participants, and to the deaf and hearing one, by 42.9%. One person indicated that does not belong either to the deaf or to the hearing (3.6%). Nobody has chosen to have the sense of belonging to the deaf group only (Figure 1).

Results related to deaf sociocultural identity (DIDS), evaluated on a scale of: Hearing, Marginal, Immersion and Bicultural, corresponding to the hearing identity, marginal identity, deaf identity and dual (hearing and deaf) identity, respectively, are presented in Figure 2 as well as in Table 1. The results of the N. Glickman's DIDS

²⁹ K. Kroenke, R.L. Spitzer, J.B. Williams, *The PHQ-9 validity of a brief depression severity measures*, "Journal of General Internal Medicine" 2001, no. 9, p. 606-613.

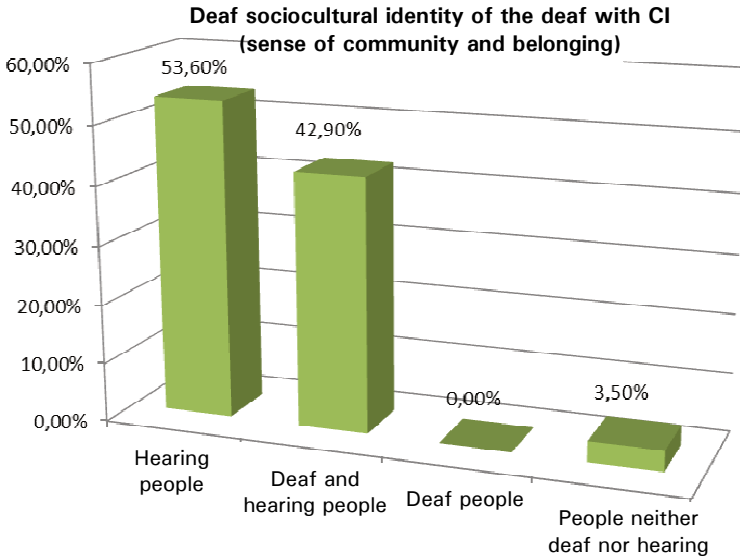


Figure 1. Deaf sociocultural identity of the deaf with a cochlear implant (CI), percentage distribution in individual categories of sense of community and belonging to: hearing people, hearing and deaf people, deaf people, and neither deaf people nor hearing people

Table 1. Deaf sociocultural identity (DIDS) and depression symptoms (PHQ-9), results obtained (minimum and maximum score, mean: M, standard deviation: SD) in deaf people with a cochlear implant (CI) (n = 28)

Tool name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (SD)
Deaf sociocultural identity N. Glickman's DIDS				
Hearing (range from 1 to 5 points)	1.80	4.00	3.14	0.48
Marginal (range from 1 to 5 points)	1.50	4.31	2.44	0.57
Immersion (range from 1 to 5 points)	1.47	2.73	2.01	0.34
Bicultural (range from 1 to 5 points)	2.20	4.73	3.4	0.54
Depression symptoms PHQ-9				
PHQ-9 (range from 1 to 27 points)	0	19	5.36	5.11

demonstrate that among the study deaf with CI, dual bicultural identity as well as the hearing identity dominate. Identification with deaf people only, and thus the deaf identity, as well as the marginal identity, i.e. a sense of lack of community and belonging to both groups, may appear relatively rarely.

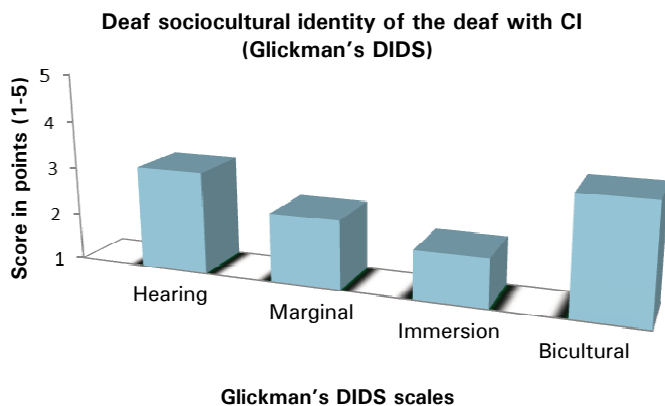


Figure 2. Deaf sociocultural identity of the deaf with a cochlear implant (CI), results obtained on N. Glickman's DIDS scales (means) ($n = 28$)

People indicating the sense of community and belonging to the hearing at the same time received significantly lower scores on the Bicultural (DIDS) scale; $M = 3.18$; $SD = 0.5$ compared to people having the sense of belonging to both groups; $M = 3.65$; $SD = 0.48$ (Student's t test: $t(25) = 2.49$; $p < 0.05$). At the same time, these people tend to have higher scores on the Hearing (DIDS) scale: $M = 3.3$; $SD = 0.47$ compared to those who chose to belong to the group of the hearing and the deaf: $M = 2.94$; $SD = 0.46$ (Student's t test: $t(25) = -1.97$; $p < 0.1$).

There were no differences between the results in the DIDS scales in younger (up to 26 years) and older (over 26 years) people. However, it was demonstrated that the younger a deaf person with CI is, the higher the results ($r = -0.425$; $p < 0.01$) on the Hearing (DIDS)

scale they obtain. The results in the N. Glickman's DIDS scales also show no differences related to the sex of the respondents, or to the age of CI implantation, i.e. in childhood or adolescence (here: up to 12 years of age) or adolescence or adulthood (here: above 12 years).

Deaf sociocultural identity of the deaf with a cochlear implant (CI) and depression symptoms

The severity of depression symptoms (PHQ-9) in the study group corresponds on average to its mild level (Table 1) according to American standards, published by the authors of the applied tool. Normal³⁰ results were obtained by 53.6% of respondents, however they should be treated with some caution, as these are not standards for the Polish population or for the deaf population. People aged 18-26 and above, as well as women and men do not demonstrated statistically significant differences in the severity of depression symptoms. The sense of community and belonging to the hearing v. the hearing and the deaf is not related to the severity of depression symptoms in the study deaf people with CI. On the contrary, people provided with CI up to 12 years of age obtained a significantly higher severity of depression symptoms (PHQ-9): $M = 7.75$; $SD = 6.48$ than those that have been implanted at the age of over 12: $M = 3.4$; $SD = 2.89$ (Student's t test: $t(25) = 2.33$, $p < 0.05$). Searching for the relationship between deaf sociocultural identity (DIDS) and the severity of depression symptoms, a correlation analysis was performed, in which only a significant relationship between the result on the Marginal (DIDS) scale and depression symptoms (PHQ-9) ($r = 0.541$; $p < 0.01$) was found. It suggests that in subjects greater levels of marginality coexist with symptoms of depression. Regression analysis was performed, introducing deaf sociocultural identity types (DIDS) to the model when the severity of depression symptoms is a dependent variable. A regression model on the bor-

³⁰ K. Kroenke, R.L. Spitzer, J.B. Williams, op.cit.

der of statistical significance was obtained: $R^2=0,21$; $F(4,23)=2,79$; $p=0,05$. It resulted that marginality is the only predictor of the severity of depression ($\beta=0.61$; $t = 3.29$; $p < 0.01$) in the study group, while other types of deaf sociocultural identity (DIDS) of deaf people with CI demonstrated no relationship with the experience of depression symptoms.

Discussion

The research concerned the problem of deaf sociocultural identity in deaf adult people with a cochlear implant (CI), as well as its relationship with experienced symptoms of depression. They also considered the relationship between deaf sociocultural identity and gender and age, as well as age at the time of CI implantation. So far, there has been no research concerning this subject in Poland, especially with regard to CI users with prelingual deafness, who have used CI since childhood, adolescence or adulthood.

The obtained results regarding the sociocultural identity of deaf people with CI using N. Glickman's DIDS are similar to previous results of studies obtained by deaf youth with high competence in the Polish spoken language without CI³¹, as well as young adults with hearing loss, students and university graduates³². It can be said that CI as a device enabling hearing does not play an important role in the formation of the deaf sociocultural identity of the study deaf people, brought up orally in the hearing environment. Other researchers also received no correlation of CI and the deaf sociocultural identity of deaf people³³.

³¹ J. Kobosko, op. cit.. In the studies cited here, only 1 person used CI (author's note).

³² A. Dłużniewska, *Jakość relacji komunikacyjnych a tożsamość społeczna i kulturowa młodzieży z uszkodzeniami słuchu*, "Niepełnosprawność. Półrocznik Naukowy" 2015, no. 17, p. 39–51. There is no information as to whether any of the respondents used CI (author's note).

³³ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, op. cit.

Among deaf people with CI, the bicultural and dual identity (DIDS), in which identification with the hearing and the deaf occurs, as well as the identity of the hearing, are dominating. However, in relation to the participants of the study, one should rather talk about identification with hearing and audiotically deaf people, i.e. people with similar experiences related to being a deaf person (e.g. hearing and speech rehabilitation, experience in relationships with hearing peers, etc.),³⁴ brought up in the hearing environment and in the context of medical thinking about deafness as a disability and dysfunction³⁵ than about identification with Deaf people and Deaf culture. It can be said that it is a bicultural identity with the predominance of identification with hearing people and their language and values, and therefore dominated by the hearing identity, as evidenced by the prevailing sense of community and belonging to this group, declared by 53.6%. According to the results of studies conducted in other countries, implanted deaf people tend to identify primarily with the hearing, the spoken language of a given country, as well as the values of the hearing culture³⁶.

Deaf sociocultural identity (DIDS) demonstrates no relationship with sex, as well as with the age at which CI was implanted, which

³⁴ J.L.A. Wolsel, M.D. Clark, L. van der Mark, C. Suggs, *Life scripts and life stories of oral deaf individuals*. "Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities" 2017, no. 1, p. 77–103; J. Kobosko, *Doświadczanie siebie jako osoby głuchej – badania nad młodzieżą głuchą i jej słyszącymi matkami z perspektywy interpersonalnej*, "Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo" 2010, no. 11, p. 101–122; D. Podgórska-Jachnik, *Głusi. Emancypacje*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Łodzi, Łódź 2013.

³⁵ P. Tomaszewski, K. Kotowska, P. Krzysztofiak, op. cit.; M. Wrześniewska-Pietrzak, *Aksjologiczne wyznaczniki tożsamości w wypowiedziach głuchych i czasopiśmie środowiskowym "Świat Ciszy"*, Wydawnictwo Rys, Poznań 2017.

³⁶ R.L. Wald, J.F. Knutson, op. cit.; M. Hintermair, op. cit.; J. Zębiak, *Tożsamość osób g/Głuchych z implantem ślimakowym w Polsce*, [in:] *Młodzież głucha i słabostysząca w rodzinie i otaczającym świecie – dla terapeutów, nauczycieli, wychowawców i rodziców*, ed. J. Kobosko, "Hear the World" Foundation, Warsaw 2009, p. 45–51; J.S. Moog, A.E Geers, C. Gustus, C. Brenner, op. cit.; S. Rich, M. Levinger, S. Werner, C. Adelman, op. cit.; M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, *The relationship between cochlear implants and deaf identity*, "American Annals of the Deaf" 2017, no. 4, p. 319–332.

was also shown by Danish researchers³⁷ However, a significant negative relationship between age and hearing identity (DIDS), which is more common in younger deaf people with CI, was found. As it might be expected, younger people usually depend on hearing family and educational environments, and often did not have contact with deaf adults in their adult life. Acquiring social experiences, undertaking sexual and professional roles, including experiences with other deaf people as well as sign language, and hence with various forms of “being deaf”³⁸ favour a decrease in identification with hearing people for the benefit of, as indirectly demonstrated by the obtained results, bicultural identity with the domination of the hearing identity.

Symptoms of depression, from mild to severe, occur in almost 50% of the respondents. Untreated, they can result in isolation, experiencing anger, and maladaptive behaviour³⁹. In deaf people with CI, they remain in a significant moderate positive relationship with deaf marginal sociocultural identity (DIDS). In the study group, as well as in the Danish study (2017), the level of depression is higher than in the general population, and this is indicated both by its increased severity⁴⁰, and large variation in results. A significantly greater severity of depression symptoms is also characteristic for people who were implanted with CI up to 12 years of age in comparison with those implanted later, and thus younger people. Such a result may express the difficulty in becoming deaf and entering

³⁷ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, *ibidem*.

³⁸ E.S. Ohna, *Deaf in my own way: Identity, learning and narratives*, “Deafness and Education International” 2004, no. 1, p. 20–37; A. Kołodziejczak, *Pomiędzy dwoma światami – problem tożsamości społecznej wybranej grupy niesłyszących*, [in:] *Tożsamość społeczno-kulturowa głuchych*, ed. E. Woźnicka, University of Humanities and Economics in Łódź, Polish Association of the Deaf, Department in Łódź, Łódź 2007, p. 22–32.

³⁹ K. Gryglewicz, M. Bozzay, B. Arthur-Jordon, G.D. Romero, M. Witmeier, R. Chapple, M.S.A. Karver, *Silenced population uncovering correlates of suicidal-related behavior among deaf and hard-of-hearing*, “Youth Crisis” 2017, no. 6, p. 433–442.

⁴⁰ According to American standards for the PHQ-9 questionnaire used in the study, as mentioned earlier in part: Results

adulthood⁴¹ than be associated with the fact of relatively early implantation, which requires further research.

Deaf marginal sociocultural identity (DIDS) proved to be an important predictor of the severity of depression symptoms in deaf people with CI. Experienced symptoms of depression may exacerbate problems existing “around the identity of a deaf person”, as demonstrated by the previously cited studies⁴². It is known that marginal identity, but not other types of deaf sociocultural identity, remains associated with a lower level psychological well-being⁴³, which is consistent with the results obtained in the reported studies in relation to the severity of depression symptoms.

The limitation of the study is a relatively small size of the study group, as well as the selection of people with high competence in the Polish spoken language. The inclusion of deaf people, for whom sign language is the basic tool of communication with the environment to the study, can be considered a challenge in the near future.

To summarise, deaf people with CI with a deaf marginal sociocultural identity need different forms of psychological intervention, including psychoeducation and psychotherapy. This is first of all, because it is associated with negative adaptation, as well as symptoms of depression. Social experiences that will also allow for a positive experience of oneself as a deaf person, which will favour a formation of a selected deaf sociocultural identity, but without denying deafness, are necessary⁴⁴. The same postulate applies to deaf people having CI with increased severity of depression symptoms, because not everyone suffering from depression must experience a deaf marginal sociocultural identity, i.e. the sense of lack of belonging to the deaf and/or the hearing.

⁴¹ H.S. Schlesinger, *A developmental model applied to problems of deafness*, “Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education” 2000, no. 4, p. 349–361; M. Zalewska, op. cit.; D. Podgórska-Jachnik, op. cit.; J.L.A. Wolsel, M.D. Clark, L. van der Mark, C. Suggs, op. cit.

⁴² M.J. Carter, D.C. Mireles, op. cit.

⁴³ M. Chapman, J. Dammeyer, op. cit.

⁴⁴ M. Zalewska, op. cit.

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Competencies of a deaf educator and deaf speech and language therapist in the diagnostic and therapeutic process of a child with hearing impairment

ABSTRACT: Renata Marciniak-Firadza, *Competencies of a deaf educator and deaf speech and language therapist in the diagnostic and therapeutic process of a child with hearing impairment*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 297-331. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.13>

The specificity of the cognitive processes of a child with hearing impairment, and the need to apply appropriate methods and means of teaching, requires participation of a properly prepared specialist in the field of remedial and educational, preventive and therapeutic work in the didactic process.

The manifestation of not only theoretical reflection on the profession of teacher and speech and language therapist, but also the effect of practical searches related to the vocational education and training of educators and speech and language therapists, as well as the assessment of their work, is the issue of professional competencies of a deaf educator and deaf speech and language therapist in the diagnostic and therapeutic process of a child with hearing impairment. Competence is understood in the article in two ways: as a range of knowledge, skills, predispositions and as a range of qualifications.

KEY WORDS: competence, deaf education, deaf speech and language therapy

Introduction

As emphasized by Katarzyna Plutecka, the author of the monograph entitled *“Professional competencies of a deaf educator with hearing impairment”* (*“Kompetencje zawodowe surdopedagoga z wadą słuchu”*), the specificity of cognitive processes in children deviating from the psychophysical standard, as well as the need to apply appropriate teaching methods and aids require the participation of a specialist properly trained in remedial, educational, preventive and therapeutic work in the didactic process¹. In the case of children with hearing impairment, the requirements on deaf educators are subordinated to the comprehensive development of the individual with hearing impairment, the ability to communicate the knowledge about the surrounding world, and associated phenomena, their properties and relationships between them, as well as about the cause-effect relationship².

Speech development is inseparably connected to mental development (including intellectual development) and social development of the child. It is not necessary to convince anyone about the importance of communication and intercommunication with other people for each human being. Because the condition for natural and correct development of voice and speech is, among others, the ability to hear ambient sounds, a deaf speech and language therapist plays important role in the process of hearing rehabilitation³. The specificity of speech and language therapy interactions related to shaping communication competencies of people with hearing impairment requires a deaf speech and language therapist to have,

¹ K. Plutecka, *Kompetencje zawodowe surdopedagoga z wadą słuchu*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2006, p. 61.

² A. Korzon, *Efektywny surdopedagog w opinii nauczycieli i uczniów z wadą słuchu*, (in:) *Pedagogika specjalna wobec zagrożeń i wyzwań XXI wieku: materiały z obrad XVI sekcji III Zjazdu Pedagogicznego w Poznaniu (21-23 September 1998)*, ed. J. Pańczyk, W. Dykik, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza, Poznań 1999.

³ Deaf speech and language therapy focuses on the communication specificities of people with hearing impairment and its biopsychosocial conditions.

among others, the ability to diagnose developmental needs, including communication-related needs of a hearing-impaired child in order to improve them, correct them and compensate for them, which requires the ability to support both the hearing-impaired child and their family.

The right of people with hearing impairment to care (including rehabilitation, education) from the part of the state and various institutions is guaranteed by Polish and international legislation, cf. e.g.

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which: in art. 68 paragraph 3 states that people for whom public authorities have special obligations regarding the provision of special health care include children and handicapped people. This means that children are entitled to "special health care" for both belonging to a specific age category and their disability status; in Article 69, it is said "Public authorities shall provide, in accordance with statute, aid to disabled persons to ensure their subsistence, adaptation to work and social communication"; in Article 32, point 2 it is stated that "No one shall be discriminated against (...) for any reason whatsoever". The protection of these goods is the responsibility of public authorities.

2. The Act of 19 August 1994 on the protection of mental health (Journal of Laws No. 111, item 535 as amended), which in art. 4 ensures that "preventive actions in the field of mental health protection are taken above all among children..." and that these actions include, in particular, "the establishment of facilities to develop preventive activities, primarily psychological counselling, and specialist facilities covering early recognition of needs of children with psychomotor developmental disorders."

3. The Act of 7 September 1991 on the education system (Journal of Laws of 1996, No. 67, item 329, as amended), which states in the preamble that "Education in the Republic of Poland is a common good of society; is guided by the principles contained in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, as well as the indications contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child", and in Art. 71b introduces the possibility of

early support for the development of the child and their family from the moment disability is diagnosed.

4. Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes the agreement of the countries ratifying the Convention that health care, including rehabilitation and therapy, and education of children with disabilities are covered by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in art. 23 1. states that, "States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community".

An important step was the signing and ratification by Poland of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006 in New York pursuant to Resolution 61/106; it entered into force on May 3, 2008, Poland signed the Convention on March 30, 2007, and ratified it on September 6, 2012. The Convention has bound Poland in internal and external policies since October 25, 2012, after its publication in Journal of Laws of 2012, item 1169) (hereinafter also referred to as: the Convention), being the first international agreement that comprehensively regulates the rights of people with disabilities and specifies the obligations of the States Parties in respect of their observance and protection. It should be noted that in its provisions the Convention directly refers to the implementation of the rights of deaf people. Article 24 of the Convention states that the necessary actions include:

facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community, [...] ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.

It includes a record regarding recognition of the specific cultural and linguistic identity of deaf people, including sign languages and culture of deaf people (art. 30 paragraph 4):

Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.

In the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24 on education states that in countries that have signed the convention: a) persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live, on the basis of disability; b) States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community; c) it is ensured that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development; d) appropriate measures will be taken to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

It should also be mentioned that the problem of hearing loss in schoolchildren and its consequences has been recognized in Europe, as evidenced by the signing of two European Scientific Consensuses on June 22, 2011. The first of them entitled: "Hearing Screening of Pre-school and School-Age Children" was signed by 35 representatives of 27 countries, while the second consensus entitled "Hearing, Vision, and Speech Screening in Pre-School and School-Age Children" was signed by representatives of the scientific community (<http://whc.ifps.org.pl/konkluzja-rady/>).

In order to ensure the appropriate level of the rehabilitation and education of people with hearing impairment guaranteed by legislation, high-class specialists, including deaf educators and deaf speech and language therapists are needed.

The manifestation of not only theoretical reflection on the profession of teacher and speech and language therapist, but also the effect of practical searches related to the vocational education and training of educators and speech and language therapists, as well as the assessment of their work, is the issue of professional competencies of a deaf educator and deaf speech and language therapist.

The concept of competence, classification of competencies

The term “competence” comes from the Latin language, in which *competere* means ‘fit’. The semantic scope of the concept of “competence” can be found in numerous synonymous terms, such as: predisposition, qualification, skill, ability, preparation. In source literature, various definitions of professional competence are found. The first group consists of definitions having an instrumental nature. They recognize competence as a higher order qualification that predisposes the individual to solve problems⁴. In the emotional and normative aspect, competence is an instruction expressing a positive, accepting attitude to specific tasks⁵. The third group of definitions includes those that can be described as comprehensive. In this approach, competence is a dynamic structure and is a function of integrating knowledge, emotions, understanding, desire and behaviour⁶.

Competence is the range of one’s knowledge, skills and responsibility. A competent employee is an employee who is able to

⁴ S. Dylak, *Wizualizacja w kształceniu nauczycieli*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza, Poznań 1995.

⁵ M. Dudzikowa, *Kompetencje autokreacyjne – czy i jak są możliwe do nabycia w toku studiów pedagogicznych*, (in:) *Ewolucja tożsamości pedagogiki*, ed. H. Kwiatkowska, Wydawnictwo IHNOiT, Warsaw 1994.

⁶ M. Czerepaniak-Walczak, *Aspekty i źródła profesjonalnej refleksji nauczyciela*, Wydawnictwo Edytor, Toruń 1997; K. Stech, *Kompetencje zawodowe nauczyciela – spojrzenie na problem*, (in:) *Kompetencje nauczyciela-wychowawcy*, ed. K. Ferenz, E. Koziół, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, Zielona Góra 2002.

properly perform assigned tasks; he has appropriate competence for their completion⁷. As I. Zeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz and A. Szydłowska write, "Competences understood in a standard way are basic requirements for a profession in terms of skills, knowledge and psychophysical features that enable effective performance of typical, characteristic professional tasks. Therefore, the employee's competences can be briefly defined as a set of necessary factors: knowledge, skills and psychophysical predispositions to practice a given profession⁸. Similarly, D. Hyżak believes that: "In the teacher's work, competences are identified with the qualifications necessary for the effective performance of this profession⁹.

Therefore, competences can be perceived as certain individual abilities of an individual and as qualifications, i.e. normative abilities that a person in the position of a teacher should possess.

Wacław Strykowski draws attention to the fact that the term "competence" can also mean the range of qualifications¹⁰.

In the field of pedeutology, there are numerous classifications of teaching (pedagogical) competences, cf., among others, classifications of: H. Hamer¹¹, S. Dylak¹², K. Stech¹³, R. Kwaśnica¹⁴, C. Banaś¹⁵ or K. Denek¹⁶.

⁷ W. Kopaliniński, *Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych z almanachem*, Warsaw 2000, Wydawnictwo Świat Książki, p. 269.

