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**Role of teacher, culture and the
family in sexual education context**

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dozwolonego użytku.

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AKADEMIA POMORSKA W SŁUPSKU

ROLE OF TEACHER, CULTURE AND THE FAMILY IN SEXUAL EDUCATION CONTEXT

INTRODUCTION

The child is the subject of culture, including sexual culture¹. It internalizes the resources offered to him using the processes of memory. Through remembering it begins to constitute itself. This message becomes more suggestive when, in the process of inculturation, the person highly significant for the child changes. Thus, the attitude towards the world, objects and events is not accidental. It is a reproduction of the earlier conditions of socialization². The child, willingly or unwillingly, “lives in a world defined by his parents and teachers”³. This suggests, according to M. Bakhtin, that “there is in man an internal sovereign territory, where he and everyone is always located on the border; looking into each other’s eyes they see another or the eyes of another”⁴. As a consequence, we have to deal with a polylateral impact, which means that the child does not recognize the world alone or in isolation, but in direct relationship with others, and beyond his direct role⁵.

¹ S. Maxwell, *Jak rozmawiać z dziećmi o seksie. Mądre wychowywanie dzieci w świecie internetu i nowoczesnych technologii*, Vesper, Poznań 2010.

² P. Bourdieu, J.C. Passeron, *Reprodukcja. Elementy teorii systemu nauczania*, PWN, Warszawa 2006; M. Falkiewicz-Szult, *Przemoc symboliczna w przedszkolu*, Impuls, Kraków 2006, p. 39.

³ P.L. Berger & T. Luckman, *Spółeczne tworzenie rzeczywistości*, PWN, Warszawa 2010; M. Falkiewicz-Szult, *Przemoc symboliczna...*, op.cit., p. 35.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 104.

⁵ M. Falkiewicz-Szult, *Przemoc symboliczna...*, op.cit., p. 40.

THE PROCESS OF THE FORMING OF IDENTITY

In the course of our whole life from childhood through the phases of adolescence to late adulthood not only do we acquire knowledge and various skills, but also learn multiple strategies of coping with new – more or less typical – situations. What is formed in each phase of our life – is above all – identity. According to the dictionary of the Polish language, identity means “being the same”. F. Znaniecki perceives identity as „the reality which exists in the consciousness of people who participate in it and form it – who get to know themselves and their potential in the environment in which they are brought up”⁶. J. Miluska refers to two concepts in the description of an identity-forming model. The first concept: „personalization – refers to the process of identifying someone as an individual separate from others, the second – categorization – relates to the process of recognizing someone as a member of a given group”⁷. A. Jacobson-Widding⁸ emphasises that „the word ‘identity’ has two crucially different meanings. One of them relates to the continuation aspect or being the same (sameness). The other one concerns the concept of being different – of standing apart (distinctiveness)”. J. Habermas⁹ suggests there are three types of identity to be differentiated: “natural identity, the role identity, identity of Ego – and connects them with three types of social order – respectively, the community society, the modern society and the post-modern one”. J. Marcia¹⁰ defines identity as “‘the I structure’. It is an internal, man-developed, dynamic organization of impulses, abilities to convince and individual experiences”.

E.H. Erikson „interprets the phases of development not exclusively through the perception of impulses but also as a sociocultural process of learning. [...]

⁶ F. Znaniecki, *Nauki o kulturze*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa 1971, p. 228.

⁷ J. Miluska, *Tożsamość kobiet i mężczyzn w cyklu życia*, Wydaw. Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań 1996, p. 11.

⁸ Z. Bokszański, *Tożsamości zbiorowe*, PWN, Warszawa 2005, p. 53.

⁹ M. Marody, A. Giza-Poleszczuk, *Przemiany więzi społecznych*, Scholar, Warszawa 2004, p. 108.

¹⁰ A.I. Brzezińska, *Dzieciństwo i dorastanie: korzenie tożsamości osobistej i społecznej*, [w:] A.W. Brzezińska, A. Hulewska, J. Słomska (red.), *Edukacja regionalna*, PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 53.

Psychosocial development, according to E.H. Erikson, is a process which takes place in evolution conditioned by biological and social factors. Full cohesion, integrity of man as well as development of relatively permanent personality traits is achieved in the conditions of mutual interaction of vital force, biological maturation, impulses as well as that of environmental and cultural influences". He claims that "everything subjected to development has grounds, and from