⁸ I. Zeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz, A. Szydłowska, *Kompetencje nauczyciela w kontekście kształcenia*, „Społeczeństwo. Edukacja. Język” 2016, no. 4, p. 94.

⁹ D. Hyżak, *Kompetencje i umiejętności nauczycieli wobec wyzwań XXI wieku*, (in:) *Edukacja jutra. XI Tatrzańskie Seminarium Naukowe*, ed. F. Bereźnicki, K. Denek, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2005, p. 297.

¹⁰ W. Strykowski, J. Strykowska, J. Pielachowski, *Kompetencje nauczyciela szkoły współczesnej*, Wydawnictwo eMPi, Poznań 2003, p. 22.

¹¹ H. Hamer, *Klucz do efektywności nauczania. Poradnik dla nauczycieli*, Wydawnictwo Veda, Warsaw 1994, pp. 25-125.

¹² S. Dylak, *Wizualizacja w kształceniu nauczycieli*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza, Poznań 1995, p. 35.

¹³ Stech, *Kompetencje zawodowe nauczyciela – spojrzenie na problem*, (in:) *Kompetencje nauczyciela-wychowawcy*, ed. K. Ferencz, E. Kozioł, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, Zielona Góra 2002, p. 16.

For the purposes of the present article, the author will use a typology of competences, considering the complexity and multidimensionality of teacher's tasks and the specificity of the teaching profession, presented by the Committee on Education Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. In this typology certain general standards for teachers' activities are distinguished, while the detailed intellectual and practical skills are grouped into categories of the following competences:

- praxeological ones, including detailed skills in the area of planning, and organizing evaluation of educational processes;
- communication-related ones, which are expressed in the effectiveness of linguistic behaviour in educational situations;
- cooperation-related ones, manifested in pro-social and integration behaviour;
- creative ones, thanks to which the teacher is capable of innovation and a creative approach to tasks;
- information technology-related ones, which, after mastering a foreign language and new technologies, allow the teacher to use modern sources of information;
- moral ones, constituting the basis for responsibility and professional ethics¹⁷.

Praxeological competence is expressed by the teacher's effectiveness in planning, completing, organizing, as well as controlling and evaluating educational processes. It manifests itself in the fact that the teacher is able to: a) develop their own curriculum; b) operationalize general aims of education and upbringing; c) program teaching contents; d) construct tests and other tools to measure stu-

¹⁴ R. Kwaśnica, *Wprowadzenie do myślenia o nauczycielu*, (in:) *Pedagogika. Podręcznik akademicki*, ed. Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 2003, pp. 300-303.

¹⁵ After: J. Kuźma, *Nauka o szkole. Studium monograficzne. Zarys koncepcji*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2005, p. 195.

¹⁶ K. Denek, *Edukacja jutra*, "Homines Hominibus" 1(4), 2008, pp. 5-15.

¹⁷ K. Denek, *Kształcenie zawodowe nauczycieli w kontekście reformy edukacji*, (in:) *Problemy pedeutologii na przełomie XX i XXI wieku*, ed. Z. Jasiński, T. Lewowicki, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2000, pp. 122-127.

dent achievements; e) interpret and evaluate these achievements; f) use the results of examinations to modify the didactic work; g) build a school education program; h) individualize mental activity of students according to their abilities and talents; i) determine the reasons for school failure; j) identify threats related to various addictions; k) identify phenomena and typical forms of developmental disorders of a student and direct them to obtain appropriate help; l) cooperate with parents; m) design a plan of own professional development¹⁸.

Communication-related competence of the teacher are manifested by the effectiveness of verbal and non-verbal behaviour in educational situations. A teacher with this competence knows how to: a) use verbal and non-verbal language in the work with students; b) arouse language sensitivity of students, revealing the values of cultural heritage and the functions of language as a tool of thinking and communication¹⁹.

Cooperation-related competence are associated with the skill to recognize the needs of students and the ability to cooperate in interpersonal relationships. This competence is manifested by the effectiveness of pro-social behaviour and the efficiency of teacher's integration activities²⁰. The teacher becomes the initiator and partner of student actions, creates educational situations that involve students emotionally and intellectually, and trigger their specific activities²¹.

Creative competence is the ability to self-education, innovation and unconventionality of activities combined with with adaptability, mobility and flexibility²². The concept of a creative teacher, who

¹⁸ W. Strykowski, J. Strykowska, J. Pielachowski, *Kompetencje nauczyciela szkoły współczesnej*, Wydawnictwo eMPi2, Poznań 2003, p. 27.

¹⁹ K. Denek, *Edukacja jutra*, "Homines Hominibus" 2008, no. 1(4), pp. 5-15.

²⁰ K. Denek, *Edukacja jutra*, "Homines Hominibus" 2008, no. 1(4), pp. 5-15.

²¹ I. Żeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz, A. Szydłowska, *Kompetencje nauczyciela w kontekście kształcenia*, „Społeczeństwo. Edukacja. Język” 2016, no. 4, p. 96.

²² K. Denek, *Kompetencje nauczycieli w kontekście wyzwań XXI wieku i potrzeb reformy systemu edukacji w Polsce*, (in:) *Kształcenie pedagogiczne w dobie przemian eduka-*

shapes their professional personality by self-education, continuous improvement of qualifications, improvement of their own skill, participation in scientific and methodical research, undertaking innovative activities, and finally search for new areas and challenges in didactic and educational work, is described in the pedagogical literature²³. As K. Denek writes, a teacher with creative competence can creatively solve problems and think critically, as well as stimulate this kind of thinking in their students²⁴.

Information technology-related competence is characterized by the ability to use information technology, including its use in teaching the subject. This competence is demonstrated by a teacher who is able to: a) skilfully choose and use media offers; b) read and analyse information contained in the media message; c) operate media devices; d) create multimedia presentations²⁵. In addition, the teacher should know the basic principles of ergonomics of work with media in school settings and know at least one foreign language in order to be able to fully benefit from the scientific and cultural achievements of the modern world or develop their professional career²⁶.

Moral competence is permanently inscribed in the ethos of the teaching profession. The teacher should be characterized by high moral standards.

In addition, didactic competence of a teacher should not be forgotten.

cyjnych w Polsce, ed. K. Wenta, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2000, p. 39.

²³ I. Żeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz, A. Szydłowska, *Kompetencje nauczyciela w kontekście kształcenia*, „Społeczeństwo. Edukacja. Język” 2016, no. 4, p. 97.

²⁴ K. Denek, *Kompetencje nauczycieli w kontekście wyzwań XXI wieku i potrzeb reformy systemu edukacji w Polsce*, (in:) *Kształcenie pedagogiczne w dobie przemian edukacyjnych w Polsce*, ed. K. Wenta, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2000, p. 39.

²⁵ I. Żeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz, A. Szydłowska, *Kompetencje nauczyciela w kontekście kształcenia*, „Społeczeństwo. Edukacja. Język” 2016, no. 4, p. 99.

²⁶ I. Żeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz, A. Szydłowska, *Kompetencje nauczyciela w kontekście kształcenia*, „Społeczeństwo. Edukacja. Język” 2016, no. 4, p. 99.

The teacher's didactic competence relates to knowledge about the relevant principles, methods and forms of conducting the education process. First of all, the teacher should create conditions for independent learning, and conduct the learning process in various ways using a variety of teaching aids.

Diagnostic and therapeutic process of a child with hearing impairment

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that hearing impairment leads to selective disability, which, as a result of the lack of stimulation of psychomotor development and without specialized assistance, makes a person with hearing impairment acquire secondary disability, and not adapted to independent living. To prevent this, early revalidation should cover children from their birth to six years old. The organization of early care of a child with hearing impairment consists of three main levels: 1) diagnostic one (hospital, labour wards, neonatal centres, children's clinics), 2) diagnostic and revalidation one (specialist clinics, psychopedagogical clinics), 3) revalidation and education ones (kindergartens, schools)²⁷.

The principles of early intervention are regulated in Polish legislation by the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of October 11, 2013. Early intervention applies mainly to those children who have been diagnosed with a hearing impairment during general screening. The test involves diagnosis of the neonate's hearing organ on the second day of life and on the day of discharge from the hospital. In addition to physical examination of the neonate's hearing organs, medical history is collected from the mother to determine risk factors for hearing impairment at a later stage. If factors are present, the child is subjected to periodic hearing control tests.

²⁷ U. Eckert, *Przygotowanie dziecka z wadą słuchu do nauki szkolnej*, WSiP, Warszawa 1986, p. 170.

The first large-scale hearing screening was performed in 2001 as part of a newborn hearing screening program. In 2002, thanks to the "Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity" Foundation, which from its very beginning has been led by Jerzy Owsiak, the Newborn Universal Hearing Screening Program was introduced, based on global recommendations in this field, as hearing screening is the basic link in the early care and intervention program.

Children who have been diagnosed with hearing loss are subjected to the following actions:

- Provision, depending on the degree of hearing impairment, with a hearing aid or cochlear implant.
- Rehabilitation process aimed at the fullest possible reception of sounds.
- Psychological and pedagogical, speech therapy, therapeutic and specialist support depending on the individual needs of the child, within the time dimension and manner of implementation specified in the Act.

The aforementioned activities are called early intervention, although some suggest that it includes only activities provided by the health service, while the non-medical actions system should be called early support for child development²⁸

However, it should be remembered that neither hearing aids nor cochlear implant restore hearing. They only create a chance to receive sounds and, after prolonged rehabilitation, "learn to hear"²⁹.

For several years, the so-called multi-interdisciplinary approach in the diagnosis and therapy of children with various disabilities has been discussed. Specialists work in a team consisting of, depending on the needs, physicians of various specialities, a psychologist, a physiotherapist, a speech and language therapist, an

²⁸ M. Sak, *Decyzje specjalistów a osoby głuche i słabosłyszące*, (in:) *Sytuacja osób głuchych w Polsce. Raport zespołu ds. g/Głuchych przy Rzeczniku Praw Obywatelskich*, Warsaw 2014, pp. 105-106.

²⁹ H. Skarżyński, *Wskazania do wszczepów ślimakowych u dzieci*, „*Otolaryngologia Polska*” no. 18/1994, pp. 154-157.

occupational therapist, other therapists, a teacher, a social worker. Early, multispeciality, comprehensive and coordinated support should be understood as simultaneous, complementary medical, rehabilitation and therapeutic (early intervention), and rehabilitation and educational (early development support) interactions covered by one program, jointly developed, implemented and evaluated by properly prepared necessary specialists necessary for a given child.

Complexity should be understood in several ways as: a) combining medical, psychological and pedagogical diagnosis with indications of necessary rehabilitation and speech and language therapy; b) combining diagnosis with the development and performance of an individual rehabilitation and therapeutic program; c) combining the introduction of a rehabilitation and therapeutic program with its modification in connection with the achieved effects or their lack by an interdisciplinary team of specialists.

Comprehensive diagnosis and revalidation of the deaf are conducted by: speciality care clinics; rehabilitation clinics for children with hearing impairment under the auspices of the Polish Association of the Deaf; hearing and speech clinics of the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing; early intervention centres; early psychological and therapeutic help centres; diagnosis and therapy teams; psycho-pedagogical counselling centres³⁰.

As mentioned above, specialists who have accompany the child from the moment of the diagnosis of hearing impairment are a deaf speech and language therapist and a deaf educator. Their high competence has an impact on the diagnostic and therapeutic process.

Aim of the paper

The development of education and rehabilitation, as well as the development of speech in a child with hearing impairment has been

³⁰ G. Gunia, *Terapia logopedyczna dzieci z zaburzeniami słuchu i mowy*, Impuls, Cracow 2006, p. 48.

described in many scientific papers in the field of both deaf education³¹, and deaf speech and language therapy³². Numerous works in

³¹ Cf. e.g. K. Kirejczyk, *Ewolucja systemów kształcenia dzieci głuchych*, Wydawnictwo Nasza Księgarnia, Warsaw 1967; E. Nurowski, *Surdopedagogika polska. Zarys historyczny*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 1983; B. Hoffmann, *Surdopedagogika*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 1987; O. Périer, *Dziecko z uszkodzonym narządem słuchu. Aspekty medyczne, wychowawcze, socjologiczne i psychologiczne*, translated by T. Gałkowski, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 1992; A. Rakowska, *Rozwój systemu gramatycznego u dzieci głuchych*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, Cracow 1992; A. Korzon, *Totalna komunikacja jako podejście wspomagające rozwój zdolności językowych uczniów głuchych*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, Cracow 2001; E. Kulczycka, *Wychowanie słuchowo-werbalne dzieci z wadą słuchu w wieku przedszkolnym*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej im. Marii Grzegorzewskiej, Warsaw 2004; U. Eckert, *Pedagogika niesłyszących i niedosłyszących – surdopedagogika*, (in:) *Pedagogika specjalna*, ed. W. Dykciak, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza, Poznań 2001; J. Zielińska, *Edukacja dzieci z uszkodzeniem słuchu w społeczeństwie informacyjnym*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2005; K. Krakowiak, *Studia i szkice o wychowaniu dzieci z uszkodzeniami słuchu*, Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 2006; A. Korzon, K. Plutecka, *Kształcenie zintegrowane uczniów niesłyszących w teorii i praktyce edukacyjnej*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2010; D. Podgórska-Jachnik, *Głusi – emancypacje*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej, Łódź 2013; I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2015; E. Woźnicka (ed.), *Edukacja niesłyszących: wczoraj, dziś i jutro*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej, Łódź 2017.

³² Cf. e.g. S. Grabias (ed.), *Głuchota a język*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 1994; Z.M. Kurkowski, *Przegląd metod kształcenia mowy dzieci z uszkodzonym słuchem*, (in:) S. Grabias (ed.), *Głuchota i język*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 1994; Z.M. Kurkowski, *Mowa dzieci sześciolatków z uszkodzonym narządem słuchu*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 1996; J. Cieszyńska, *Od słowa przeczytanego do wypowiedzianego. Droga nabywania systemu językowego przez dzieci niesłyszące w wieku poniemowlęcym i przedszkolnym*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, Cracow 2000; G. Gunia, *Terapia logopedyczna dzieci z zaburzeniami słuchu i mowy*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2006; Z.M. Kurkowski, *Audiogenne uwarunkowania zaburzeń komunikacji językowej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2012; E. Muzyka-Furtak (ed.), *Surdologopedia. Teoria i praktyka*, Wydawnictwo Harmonia Gdańsk 2015; D. Podgórska-Jachnik, *Specyfika wczesnego wspomagania rozwoju i wczesnej interwencji logopedycznej w pracy z dziećmi z uszkodzonym słuchem*, (in:) *Wczesna interwencja logopedyczna*, ed. K. Kaczorowska-Bray, S. Milewski, Wydawnictwo Harmonia, Gdańsk 2016, pp. 459-496.

the field of pedeutology have also been created (see chapter on the concept of competence). In these works, the issue of the deaf educator's and deaf speech and language therapist's competencies was discussed to a small extent (the exception is the work of K. Plutecka, cited above, *Professional competence of a deaf educator... (Kompetencje zawodowe surdopedagoga...)*). The aim of the article is to discuss the competence of a deaf educator and a deaf speech and language therapist (a deaf speech and language therapy and a deaf speech and language therapy and education specialist). Competence are understood here in two ways: firstly, as the range of knowledge, skills and predispositions to practice the profession, and secondly, as the range of the qualifications to deal with specific tasks and make decisions related to them.

The aim is also to draw attention to the problem of the quality of training specialists in the field of diagnosis and therapy of children with hearing impairment. Care for the highest quality of education, and preparation of high-class specialists is one of the priorities of higher education.

The term *child with hearing impairment* is treated as superior to the terms adopted in scientific publications in the field of deaf education³³, i.e. the terms: *a deaf, hard of hearing, hearing-impaired child* and synonymous with the terms: *a child with hearing defect, a child with hearing loss, a child with hearing disability*.

³³ Currently, in the educational source literature, there are several terms used to describe a child with special educational needs, who requires deaf speech and language therapy support, namely: *a child with hearing defect* (e.g. U. Eckert, *Przygotowanie dziecka z wadą słuchu do nauki szkolnej*, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 1986; A. Korzon (ed.), *Wychowanie słuchowe dzieci z wadą słuchu*, Wydawnictwo Intrograf, Katowice 1994), *a child with hearing loss* (e.g. B. Hoffmann, *Surdopedagogika*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 1987; Z.M. Kurkowski, *Przeгляд metod kształcenia mowy dzieci z uszkodzonym słuchem*, (in:) *Głuchota i język*, ed. S. Grabias, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 1994), *a deaf, hard of hearing, hearing-impaired child* (np. B. Szczepankowski, *Niestyszący – głusi – głuchoniemi. Wyrównanie szans*, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 1999), *a child with hearing impairment* (e.g. H. Skarżyński, M. Mueller-Maleśńska, W. Wojnarowska, *Klasyfikacja zaburzeń słuchu*, „Logopedia” 2002, 28).

Competencies (range of knowledge, skills, predispositions) of a deaf educator and a deaf language and speech therapist

A. Competence of a deaf educator³⁴:

1. Praxeological competence:

- people involved in the work with children and youth with hearing impairment must undergo an appropriate specialist training, or these are people with knowledge in the field of audiology, deaf child psychology, speech and language therapy, methods of activating the hearing analyser;
- a deaf educator is a specialist in three fields: deaf education, subject teaching and he knows sign language very well;
- they can choose the best teaching methods for their students, have a good organization of educational and rehabilitation work;
- they are effective in planning, organizing, performing, controlling and evaluating educational processes;
- they know and apply the principles of the deaf didactics: among others, they accept a student with hearing impairment, apply the principle of individualization, accurately inform students about tasks and requirements, grade difficulties;
- they have full contact with the deaf child;
- they take care of the development of speech and thinking of their students and proper attitude to students with hearing impairments;
- they encourage students to acquire knowledge on their own;
- they broaden their knowledge and skills through: knowledge of source literature, reading specialist literature, participation in professional development workshops or exchange of views with other teachers.

³⁴ The following competencies are listed based on the work of K. Plutecka, *Professional competencies of a deaf educator with hearing impairment (Kompetencje zawodowe surdopedagoga z wadą słuchu)*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2006.

2. Communication-related competence:

- they tend to use all available forms of communication to shape the language competence of the student with hearing impairment;
- they are very good at using bimodal or multimodal codes for communicating with the student with hearing defect;
- they easily establish a satisfactory dialogue with the student.

3. Cooperated-related competence:

- they understand the importance of constructive acceptance of the disability and the deaf subculture;
- they have the skills to build scenarios of various forms of cooperation constituting a form of solutions to problem situations in contacts between school and the environment;
- they have the skills to perform appropriate educational and rehabilitation activities among students with hearing defect;
- they know the principles and forms of cooperation between teachers and parents;
- they treat children with hearing defect with respect, treat them seriously and shows interest in their problems;
- they undertake appropriate educational and remedial actions in the case of children with behavioural and learning difficulties.

4. Creative competence:

- they have the skill to develop creative behaviour and independent thinking in children with hearing impairment;
- they encourage the creation of a positive "teaching" environment for individuals with hearing impairment;
- they teach children to think, solve problems and other logical strategies to fulfil their individual learning needs;
- they organise form teams, considering the level of students' abilities, develop effective, active and creative attitudes of students;
- they plan problem-based teaching encouraging the active participation of children in different groups and individually;

- they develop their own creativity by, among others: training in creative methods, stimulating themselves to creativity, organizing their work, developing the ability to use the ideas of other people, educating themselves in cooperation with others, developing an attitude of positive thinking and acting, developing interpersonal and negotiating skills.

5. Information technology-related competence:

- a deaf educator has the skills to use new information technologies that can be part of their workshop and provide didactic help in teaching the subject;
- they have the skill to use terminology, means, software and methods in the field of information technology;
- they recognize the role of information technology as a teaching aid in teaching their field;
- they know and respects the legal, ethical and social aspects of access to and use of information technology;
- they use information technology to communicate with parents of students and in their own professional development.

6. Moral competence:

- a deaf educator has appropriate psychological predispositions, which lead to moral reflection, as well as evidence the ethical validation of the teacher's professional activities;
- they are moral authorities that restores the order and unambiguity of criteria to students with hearing defect.

In addition to the aforementioned competencies, A. Löwe³⁵ distinguishes personal competencies, among which he lists the following predispositions necessary for effective work with a child with hearing impairment and their parents: patience, perseverance, sense of humour, good diction. In her research A. Korzon³⁶ draws attention to such qualities as patience, kindness, perseverance, balance

³⁵ A. Löwe, *Każde dziecko może nauczyć się słyszeć i mówić: wczesna diagnoza i wczesna rehabilitacja dziecka z wadą słuchu*, translated by H. Ferens, Wydawnictwo Media Rodzina, Poznań 1999, p. 154.

³⁶ A. Korzon, *Osobowość pedagoga specjalnego*, „Rocznik Naukowo-Dydaktyczny. Prace Pedagogiczne” 1986, vol. 100.

and self-control. Surveys conducted by K. Plutecka³⁷ demonstrate that the most desirable characteristics of a deaf educator include³⁸: patience, forbearance, empathy, determination, self-control, tolerance, kindness, thoroughness, discipline, selflessness, ability to establish contact, criticism, assertiveness, justice, sensitivity, diligence, ambition, flexibility of thinking, ability to organize work, ability to listen, personal culture, seriousness, punctuality, ease of adapting to other people, ability to help others, protectiveness, politeness.

B. Competencies of deaf speech and language therapist:

1. Praxeological competence:

- they know medical, psychological, educational and speech and language therapy aspects of hearing impairment, they know the consequences of hearing impairment in specific areas of child development;
- they know the classification of hearing impairment, the most common causes, mechanisms and clinical symptoms, as well as speech disorders caused by impaired hearing;
- they know the basic typologies related to hearing impairment in the context of speech development, language and communication competence;
- they can describe the linguistic and cognitive development of a child with impaired hearing and compare it with the correct language acquisition in a healthy child;
- they are able to assess the usefulness of various therapeutic techniques, speech and language therapy tests to perform tasks and solve problems of children with central hearing loss, are able to introduce these techniques and tests to the study;
- they can interpret the results of basic hearing tests;
- they know the applications of various forms of hearing aids in children;

³⁷ K. Plutecka, *Kompetencje zawodowe surdopedagoga z wadą słuchu*, Wydawnictwo Impuls, Cracow 2006, pp. 147-150, 163-168.

³⁸ K. Plutecka lists them as moral competence.

- they know the standards of the procedure in the case of diagnosis and deaf speech and language therapy;
- they are able to assess the possibility of auditory and visual perception of spoken statements of children with hearing impairment;
- they are able to perform the assessment of the linguistic, communication and cognitive development of children with hearing impairment;
- they are able to perform the assessment of the possibility of nonverbal communication of children with hearing impairment;
- they have knowledge about the basics of modern medical diagnostics important for speech and language diagnostics and therapy;
- they know the basics of diagnostics of complex cases of hearing impairment, have acquired the ability to assess selected clinical cases;
- they have the ability to program therapy for children with hearing impairment based on selected therapeutic strategies;
- they have the ability to prepare a program of auditory education/auditory training of a child with hearing impairment;
- they can develop auditory perception and linguistic skills in children, and remove reading and writing difficulties caused by central hearing impairment;
- they know how to create communication aids, adapt them to the current needs and capabilities of a child with hearing impairment;
- they have the ability to control, document the course and effectiveness of speech and language therapy, verify diagnostic hypotheses, modify the goals and methods of therapy;
- they have the ability to create a speech and language therapy opinion for an educational institution and for a team adjudicating on the need to provide a child with necessary rehabilitation, educational, financial resources, etc.;
- they have knowledge about the possibilities of teaching in ordinary schools, integrated classes and special schools for children and youth with hearing impairments;

- they have knowledge about the impact of hearing disorders on the education and upbringing of children and youth with hearing damage;
 - they have the ability to prepare parents and teachers to support the child's linguistic development in terms of communication and cognition;
 - they are able to assess the usefulness and purposefulness of using speech and language therapy diagnosis methods and therapeutic techniques;
 - they have the ability to assess the progress in the rehabilitation of hearing, voice and speech of children with hearing impairment;
 - they have knowledge in the field of scientific research on disorders and are able to use it in therapeutic practice;
 - they understand the need for continuous professional training and personal development, they use foreign language literature to acquire knowledge.
2. Communication-related competence:
- they have knowledge about the principles of building therapeutic contact with hard of hearing and deaf children;
 - they know how to establish contact with children with hearing impairment and their guardians;
 - they are able to communicate using various communication and information channels and techniques with specialists in the field of, among others, audiology, phoniatrics, otorhinolaryngology.
3. Cooperated-related competence:
- can cooperate with a child with hearing impairment, showing them respect and understanding;
 - can cooperate with an audiologist, laryngologist, deaf psychologist, deaf educator, neurologist to make a full diagnosis and discuss the therapy program.
4. Creative competence:
- they have the ability to develop a program of procedure tailored to the needs and capabilities of the child, considering the results of multispeciality examinations;

- they have the ability to incorporate a deaf speech and language therapy program into the procedures of multispeciality treatment of a child with hearing impairment.
5. Information technology-related competence:
- they know the possibilities of supporting children with hearing impairment by low and high technology aids;
 - they have knowledge of computer programs for the deaf speech and language therapy diagnosis and rehabilitation.
6. Moral competence:
- they know the ethical principles and standards related to practising the profession of a deaf speech and language therapist;
 - they know that the confidentiality and respect for privacy and all rights of the child with hearing impairment as a patient must be respected;
 - they place the benefit of the patient on the first position;
 - they respect the dignity of a child with hearing impairment, their abilities, needs and limitations.

Competencies (range of qualifications) of a deaf educator and a deaf speech and language therapist

A. Competence of a deaf educator:

A deaf educator:

- makes a psychopedagogical and functional diagnosis of children and youth with hearing impairment;
- organizes and describes individual educational facts related to a child with hearing impairment;
- explains and designs changes in didactic and educational reality;
- takes care of the correctness of the upbringing and teaching process;
- creates an educational environment in which every child has a sense of security, care and respect, can freely and without inhibition express their needs and feelings;

- prevents the development of deficits and dysfunctions and the adverse impact of deafness on the child's developmental potential;
- prepares their students to live in an environment of hearing people;
- is qualified for diagnostic, educational and therapeutic work with a child with hearing impairment;
- designs and implements individual and group revalidation programs and introduces various methods of working with children with hearing impairment;
- improves cognitive processes that are impaired by the reduction of perception of auditory stimuli, including verbal speech;

In addition, a deaf educator is entitled to:

- initiate and coordinate interdisciplinary measures to support a child with hearing impairment;
- offer advice and constant support in educational matters to parents;
- provide other teachers and institutions with advice and constant support concerning further child's education and even choice of profession;
- undertake a cooperation with a broadly understood specialist community (a deaf speech and language therapist, a therapist).

B. Competencies of deaf speech and language therapist:

A speech and language therapist:

- examines and analyses factors affecting the pace and quality of speech learning by children with hearing impairment;
- diagnoses hearing impairment, linguistic attitudes and difficulties as well as communication behaviours of children with hearing impairment and disorders based on interviews with parents, examination of the child, observation of their behaviour, etc.;
- diagnoses developmental needs (primarily communication-related needs) of a child with hearing impairment;

- plans the rehabilitation of hearing and speech of children with hearing impairment based on the diagnosis, develops strategies of the speech and language therapy procedure;
- conducts speech and language therapy aimed at diverse groups of children with hearing impairment (depending on the degree of hearing impairment, age, achieved level of functioning, individual needs and possibilities, as well as social and environmental situation) using modern methods and techniques of work;
- conducts training that stimulates, improves auditory perception (auditory control, auditory analysis and synthesis, auditory memory) and pronunciation; speech understanding exercises (words, phrases, simple and complex sentences);
- conducts stimulation of speech expression (repetition, naming, dialogue and narrative speech);
- stimulates cognitive processes in the field of visual, sensory perception, spatial orientation, attention, memory, cause and effect and abstract thinking;
- conducts classes developing the ability to understand and create verbal statements, or to acquire language and communication skills in children with various hearing disorders;
- conducts classes in the field of acquisition of reading and writing skills by children with various hearing disorders;
- conducts classes developing psychomotor and cognitive functions;
- introduces elements of supportive and alternative methods, conducts non-verbal communication exercises (e.g. gesture, facial expressions, fingerspelling);
- shapes appropriate attitudes and behaviours in parents (guardians) of children and youth with hearing impairment;
- carries out preventive activities in the field of eliminating factors that lead to hearing impairment (e.g. listening to loud music);
- cooperates with members of a multispeciality medical and rehabilitation, as well as adjudicating team.

In addition, a deaf speech and language therapist is entitled to:

- prepare a written deaf speech and language therapy opinion on the results of deaf speech and language therapy diagnosis of children and youth with hearing impairment and/or dysfunction;
- formulate written and oral recommendations based on deaf speech and language therapy diagnosis on how to proceed in other health care and educational facilities attended by children and youth with impairment and/or dysfunctions of the auditory system, who experience disorders in the development and/or course of verbal communication;
- indicate specialist examinations necessary for making deaf speech and language therapy diagnosis;
- cooperate with other specialists in the process of diagnosing and improving children and youth with hearing impairment and/or dysfunctions, who experience disorders in the development and/or course of verbal communication;
- consult and instruct the child's family and relatives about the recommended methods and forms of speech therapy and prognosis;
- participate in committees and teams adjudicating on the need for special (early support teams, rehabilitation and special care centres) and social (benefits, treatment and rehabilitation services) services depending on the age of the patient and the adjudicating institution³⁹

Deaf educator and deaf speech and language therapist in the modern education and rehabilitation system

The Classification of Occupations and Specializations prepared by the Department of Labour Market of the Ministry of Family, La-

³⁹ Cf. *Program specjalizacji w surdologopedii*, Warsaw 2010 www.cmkp.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/surdologopedia-2010.pdf.

bour and Social Policy, published on April 29, 2014, modified on February 12, 2019, lists two aforementioned profession, or the profession of a deaf and hard of hearing teacher (deaf educator) (code 235201) and a deaf speech and language therapist (code 229404). According to the classification, a deaf and hard of hearing teacher: conducts didactic and educational, as well as care providing classes with deaf children and youth in: kindergartens, primary schools, junior high schools, upper secondary schools and school and education centres for the deaf, using hearing aids, sign language, finger alphabet and sound speech, in order to teach them knowledge and skills provided in the curriculum; prepares deaf students to fully participate in life among hearing people. Their professional tasks include: conducting didactic and educational, as well as care providing classes as part of general education subjects provided in the curriculum, such as Polish language, art, history, geography, biology with hygiene, mathematics, physics, etc.; conducting various types of individual revalidation, such as: didactic-compensatory classes, remedial classes aimed at eliminating defects and disorders of speech and its improvement, as well as classes aimed at eliminating postural defects and improving physical fitness; planning the didactic and educational process as part of the taught subject (developing content distribution, adapting content to students' abilities), developing syllabuses; planning and preparing teaching aids (illustrations, charts, models, labels, films, video cassettes, etc.) necessary to present the content of education within a given subject; developing tools to measure students' achievement; diagnosing students' school achievements and skilful prevention of failures; creating conditions for the participation of students in various forms of socio-cultural activity and self-governance; introducing students to independent work, developing their interests, shaping desirable attitudes, promoting activity of deaf students in social, cultural and recreational work; fulfilling the duties of a form master, care for the general level of the educated group, speech development, socialization, discipline, students' reading habits and activity of student organizations; applying various forms of care to students

and taking actions to improve the material and educational conditions of deaf children; cooperating with parents of deaf students and encouraging them to cooperate for the benefit of the form and school; reasonable organizing of deaf students' free time; undertaking actions aimed at proper school and professional orientation of students; improving qualifications by participating in various forms of improvement and self-education⁴⁰.

In turn, a deaf speech and language therapist, in accordance with the record in the classification: performs specialized tests, analyses their results, makes a diagnosis of people with hearing impairment and disorders; conducts rehabilitation and speech improvement therapy: articulation, breathing, auditory exercises, lip reading, etc. in the rehabilitation clinics of the Polish Association of the Deaf, phoniatic clinics, otorhinolaryngology wards, sanatoriums, schools and kindergartens, as well as centres for children with hearing impairment. Their tasks include: examination and analyse of factors affecting the pace and quality of speech learning by children with hearing impairment; diagnosing hearing impairment, linguistic attitudes and difficulties as well as communication behaviours of children with hearing impairment and disorders based on interviews with parents, examination of the child, observation of their behaviour, etc.; planing the rehabilitation of hearing and speech of deaf or hard of hearing people based on the diagnosis; conducting speech and language therapy for children and youth, as well as adults with hearing impairment and disorders consisting in performing breathing and auditory exercises as well as learning and understanding words, sentences and expressions; developing the skill of reading and writing; conducting classes aimed at improving auditory perception and pronunciation; cooperating with otolaryngologists and clinics of the Polish Association of the Deaf; shaping appropriate attitudes and behaviours in parents (guardians) of children and youth with hearing impairment; documenting examinations, diagnoses and prevention, as well as therapeutic activity; car-

⁴⁰ (http://psz.praca.gov.pl/rynek-pracy/bazy-danych/klasyfikacja-zawodow-i-specjalnosci/wyszukiwarka-opisow-zawodow/-/klasyfikacja_zawodow).

rying out preventive activities in the field of eliminating factors that lead to hearing impairment (e.g. listening to loud music); participating in training in the field of deaf speech and language therapy. Additionally, they can: conduct scientific, didactic and training activities for deaf educators and speech and language therapists; publish research results and professional experience; ensure provision of hearing aids to hearing impaired children⁴¹.

Education preparing and entitling to work with people with hearing impairment can be received at the bachelor's and supplementary master's studies, as well as postgraduate studies in deaf education, deaf speech and language therapy and less often special education. Such studies are offered by renowned state universities, cf. full-time and extramural master's studies, as well as uniform master's studies in the field of special education, specialization in deaf education: the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw; postgraduate studies in deaf education: Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw, Pedagogical University of Krakow, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz; postgraduate studies in deaf speech and language therapy; Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, University of Gdańsk, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the University of Silesia in Katowice.

The report of the team for the d/Deaf at the Polish Ombudsman published in 2014 draws attention to the following issues regarding the education of high-class specialists to work with people with hearing impairment: study programs focus mainly on issues of rehabilitation, correction of speech defects and issues of social integration and deaf education. They lack topics related to the deaf culture, sign language, the deaf identity as a language minority, and many other matters relevant to this environment⁴².

⁴¹ (http://psz.praca.gov.pl/rynek-pracy/bazy-danych/klasyfikacja-zawodow-i-specjalnosci/wyszukiwarka-opisow-zawodow/-/klasyfikacja_zawodow).

⁴² M. Sak, *Decyzje specjalistów a osoby głuche i słabosłyszące*, (in:) *Sytuacja osób głuchych w Polsce. Raport zespołu ds. g/Głuchych przy Rzeczniku Praw Obywatelskich*, Warsaw 2014, p. 109.

To meet certain demands, some universities open postgraduate studies in Polish Sign Language⁴³ (cf. e.g. Polish Sign Language at the University of Warsaw), at some postgraduate studies such subjects as sign language basics, bilingual education, work with family are introduced (cf. Deaf Speech and Language Education at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań).

The education quality committees operating at universities, as well as the Ministry of Science and Higher Education oblige people responsible for conducting study majors and postgraduate studies to introduce high standards of education. The problem of ensuring high-quality education during studies was highlighted in several strategic documents in the area of higher education, including the Development strategy for the higher education system in Poland up to the year 2020 (“Strategia Rozwoju Szkolnictwa Wyższego do 2020 r.”)⁴⁴.

Deaf educators and deaf speech and language therapists, as highly qualified specialists, can find employment in educational and rehabilitation facilities and other facilities supporting people with hearing impairment, or in: education and upbringing institutions (kindergartens, special, integrated and public primary schools, school and education centres for the deaf and hard of hearing, boarding schools); speciality care clinics, including psychological and pedagogical counselling centres, the Polish Deaf Association counselling centres; care, upbringing and rehabilitation facilities; social and health care facili-

⁴³ A milestone has been the enactment of the Act on sign language and other forms of communication (Act of 19 August 2011 on sign language and other means of communication (Journal of Laws of 2011, No. 209, item 1243, as amended, hereinafter also: the Act on Sign Language), whose main goal is to ensure an adequate level of support for people with hearing impairment and to enable them to overcome barriers in communication with public institutions, emergency and intervention services and health care institutions. This Act is also the first universally binding legal act in Poland, which explicitly emphasizes the right of deaf and deafblind people to communicate using freely selected non-verbal communication methods.

⁴⁴ Report entitled. „Strategia rozwoju szkolnictwa wyższego w Polsce do 2020 roku - wariant drugi” was prepared by the consortium Ernst & Young Business Advisory and the Institute for Market Economics in March 2010, www.nauka.gov.pl/g2/oryginal/2013_05/59579f9e6efaec82014d6d5be081ca23.pdf

ties; early intervention centres; facilities with early support teams; educational local government agencies; non-governmental organizations working for the benefit of the disabled.

Summary

Children with hearing impairment behave differently than their healthy peers. Problems and limitations mainly concern: a) communication, making it difficult to satisfy needs and exchange information with others, get to know oneself and the surrounding social reality, order the world by naming objects, phenomena, events, determining their characteristics and relationships between them; b) learning about reality and phenomena, understanding concepts; c) the emotional sphere, connected with the acceptance of own disability and limitations, as well as shaping the image of oneself, and undertaking social interactions; d) social contacts and interpersonal relationships⁴⁵.

The consequence of hearing loss are psychological and social behavioural disorders. Without affecting the physical, and potentially also mental capacity of the child, impairment of the hearing organ impedes and limits their social contacts, generally creating situations in which a child suffering from this disability is to some degree isolated from the environment. This becomes the cause of significant educational, didactic and rehabilitation problems.

Teaching, upbringing and rehabilitating a child with a hearing impairment is a complex problem. The wide and varied form of rehabilitation of such a child requires close cooperation between many specialists. Well conducted rehabilitation favours the teaching process, and the correct teaching course favours the rehabilitation process.

The expectations concerning the competence of an ideal deaf educator and deaf speech and language therapist are very high.

⁴⁵ B. Ciupińska, *Dziecko z wadą słuchu w roli ucznia*, „Konteksty Pedagogiczne” 2(7)/2016, p. 148.

They should possess extensive general and specialist knowledge and constantly improve their skills in this field. They should also be able to practically apply the methodology of work in an effective manner, which guarantees the achievement of teaching success. They should also set an example for children and youth, as well as be able to establish contact with them. Finally, they are required to have a high ethical level and personality traits that guarantee commitment to the profession and resistance to stressful situations⁴⁶.

Thanks to reliable implementation of educational challenges and teachers' involvement, it is possible to prepare a disabled (deaf or hard of hearing) child to function independently in adult life⁴⁷.

Currently, in deaf education, tendencies of the search for various organizational forms, methods and means in order to make the best use of all opportunities that provide a child with hearing impairment with comprehensive development, are visible⁴⁸.

The environments associated with people with hearing impairment emphasize that:

In the field of preparation of specialists dealing with issues related to deaf and hard of hearing people, little has changed for several decades. The vast majority of deaf educators, deaf speech and language therapists and psychologists represent the medical approach to deaf people and place the necessity of auditory rehabilitation of a deaf person in the first position as a prerequisite for their proper rehabilitation, as well as rejects the possibility of using sign language as a form of communication with a deaf child. However, life practice shows that the effects of choosing such a path do not always bring measurable benefits⁴⁹.

⁴⁶ I. Żeber-Dzikowska, M. Wysocka-Kunisz, A. Szydłowska, *Kompetencje nauczyciela w kontekście kształcenia*, „Społeczeństwo. Edukacja. Język” 2016, no. 4, p. 99.

⁴⁷ B. Ciupińska, *Dziecko z wadą słuchu w roli ucznia*, „Konteksty Pedagogiczne” 2(7)/2016, p. 148.

⁴⁸ I. Jagoszewska, *Rola rodziców w rozwoju dziecka niesłyszącego*, „Wychowanie w Rodzinie” 2011, vol. 4, p. 54.

⁴⁹ A. Butkiewicz, M. Czajkowska-Kisil, *Głusi i nie(do)słyszający na uczelni wyższej*, (in:) *Sytuacja osób głuchych w Polsce. Raport zespołu ds. g/Głuchych przy Rzeczniku Praw Obywatelskich*, Warsaw 2014, pp. 33-34.

They postulate that the process of educating people who will participate in the diagnostic and therapeutic process, or deaf educators and deaf speech and language therapists, should include sign language learning, subjects covering therapeutic methods from the point of view of special education, and not medicine (audiology), and finally subjects preparing specialists to work with parents of a child with hearing impairment⁵⁰.

An educational offer that meets the aforementioned postulates is proposed to students by organizers of postgraduate studies in deaf education and deaf speech and language therapy conducted at the Faculty of Educational Studies of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.

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⁵⁰ M. Czajkowska-Kisil, A. Siepkowska, M. Sak, *Edukacja głuchych w Polsce*, (in: *Sytuacja osób głuchych w Polsce. Raport zespołu ds. g/Głuchych przy Rzeczniku Praw Obywatelskich*, Warsaw 2014, pp. 13-27.

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Senior citizens losing vision as a challenge to contemporary special education

ABSTRACT: Kornelia Czerwińska, Izabella Kucharczyk, *Senior citizens losing vision as a challenge to contemporary special education*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 333-351. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.14>

Acquiring blindness or low vision at the senior age usually results in decreased quality of life due to a decrease in functional performance in the areas of activities of everyday activities, spatial orientation and mobility, physical activity, spending free time and obtaining information. Loss of vision also implies serious emotional consequences, which in the absence of professional therapeutic help and social support can lead to mental health disorders. Research analyses indicate that the level of satisfying rehabilitation needs of seniors who are losing vision is relatively low, and the specificity of their functioning resulting from the coexistence of various health problems is rarely included in support programs. The aim of the article is to indicate areas that have been so far neglected in the rehabilitation of elderly people who have acquired visual impairment and to formulate proposals aimed at increasing the availability and quality of therapeutic services for this social group.

KEY WORDS: vision loss, visual impairment, late adulthood, social support, social security

Introduction

The dynamic transformations of contemporary social space generate new criteria for the selection and allocation of individuals and demonstrate the need for scientific reflection on the specific needs of

groups at risk of exclusion and the need to design support activities aimed at increasing their successful participation in social life¹. Among numerous currently observed changes, which may lead to a significant deepening of problems of marginalization of specific groups, the progressive process of population ageing is particularly noteworthy. The constantly increasing percentage of elderly people in the general social structure entails new problems and tasks for individuals, groups, communities and countries, resulting in a global systemic transformation in all relevant areas of public life². Ensuring proper living conditions and using the potential of people who, in late adulthood, suddenly or gradually acquire disability, become a special challenge.

Psychosocial functioning of adults with disabilities has relatively recently become the subject of interest for special educators³. Activities, research and analysis in this scientific subdiscipline focused primarily on childhood, and mainly on issues related to the education system and satisfying special educational and rehabilitation needs related to the type and degree of disability. The departure from the medical paradigm in favour of the biopsychosocial concept of disability led to changes in the understanding of the development conditions of this group of people and activated the tendency to normalization of the environment and social inclusion, as well as guaranteeing a sense of psychophysical well-being, which required the adoption of a full course of life perspective in theoretical and scientific analyses⁴. It was observed that in the late adulthood people with disabilities

¹ G. Dryżałowska, M. Kuleta-Hulboj, A. Naumiuk, M. Skura, A.M. Steinhagen, *Inkluzja w perspektywie pedagogiki specjalnej i pedagogiki społecznej. Pytania, konteksty, dyskusje*, Wydawnictwo UW, Warsaw 2018, pp. 20-21.

² Z. Woźniak, *Programy i strategie polityki społecznej dla grup ryzyka. Przesłanki, cele, narzędzia, praca socjalna*, Difin, Warsaw 2019, pp. 208-210.

³ A. Krause, *Współczesne paradygmaty pedagogiki specjalnej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Cracow 2010, pp. 50-51.

⁴ A. Rakowska, *Transformacja pedagogiki specjalnej – próba interpretacji niektórych aspektów ewolucji*, [in:] „Uwarunkowania i kierunki rozwoju pedagogiki specjalnej”, ed. B. Antoszevska, Cz. Kosakowski, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2011, p. 9.

become particularly vulnerable to marginalization and reduced quality of life, and the need to focus educational activities on this age group was emphasized. It has been recognized that the key areas of functioning of senior citizens with disabilities requiring in-depth scientific analyses leading to the development of good support practices includes, among others, shaping healthy habits, spending free time, participation in cultural events as audience and creator, and social participation. It has been postulated to introduce changes into the Polish system of preparing for a profession of special educator in order to equip these specialists with competencies necessary to work with both senior citizens whose disability is innate and those who lost their fitness in elderly age⁵. Despite the undoubted increase in interest in the issue of experiencing disability in late adulthood, this area is still considered one of the most neglected in Polish studies and scientific analyses in the field of special education⁶.

Strategies for using development potential and providing senior citizens with care and support are a common field of research and practice within numerous scientific disciplines⁷. Currently, increasing participation in transdisciplinary research aimed at the real recognition of the health-related and socio-economic situation of elderly people and the development of preventive and support programs allowing for the successful implementation of developmental tasks typical of late adulthood, is becoming a challenge for special education. In gerontological programs embedded in broadly understood social policy, it is considered necessary to closely combine projects aimed at solving problems typical of both elderly people and people with disabilities⁸. Therefore, activities aimed at main-

⁵ I. Chrzanowska, *Starość z niepełnosprawnością*, [in:] „Człowiek i jego rodzina wobec utraty zdrowia i sprawności”, ed. A. Nowicka, J. Bąbka, Copper Belt Technical College in Lubin, Lubin 2010, p. 103.

⁶ I. Chrzanowska, *Pedagogika specjalna. Od tradycji do współczesności*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Cracow 2015, p. 626.

⁷ A. Błachnio, *Potencjał osób w starości. Poczucie jakości życia w procesie starzenia się*, Wydawnictwo UKW, Bydgoszcz 2019, pp. 30-74.

⁸ Z. Woźniak, *Programy i strategie polityki społecznej dla grup ryzyka. Przesłanki, cele, narzędzia, praca socjalna*, Difin, Warsaw 2019, p. 230.

taining the quality of life and securing senior citizens against feelings of loneliness and marginalization, require the active participation of representatives of all sub-disciplines of special education. Due to the fact that visual impairment is the third most frequent chronic disease in elderly people⁹, it is advisable to increase the involvement of educators of people with visual impairment in the creation of national senior-related policy.

Ageing and disability

Worldwide demographic forecasts estimate that the population will increase by half in 2050 compared to 2000, with a threefold increase in the elderly people population. The largest increase is forecast in the group of people aged 80 and more. In 2030, every third person in the European Union member states will reach the age of 60 and more, while a quarter of the European population will be aged 65 and more¹⁰. The analyses prepared by the Statistics Poland based on current reports, the results of the Polish Census of 2011 and the demographic forecast for 2014-2050 indicate the occurrence of similar trends in Poland.

In the years 1989-2016, the number of elderly people increased in Poland by almost 3.7 million, including the largest increase, by more than 0.9 million, recorded for the group of 60-64-year-old people. During that time, the percentage of people aged 60 or above in the general population increased by almost 10 percentage points, while the percentage of children and adolescents decreased by approximately 12 percentage points. Almost 18% of the senior population are people of at least 80 years old. Forecasts indicate a progress of the ageing process of the population, because despite the forecast

⁹ R. Stevens-Ratchford, A. Krause, *Visually Impaired Older Adults and Home-Based Leisure Activities: The Effects of Person-Environment Congruence*, "Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness" 2004, no. 98(1), pp. 14-15.

¹⁰ Z. Woźniak, *Programy i strategie polityki społecznej dla grup ryzyka. Przesłanki, cele, narzędzia, praca socjalna*, Difin, Warsaw 2019, p. 208.

decrease in the population by 4.5 million by 2050, there will be a systematic increase in the number of people aged 60 and more. At the end of the forecast horizon, the population of people of this age will constitute over 40% of the total population. It is estimated that in 2050 as much as 42% of urban residents and 38% of rural residents will be at least 60 years old. Between 2025 and 2040, the number of people aged 80 and more will double¹¹.

Extending the average life expectancy implies the necessity to implement measures to ensure successful ageing understood as maintaining a relatively high level of physical and mental functions, maintaining functional independence, manifesting activity in the public and social sphere, experiencing financial independence, as well as having opportunities for education and self-fulfilment¹². The basic determinants of successful ageing are closely linked to a sense of well-being and high quality of life, the achievement of which is the main goal of social support and preventive activity among senior citizens¹³. One of the most important factors determining the quality of life in elderly age is health, whose condition determines the ability to independently fulfil the needs and normative implementation of developmental tasks specific to late adulthood¹⁴.

The results of Eurostat research for 2016 indicate that in Poland a 65-year-old man still has on average of approximately 16 years of

¹¹ *Informacja o sytuacji osób starszych na podstawie badań Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego*, <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/osoby-starsze/osoby-starsze/informacja-o-sytuacji-osob-starszych-na-podstawie-badan-glownego-urzedu-statystycznego,1,2.html> [2 April 2019].

¹² E. Kościńska, *Starzenie się człowieka – zagadnienia ogólne*, [in:] „Wybrane formy opieki i pomocy dla seniorów”, ed. E. Kościńska, Wydawnictwo UKW, Bydgoszcz 2013, pp. 23-26.

¹³ I. Mandrzejewska-Smól, *Aktywność edukacyjna i zawodowa osób w wieku emerytalnym w perspektywie pomyślnego starzenia się. Diagnoza wybranych problemów*, Wydawnictwo UKW, Bydgoszcz 2018, pp. 31-71. A. Wieczorek, *Starość i starzenie się z punktu widzenia współczesnego doradcy – geragoga*, [in:] „Wielowymiarowość poradnictwa w życiu człowieka”, ed. D. Kukla, Difin, Warsaw 2011, p. 418.

¹⁴ D. Rynkowska, *Rola opiekunów w procesie wsparcia podopiecznych w świetle działalności opiekuńczej Polskiego Czerwonego Krzyża*, Wydawnictwo URz, Rzeszów 2019, pp. 79-80.

life ahead, including 8.2 years of healthy life (average number of years without disability), while a woman has 8.9 years in good health condition out of her remaining 20.5 years. According to the results of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) from 2017, 67.7% of Poles over 60 years of age perceive in themselves long-term health problems or chronic diseases that last (or are expected to last) at least 6 months. Over 46% of the surveyed senior citizens rated their ability to perform daily activities as seriously or not very seriously limited because of their health condition. Data collected as part of the latest European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) conducted in 2014 demonstrated that chronic diseases occur in most elderly people; only every ninth person did not report such problems. It was found that only every sixth elderly person did not use glasses or contact lenses, while nearly every second senior citizen, despite using correction, experienced difficulty with vision; this phenomenon was noted primarily among the oldest people. In the group of at least 80 years old people, 2/3 of the respondents reported vision problems, of which almost every fifth person declared that they had significant vision problems or did not see at all. In addition, the health condition resulted in the fact that every third person aged 65 and more had difficulty in performing everyday activities related to self-care (going to bed and getting up from the bed, sitting and getting up from the chair, bathing or washing in the shower, dressing and undressing). It should be emphasized that nearly 45% of elderly people who have problems with basic self-care activities did not receive any help from other people and did not have access to facilities and assistive devices. Furthermore, difficulties in the field of independent and safe movement increasing with age, were recorded. Every third elderly person reported problems in the 500 m walk without using the help of another person or equipment such as a walking stick, crutch, zimmer frame; difficulties of this type were experienced by every second person aged 70-79 and nearly 3/4 of the population of people over 80 years of age. Nearly 30% of people aged 60-69 had problems to

ascend and descend the stairs on their own. These problems were declared by more than half of the respondents from the group of 70-79 years old and almost 80% of people of 80 years old or older¹⁵. It is worth noting that the risk of limitation or loss of functional performance by elderly people is particularly high due to the coexistence of numerous disorders. Over 40% of the Polish senior population suffers from four or more chronic diseases, which contributes to dependence increasing with age, and generates a number of complex problems at the individual, family and community level¹⁶.

Coexistence of several diseases is relatively common among elderly people who acquire visual impairment. According to data concerning the population of Great Britain, people who have lost their vision are twice as likely to report other somatic or mental illnesses and experience of other permanent dysfunctions. Disorders related to visual impairment are often not reported to a physician by senior citizens in the order of priority, but a detailed analysis of the medical history usually indicates that visual dysfunction leads to complications in other conditions. Approximately 30% of people reporting themselves as blind or deaf and 69% of those with both disabilities suffer from at least four other chronic conditions. The dysfunctions most commonly associated with age-related vision impairment include diabetes, hearing loss, dementia syndromes, stroke, depression. The consequences of vision loss and deterioration of health condition resulting from other diseases are complex, interrelated, so they imply the need to integrate medical services and provide elderly people with holistic rehabilitation care¹⁷.

¹⁵ *Informacja o sytuacji osób starszych na podstawie badań Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego*, <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/osoby-starsze/osoby-starsze/informacja-o-sytuacji-osob-starszych-na-podstawie-badan-glownego-urzedu-statystyczne-go,1,2.html> [02 April 2019].

¹⁶ D. Rynkowska, *Rola opiekunów w procesie wsparcia podopiecznych w świetle działalności opiekuńczej Polskiego Czerwonego Krzyża*, Wydawnictwo URZ, Rzeszów 2019, pp. 83-84.

¹⁷ M. Kilian, *Następstwa utraty wzroku w starszym wieku*, „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” 2010, no. 2(12), pp. 89-103. A. Sinclair, B. Ryan, D. Hill,

Senior citizens losing vision, needs and support

The population of people acquiring blindness or low vision in late adulthood does not have a homogeneous nature and is characterized by high heterogeneity of possibilities and needs. However, the existing empirical analyses indicate, quite unequivocally, that the loss of vision in this phase leads to a decrease in the quality of life due to experiencing a number of significant difficulties in the basic spheres of psychosocial functioning¹⁸ Studies comparing the behavioural and emotional adaptation of elderly people with and without visual impairment have demonstrated that age-related vision impairment is associated with other significant losses that increase within a six-year period from vision loss, including future orientation disorders and a decrease in life satisfaction. Acquisition of visual impairment has a negative impact on the course and effects of ageing, and which is most important, increases the risk of mortality¹⁹.

Visual impairment hinders the performance of everyday activities in an effective and safe manner. Senior citizens with acquired visual impairment declare greater problems in performing self-care activities and tasks related to household management than their peers with good vision. It has been observed that people with visual impairment of over 70 years of age perform everyday activities at a level typical for people of over 90 years of age²⁰. The everyday

Sight loss in older people. The essential guide for general practice, The Royal National Institute of Blind People, London 2014, pp. 15-21.

¹⁸ K. Czerwińska, I. Kucharczyk, *Nabywanie niepełnosprawności wzroku w późnej dorosłości a jakość życia*, „Niepełnosprawność. Dyskursy pedagogiki specjalnej” 2019, no. 34, pp. 131-145. C-W Pan, H. Liu, H-P. Sun, Y. Xu, *Increased Difficulties in Managing Stairs in Visually Impaired Older Adults: A Community-Based Survey*, “PLoS ONE” 2015, no. 10(11), DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0142516, pp. 2-8.

¹⁹ H. Wahl, V. Heyl, *Psychosocial adaptation to age-related vision loss: A six-year perspective*, “Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness” 2001, no. 95, pp. 739-748.

²⁰ J. Percival, *Meeting the needs of older people with visual impairment: Social care or social exclusion?*, Thomas Pocklington Trust, London 2003, pp. 1-15.

activity of the discussed group is also smaller due to problems with spatial orientation and independent movement, especially in terms of ascending the stairs²¹, using public transport and moving in the outdoor environment²². Restrictions of mobility are also associated with the risk of injury as a result of falls, to which senior citizens with visual impairment are exposed nearly twice more likely than elderly people without perceptual problems. Importantly, the occurrence of a fall leads to a decrease in motor activity, which results in a decrease in the level of motor performance as a result of weakening of joint stability and muscle strength as well as deterioration of equivalent reactions and loss of normal gait patterns²³.

Negative consequences of the acquisition of visual impairment are also visible in the field of social participation of senior citizens. Studies comparing the degree of social activity of elderly people with visual impairment and their able-bodied peers have demonstrated that the extent of participation in social life of this group of senior citizens is smaller. These data are alarming because social and public activities are an indicator of a successful course of the ageing process and have a positive impact on broadly understood health. Restrictions that were noted among the respondents concerned mainly voluntary and professional activity (92%), forms of spending free time (88%), housework (84%), socialization (53%). In addition, subjects with visual impairment experienced a sense of loneliness more often compared to the reference group²⁴. The re-

²¹ N.N. Hairi, A. Bulgiba, D. Peramalah, I. Mudla, *Do older people with visual impairment and living alone in a rural developing country report greater difficulty in managing stairs?*, "Preventive Medicine" 2013, no. 56, pp. 8-11.

²² A. Lewicka, *Niezależność osób niewidomych, czyli rzeczywistość – oczekiwania – utrudnienia*, [in:] „Jakość życia a niepełnosprawność. Konteksty psychopedagogiczne”, ed. Z. Palak, A. Lewicka, A. Bujnowska, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2006, pp. 365-368.

²³ S.R. Lord, S.T. Smith, J.C. Menant, *Vision and falls in older people: risk factors and intervention strategies*, "Clinics in Geriatric Medicine" 2010, no. 26(4), pp. 569-581.

²⁴ M.A. Alma, S.F. Van Der Mei, B.J.M. Melis-Dankers, T.G. Van Tilburg, J.W. Groothoff, Suurmeijer T.P.B.M., *Participation of the elderly after vision loss*, "Disability & Rehabilitation" 2011, no. 33(1), pp. 63-72, DOI: 10.3109/09638288.2010.488711.

duced scope of leisure activities has also been confirmed in other scientific analyses²⁵, which is worth emphasizing due to the fact that in late adulthood the importance of home activities, recreation, rest and participation in social life increases significantly and directly affects life satisfaction.

Serious effects of vision loss at elderly age occur in the sphere of emotional functioning. These problems are quite often not perceived by specialists, especially in situations where the acquisition of disability is a gradual process associated with the progressive nature of a disease of the visual system²⁶. The feelings experienced by blind seniors, such as: uneasiness, irritability, anxiety, despair, feeling of malaise, loss and lifelong change, are difficult to observe due to the specific form of their expression and the mechanisms of denial and repression. The emotional state of these people is also sometimes incorrectly assessed due to low awareness and lack of suitable training of medical staff. Lack of emotional support at the critical moment of diagnosis and the beginning of the adaptation process strengthens the feeling of being not understood and favours mental health disorders, especially depression. Likewise, at the later stages of rehabilitation, the lack of sensitivity to the emotional state of an elderly person and the failure to perceive the affective determinants of their behaviour may lead to incorrect assessments of their needs, level of motivation and expectations from a specialist, and thus reduce the effectiveness of therapeutic interactions. For example, cancelling or shortening a home visit may not necessarily indicate a lack of interest in the offered services, but may result from an unconscious desire to mask malaise accompanied by a wish to maintain contact with the rehabilitator²⁷.

²⁵ R. Stevens-Ratchford, A. Krause, *Visually Impaired Older Adults and Home-Based Leisure Activities: The Effects of Person-Environment Congruence*, "Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness" 2004, no. 98(1), pp. 14-27.

²⁶ S.C. Houde, ed., *Vision Loss in Older Adults. Nursing Assessment and Care Management*, Springer Publishing Company, New York 2007, pp. 109-130.

²⁷ J. Percival, *Meeting the needs of older people with visual impairment: Social care or social exclusion?*, Thomas Pocklington Trust, London 2003, pp. 1-15.

When determining the rehabilitation needs of senior citizens who are losing vision, it is necessary to assess the functional consequences of visual impairment in a holistic way and recognize their interrelationships, as well as the impact of contextual and environmental factors. For example, problems in the area of spatial orientation and movement will directly have a negative impact on the sphere of social participation of a senior citizen, however, the acquisition of competences that increase mobility will not immediately broaden social contacts, which may have weakened for many different reasons (including emotional problems, mental barriers in the society, periodic loss of opportunities to spend free time in selected forms, deteriorating health condition). Considering environmental conditions is also a key issue in the diagnosis of the needs of elderly people with acquired visual impairment, as the extent and degree of negative effects of visual impairment will depend on the availability of individual and external resources.

The existing empirical analyses of support systems for senior citizens losing their vision has revealed a number of neglected areas in the area of early diagnosis of health problems, access to specialist ophthalmological treatment, and the provision of appropriate rehabilitation services. The multiplicity and complexity of the needs of this group of people requires active integration of clinical, social and therapeutic activities, but holistic care for senior citizens in numerous countries is still a desideratum²⁸. Source analysis demonstrated that a significant percentage of elderly people experience visual problems that could potentially be eliminated or significantly reduced. These disorders remain undiagnosed for a number of reasons, among which the particularly common ones include:

- treating visual impairment as a natural consequence of ageing process combined with disbelief in the possibility of treatment and the achievement of a functional change,

²⁸ H. Court, G. McLean, B. Guthrie, S.W. Mercer, D.J. Smith, *Visual impairment is associated with physical and mental comorbidities in older adults: a cross-sectional study*, "BMC Medicine" 2014, no. 12(181), DOI: 10.1186/s12916-014-0181-7.

- long waiting time for an ophthalmology appointment,
- lack of awareness of the adverse impact of visual impairment on everyday life,
- lack of information about available services, system limitations of specialist treatment,
- limited mobility which makes the access to healthcare facilities difficult²⁹.

A small percentage of visually impaired people use private or public ophthalmic care services, and medical recommendations usually do not consider the specific nature of the functioning of elderly people. For example, multifocal glasses can reduce contrast sensitivity and depth perception, which negatively affects the ability of senior citizens to visually detect obstacles, thereby increasing the risk of falling, especially in unfamiliar surroundings³⁰. It was observed that elderly people wearing multifocal lenses were twice as likely to fall compared to their peers wearing standard glasses³¹.

Organization of rehabilitation assistance including psychological therapy, learning alternative techniques for performing everyday activities, adaptation of the environment, training of spatial orientation and movement, social and recreational activation, constitutes another area of the system for supporting senior citizens who are losing their vision, which has profound deficiencies. The data collected by the Social Services Inspectorate showed that almost 50% of all departments of social services in the United Kingdom do not carry out assessments targeted at the needs of the elderly

²⁹ C. Bégin, V. Boudreault, D. Sergerie, *La prévention des chutes dans un continuum de services pour les aînés vivant à domicile. Guide d'implantation – IMP – 2e édition*, Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec, Québec 2009. J.M. Tielsch, J.C. Javitt, A. Coleman, J. Katz, A. Sommer, *The Prevalence of Blindness and Visual Impairment among Nursing Home Residents in Baltimore*, "The New England Journal of Medicine" 1995, no. 332(18), pp. 1205-1209.

³⁰ J.V. Odom, C.V. Odom, M.J. Leys, *Does improving vision reduce the risk of falls? A review*, "Insight: Research and Practice in Visual Impairment & Blindness" 2011, no. 4(2), pp. 92-99.

³¹ S.R. Lord, S.T. Smith, J.C. Menant, *Vision and falls in older people: risk factors and intervention strategies*, "Clinics in Geriatric Medicine" 2010, no. 26(4), pp. 569-581.

people with visual impairment, while the activities of specialists dealing with the distribution and monitoring of rehabilitation services do not in fact include this group of senior citizens. These negligence results from a number of reasons, among which the most important include:

- lack of knowledge of senior citizens about the possibility of formal registration as a person with visual impairment and the benefits in the field of services and social security resulting from obtaining this status,
- ineffective activities of teams of social workers (including lack of resources and specialized training, providing assistance based on a single, non-complex assessment of needs, no evaluation of services)³².

In the Polish aid system, there are also deficiencies in the number of centres and clinics, in which people who lose their full visual efficiency in late adulthood could receive specialist rehabilitation to facilitate adaptation to a new life situation. Therefore, despite its large size, this group relatively rarely uses the improvement of vision and other forms of visual impairment pedagogy-related support³³. This problem particularly affects people living in rural areas and small towns.

In analyses conducted by the Royal National Institute for the Blind, it was noted that a significant percentage of elderly people with visual impairment primarily needs little support to be able to function at the level appropriate for their age group. In the meantime, social care institutions overloaded with work direct their help mainly to people who require significant support. Lack of relatively insignificant, but systematic help provided at home increases the risk of premature transfer of the senior citizen to a care institution,

³² J. Percival, *Meeting the needs of older people with visual impairment: Social care or social exclusion?* Thomas Pocklington Trust, London 2003, pp. 1-15.

³³ M. Dycht, *Rehabilitacja optyczna osób starszych*, [in:] "Niepełnosprawność w okresie późnej dorosłości", ed. M. Kilian, E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Cracow 2018, pp. 248-252.

which does not favour social activity of elderly people with this type of dysfunction³⁴.

It should be remembered that the population of senior citizens with visual impairment reveals a significant degree of diversity, which suggests that many irregularities and neglects in the support system aimed at addressing the needs of this group of people have not yet been identified. The improvement of the quality of rehabilitation services certainly requires a reliable diagnosis of the current situation of elderly people who are losing their vision through transdisciplinary research investigating the experience of disability in terms of possessed resources and functional limitations as well as a specific social context. Support related activities should be planned in an integrated manner, considering the multiplicity of problems emerging during this period of life. This generates the need to intensify cooperation between specialists, in particular physicians, psychologists, social workers, vision rehabilitators, spatial orientation teachers and other experts operating in the field of broadly defined special geragogy.

The comprehensive nature of the activities is a necessary condition for achieving the basic goals of supporting elderly people with acquired vision disability, which are considered to be:

- 1) modification of misconceptions about the relationship of the experienced symptoms with the natural ageing process and the lack of possibility of an effective treatment,
- 2) reduction of the sense of uniqueness, isolation, loneliness and protection of mental health,
- 3) development new patterns of social functioning and a reasonable assessment of the current life situation³⁵.

In the case of the population of elderly people with acquired visual impairment, the combination of rehabilitation services pro-

³⁴ J. Percival, *Meeting the needs of older people with visual impairment: Social care or social exclusion?*, Thomas Pocklington Trust, London 2003, pp. 1-15.

³⁵ S. Steuden, *Poradnictwo psychologiczne dla osób w okresie późnej dorosłości*, [in:] „Poradnictwo psychologiczne”, ed. Cz. Czabała, S. Kluczyńska, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2015, pp. 174-175.

vided at home and participation in peer support groups is considered to be the most effective. Programs covering these two forms of services provide informational (broadening knowledge about the disease, as well as treatment and rehabilitation options) and emotional (reduction of mental tension felt in difficult situations) support, favour social contacts, strengthen the sense of self-determination and success in dealing with the consequences of vision loss³⁶.

Community support is an economic solution that effectively prevents the institutionalization of these people. During home visits, basic assistance services are provided, including provision of assistance in performing self-care activities and household management, provision of reading services, provision of transport and guiding services. Specialized services usually offered by an educator of the visually impaired aim at teaching alternative techniques and new skills enabling the senior citizen to function independently. Home rehabilitation enables the acquisition of new competences at a pace adapted to the needs of elderly people with minimal disruption to daily routine, and without isolating the individual from their family and the local environment. Home visits allow for full individualization of the therapy process, both in terms of set goals and methods of their achievement. In turn, support groups favour the exchange of experiences and expression of emotions, and weaken the feeling of loneliness. Plans of a rehabilitation program for elderly people with acquired loss of vision or low vision must include the specific needs associated with the effects of ageing and individual interests, aspirations, habits. In general, in the first phase of work, therapeutic interactions focus on the help in emotional experiencing the trauma related to acquired dysfunction and the increase of independence by

³⁶ A. Horowitz, R. Leonard, J.P. Reinhardt, *Measuring psychosocial and functional outcomes of a group model of vision rehabilitation services for older adults*, "Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness" 2000, no. 94(5), pp. 328-337. J. Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, M. Kilian, *Rola grup wsparcia w podnoszeniu jakości życia niewidomych i słabo widzących osób w starszym wieku*, [in:] „Jakość życia osób niepełnosprawnych i nieprzystosowanych społecznie”, ed. Z. Palak, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2004, pp. 101-107.

training spatial orientation in the nearest surroundings³⁷ as well as learning how to safely perform basic everyday activities³⁸. Second come therapeutic goals related to the social and recreational sphere³⁹. Support of specialists for family members of an elderly person losing their vision is also necessary, because the family is still the basic entity providing daily care⁴⁰, and its incorrect forms (e.g. excessive protection) may block the process of adaptation to the acquired dysfunction.

Summary

Despite the fact that as early as more than a decade ago people losing their fitness in late adulthood were indicated as a new subject for special education activities in Polish source literature, the interest in this group of people seems to be still insufficient, both in the scientific and research area and in the field of educational and rehabilitation practice. The lack of systematic aforementioned studies concerning these issues makes it difficult to make an unambiguous assessment of the state of satisfaction of rehabilitation needs of people acquiring visual impairment or low vision at elderly age. Based on the available data related to specific areas of this group's functioning, numerous fields that require the implementation of good practices that protect against social exclusion and favour successful ageing can be identified.

³⁷ J. Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij, *Orientacja przestrzenna i poruszanie się osób z niepełnosprawnością narządu wzroku. Współczesne techniki, narzędzia i strategie nauczania*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UKSW, Warsaw 2017, pp. 138-146.

³⁸ M. Kilian, *Rehabilitacja w zakresie poruszania się i wykonywania codziennych czynności wobec potrzeb osób w starszym wieku z niepełnosprawnością wzrokową*, „Człowiek – Niepełnosprawność – Społeczeństwo” 2009, no. 2(10), pp. 25-28.

³⁹ K.M. Ryan, *Rehabilitation Services for Older People With Visual Impairments*, “RE:view” 2002, no. 34(1), pp. 31-48.

⁴⁰ M. Rosochacka-Gmitrzak, *Wsparcie opiekunów nieformalnych – w stronę równowagi społecznych oczekiwań i opiekuńczych możliwości rodzin*, [in:] „Publiczna troska, prywatna opieka. Społeczności lokalne wobec osób starszych”, ed. M. Raclaw, Fundacja Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2011, pp. 137-154.

Furthermore, it seems necessary to undertake empirical analyses concerning ways of using the development potential of this group. The increase of the active participation of educators of the visually impaired and other specialists involved in activities for people with visual impairment is the key issue in developing a health care system and rehabilitation services for senior citizens, as well as integrated, interdisciplinary geriatric care. It is advisable to introduce systemic solutions enabling an increase in cooperation between non-governmental organizations which are currently the main entity offering rehabilitation services for adults losing their vision and health care and social care institutions. The gerontological education of society should also become a priority of the national policy for senior citizens, because the source of many difficulties experienced by senior citizens with disabilities is the negative stereotype of old age.

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Echolocation, as a method supporting spatial orientation and independent movement of people with visual impairment

ABSTRACT: Kamila Miler-Zdanowska, *Echolocation, as a method supporting spatial orientation and independent movement of people with visual impairment*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 353-371. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.15>

People with visual impairment use information from other senses to gain knowledge about the world around them. More and more studies conducted with the participation of visually impaired people indicate that data obtained through auditory perception is extremely important. In this context, the ability of echolocation used by blind people to move independently is interesting. The aim of the article is to present echolocation as a method supporting spatial orientation of people with visual impairment. The article presents the results of empirical studies of echolocation. It also presents the benefits of using this ability in everyday life and signals research projects related to the methodology of teaching echolocation in Poland. People with visually impaired to get knowledge about the world around them use information from other senses. Many studies conducted with the participation of visually impaired people indicate that data obtained through hearing are extremely important. In this context, the ability of echolocation used by blind people to move independently is interesting. The aim of the article is to present echolocation as a method supporting spatial orientation of people with visual disabilities. The article presents the results of empirical studies on echolocation. It also presents the benefits of using this skill in everyday life and signals research projects on the methodology of teaching echolocation in Poland.

KEY WORDS: echolocation, spatial orientation, visual impairment echolocation, spatial orientation, visual disability

The reality in which we live is strongly oriented towards looking at and seeing. Well-functioning vision provides us with a lot of information about the world. It allows for a detailed perception of space, the objects it contains, and the relationships between them. It also enables the perception of movement and changes taking place in the environment. Vision is also crucial for assessing the position of one's body in space and for moving there. Therefore, in a situation of blindness or poor vision, when eyesight cannot be the primary source of information about the world, other senses and other strategies for obtaining such information should be used. In the case of people with visual impairment, properly functioning senses of hearing, touch, proprioception, balance, and smell are of key importance.¹ According to research conducted around the world on the perception of the world by blind people, sound plays a key role in creating their image of the world. Blind people convert the received sound signal into a spatial image in the visual cortex responsible for vision. Therefore, blind people create a fairly accurate picture of the environment in their brains, even if they do not use eyesight but reflected sounds.² This skill is extremely needed and useful to orientate in space and during independent movement of people with visual impairment. The basis of this auditory spatial

¹ K. Miler-Zdanowska, *Czynniki warunkujące nauczanie orientacji przestrzennej i samodzielnego poruszania się osób z niepełnosprawnością wzroku*, [in:] K. Czerwińska, M. Paplińska, M. Walkiewicz-Krutak (eds.), *Tyflopädagogika wobec współczesnych przemian przestrzeni edukacyjnej*, Wydawnictwo APS, Warsaw 2015, p. 296.

² Research with the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) was conducted by Melvyn Goodale, a professor of psychology, director of the Brain and Mind Institute at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. Together with his team, he studied the functional organization of visual pathways in the cerebral cortex. As a result of experiments conducted with the participation of Daniel Kish and Brian Bushway (blind men using echolocation to move), he discovered that only in them the visual cortex in the brain is activated while hearing reflected sounds. However, in sighted people exposed to the same procedure, only auditory cortex is activated. Professor Goodale has determined that echolocation can be used in a very similar way to eyesight. More information on this topic can be found in: M.A. Goodale, *Po co mógł widzi?*, „Charaktery”, 2013, 2, pp. 44-45.

orientation of blind people is the auditory sensation arising from the reflection of sound from an obstacle. According to Urszula Jorasz, probably the most important is the assessment of the so-called “reflection tone”, which results from the interference of sound reflected directly from the obstacle.³

This ability to detect, interpret and locate an obstacle based on the echo created by reflection of independently produced sounds from surrounding objects is called echolocation.⁴ The term is also defined as “a method of interpreting the sounds generated by echoes from surrounding objects in order to determine the place in which the objects are situated”⁵, as well as “a technique that consciously involves the senses, especially the sense of hearing, in perceiving and gathering precise information about structures, forms, features of objects in such a way that an object or a group of objects presented in a given environment can be identified”.⁶ This skill is available to all blind and sighted people. This is confirmed by scientific research conducted in the world, in which sighted people after several weeks of training were able to aurally locate objects in space.⁷ However, this ability is more often used and improved by

³ U. Jorasz, *Wykłady z psychoakustyki*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, Poznań, 1998, p. 126.

⁴ The term echolocation was first used by Donald Griffin, a zoologist who studied the behaviour of bats. Because of the fact that the same mechanism was observed in blind people, it was adapted to describe this type of ability in people. A.J. Kolarik, S. Cirstea, S. Pardhan, B.C., Moore, *A summary of research investigating echolocation abilities of blind and sighted humans*. 2014, “Hear Res”, 10, p. 62.

⁵ T. Johnson, *Beginner’s guide to echolocation for the blind and visually impaired*. Learning to See with Your Ears. Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2012, p. 16.

⁶ D. Kish, J. Hook, *Echolocation and Flash Sonar*. American Printing for the Blind, 2016, p. 27.

⁷ The study conducted by Rojas et al. on a group of ten sighted volunteers showed that sighted people are able to learn to use echolocation to detect obstacles. This learning consisted of systematic, daily training with closed eyes. A description of the study was included in: J.A.M, Rojas J.A., Hermosilla, R.S, Montero, P.L.L., Espí. *Physical analysis of several organic signals for human echolocation: hand and*

people with visual impairment because of its useful nature in their daily functioning as one of the ways to obtain information about the surrounding world.

Use of echolocation by people with visual impairment

People with visual impairment more or less consciously use echolocation in everyday life. Very young blind children are focused on the perception of sound sensations from the environment (sounds made by objects, people, phenomena, etc.) or on the spontaneous production of sounds by shuffling their feet, clapping their hands or making different mouth sounds. These are their first spontaneous manifestations of using echolocation. These behaviours are not always understood by their surroundings and are often not strengthened or developed. Auditory reception of random sounds from the environment (e.g. bus brake squealing, noises from a construction site, sound of closed doors, etc.) is passive echolocation⁸. It allows locating the sound source, determine its distance from a person and helps to determine the position of our body in relation to the sounds emitted from the environment. This type of echolocation is usually used to obtain information about the presence of large objects in the environment (e.g. cars, building walls, bus shelters, etc.) or general information about the size and shape of the room. However, when a blind person wants to identify small objects in space precisely, get information about their size, shape, material of which they are made by hearing, they should independently and

finger produced pulses. "Acta Acustica united with Acustica", 2010, 96, pp. 1069-1077. The study of S. Teng, D. Whitney also demonstrated that sighted people (eleven sighted people participated in the study) are able to achieve echolocation skills at the same level as blind people as a result of training. S. Teng, D. Whitney, *The acuity of echolocation: Spatial resolution in the sighted compared to expert performance*, Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness. 2011, 105(1), pp. 20-32.

⁸ D. Kish, J. Hook, *Echolocation and Flash Sonar*. American Printing for the Blind, 2016, p. 40.

consciously produce sounds by clapping their hands, clicking with their fingers or smacking their lips. In this way, the sound emitted in the desired direction hits the object and the echo arising from the reflection returns to the person making the sound. The ability to interpret the returning echo is very important here. Based on its assessment, people with visual impairment are able to create a mental representation of the environment. Developing the ability of active echolocation requires a lot of exercise and commitment.

Both types of echolocation can be used together in an integrated way. Passive echolocation provides a person with visual impairment with rather general, usually not very precise images. In contrast, active echolocation allows getting more specific perception. In this sense, we can think of passive echolocation as a peripheral vision system that provides a constant, broad, overall picture of the environment, acting as a kind of alarm system. In turn, active echolocation is comparable to the central visual system in the sense that it allows noticing specific objects or interesting elements in more detail and from further distances.⁹ The condition of using passive echolocation is an efficient hearing organ, which is sensitive to sounds, while in the case of active echolocation, it is very important to be able to emit sound (smacking one's lips, snapping one's fingers, clapping one's hands, etc.) and be able to interpret the sound reflected from objects. The conducted studies of echolocation¹⁰ have demonstrated that of all human-made signals, sounds produced by the mouth (smacking one's tongue, smacking one's lips) are best heard in noise or din. However, few people with visual impairment can emit this sound correctly. As an alternative, many people clap their hands or snap their fingers. Based on the performed tests,

⁹ More information on this topic can be found in: D. Kish, J. Hook, *Echolocation and Flash Sonar*. American Printing for the Blind, 2016, pp. 44-45.

¹⁰ The study conducted by Rojas and his team aimed to determine the most effective way of producing sounds for active echolocation. These studies were described in: J.A.M. Rojas, J.A. Hermosilla, R.S. Montero, P.L.L. Espi *Physical analysis of several organic signals for human echolocation: hand and finger produced pulses*. "Acta Acustica united with Acustica", 2010, 96, p. 1075.

snapping one's fingers is more effective for echolocation than clapping one's hands. However, both clapping one's hands and snapping one's fingers is less useful in practice than smacking one's tongue due to the involvement of hands, which in the case of blind people are usually used when moving around to hold a white cane, a guide or a guide dog.¹¹

Here, it should be strongly emphasized that during movement, echolocation should be used as a method supporting orientation in space of people with visual impairment and not as an independent technique (without the use of a white cane, a guide dog, a guide or other devices supporting mobility).¹²

A properly developed echolocation skill can provide a visually impaired person with a lot of information about the spatial environment. According to the blind, the main advantage of echolocation is obtaining information about space that is not accessible by touch, which significantly improves their mobility and sense of direction, especially in unknown places. Echolocation significantly improves navigational abilities during movement.¹³

The skill of echolocation can be used by people with visual impairment in many everyday situations, and thus in numerous different places. Basically, two types of space in which people with visual impairment use echolocation can be distinguished. These are

¹¹ Characteristics of the mentioned ways of movement of people with visual impairment has been described in: K. Miler-Zdanowska, *Orientacja przestrzenna dzieci z dysfunkcją wzroku – droga do niezależności*, [in:] Witczak-Nowotna J. (ed.), *Wspomaganie uczniów z dysfunkcją wzroku w szkołach ogólnodostępnych*. Edited by: Office for Persons with Disabilities of the University of Warsaw, Warsaw 2010, p. 53.

¹² This important aspect is pointed out by Daniel Kish, the most famous blind echolocator in the world. The use of echolocation as an independent technique can even be dangerous for people with visual impairment, because it does not provide information about obstacles that are below the hips (small objects protruding above the ground, holes, unevenness etc.). Daniel Kish encourages moving with a white cane that, when used correctly, ensures a blind person safety and quite a lot of independence.

¹³ K. Fiehler, I. Schiitz, T. Meller, L. Thaler, *Neural Correlates of Human Echolocation of Path Direction During Walking*. "Multisensory Research" 2015, 28, p. 197.

a closed space (inside the building) and an open space (outside the building). In a closed space, or in an apartment, office, clinic, store, etc., using echolocation permits a determination of the shape, and size of the room, and acquisition of information whether the room is empty or filled with furniture.¹⁴ During movement in the corridor, it is possible to maintain straightness of the march, detect and locate the door (open and closed), stairs, as well as locate obstacles along the route. On the other hand, in an open space, or in a park, a forest, in a residential or commercial area or city centre, echolocation can facilitate the location of service outlets (e.g. a store, a clinic, an office, etc.), and the location of large facilities along the route (e.g. a bus stop, cars parked along the street, bushes, trees, benches, poles, etc.). During the movement on a pavement, parallel to street traffic, this skill can help to locate the ends of the building walls, fences or facilitate the detection of spaces between buildings (entrance gates, parking entrances, etc.), as well as efficiently detect and identify underground passages, tunnels, etc.¹⁵

Selected studies concerning the subject of echolocation in people with visual impairment

Issues regarding echolocation in people with visual impairments were and still are of interest to various groups of scientists. They were usually embedded in the field of acoustics, cognitive psychology and psychoacoustics. However, the development of neuroscience, attempting to explain human cognitive functioning based on the normal functioning of the brain, attracted scientists in the field of neuropsychology and information engineering to this area.

¹⁴ J. Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, *Znaczenie dźwięku w orientacji przestrzennej niewidomych i słabo widzących*. Normalizacja, 1997, 2, no. 12.

¹⁵ The aforementioned examples of echolocation are based on training materials as part of the EchoProViP project in Poland: L. Dycker, O&M – Flash sonar/ekkolokalisering. A tutorial for O&M instructors in Denmark, IBOS, 2014 (unpublished materials).

The first research reports concerning the use of sounds reflected from an obstacle for movement were recorded in 1793 by Lazzaro Spallanzani, but they concerned the use of this ability by bats. In subsequent observations of these animals, Charles Jurines in 1794 determined that if bats have plugged ears they are not able to use this ability and collide with an obstacle. One hundred and fifty years later, Donald Griffin showed that bats use their own emitted sound to navigate and locate victims using sounds.¹⁶

Simultaneously to the observations and discoveries of zoologists, the first reports on the use of echolocation skills in humans have been reported. In 1749 Denis Diderot described the case of a blind man who was able to locate various objects and estimate their distance. However, Diderot explained this ability as feeling the closeness of objects on the face and called this ability "face vision".¹⁷ Over the years, numerous researchers (Levy 1872, James 1890, Dressler 1893, Heller 1904, Javal 1905, Villey 1918, etc.)¹⁸, searched for the explanation of object locating skills possessed by blind people and tried to explain their mechanism by calling them "face vision", "the sixth sense", "the sense of obstacles". Subsequent experiments conducted by Włodzimierz Dolański in 1930 demonstrated that the basis of the sense of obstacles is hearing, and not as previously thought the touch created by air pressure.¹⁹

¹⁶ Wiener W.R., Lausen G.D. *Audition for the Traveler Who Is Visually Impaired*, [in:] B.B. Blasch, W.R. Wiener, R.L. Welsch (eds.), *Foundations of Orientation and Mobility*, 1997, A.F.B. Press: New York, p. 146.

¹⁷ Kolarik A.J., Cirstea S., Pardhan S., Moore B.C., *A summary of research investigating echolocation abilities of blind and sighted humans*. 2014, "Hear Res", 10, p. 63.

¹⁸ A detailed description of the undertaken research is included in: Wiener W.R., Lausen G.D., *Audition for the Traveler Who Is Visually Impaired*, in B.B. Blasch, W.R. Wiener, R.L. Welsch (eds.), *Foundations of Orientation and Mobility*, 1997, A.F.B. Press: New York, 146. These researchers formulated several theories explaining the mechanism of the sense of obstacles: Truschel's acoustic theory, Kunz's compression theory, Krogius's thermal theory, Villey's auditory theory, and Heller's complex reception of impressions theory.

¹⁹ Włodzimierz Dolański conducted several experiments during which he investigated the detection of a shield approached to the exposed face, with the use

A breakthrough in the study of echolocation and the explanation of its mechanisms was a series of pioneering studies conducted at the Cornell Psychological Laboratory in the 1840s. In the first study, Karl M. Dallenbach (a professor at the Cornell University), Michael Supa (a blind echolocator), and Wilton Cotzin (a sighted echolocator) found that face vision is actually an auditory ability and that acoustic stimulation is necessary to detect and locate objects in the environment.²⁰

Further studies conducted in various research facilities confirmed that both blind and sighted people have echolocation abilities. The most comprehensive study in the field of this issue was conducted in 1960 by Charle E. Rice. His research involved blind people (5 people blind from birth), people who became blind at the age of above 3, as well as sighted people. As a result of the study, it was found that both blind and sighted people are able to echolocate at a comparable level.²¹ Similar research was also conducted by Kellogg and he found that blind people have a better ability to detect reflected sound (echoes) than sighted people, and that "obstacle detection" is better in people blind from birth than those who became blind later or are partially sighted. In addition, modern research conducted by Santani Tenga and David Withnej demonstrate that echolocation abilities in some sighted people after training are at a similar level as in the case of blind people, and that in both the

of earmuffs, a mask and cotton wool in the ears. W. Dolański, *Czy istnieje "zmysł przeszkód" u niewidomych*. PWN, Warszawa 1954, pp. 36-41.

²⁰ Two sighted people and two blind people participated in the study. Subjects were asked to approach the obstacle and report it as soon as they were able to detect it, and then stop as close as possible to the obstacle. When the participants' ears were covered (headphones with loud music were applied), the ability to detect the obstacle and assess its distance disappeared. Supa, M. Cotzin, M., Dallenbach, K.M., *Facial vision, the perception of obstacles by the blind*. American Journal of Psychology, 57, 1944, pp. 133-183.

²¹ J. Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij, *Orientacja przestrzenna i poruszanie się osób z niepełnosprawnością wzroku. Współczesne techniki, narzędzia i strategię nauczania*, Wydawnictwo UKSW, Warsaw 2017, p. 43.

blind and the sighted population these abilities show individual variability.²²

In the following years, research on echolocation was focused on the acoustic properties of both the echo produced by echolocators, as well as the acoustic properties of the environment. In the 1980s Bo. N. Schenkman analysed the impact of several factors (sound sources, object physical parameters and type of tasks) on the abilities of the blind and examined the psychoacoustic mechanisms of echolocation. As a result of the conducted study, it was found that detecting objects in the environment based on the sounds produced by the white cane (in contact with the ground) is more difficult for blind echolocators than smacking their tongue. Studies have also demonstrated that the length of the emitted sound signal affects the effective detection of objects in the environment. Short signals are more helpful in locating objects, while continuous signals are better for determining physical characteristics of objects.²³

In the late 1990s Claudia Arias and O.A. Ramos studied the effect of sound pitch on detecting objects in space. To conduct the study, they used both smacking one's tongue and sound emitted from a loudspeaker (alone or with echo). The tasks used in the study included detecting various objects (distinguishing sounds with and without echo) and distinguishing changes in the distance between the sound source and the object. As a result of the conducted study, it was found that sound pitch is important for faster location and detection of objects in space and for distinguishing their distances.²⁴ Subsequent studies of human echolocation were aimed at checking the impact of movement, and actions on echolocation

²² S. Theng, D. Whitney, *The acuity of echolocation: Spatial resolution in the sighted compared to expert performance*, *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*. 2011, 105(1), pp. 20-32.

²³ C. Arias, F. Bermejo, M.X. Hüg, N. Venturelli, D. Rabinovich, A.O. Skarp, *Echolocation: An Action-Perception Phenomenon*, "New Zealand Acoustics", 2012, 25(2), p. 22.

²⁴ Arias, C., Ramos, O.A. *Psychoacoustic tests for the study of human echolocation ability*. *Appl. Acoust.*, 1997, 51, pp. 399-419.

abilities. This type of study was conducted by Lawrence D. Rosenblum and he demonstrated a beneficial effect of motor activity on the accuracy of echolocation.²⁵

Interesting studies of echolocation were conducted in 2010 and 2016 by Bo N. Schenkman and Mats E. Nilsson. In both studies, attempts were made to determine which components of the acoustic stimulus affect echolocation. Blind and sighted people (ten blind people and ten sighted people between 30 and 60 years old) were asked to indicate which of the two presented sounds is the sound from the reflected obstacle. The presented sounds differed in both the sound volume and pitch parameter. As a result of the study, it was found that a person with visual impairment, located in close proximity to the object for echolocation usually uses the pitch of the sound, while the volume of the sound is an additional source of information.

The researchers also found that the size of the room affects the distance at which echolocation can be used. In large rooms, e.g. in a conference room, this distance may be greater than in very small rooms, e.g. in an anechoic chamber. In this experiment, blind people obtained better results than sighted people.²⁶ The second of the conducted studies also confirmed the benefits of using the “excess of information” principle in echolocation. This means that for the blind, the presence of a large amount of acoustic information makes perception tasks (e.g. obstacle detection) easier than when there is little information. Even hearing levels in both ears are also very important for echolocation.²⁷

²⁵ Blind people who used echolocation while moving achieved better results in detecting obstacles than those who used stationary echolocation. These studies were described in: A.J. Kolarik, S. Cirstea, S. Pardhan, B.C. Moore., *A summary of research investigating echolocation abilities of blind and sighted humans*. 2014, “Hear Res”, 10, pp. 60-68.

²⁶ A detailed description of the study can be found in: B. Schenkman, M.E. Nilsson, *Human echolocation: Blind and sighted persons' ability to detect sounds recorded in the presence of a reflecting object*, “Perception”, 2010, 39, p. 485.

²⁷ B. Schenkman, *Human echolocation in different situations and rooms*. The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 2017, 141(5), pp. 3452-3452.

Yet other studies of the properties of the most common pulses generated during echolocation were conducted by Juan A.M. Rojas with his team. During the study it was investigated which sounds produced by humans for echolocation are the most effective. Clapping one's hands, snapping one's fingers, playing castanets, and smacking one's tongue were analysed. As a result of the conducted study, it was found that clapping one's hands and snapping one's fingers are the most intuitive and commonly produced sounds of the human body. However, detailed physical properties of the sounds produced in this way vary greatly from person to person, and it is impossible to reproduce the same sound each time, which can significantly affect the detection of small obstacles.

Therefore, clapping one's hands and snapping one's fingers can be used as an alternative way of producing sounds to detect distant obstacles.²⁸ The results of the conducted tests confirm that the best sound for echolocation is the so-called smacking one's tongue. It involves "a rapid, horizontal retraction of the tongue towards the back of the mouth, previously touching the palate, above the upper teeth, with slightly parted lips".²⁹ The tactile aspect of smacking one's tongue, which is felt as a vibration on the tongue, teeth, jaws and skull bones, is also very important. These types of smacking are very effective in detecting and locating obstacles located at the height of the echolocating person's head and in detecting very small objects in space.

In further studies of echolocation in the field of acoustics, attempts were made to determine the most favourable acoustic fea-

²⁸ Detailed acoustic analyses of individual types of sounds produced during echolocation can be found in: J.A.M. Rojas, J.A. Hermosilla, R.S. Montero, P.L.L. Espí, *Physical analysis of several organic signals for human echolocation: hand and finger produced pulses*. "Acta Acustica united with Acustica", 2010, 96, pp. 1073-1075.

²⁹ P. Witek, A. Rozborska, A. Waszkielewicz, M. Rotnicki, L. Brayda, *Echolokacja – mit czy istotny element rehabilitacji osób z niepełnosprawnością wzroku*, [in]: Paplińska M., Walkiewicz-Krutak M. (eds.), *Tyflopedagogika wobec współczesnych potrzeb wspomagania rozwoju, rehabilitacji i aktywizacji społecznej*, Wydawnictwo APS, Warsaw 2017, p. 245.

tures of the emitted sounds. Liam J. Norman and Lowrence Thaler in 2017 conducted a study in a group of 12 blind people (8 women and 4 men aged from 18 to 41) consisting in assessing the presence of the object in the environment and the distance of the object based on echo recordings at different frequencies. As a result of the conducted experiment, it was found that the use of emission of sounds containing higher spectral frequencies improved echolocation performance in the object detection task. Blind people generating clicks of higher spectral frequencies detected and located objects in the environment much better than blind people using clicks of lower frequencies. Sound emissions containing higher spectral frequencies produced louder echoes that were more audible.³⁰

Researchers involved in echolocation, in addition to the acoustic aspect of echolocation were also interested in the effects of the age of becoming blind on the ability to echolocate, as well as learning this ability by sighted people. The studies in this area were conducted by Sanatani Teng and David Whitney. The study involved sighted and blind people with various experience in using echolocation. The task of the examined people was to determine the location of plastic discs several times by means of smacking their tongue (discs were presented at different distances and in different positions). The results of the research showed that the best and most precise echolocation was demonstrated by people who had experience in the use of echolocation. Moreover people who lost their vision in early childhood showed echolocation skills similar to bats. Therefore, the time of vision loss and echolocation experiences are important for the presented echolocation skills (the study showed a strong correlation between the age of losing vision and the ability to echolocate, and a consistent improvement of the obtained results by practice).³¹

³⁰ L.J. Norman, L. Thaler, *Human Echolocation for Target Detection Is More Accurate With Emissions Containing Higher Spectral Frequencies, and This Is Explained by Echo Intensity, "i-Perception"*, 2018, 9(3), pp. 16-18.

³¹ S. Theng, D. Whitney, *The acuity of echolocation: Spatial resolution in the sighted compared to expert performance*, *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*. 2011, 105(1), pp. 20-32.

Yet another study comparing echolocation performance in sighted and blind people was conducted by Andrew J. Koralik with his team in 2012. Research has demonstrated that blind people are more sensitive to information they do not generate originating from sounds reflected from an obstacle than sighted people (e.g. sounds emitted from a loudspeaker) and are better performing the task of discrimination at a distance, when only signals from the echo are available than sighted people. Moreover, a large individual variation in echolocation skills was observed in both groups.³²

In recent years, within research on echolocation, extremely interesting studies with the use of the method of neuroimaging appear. Two independent teams of scientists (a team of American psychologists from the University of Western Ontario in Canada and a team from the University of California) observed the brain activity of blind people who, based on the sounds of the reflected echo, were able to assess the properties of objects (metal, woven fabric, wood, etc.). In both studies, cortical activity of the brain was also observed in areas typical for visual perception. The discoveries of "brain plasticity" made during research are of great importance for both blind people (echolocation can be used in a similar way to eyesight) but also allow a better understanding of the brain work in sighted people.³³

In recent years there has been a great interest in the echolocation skills of blind people. It translates into the research interests of scientists around the world. However, the biggest limitation of research are few research samples (from a few to a dozen or so people), which means that the research results cannot be extended to the entire population of people with visual impairment. Despite

³² L.J. Norman, L. Thaler, *Human Echolocation for Target Detection Is More Accurate With Emissions Containing Higher Spectral Frequencies, and This Is Explained by Echo Intensity*, "i-Perception", 2018, 9(3), pp. 1-18.

³³ The mentioned studies were partially described in the first part of the article. More information can be found in: M.A. Goodale, *Po co mózg widzi?*, "Charaktery", 2013, 2, p. 45.

this, the conducted studies allowed for understanding the mechanism of echolocation, factors that determine its effectiveness, acoustic mechanisms and its neurological basis.

Echolocation of people with visual impairment in Poland, practical activities

The research on human echolocation described above demonstrate the theoretical foundations of this issue. They are extremely important for establishing the methodology of teaching this skill to people with visual impairment. Blind echolocators³⁴ develop their echolocation abilities in an intuitive way, while research clearly indicates that the effectiveness of echolocation increases with its practical, systematic use. In Poland, for several years a team of scientists from the Lodz University of Technology³⁵ has been conducting intensive research on human echolocation, which in addition to research findings has a practical dimension. Researchers compared echolocation skills (obstacle detection from different distances) in a natural environment in a group of blind children, blind adults and sighted adults. They also compared the accuracy of recognizing the same scenarios using binaural recordings and a mobile application. The obtained research results will be used to create several mobile applications supporting the development of echolocation. Each of the designed applications will be devoted to a different issue. The first one will be a tool for learning to distinguish between sounds at a basic level. The second one will constitute support for learning passive and active echolocation (at various levels of advancement) for people with visual impairment, as well as support for spatial

³⁴ The best-known blind echocator is Daniel Kish. As part of the Word Access for the Blind, he conducts training in echolocation for instructors and blind people.

³⁵ Bujacz M. et al. *EchoVis: Training Echolocation Using Binaural Recordings - Initial Benchmark Results*. In: *Miesenberger K., Kouroupetroglou G. (eds) Computers Helping People with Special Needs*. ICCHP 2018. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, 2018, 10897. Springer, Cham.

orientation teachers. The third application will be an audio game in which the phenomenon of echolocation will be used.³⁶

Simultaneously to the activities conducted by the scientists from Łódź, the Foundation Institute for Regional Development conducts activities aimed at popularizing knowledge about echolocation, developing echolocation teaching methodology and developing practical solutions for training in the field of echolocation under the project "Echolocation for people with visual impairment" (2017-1-PL01-KA204-038557) As part of the project, training in echolocation teaching (based on the curriculum proposed by Daniel Kish) covered 12 teachers of spatial orientation from Poland and Lithuania, and a training of 24 people with visual impairment was conducted.³⁷ This project is of an international nature, with the participation of spatial orientation teachers from Poland, Lithuania and Denmark. The final goal of the project is to develop a compendium of knowledge about echolocation, a training program for spatial orientation teachers (methodology of teaching echolocation) and recommendations for the implementation of training in echolocation in training in the field of spatial orientation of people with visual impairment. The projects developed in Poland described above are a response to the need for practical use of echolocation in everyday life of people with visual impairment.

Summary

The use of echolocation ability by people is a phenomenon that is still little known but is increasingly being studied by scientists

³⁶ The works are conducted as part of a project co-financed by the National Center for Research and Development. Witek P., Rozborska A., Waszkielewicz A., Rotnicki M., Brayda L., *Echolokacja – mit czy istotny element rehabilitacji osób z niepełnościami wzroku*, [in]: Paplińska M., Walkiewicz-Krutak M. (eds.), *Tyflopedagogika wobec współczesnych potrzeb wspomagania rozwoju, rehabilitacji i aktywizacji społecznej*, Wydawnictwo APS, Warsaw 2017, pp. 246-247.

³⁷ Detailed information about the project can be found on the Foundation website <https://firr.org.pl/projekty/miedzynarodowe/> (access on: 7 June 2019).

around the world. It becomes particularly significant for blind people, as it allows them to achieve a high level of independence in everyday life. Therefore, which are the benefits of using and developing this skill? First of all, echolocation does not require special equipment or special talent. All people with visual impairment, as well as sighted people can develop this natural, simple ability.³⁸ However, in the case of blind people, it can significantly help in creating the correct mental representation of the world (e.g. in terms of spatial relations) based on sound guidance, by determining the exact distances, sizes, shapes, edges and even the density of the surrounding objects.³⁹ Moreover, echolocation significantly improves mobility (movement speed, security) in unknown places, making blind people become more independent.⁴⁰

However, despite the aforementioned benefits resulting from the use of echolocation by people with visual disabilities, it is still a phenomenon little known and understood by sighted people. According to the accounts of blind people using echolocation, they often encountered social misunderstanding (misunderstanding of accompanying persons, teachers, etc.), and their echolocation behaviours (smacking their tongue, snapping their fingers, etc.) were assessed as inappropriate behaviour. Probably the reason for such reactions of sighted people is little knowledge about echolocation, its mechanisms and its rehabilitation importance for people with visual impairment. From this perspective, human echolocation seems to be an area that still requires further analysis and research.

³⁸ T. Johnson, *Beginner's guide to echolocation for the blind and visually impaired. Learning to See with Your Ears*. Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2012, pp. 19-21.

³⁹ D. Kish, J. Hook, *Echolocation and Flash Sonar*. American Printing for the Blind, 2016, p. 40.

⁴⁰ L. Thaler, M.A. Goodale, *Echolocation in humans: an overview*. "WIREs Cognitive Science", 2016, 7, pp. 382-393.

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“Between a child who wants to tell and an adult who does not want to hear”. Arts Therapists’ Dilemmas in the Application of Arts Therapy with Children from Arab Society Who Suffered Abuse

ABSTRACT: Amani Mussa, *“Between a child who wants to tell and an adult who does not want to hear”. Arts Therapists’ Dilemmas in the Application of Arts Therapy with Children from Arab Society Who Suffered Abuse*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 373-401. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.16>

The Arab education system in Israel together with the ethics and legal regulations are found to indicate reports of maltreated and sexually abused children. The problem of viewed in this paper is connected with the reporting of children who had experienced maltreatment and sexual abuse. The article aspires to present the work and dilemmas of art therapists using arts therapy when working within educational and therapeutic frameworks in Israeli Arab society. Today, the field of arts therapy in the Arab society is in its initial stages in contrast to the seniority this field has gained in the Jewish society and more traditional therapies such as psychology and psychotherapy. In the Arab society, mental therapy is uncommon. The field of therapy as a whole is undeveloped and conducted secretly largely due to shame, stigma and prejudices associating mental therapy with mental illnesses or disorders (Masarwa & Bruno, 2018). Until recently, arts therapy has not been practiced at all in Israeli in the Arab society. In comparison to psychological treatment, arts therapy carries an extra value because of its non-verbal work methodology, and enables can the client to make projection and reduction of social and personal objections in

face of the therapeutic process. In recent years, implementation of this field of knowledge has gained momentum in therapeutic frameworks in general and at schools in particular, slowly becoming an integral part of the education system. However, this field is still in its early stages and it is oriented towards special education students and those with special needs (Nachum, 2007; Moriah, 2000).

KEY WORDS: abused child, education system in Israel, Arab society in Israel, emotional and art therapy, mandatory reporting, special education

Abuse and neglect and their effect on children

The subject of child abuse gained international interest and research since it constitutes a phenomenon which concerns children all over the globe. Throughout history, child maltreatment and abuse is mentioned in multiple cultures and peoples, carrying impact and repercussions on the social realm, public health as well as short and long term implications on victims and aggressors (Kedman, 2011; Gilbert, Widom, Brown, Fergusson, Webb & Janson, 2009). Despite being a multi-age phenomenon, it is only in the 60's of the previous century that public discourse and diagnostic, treatment and prevention processes related to child abuse began to develop (Lev-Wiesel & Izikovich, 2016). Evidence also indicates that female sexual abuse is associated with subsequent risky sexual behavior. Risky sexual behavior can lead to relatively early sexual initiation that occurs before acquiring the necessary emotional maturity, which may increase the risk of subsequent sexual abuse and potential revictimization (Jankowiak, Gulczyńska, 2014; Jankowiak, 2016).

The prevalence of child abuse phenomenon and its variations is high. A meta-analytic research that studied this prevalence in the USA and the world found that 22.6% of the world's children are physically harmed, 36.3% are mentally harmed, 16.3% suffer from physical neglect, 18.4% suffer from emotional neglect, 12.7% suffer from sexual assault, and additional percentages are exposed to domestic violence (Stoltenborgh, Bakermans-Kranenburg & Van

Ijzendoorn, 2013). A large-scale study (n = 12,035) conducted among children aged 12-14 in Israel found that over half of the children were exposed to one or more assault (52.9%). Research findings depict that 31.1% of the children were exposed to emotional assault, 18.7% to sexual assault, 18% to physical neglect, 17% were physically harmed, 17% were exposed to emotional neglect and 9.8% were exposed to domestic violence. This study further found that boys are at higher risk for sexual and physical assault, and emotional and physical neglect. Girls were found to be at higher risk for exposure to domestic violence. The study additionally indicated that among Arab children and youth, the percentages are higher than their Jewish counterparts (Lev-Wiesel & Izikovich, 2016).

Despite the wide scope nature of research on assault and maltreatment of children, there is evident lack in uniform definition of this phenomenon and its various aspects (Lev-Wiesel & Izikovich, 2016; Kornin, 2017). Kedman (2011) defines abuse as “intentional physical, sexual or mental harm, caused by an act, default or ongoing neglect, characterized by their severity or constant pattern over time” (Kedman, 2011: 2). Commonly, each abuse is defined specifically by its type (Kronin, 2017).

Physical abuse: The definition of physical abuse also varies in accordance with the customary law of each country. It varies from definitions such as causing injury or pain to include different types of maltreatment, including sexual abuse, neglect and more (Christian & Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2015). Another, apparently more focused definition defines physical abuse as follows: „Non accidental physical assault with or without an implement (weapon, foreign object or substance), including slapping, spanking with hand, hitting with fist, biting, kicking, shoving, shaking, throwing, non accidental dropping, stabbing, choking, permitting of physical assault, and semi-accidental injuries foreseeably resulting from physical assault” (Sedlak, 2001).

Emotional abuse: The definition of emotional abuse is also in dispute among various researchers, but most of its definitions include threats or activation of emotional manipulations, including

threat of injury, as well as reference to a recurring pattern of action taken by the child's caretakers, including recurring behaviour or incidence(s) relating to the child that he is faulty, unloved, unwanted and/or is of value only when satisfying the needs of another (Meinck, Cluver, Boyes & Ndhlovu, 2015; Taillieu, Brownridge, Sareen & Afifi, 2016).

Sexual abuse: The definition of this phenomenon is also controversial showing wide variation between definitions of the law, welfare, social sciences, public health and public policy (Mathews & Collin-Vezina, 2019). A possible definition for this phenomenon can be articulated as follows:

The involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are – by virtue of their age or stage of development – in a position of responsibility, trust, or power over the victim (Butchart, Harvey, Mian & Furniss, 2006, p. 10).

Aside the above definition, there are those who classify sexual abuse into five major types: a. sexual abuse that includes penetration; b. sexual abuse that includes sexual contact with the genitals (without penetration); c. sexual abuse that includes sexual contact (without contact with genitals or penetration); d. sexual abuse without physical contact, i.e. verbal harassment, photography, etc.; e. other types of sexual maltreatment and abuse (Euser, Alink, Tharner, van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2016).

Neglect: The definitions of neglect also vary in accordance with the context in which they are presented (public health, welfare, consulting and rehabilitation services, law etc.). Nonetheless, there are several elements that are common to the different definitions: referral to type of neglect (neglect of child's health or security, or neglect of his basic needs – food, shelter, emotional, social and educational treatment); referral to the cause of neglect as failure in caretaking and address of child's needs on behalf of the responsible adult.

Many of the definitions refer to the mal effect of neglect, and/or the parties involved or linked to it, that is whether other types of abuse are involved (Gardner, 2016).

Child abuse in the law and Islam

Assault and abuse of any type carry devastating repercussions on the victim in general and child in particular. These repercussions may lead to multiple injuries in physical, cognitive, emotional and social development that may accompany the victim on all levels, up to adulthood (Abu-Baker, 2009; Lev-Wiesel, 2007).

In 1989, the Penal Law in Israel was amended, mandating reporting of violent offences, neglect and abuse of children and the defenceless (Zadik, 2002; Kedman, 2011). According to the law, the state is mandated to protect children from any self or environmental harm (Kedman, 2011). Any injury to the physical or mental wellbeing of a child is defined by law as the liability of the responsible adult. The sections of the law refer differently to each type of abuse, violence or neglect. Accordingly, the law defines a penalty of up to nine years prison sentence for physical, mental or sexual abuse of a minor or defenceless (Penal Law, 1977, section 368). The law also refers to neglect and other injuries, stating that:

A parent or person liable for a minor at their household is obligated to provide for his livelihood, care for his health and prevent maltreatment, injury to his body or other injury to his wellbeing and health, and will be viewed as the one who has brought about the consequences upon the child's life and health, as he did not fulfil his stated mandatory obligation (Penal Law, 1977, section 323).

By virtue of this law, intervention on behalf of the police or welfare official is conducted following reporting so as to protect the child in cases of violence, neglect, or abuse (Kedman, 2011). The preferred treatment will be provided when the child is in their family or natural environs in accordance with life risk assessment.

For the purpose of protecting the physical wellbeing of children at high risk, the state developed tools, shelters and aid centres designed for short and long terms, houses for homeless adolescents as well as programs implemented within the community or outside the home such as foster families and boarding schools (Kedman, 2011). The highest degree of complexity is attributed to the circumstances of mandatory reporting. In Israel, mandatory reporting applies to any “reasonable basis to think” that “a transgression has been committed”. In addition to physical or sexual violence, these transgressions include any transgression that may place the minor’s life and health at risk, abandonment, neglect, assault, emotional or mental abuse, as well as child trade (Doron, 2012).

The public as a whole is subject to mandatory reporting to welfare or law authorities, yet for the general public it is a limited obligation according to which only recently committed transgression must be reported. The mandatory reporting to which professional personnel are subjected to is more comprehensive so that doctors, therapists of different professions, social workers, educators and teachers and other persons who come into contact with the child by virtue of their role and work are obligated to report every case that comes to their knowledge (Doron, 2012). The status of this law is similar in many other countries. For instance, in all USA states, child abuse is defined as mandatory reporting and situations carrying mandatory reporting by law are specified, including definition of physical, sexual and mental abuse, and neglect (Doron, 2012). Moreover, Israeli law imposes sanctions on failure to report, where the general public receives maximal penalty of three months imprisonment and professionals up to six months imprisonment. In the USA too, there are sanctions on non-reporting as well as false reporting. Unlike the USA, in Israel the anonymity of the reporter is not always maintained (Doron, 2012).

According to Islamic law, the Koraan specifically states the commandment of God to guard the children and treat them well (11: AL-Nisa). It is also stated (32: Al-Ma’idah) that anyone who kills, injures or distributes evil in the world out of malice it is as though he has killed all of the people, and anyone who aids and

assists a person it is as though he revives all of the people. Clearly, there is no contradiction between Islamic commandment and the law applied in Israel. The Prophet Mohammad also imposed responsibility for children upon their parents by likening them to shepherds – man is the shepherd of his family while the woman is the shepherd of her children, hence they must guard and protect them. Lastly, Mohammad stated that all of us – the general public – are liable for society as a whole (Al sahih buhari: 7137).

Despite the importance of real-time reporting so as to halt further injury and treat the victims, this law is currently not fully implemented, particularly in Israeli Arab society. On the contrary, the reporting may blame the victim of ruining the family, and the imprisonment of the criminal does not necessarily guarantee physical, social or traditional protection in this society (Baker & Dwairy, 2003).

Furthermore, upon comparing the number of reports between Arab and Jewish societies, it appears that in Arab society the percentages of injury are higher than in the Jewish sector, despite the fact that reporting percentages in Arab society are lower than in the Jewish sector for an equal child rate (Lev-Wiesel & Izikovich, 2016). This reporting discrepancy between Arab and Jewish societies seems to originate from the state's lack of investment in education resources and welfare services which in turn produces overload and shortage in welfare services (Ben-Arieh & Haj-Yahia, 2006).

Reporting leading to the removal of the injured family member from their home (in cases of violence or abuse) is viewed by the family as direct injury to its authority and honour, evoking great fear and commonly ensuing harm to the child's state, status, treatment and conditions of return to family cell. Nonetheless, the law obligates mandatory reporting (Abu-Baker, 2009), turning professional personnel into venues through which information is relayed between child, institutions and family. This state carries multiple implications for the therapist and therapy (Abu-Baker, 2009). In cases of sexual abuse, society's reaction may be harsher and come into expression in blaming the victim, harming, separating and dismantling the family cell. This causes severe secondary injury and creates 'prototype dynamics' (Abu-Baker, 2009).

For the therapist, the Law of Mandatory Reporting is a source of ethical dilemma. In order to conduct therapy, the therapist must provide safe space that maintains privacy and secrecy (therapy confidentiality) and enables openness and sharing of thoughts, emotions and difficulties. Thus, in the initial contract and as part of professional ethics, the therapist signs and is obligated to maintain client confidentiality yet is simultaneously subject to mandatory reporting (Zadik, 2002). The issue of breaking confidentiality is highly sensitive, bearing repercussions that may harm contact and relations with client's family as well as client's trust in the therapist, a state that may re enact and intensify past experiences (Abu-Baker, 2013). Maintaining confidentiality is valid post treatment and even post death of client. When the therapist encounters contents necessitating reporting, multiple conflicts rise concerning what is the best course of action - or least harmful - for the client (Shefler, Agamon & Wiel, 2003). Moreover, upon reporting the therapist is required or obligated to testify/relay information origination from the therapy session, a situation that evokes ethical-legal dilemma alongside harsh feelings and a strong urge to protect the client (Zadik, 2002).

The Prophet Mohammad stated that "anyone who sees evil must change it, first with his hand, if not with his hand then with his tongue, and if not with his tongue then with his heart. This is the basis of faith" (Al sahih muslem: 34). According to this statement, mandatory aid and assistance against any mal intent applies to all, beginning with a deed, if there is no ability to protect physically then by reporting to authority, and if there is no possibility of reporting - one must find the way in their heart to help man. This is the minimal requirement for maintaining Islamic faith.

Arab society in Israel and the view of the child

Arabs in Israel constitute a minority that remained from a larger population which fled from Palestine to neighbouring Arab nations during the 1948 War (Rinawi, 2003). They share social, cultural,

ethnic and other features with Arab nations. As of 2016 census, Arabs make up 20.8% of Israel's population. Of this minority which numbers nearly two million capita, 84.8% of Arab population is Muslim, 7.4% are Christian Arabs, and 7.8% are Druze (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2019). Most of Arab society functions as a tribal society where family and clan are at the centre. Emphasis is placed on collective identity influenced by family, community, ethnic and national identity rather than individual identity, where the individual is expected to waver for the greater good (Jerajisi, 2013). In western society, the perception of human personality developed as part of the development of individualism versus collective society - as Israeli Arab society is defined - where the individual's personality and reactions are affected by the collective. The difference between the two rests on the degree of independence the individual has from his family. Thus, when the state and the social system are supportive, as in the west, development of unique personality is made possible whereas in a collective society lacking state intervention, the family becomes sole protector and centre of dependency yet negates realization of personal independence (Dwairy, 2004).

Nonetheless, it is evident that Israeli Arab society is undergoing intensive processes of change and socio-economic transformation in light of the Arab-Jewish conflict alongside modernization and globalization processes. This transition from traditional to a more modern society induces intergenerational conflict between parents who were raised on traditional social values and young generations who begin to adopt western culture values that espouse social openness and individualism (Dwairy, 1997, 2004, 2006).

Arab society is hierarchical, where children hold a marginal status while central status is attributed to the male and elder women (Abu-Baker, 2009). This state turns children into objects and provides legitimacy to ignore their feelings and needs on behalf of utilization by the adult. The view of children is one of entities who do not feel or understand, and have no emotional say or view what so ever. Moreover, in the presence of adults the children are the ones who are supposed to obey and care for the adults, being in sharp

contrast to the approach of western education towards children (Abu-Baker, 2009, 2013). Hence, contrary to the legal definition that aspires to prevent physical or other violence towards children, it appears that in Arab society parents and teachers still use violence as a tool to solve problems for the benefit of advancing the child or their achievements. The authoritative, hierarchical education in Arab society legitimizes for countless parents and teachers the use of violence under the auspices of 'for the benefit of the child' and the intention of educating him right so that he will have a good future. Thus, parents' punishment is not accompanied by any notions of guilt as the intent of physical punishment is justified in their eyes, alongside the widely held view that physical punishment carries no emotional repercussions upon the child. Islamic religion commands children to comply with their parents and elders. Although religion encourages a connection of love, compassion and healthy bond between child and parent, there is a lack in tools and social awareness regarding the implications of these traditional education styles (Abu-Baker, 2009; Dwairy, 1998).

Special needs and disabled children in Arab society in Israel

The education system in Israel is adapted to the needs of the various sectors in the State of Israel and is divided into four main sections: 1. By age; 2. By legal status; 3. By type of inspectorate; 4. By sector type: - Jewish and non-Jewish sector. The non-Jewish sector includes Arab, Bedouin, Druze, and Circassian (Ministry of Education website, 2019).

Since the British Mandate, Arab education in Israel has been separated and managed in parallel with Jewish education, similar to the ultra-Orthodox religious education system, which is run by representatives of the Jewish community (Swirski and Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009). Their challenges of children with special needs and their families is even more challenging, due to the considerable discrimination, especially in the Arab and ultra-Orthodox sectors, and due to

the prevalent stigma in the Arab sector regarding special education students (Swirski and Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009). After the enactment of the special education law in 1988 and its amendment in 2002, children of special education began to receive systematic instruction in the regular system and receive treatment in the arts and other paramedical professions within the school framework (Abbas, 2011). This situation enabled children with special needs to integrate as part of the regular education system, and raised the need for the presence and integration of art therapists in order to support and help these children find the strength to integrate into the system (Morya, 2006).

Hence, the treatment of the arts is for children of school age in general and children with special needs in particular a natural and spontaneous tool that connects their inner world to their external world and builds a media space for creative communication and action, which is a therapeutic process that develops the inner channels of the child and connects the mental and physical abilities (Abd al-Qade. H, 2015). In addition to these advantages, the presence of the art therapist within the school system has a vital impact on the environment and on the educators with whom the child comes into daily contact, such as an educator, counselor and psychologist, as well as the rest of the paramedical staff. So that it affects and is influenced by the team and from it (Abd al-Qader.H, 2015).

Arts therapies

Throughout many centuries of human history, mankind created arts in the form of drama, painting, sculpture, music, dance and movement, where shamans and religious men used these tools of expression and creativity to heal people. Utilization of drama and the arts has become more conscious in recent years, transforming it into an organic tool for mental therapy whereby the client undergoes a process of cognitive, behavioural and emotional analysis in line with the client's psychological, social and cultural conditions,

enabling the client development of tools and skills for coping with difficulties and problems, both consciously and unconsciously (Bailey, 2007).

Arts therapy enfolds multiple unique courses of mental therapy such as drama therapy, visual and plastic art therapy, music therapy, psychodrama, movement therapy and bibliotherapy. The basis of arts therapy is human creativity which relies on imagination, creativeness, and vital forces existing in each and every one of us. In drama therapy for instance, the meaning of the word 'drama' is rooted in the Greek word for 'action', so that drama incorporates a sea of languages from all arts based on action, e.g. movement, music, visual arts, role play, improvisation, playback theatre, puppetry, masks, story narration, theatrical performances integrated with psychotherapy - all of which serve to strengthen the individual's inner powers, increase personal and interpersonal awareness, and develop coping abilities (Berger, 2015; Bailey, 2007). Gersie (1996a, 1996b) adds that the field of drama therapy refers to a number of therapy models that utilize theatrical elements, improvisations and therapeutic role play. Drama therapy creates a learning environment with distinct therapeutic objectives that encourages personal insight, where the work process itself produces unique experiences. Furthermore, dramatic play affords the client to embody numerous roles including actor, producer and various characters, alongside the opportunity to direct a biographical performance and more, while all of these venues allow the existence of an empowering therapeutic process (Johnson, 2009; Doron-Harari, 2014). The roots of drama therapy nourish from significant psychotherapy approaches such as Gestalt, play therapy and psychodrama which incorporate techniques and dramatic processes. Drama therapy is similar to psychotherapy in its use of role play, spontaneity, working with imagination and stage experience yet also involves additional dramatic and theatrical techniques (Jennings, 2000). Play and theatre invite utilization of all arts such as music, voice, sound, movement, imagination, colour, lighting, puppets, masks, photography, text and writing. The creative combination of the various

tools affords expression of emotion, particularly in drama therapy where the client is able to empathize with characters as well as experience conflicts on stage. This re enactment of conflicts serves as a corrective experience that can provide coping ability with anxieties and adversities that may subsequently rise (Lahad, 2006). Additionally, the client is allowed to express emotions that may not necessarily receive legitimization in society through playing roles and characters (Meldrum, 1994).

Similar to other arts therapies, drama therapy too relies upon various psychology theories, including Jung's theory of understanding the mind via archetypes and universal symbols (Jennings, 2000; Lahad, 2006), and development theories such as Piaget's which also form the basis for understanding the development of play and its importance for child mental development (Gersie, 1996a), and the significance of stimuli and activities offered to children to advance their development (Banister, 2006). Particularly among children, play is viewed as cardinal for self healing, correction and processing of traumatic experience; it is evident that in light of a deep traumatic experience that does not receive processing and containment the child's ability to play is harmed, emphasizing to the greatest extent the importance of play in therapy (Banister, 2006).

Emotional therapy in Arab society

The status of emotional therapy in Arab society is affected by Arab culture which is characterized by distrust and suspicion towards foreigners and foreign external cultures, casting doubt on the ability of foreigners to comprehend or contribute to their culture. Nonetheless, the impact of modernization and other various changes is discernible in the field of therapy, and in the issue of referral to external assistance. Further improvement is notable with reference to fear of social stigma, indicating higher willingness of parents to receive assistance and guidance mostly within educational frameworks. The massive influence of the hierarchical-authoritative-tribal

structure is still evident with reference to negation of the individual's freedom of choice and lack of address to his needs alongside illegitimacy of personal expression and choice, as the family remains the sole source of security and economic resources in absence of state and welfare bodies' intervention (Dwairy, 1998).

To this date, when in mental distress many people of Arab culture hold the belief that doctors, religious men or family relatives form the primary address while requesting mental assistance from mental health professionals is a last resort, commonly opting traditional venues of therapy over western therapy methods (Dwairy, 1998; Al-Krenawi, 2004; Shelata, 2010). Notwithstanding, the Arab client relates to the therapist as an educated person and mentor who is perceived as an authoritative figure. The Arab client expects to receive a concrete solution to his problem. In Arab society, there are many cultural stigmas that generated false views on mental therapy relayed through stories and movies, such as the association of mental treatment and madness. In addition, the Arab client finds it difficult to reveal his personal problems to someone outside his family and community – since whoever does so is viewed as weak and untrustworthy – particularly in cases that place family honour at risk. At the same time, it is important that the therapist will be an outsider to the village or clan so as to prevent fear of social exposure and shame, allowing the client to relay his story to a 'foreigner' (Jeraisi, 2013). Alzargawi (2001) contends that prevailing myths and stigmas prevent the individual in Arab society from going to an emotional therapist or psychologist so that he will prefer turning to religious men or shamans for treatment. This notion causes shame and avoidance of therapy that generate negative situations, particularly when mental or emotional harm to one of the family members is detected.

Emotional arts therapy carries its own uniqueness in the ability of art to serve as an intercultural bridge and venue for self expression especially for one whose culture does not allow direct emotional discourse (Huss & Cwikel, 2008). Therapy that utilizes dramatic tools contributes to the therapeutic discourse the additional

elements of intuition, imagination, excitement and power which the client gains by sheer dramatic activity (Faust, 2002). Another element that must be taken into consideration is the cultural world of the client and the codes, norms and values that originate from it (Jennings, 1995; Al-Krenawi, 2004).

Arts therapy developed within western society where art is perceived as an expressive tool for the individual (Chalifa a, 2017; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018). Contrarily, art in Arab society is not considered a tool for expressing emotions but rather a means for expressing religious ideas (Alyami, 2009). Thereby, when a child of Arab society is requested to express feelings through art for the first time in his life it is a notion that is foreign to him versus a child of Jewish society for whom emotional and personal expression via art is more familiar (Daud, 2015). Such a situation may evoke a sense of confusion for the Arab child, particularly when the issue at hand is loaded and difficult (Chalifa a, 2017). The cultural difference affects therapists as they study and are exposed to western culture (Masarwa & Bruno, 2018), and forced to make changes and adaptations to Arab society by themselves (Huss & Cwikel, 2008), where in multiple instances the Arab therapist is compelled to use religious language or examples in order to express contents of emotional processes (Alyami, 2009). Currently, there is a lack in research that enriches arts therapy for children who have suffered sexual abuse, particularly in Arab society (Chalifa b, 2017).

Arts therapy in the education system

In 1988, the Law of Special Education was legislated in Israel granting students diagnosed as suffering from difficulties within school and kindergarten frameworks to receive an array of paramedical treatments including emotional therapy through expression and art. The Ministry of Education is considered to be the largest body in Israel that employs expression and creativity therapists through Settlement or Regional Support Centres (Director General of the Ministry of Education circular, 2010). In recent years, the field

of emotional therapy in schools is gradually being integrated into the educational system and is yet in its initial stages while being specifically oriented towards the special education sector. Part of the therapy service is conducted via arts therapy (drama, arts, music, psychodrama, bibliotherapy, movement and dance), while the other is conducted by the school's education psychologist, or by psychologists employed at the service of various projects on behalf of the local authorities (Moriah, 2000; Nachum, 2007). School therapeutic work provides emotional therapy performed within school space, during study hours, as part of the student's daily schedule so that therapy is integral with student's natural environment. This work affords direct contact with important others in the child's life, teachers and parents. It further cuts down financial costs as well as affords secure space without branding parents and child (Huss, 2013).

The presence of expression and creativity therapists at schools is vital for school needs as well as students' (Chazut, 1998). The student's familiar environment appears to assist in the creation of trust necessary for therapeutic relations, as school forms the child's natural environment where he spends his daily life and undergoes processes on personal, scholastic and group levels that impact his development and self formalization. However, despite the importance of expression and creativity therapist's presence within school system, there are multiple challenges and frictions primarily originating from the meeting point of two approaches - educational and therapeutic. This generates the need to construct wide dialogue space between the therapist and the education system (Huss, 2013). As dialogue necessitates cooperation that enables flow of information and mutual enrichment, the integration of the therapist in the multi professional staff, adjustment of therapy to school setting, flow of information and maintenance of client privacy are crucial (Moriah, 2000).

In addition to the above challenges related to integration of therapist in school staff and maintenance of mutual cooperation and proliferation, the therapist faces further challenges in Arab society schools. In multiple cases, there are frictions and disagreements

between the education staff and the therapy staff as they strive for different objectives: teachers seek rapid, measureable change and improvement in learning and behaviour whereas therapists attribute significance even to small changes, viewing therapy objectives in long term context (Tytherleigh & Kakou, 2010). Communication between teachers and therapists can be deficient causing faults such as failure to provide important information. The complex mixture of educational and therapeutic staff personnel requires a search for common language that mediates between these different approaches so as to attain the joint objective which is student empowerment (Vangrover, 1998; Huss, 2013).

Furthermore, it is important to note that adjustment of therapist to client's culture and educators is highly significant to the extent of carrying decisive impact on therapeutic success. Al-krenawi (2002) highlights the significance of training therapists in the implementation of culturally sensitive therapeutic interventions when conducting therapy in a different culture or ethnic group. Therapists should aspire to be affinitive and culturally intelligent in order to remove obstacles and attain more effective therapy (Al-Krenawi, 2002). Hence, it is critical to detect and understand the reasons for this communication discrepancy between teachers and therapist, and characterize teachers' view of the therapeutic profession as a whole.

Arts therapy and abused children within school system framework

In order to perform emotional therapy in school space, there must be a permanent and secure therapeutic space that affords client-therapist privacy and confidentiality. In the case of treating children who underwent maltreatment or sexual abuse, these conditions are even more critical (Chalifa b, 2017). Due to attributed taboo and hushing of maltreatment in general and sexual abuse in particular in Arab society, of shame and fear of society, there must be absolute secrecy in the therapy room so as to maintain and con-

struct secure space and client's trust in the therapist regarding the injury – security that concerns all persons, even the ones closest to the child such as family or teachers – so that nothing said in the room leaves the room (Waller, 2006 in Chalifa a, 2017).

In Arab society, privacy of children is not customary or acceptable as privacy is commonly perceived threatening to the excluded society which is in the habit of seeing and controlling every individual. Thus, closing or locking a door can be viewed as disrespectful towards family or staff members (Daud, 2015; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018; Chalifa b, 2017). Not permitting the teacher, counselor or school manager to enter the therapy room, or detaining specific information regarding occurrences in the therapy room or information specifically relating to the child can be viewed as disloyalty on behalf of the therapist (Daud, 2015; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018). In order to prevent these unpleasant circumstances, arts therapists strive to speak about this issue as part of their presentation on therapy profession before the staff members, where such an explanation can increase awareness among school staff in Arab society (Chalifa a, 2017; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018). Despite the success of the field of arts therapy at schools and noted progress in arts therapy treatment of sexually abused children, arts therapists still face complex obstacles in general and at schools in particular that hinder and prevent provision of full assistance and aid in the case of sexually abused children originating from the conflict between therapeutic language and traditional education language (Chalifa a, 2017; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018).

“Arts therapy is considered one of the most effective tools for identifying and detecting sexual abuse” (Chalifa b, 2017). Creativity assists the child to talk and convey thoughts and emotions too difficult for verbal relay as well as surface unconscious contents. Thereby, arts therapy is a tool for detecting and diagnosing child maltreatment in general and sexual abuse in particular. In this manner, the projection potential which allows indirect and safe expression of contents, thoughts and emotion affords surfacing of physical and sexual injuries (Chalifa b, 2017). In Arab society, where emotional

expression is sensitive and unpopular, this type of therapy or expression allows secure space for emotional expression (Chalifa a, 2017).

As arts therapy affords space and expression harsh contents surface, on some occasions for the first time, so that the secret of the injury is revealed by the arts therapist who thus becomes liable for mandatory reporting (Masarwa, 2016; Chalifa, 2017). This reporting must be executed instantly and quickly or else the therapist faces imprisonment in accordance with section 368d of the Penal Law (Doron, 2012). Doron (2012) claims that although dozens of studies written in Israel on mandatory reporting were found, one of the interesting findings was the sparseness of direct empirical studies conducted on mandatory reporting. In addition, no in depth authentic research was found that studies the experiences of arts therapists coming from Arab society and working in Arab society upon reporting child abuse (Doron, 2012). Currently in Israel, there is no accurate data on the scope of sexual abuse in Arab society (Moshe, 2013). Reporting rates in Israeli Arab society are consistently lower than reporting rates in Jewish society (Rabinovitz, 2010; Weisbly, 2010; Chalifa, 2017a). However, empirical studies indicate that in reality sexual abuse in Israeli Arab society is at a higher rate than in the Jewish population (Weisbly, 2010; Lev-Wiesel, Sabu Lal, Arazi & Ben Simon, 2017). That is, there is a low reporting rate of cases of sexual abuse of children but it does not reflect true reality, and is presumably due to other difficulties that may originate from the sheer act of mandatory reporting (Chadad Bulus, 2013 in Chalifa, 2017b; Masarwa, 2016; Chalifa, 2017b). This situation concurs with the scenario described by arts therapists claiming that they are exposed to numerous cases at Arab schools of children suffering from maltreatment and sexual abuse (Masarwa, 2016; Chalifa, 2017a).

Caught in between reporting and non-reporting, the arts therapist experiences complex inner and external conflict, accompanied by the insight that in Arab society reporting carries an extra 'secondary injury' as a result of the embarrassment caused to family honour originating from secret exposure. This is a particularly sensitive issue in Arab society with reference to sexual abuse of a fe-

male juvenile or woman. In the best scenario, the reporting may cause social damage with long term repercussions yet in other cases sever physical violence to the extent of murder (Chalifa, 2017a; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018). Thus, the arts therapist may likely find herself captured in the same trap and under real threat to her life (Goldstein & Laor, 2010).

Masarwa (2016) marks that therapy commonly ceases following reporting. Hence, Goldstein & Laor (2010) suggest a solution in the form of a separation program primarily aimed at separating therapeutic intervention from legal intervention, alongside the establishment of separate locating teams alongside ongoing provision of treatment to the child. This solution offers to maintain both protection from harm and provision of therapy (Goldstein & Laor, 2010; Chalifa, 2017b).

Ongoing provision of treatment to a child following detection of sexual abuse is one of the most essential elements needed to enable support and healing (Murphy, 1998). Nonetheless, this requires high sensitivity and understanding of the child's native society and culture, and the therapist must adapt to it (Daud, 2015; Chalifa, 2017a; Masarwa & Bruno, 2018).

Dilemmas of art therapists working with abused children

According to previous research conducted on the subject in Israel, there evidently exists a colossal dilemma among therapists in general and among Arab therapists in particular, their wish to assist and save the lives of these unprotected abused children by professional and legal tools versus their great fear and desire to remain devoted to fulfil the social conventions. The fear from repercussions of reporting abuse is shared by both clients and therapists. On the one hand, there is the state law of mandatory reporting, according to it, one must report upon discovery of maltreatment or abuse. On the other hand - this is very difficult because Of therapists' profes-

sional ethics and the order of silence and unfavourable attitude to children as well as to the therapists (Masarwa, 2016).

The difficulties arts therapists face are not solely due to mandatory of reporting but also spring from the physical, environmental conditions of school space. A huge number of therapists feel a sense of mission in their profession. They have to manage an uneasy path to gain some simple conditions required for therapeutic work and instil the meaning and significance of mental and emotional therapy via arts among teachers, parents and principals. There are a lot of routine challenges for art therapists such as: translating the child's language to the others, teaching the child skills needed in their environment, guarding and protecting the child and herself. Furthermore, the lack of equipment, rooms and maladjustment of school surroundings layout to therapy layout that are so much needed for attaining privacy and secrecy are indeed challenging. The educational staff can often misunderstand this form of therapy and use of methods that can lead to a different attitude towards therapists and children. This places upon the arts therapist the responsibility of explaining, presenting and struggling for prerequisite conditions for performing therapy within school space. Hence, the arts therapist stands alone in face of the majority – educators who represent society as well as the collective (Daud, 2015; Masarwua, 2016).

It has been argued that western psychotherapy learning enables the individual the possibility of expressing and surfacing contents within a safe, secure space. However, when surfacing severe contents that include maltreatment, sexual abuse and/or neglect, psychotherapy ignites conflict between the individual (child and therapist) and society (Kna'ana, 2007, Daud, 2015; Masarwa, 2016).

Furthermore, particularly in cases of physical or sexual abuse of minors, society's reactions are harsh, where silencing and threatening, shamefulness and helplessness overwhelm all sides, including the therapist (Baker & Dwairy, 2003). The state where therapists find it difficult to report thus search for any means by which they can help the client and guard themselves generates further complexities in their relations with the school, which constitutes their source of livelihood.

The current state of affairs indicates that upon detection of injury, society prefers referral to a family member in order to sustain social integration (Abud Halabi, 2004). Referral to external bodies (welfare, law enforcement) harms the child and family's internal texture and external environmental texture (Haj Yahia & Shor, 1995).

In fact, the arts therapist is aware of the complexity of reporting and is caught up without choice in the inevitable trap between the wish to report so as to stop further injury and protect the child, and the fear that this procedure will not necessarily protect as it surfaces the problem and difficulty and harms the therapy and delicate personal and interpersonal textures in the child's life, carrying repercussions that may be even more devastating for the child, therapy, and the therapist herself (Shlomi & Daud, 2011).

The therapist is required to act carefully and sensitively in line with the severity of the maltreatment and its type. For instance, if maltreatment is sexual, in a boy or girl, this increases level of concern and fear of social reaction (Abu Baker & Marwan, 2003; Abu-Baker, 2009). The therapist's perceived sense of threat and defencelessness further persist post reporting due to possible concrete threat to her livelihood, life, and/or the lives of her family members (Masarwa, 2016).

On multiple occasions, there exists prior to the reporting fear and concern regarding exposure of a minor's maltreatment, be it emotional, physical, sexual or neglect commonly performed by a figure that is close to or responsible for the child. Levels of difficulty and uncertainty increase by the sheer knowledge that the education system, as representative of society, commonly attempts to preserve existing status or maintain its social prestige. All of these constitute factors of which the arts therapist is well aware of, and further feed perceived sense of helplessness and uncertainty, particularly when means of communication within the therapy room is nonverbal and as such forms a testimony unacceptable at court. Hence, it is crucially important to conduct comprehensive research on the views and feelings of arts therapists towards mandatory reporting to which they are subject (Masarwa, 2016).

Varying voices rise from professional literature on the issue of mandatory reporting. Some view it as an unreasonable policy and emphasize the need to anchor it in actual reality (Melton, 2005). Others mark the need for adjustment of mandatory reporting to Arab society (Abu Baker, 2009), in accordance with the spirit of Islamic religion and society committed to preserve family honor and privacy alongside the preservation of child rights.

It is possible that arts therapists occasionally refrain from reporting, as it does not solve the essence of the problem which is lack of proper treatment of the adversities of these individuals and families, lack of programs that impart tools for changing behaviour that produces the injury, and the absence of a reliable body such as social workers, who they themselves are part of society (Sulimani-Aidn & Ben, 2013).

Summary

As it was said above, the social perception, on the one hand, enables a child with special needs to enjoy the freedom of choice and to make a decision about his life to realize himself and obliges the institutions to give full respect to the child in the special education system (Abbas, 2011). On the other hand, this approach places the child in special education system in the face of complex challenges (Abbas, 2011; Wojciechowska, Gulczyńska, 2017).

Over the years, the denial of children with special needs and disabilities was concealed. The Special Education Law contributed to changing this reality, but there are still many stigmas and discrimination in the Arab sector (Abbas, 2011).

The current article highlights the importance of research and development of an educational and therapeutic model as it brings to the fore the multi coloured, voiced and form dynamics within the ambivalence of society, mandatory reporting, feelings rising from the encounter with abuse pertaining to the emotional burden upon child and therapist, facing the system and society, and the decision

to take action – which may be most correct professionally and legally but also harmful or devastating. This dilemma and its characteristic complex dynamics place the arts therapist in continuous oscillation between professionalism and humanism, verbal and artistic space, the private and confidential versus family and tradition. The question arising from the above is: how may Art function as a bridge that mediates, advances awareness of educators and the society in which they live and operate, as a tool or means of expression and therapy, and as carrier of the long awaited social change in the field of treatment of abused and maltreated children in Arab society.

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Contemporary architect's self-education on the issues concerning architecture history. Selected problems

ABSTRACT: Olga Chrzanowska, *Contemporary architect's self-education on the issues concerning architecture history. Selected problems*. Interdisciplinary Contexts of Special Pedagogy, no. 25, Poznań 2019. Pp. 403-417. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 2300-391X. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/ikps.2019.25.17>

The aim of this text is to describe the risks faced by contemporary architects when undertaking to learn, either directly or indirectly, about architecture in the era of the Internet and mass consumption of culture. The role of architect's self-education on the issues concerning architecture history and aesthetic empathy theory in the context of everyday architectural landscapes. As an example, the historical foundations for the thinking on modernity in designs of the three architects: Peter Zumthor, Christian de Portzamparc and David Chipperfield

KEY WORDS: architecture, history, education

Modern architecture can be understood as a free creative activity based on sublimation of sensations and dreams. As Arvo Pärt, a contemporary Estonian composer and musician, put it: "In art everything is possible, but everything is not necessary".¹ Architec-

¹The quote is sourced from the interview carried out by Icelandic singer Björk with Arvo Pärt in a TV documentary series *Modern Minimalists* produced by BBC in 1997, <https://youtube.com/watch?v=9hTLf8Nz160> [accessed on 27.02.2016].

ture is an extension of man – the past and the future of his life. A building, an architectural design, is the transfer of our qualities and wishes beyond our own body into the body of architecture, into the context of orderly, desirable space.

Recognizing creative freedom as an enormous professional opportunity is a difficult task. In most cases, as Polish painter Jerzy Nowosielski approaches it: “The mere fact of emergence of a sense of freedom in mentally, artistically, intellectually and emotionally weaker individuals simply provokes panic. (...) (...) They (...) want to be in this circle of freedom but have not enough power to do so. That is why they perform a whole series of ostensible actions, which are simply the margin of the mystification accompanying practically all the great phenomena in the field of culture and human development”.² Paraphrasing the Nowosielski’s words: “The essence of a painting (...) is sublimation of our sensations and dreams”³, one may say that every creative activity: whether architectural, literary, scientific or musical is also sublimation of our sensations and dreams. So to get the most out of creative work, both of these components must be brought to resonance. To have the courage to dream, and to have the opportunity to fully experience. These two conditions are very difficult to fulfil today. We need to consciously and fully explore ourselves and the culture we live in to turn everything we know and feel into everything we want to express.

The difficulties in learning about architecture today appear when we try to get acquainted with architecture indirectly. “Some perverse people like a poem more than the art of writing poems, because they have nurtured more their ears than their minds,”⁴ as

²Quote from the interview given by Jerzy Nowosielski to Jerzy Bereś in the Krzysztofory Palace in 1984, as cited in: Krystyna Czerni, *Jerzy Nowosielski Sztuka po końcu świata Rozmowy*, 2012, p. 116.

³Quote from the interview given by Jerzy Nowosielski to the editorial board of the journal *Projekt*, 1973, as cited in: Krystyna Czerni, *Jerzy Nowosielski Sztuka po końcu świata Rozmowy*, 2012, p. 86.

⁴Quote from Aurelius Augustinus, *De vera religione*, ca. AD 386, as cited in: Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *Historia Estetyki II*, 1960, p. 79.

St. Augustine, a philosopher of late Antiquity and early Middle Ages, claimed. Without language proficiency, we will not create a poem. Without knowledge of architectural language, we will not create architecture. To know each object, there are two essential possibilities of access: direct or indirect. Each of these forms has its advantages and disadvantages.

When experiencing reality directly we may only rely, at the moment, on ourselves, on our educational background, knowledge and sensitivity. Walking near the excellent Parisian cathedral, I try to comprehend its overwhelming complexity. While standing in a colonnade near the Italian square, at the moment of rest, I am sketching a view I see. I pass by a nineteenth century palace on my way to work. Every time I undertake a personal experience of architecture, I have access to full information, complete information, encoded in its physical form. Depending on my attitude, I can read from every work the values regarding the form and function, shapes, proportions and their purpose in different architectural solutions. I first read the information encoded in the buildings, then re-encode it for myself, in the form of notes and sketches. This is usually labour-intensive, requiring a large concentration and the skill of valuing. This teaches basic analytic and synthetic skills.

Based on a work of art we create (in part or in whole) our successive works of art. By painting the Rouen cathedral at different times of the day like Monet did⁵, I give to myself and the others the knowledge both of the cathedral and my experience of it. I draw a projection and dependencies in this nineteenth-century palace I visit in order to use this knowledge later for designing a house, so as to ensure its future inhabitants a sense of comfort and luxury without having to invest in "golden door knobs". A direct contact, even one that assumes the experience of architecture, or any other work of culture, may not be sufficient. The fullness of cognition can

⁵This refers to the series of Claude Monet's paintings of the 1890s depicting the façade of the Rouen cathedral at various moments of the day and in different weather conditions.

only be possible in the circumstances of doing further work, not only reading, but also interpreting, describing, recording the conclusions, self-study. The mere reading of someone else's poems will not make us better writers. The way in which we experience interpret and remember the reality is the first step in our creative workshop.

For indirect experience and current almost unrestricted access to information there are also certain risks. "Without being copied, the original would be forgotten. But paradoxically, the copy is a different painting; it carries another meaning from original. This is why the copy could define a story different from art history"⁶ – wrote the contemporary philosopher Walter Benjamin. The 21st century we now live in may seem perfect in cognitive terms. The Internet, a growing number of companies publishing books, magazines, albums and the wide and unrestricted access to them, were designed to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, accelerate education, maximise the collection of knowledge sources. This seemingly enormous potential, in the context of the need for deep and full knowledge, necessary in the process of creating our works, includes two essential pitfalls defined long ago by two modern thinkers.

The first pitfall is the consumption and absorption of shallow information, described below in the context of Zygmunt Bauman's reflections on culture in liquid modernity.⁷ The huge problem of contemporary generations, partly submerged in digital reality from the very beginning, is that their cognition of culture is not based on real contact with it and full experience of it. This would not be such a significant threat if it were not for the fact that culture and all information about it are nowadays particularly strongly affected by the laws of the market, which has two significant consequences observed by Zygmunt Bauman.

First, there is a typical market game since culture is defined by the market as a product and the recipient as a consumer. The prod-

⁶ Quote from Walter Benjamin's, *Recent Writings*, 2013, p. 112.

⁷ Based on Zygmunt Bauman's, *Kultura w płynnej nowoczesności*, 2011 (*Culture in a Liquid Modern World*).

uct (culture) struggles to “attract unbearably volatile and dispersed attention from potential customers”.⁸ Thus, the processed information provided to us becomes flattened or exaggerated and sometimes shortens its spectrum of meanings to be faster “consumed”. Even viewing a hundred pictures of a cathedral may turn out to be poorer than its physical experience, and even a three-dimensional model on a computer screen does not convey the sense of scale and emotion accompanying personal, physical exploration of the building.

Bauman claims: “The culture of liquid modernity has no ‘people’ to enlighten and ennoble; however, it has customers to seduce.⁹ The lack of the mission of “enlightening and ennobling the people” is replaced by a plan to provide, as soon as possible and as much possible information, often superficial. In this way, what was supposed to free us and drive our development turns out to be a pitfall. Functioning in such a market-relativised reality can be a threat to contemporary architects.

The second pitfall is the growing role of copying and the disappearance of responsibility in today's bureaucratic world, described below on the basis of Walter Benjamin's thoughts. In the context of the quote cited at the beginning of the chapter, there is no physical possibility to base one's entire knowledge solely on the personal experience of the greatest works of culture. All the more so because every transformation is a separate work, be it an image of a painting, a picture of architecture, or a review of a spectacle. Since we have to rely in part on accounts told by others, we have to ask ourselves the question of whom and why we will choose as our guide.

When receiving someone else's message, we depend on his or her ability to analyse and synthesize, we read “someone else's notes”. The only information available to us concerns things that this person considered worth noting, preserving or explaining. Encoded in the manner in which this person could encode it. The field

⁸ Quote from Zygmunt Bauman's, *Kultura w płynnej nowoczesności*, 2011.

⁹ Quote from Zygmunt Bauman's, *Kultura w płynnej nowoczesności* 2011, p. 30.

for our interpretation remains only within the scope of the material provided to us. Therefore, in the absence of responsibility of the author, or his reviewers, for the process of information processing, the most important idea of the matter may be distorted or completely forgotten. Every building will eventually dilapidate, every image will become brittle, the whole material essence of reality will eventually be destroyed, and only its ideas will be passed on in a more or less skilful way.

Creative modernity can also be a constant rediscovery, it can be convinced of the power of old architecture and the power of distance in time. Jan Białostocki, a humanist and art historian, wrote: *Although the modern house is certainly more technically perfect and comfortable than old buildings, although it may also be beautiful, it is difficult to say whether it is more beautiful than pieces of old architecture. For in the field of aesthetic value there is no such progress as in technology or science*¹⁰. If the fullness of personal cognition is so essential for creation, the question remains: where to head to? Contemporary architecture may turn out to be very deceptive in this case, as it will be easy for us to fall into the trap of copying, without a deeper understanding. Without specialist knowledge and intuition, we may not recognize the functions of certain formal effects in historical buildings and even fail to try processing them. In the case of contemporary architecture, which uses materials and technologies an aesthetics we are familiar with, we sometimes succumb to the illusion that its language and expression are equally understandable to us. We ask ourselves why architect Frank Gehry uses such liquid, bent forms in his designs, why they are bent in this way, what role does this play? Should we also bend the planes in our buildings to make them modern? Another very popular example in contemporary architecture is glass, with its captivating transparency, which in large areas is not a constructional challenge today. Will it give our projects the desired expression of courage and intransigence? The true essence of freedom in modern buildings can be overlooked

¹⁰ Quote from Jan Białostocki, *Sztuka cenniejsza niż złoto*, 2006, p. 17.

when we are attracted by their superficial charm. It is extremely dangerous to use expressions that seemingly mean modernity without being aware of their sense. An additional difficulty is the fact that there are not too many real pieces of modernity, that they are not yet so widely known and understood, and that their truly modern essence often remains a mystery to us.

The nature of old architecture established in our eyes, may not delight a less sensitive observer. However, it can be a good source in the context of the search for universal architectural values. Distance in time may make it easier to evaluate and draw conclusions. Furthermore, historical architecture rarely looks "brand-new": in most cases it has changed its function or owner several times, has been extended or some of its elements have been replaced. This natural patina (often completely eliminated during renovations) shows us that architecture is transforming, giving us a lesson about transformations in time, which will happen to our works as well. On a well-made sculpture, even dirt and moisture are arranged in a manner that makes it better-looking.

On a daily basis, we speak our contemporary language with contemporary people and their works, we understand each other. In order to be able to interview an artist who died long ago (sometimes even centuries ago) and his work, a greater effort has to be made both on our and his part. As the English writer L.P. Hartley rightly pointed out: "The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there."¹¹ Thus, at the level of message, the pieces of work of the past era must be more versatile in order to deliver some content to the next generations. We often carry out conversations with great artists and their works, which may take even a lifetime.

The aesthetic empathy theory also works well for everyday landscapes. We should explore and experience architecture not only on rare occasions. We are fascinated by the most time-honoured, most popular pieces of painting, sculpture, architecture, and often

¹¹Quote from the novel by P. Hartley, *Postaniec*, 1992 (*The Go-Between*), as cited by Zygmunt Bauman, *Między chwilą a pięknem o sztuce w rozpadzonym świecie*, 2010, p. 79.

we do not realize that the same ideas can be met in our immediate surroundings. Historian and critic of literature Piotr Śliwiński, in the article "Poetry is a dead serious matter" writes: "This is because we quickly stop reading poems when we believe that they are supposed to be a repetition of what we already know. We stay with them when we assume that they are rather against what has emerged on surface, and for what is either hidden inside or obliterated".¹² The same is the case with this local, everyday architecture, buildings in our neighbourhood. With the right focus, we will be able to notice in them the same ideas seen in the greatest, most perfect works, maybe in a slightly less voiced way. But they have a huge advantage, they are with us all the time. We learn them, we experience them in different circumstances, when we are satisfied, tired, in any weather conditions. Thus, the fullness of sensations and emotions opens before us. We discover our surroundings anew and infinitely when we realize how the way we perceive them changes depending on our age and the passage of time. Such impressions can remain impossible with occasional, single or several-time contact even with the greatest work of culture. The landscape that accompanies us throughout our lives is for us a fullness we can feel with all our senses. When I assume that I will not learn anything new from a 19th-century palace passing it almost every day (because it is not the Louvre), I can lose a lot. The strength of fullness of cognition in a broader spatial context, the strength of the absorption of the reality surrounding us, can be of great importance for making both small decisions and those that shape us as architects.

The local heritage must not be rejected in favour of the global one, because this global heritage was once local. It is possible that in the so-called „mainstream“ we do not find what represents our values and things most important to us. Hence, paying attention only to what is just currently being rewarded and widely promoted,

¹² From the Piotra Śliwiński's article *Poezja to sprawa gardłowa* for „Gazeta Wyborcza“ (in the „Duży Format“ weekly magazine) of 04.02.16.

may not lead us to the depths of our experiences and needs, so important in the creative process. Indeed, „at the bottom of every creativity, there must be a bit of stupidity”¹³, naivety, mismatch. A conservative attitude is often not a prevailing domain within culture. The journey into the depths of one's own thoughts and desires, the essence of oneself and one's surroundings, looked out for and dreamed of, is what develops us.

The historical foundations of modernity can also be found in the workshop of contemporary architects. The achievements of many contemporary architects prove the thesis that with a deep understanding of local, historical architecture thoroughly modern works can be created. These undoubtedly include: Peter Zumthor, Christian de Portzamparc and David Chipperfield. By their practice, they confirm that knowledge of universal architectural values and deep listening to the place and their own desires translates into architectural concepts. The descriptions of pieces of architecture presented below, one for each of these architects, are dated from 1979 to 2009 and show different dimensions of the foundations of modernity.

David Chipperfield and his modernity accompanying historical buildings, draws on the same sources as historical buildings, but with even more courage. The Neues Museum (to be more specific, the reconstruction of the Neues Museum in Berlin, Germany 1997-2009) in its current form is a combination of two designs seeking the foundation in past eras. The original nineteenth-century part of the building referring to the architecture of ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt was partially destroyed. The contemporary reconstruction from the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries combines modern elements with the remains of the previous building, giving the impression of a coherent whole. This provides the basis for the further relation: the same principle as in the nineteenth century, namely the concept of referring to classical styles, is applied to the added parts of the building.

¹³ As cited in Teresa Tyszkiewiczowa, *Notatki 1940-1983*, p. 116.

When looking at the Neues Museum from afar, one feels peace and unity in its silhouette. The consistency in the construction of the synthetic architectural expression of the new and old parts is manifested at the most literal level in identical building materials: brick and plaster. Next, the common language of architecture talks about architectural orders through cornices, window frames, niches with reliefs. Finally, the overall picture composed of colours and shapes and their relationships suggest that the “sewn” and “patched” architectural work can still be harmonious. Modernity has no reason to come to the fore here, it has a common goal with the historical fabric. Therefore, the viewer first notices the whole thing, only then begins to look for subtle signs and differences between the two designs.

Slowly approaching the building, one can feel the suggestions of modernity. The contemporary part – the corner – begins to stand out through its special arrangement. The following are the most prominent: the post-modernist asceticism of the exterior shell, post-deconstructionist breaks in the lines of corner edges, location of niches with reliefs, which now reveal a subtle asymmetry in arrangement. Even without architectural education, it can be concluded that it cannot be the nineteenth century, that it has a modern form.

Having entered the main hall of the building, the visitors are shown a majestic staircase with a subtle detail. The semi-circular shape of the railing, the fins and their mutual relationship and the composition with the mass of the entire balustrade show the inspiration by historical styles. However, unlike the 19th-century thinking about architectural history, modern reconstruction does not literally copy the details and shapes of antiquity. The Neues Museum design is understood as lessons learned from classic styles and then the use of these ideas in a contemporary style.

Peter Zumthor and his modernity in unison with the landscape is seen in his work, the St. Benedict Chapel in Sumvig, Switzerland 1985-1988. The Peter Zumthor’s architectural and literary works contain many threads regarding memory, personal feelings and

resulting ideas. In his book „Thinking Architecture” the architect writes:

When I concentrate on a specific site or place for which I am going to design a building, when I try to plumb its depths, its form, its history, and its sensuous qualities, images of other places start to invade this process of precise observation: images of places I know and that once impressed me, images of ordinary or special places places that I carry with me as inner visions of specific moods and qualities; images of architectural situations, which emanate from the world of art, or films, theatre or literature.¹⁴

This description provided by the author gives the insight in his workshop of creative process. It shows us the inseparability of the perception of architecture with inquiring into the works of culture influencing the creation of new, further meanings in the mind of the creator.

The St. Benedict Chapel is in its fundamental dimension a site of worship and meditation: hiding, isolating the human from reality, a symbol of faith, and at the same time a fragment of the mountain landscape. Its rounded silhouette, uncluttered by anything but the modest entrance, grows into the countryside. So, like subsequent hills in the valley, also the curvature of the chapel leads the viewer's eyes further into the subsequent layers of the picturesque view. The regular layout of the building grows out of the slope resembling a bastion, to turn into windows allowing the daylight into the interior from above, and a delicate roof with a small cross.

The building does not sanctify *per se* the religious symbols and the most exquisite styles associated with the religious tradition. The reflection can be found here in the undisturbed peace of prayer and the deliberate writing of the human creation, which is the temple, into a formula respecting the surrounding landscape. It turns out, therefore, that its is not specific forms that carry a specific connotation. Eventually, the whole architecture comes down to the mutual

¹⁴Quote from Peter Zumthor, *Myślenie architektury*, 2010, p. 41.

relationship between the same elements: the entrances, walls, windows, roof, and that their narration decides on the harmony with the site and role of the building in the environment. The common denominator for the Renaissance basilica in the centre of Rome and the lonely chapel above several houses in a Swiss mountain valley is the purposefulness of expression and legibility resulting from the prudent selection of forms and giving them specific meanings.

In Christian de Portzamparc's work, modernity appears in classical canons in residential buildings at rue des Hautes Formes, Paris, France 1979. In contemporary Paris, the buildings located at the street of "high forms"¹⁵ attract attention. Its spirit, however modern, seems to refer to the same principles as the nineteenth-century Opéra Garnier, so well-known and admired Parisian monument. These buildings are mutually linked by traditional canons of *scale*¹⁶, *number*¹⁷ and *hierarchy*¹⁸, although each time they are presented in a different spirit of a given era.

The *canon of numbers* determines the main division of the form into its constituent parts. Odd numbers are always more readable than even numbers, and it is simpler to read less divisions. The height and scale of the Christian de Portzamparc's eleven-storey residential building are initially difficult to estimate. However, if we look at the niches connecting the windows of each of subsequent two storeys, it turns out that reducing the elements from ten to five makes it intuitively easier to assess the height of the building. Similarly, in the Opéra Garnier, the complex cross-section with many rooms of various sizes and interior locations is reflected in the façade with a clear five-part layout. A well applied canon of numbers makes it easier to understand the structure.

¹⁵ Les hautes formes means high forms in French.

¹⁶ Based on: Steven W. Semes, *The future of the past*, chapter two *The Principles of Traditional Architecture*, 2009, pp. 45-49.

¹⁷ Based on: Trystan Edwards, *Architectural style 1926*, as cited in: Steven W. Semes, *The future of the past*, chapter two *The Principles of Traditional Architecture*, 2009, pp. 58-59.

¹⁸ As above.

The *canon of hierarchy* defines the character of the base, the main core and the top of the building. With appropriate accentuation of each of these parts, their role in the whole can be readable for us. Even the Le Corbusier's chapel in Ronchamp, which even uses such abstract forms, is classic in this respect. In the Parisian Hautes Formes, the ground floors of the building are broken down by wide pedestrian and vehicle passages, the central core is counted with the canon of numbers, while the end of the building is suggested by clear, empty windows with a view of the sky - a kind of crowns for these skyscrapers.

The *canon of scale* defines the need to design elements with the use of the appropriate form and function for distant, closer and detailed views.. Observing this residential complex from a distant perspective, the slender towers connected to each other above half of their height remind us of ponderous gates. Upon entering the inner courtyard, the buildings are lower and, like a broken vessel, let in light beams. The details of the windows, loggias and balconies in the form of modernist and post-modernist compositions decide on detailed elaboration of the perspectives closest to the viewer.

By fulfilling all these conditions of classical composition, the architecture of the rue des Hautes Formes fits into the context and structure of Paris. Despite its high altitude, high intensity of land development and completely modern forms, its expression is in many respects consistent with the central part of the city, which is so popular among visitors.

The process of creation is carried out in parallel in each phase: of observation, thought, workshop and finally in the work itself. By depriving ourselves of the full participation in any of them, besides that it translates to a worse end result, we get rid also of the opportunity to know ourselves more deeply. We are going out of work with what we came from. And the mission of being an architect, a critic of architecture or a designer seems to be greater than our fears - whether we can find deep inside in ourselves the right emotions and values and whether we can develop them. More often than we expect, the hints are closer than we think and they are

about to be discovered. I will conclude with the statement of Ebenezer Howard, the author of the concept of garden cities, who said that one never has to be too realist in humanitarian plans. All in all, there is too much difficulty and always only a weak percentage of aspirations can materialize. Therefore, these aspirations should reach as far as possible to have sufficient area to lose, because we cannot say about considerable profits. The percentage of losses depends only on the enthusiasm, energy and perseverance of idealists taking up the work.¹⁹

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¹⁹Quote from *Gazeta Architekt* sierpień 1912, as cited by Waclaw Ostrowski, *Urbanistyka współczesna*, 1975, p. 32.

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REVIEW



**Book review: *The Methods of Logopaedic Therapy*
(*Metody terapii logopedycznej*)**
Editors: Aneta Domagała and Urszula Mirecka
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin 2018

The reviewed publication, titled *The Methods of Logopaedic Therapy* (*Metody terapii logopedycznej*), edited by Aneta Domagała and Urszula Mirecka, counting more than a thousand pages, is a highly valuable work regarding primarily the logopaedic practice, significantly filling the gap related to logopaedic therapy. It is a great guide for both the speech therapists, as well as, other specialists – psychologists, pedagogues, linguists or physiotherapists. It is a practical continuation of the two previous works, i.e. *Logopaedics. The theory of speech disorders* (*Logopedia. Teoria zaburzeń mowy*) (eds. Stanisław Grabias, Marek Kurkowski), as well as, *Logopaedics. The standards of logopaedic proceeding* (*Logopedia. Standardy postępowania logopedycznego*) (eds. Stanisław Grabias, Jolanta Panasiuk, Tomasz Woźniak), and it is a complement to these works. The monograph consists of speech therapy articles, in which complete examples of the methods of logopaedic proceedings in particular speech disorder cases, are presented. The chapters of the monograph were written by leading theoreticians, and simultaneously, practitioners from logopaedics, psychology, pedagogy, linguistics, and medicine. Their common aim had become to present particular methods used in speech therapy for patients with various speech disorders.

The presented monograph has been divided into two main sections. The first section, titled *Logopaedic therapy. The methods* (*Terapia logopedyczna. Opis metod*), comprising of thirty chapters, contains the three main areas of subject issues, i.e. the *Linguistic, communicational, and cognitive competence* –

development and restoration (Kompetencja językowa, komunikacyjna i poznawcza – kształtowanie i odbudowa), Executive efficiencies – development and restoration (Sprawności realizacyjne – kształtowanie i odbudowa), as well as, *The supportive Methods in Speech Therapy (Metody wspomagające w terapii logopedycznej).* In the first section, the reader shall find an overview of the methods that help develop and restore the aforementioned competencies, including: the cued speech sound visualisation method, the verbotonal method, the methods that expand the lexical and grammatical competencies of persons with hearing impairment, the Kraków method, the methods that expand the linguistic competencies of mute persons with the use of the alternative communication strategy, the behavioural methods in autism therapy, the methods of working with epileptic patients, the glottodidactic methods helpful in developing grammatical competency, the methods of therapy for bilingual children, the non-directive methods of therapy for adults with profound intellectual disabilities, the methods of therapy in cases of anomaly, the methods of therapy in cases of global aphasia, as well as, indirect therapy in the Alzheimer's disease. The second section, focused on the executive efficiencies, contains descriptions of strategies, including: the mechanical and phonetic methods for articulation disorders, the SMURF method, the methods that employ acoustic imagery in therapy, the logopaedic therapy method in cases of persons with cleft lip and/or cleft palate, the physiological myofunctional therapy, the VicaStim system in the therapy of swallowing disorders, the methods of psychological and motor therapy, and the therapy that considers the pathomechanism of disorders, the methods of logopaedic intervention in cases of speech fluency disorders of little children, the method of the natural rhythm of speech in the therapy of stuttering persons, the systemic stuttering therapy, as well as, the methods and therapeutic programmes for the improvement of the realisation of prosody. The last section contains the methods, that may be used by specialists, as support for the traditional logopaedic methods. Among them, one may mention: logorhythmics, sensory integration, Procus and Block psychomotor therapy, and relaxation.

The monograph is complemented by a section that presents particular case studies, demonstrating the practical application of the presented logopaedic therapy methods in various speech disorders. The inquiries are finalised with a chapter titled *Speech therapist in an interdisciplinary therapeutic team (Logopeda w interdyscyplinarnym zespole terapeutycznym)*, in which the authors discuss the models of cooperation with various specialists in educational and healthcare establishments.

This rich overview of methods employed in logopaedics, demonstrates the incredible cognitive and scientific value of the reviewed publication, as well as, indicates the increased development of Polish logopaedics and the search of therapeutic methods, most often directed at particular, individual speech pathologies. The remarkable substantive level, and the modern interdisciplinary contents presented within the context of the development of the current worldwide and nationwide logopaedic thought, should be considered as the particular scientific, didactic and methodological values of the reviewed monograph..

The reviewed publication is the first monograph on the publishing market, where the methods of therapeutic proceeding in the majority of cases of the disorders faced in the logopaedic practice are systematised. The invaluable input of the Authors presenting a high level of scholarly proficiency, contributed to the perfect complementation of the matters regarding the methods of logopaedic proceeding, which were already partially described in the literature.

Considering the detailed selection of issues regarding the entirety of the presented matters related to the subject matter of contemporary logopaedics, as well as, the means of presenting them, one may definitely say that it is one of the most important works dedicated to logopaedic practice, present on the Polish educational market. It is a modern and an interdisciplinary monograph, based on the up-to-date knowledge regarding logopaedics, which may be found interesting not only by speech therapists, but also linguists, psychologists, pedagogues, doctors, or physiotherapists.

I would like to express my profound belief, that the discussed monograph is a treasure trove of logopaedic knowledge, from which, both the generations of young, as well as, experienced specialists dedicated to the issues of speech disorders, will be able to learn.

Published on the basis of an authorised copy

Cover design: Izabella Grzesiak

Technical editor: Dorota Borowiak

Computer DTP: Eugeniusz Strykowski

ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY PRESS, POZNAŃ

POLAND, 61-701 POZNAŃ, A. FREDRY 10

www.press.amu.edu.pl

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Marketing and sales: phone no. 48 61 829 46 40, e-mail: press@amu.edu.pl

Publication sheets 20.50, printed sheets 26.50

PRINTING AND BINDING: VOLUMINA.PL DANIEL KRZANOWSKI, POLAND, SZCZECIN,
ADDRESS KS. WITOLDA 7-9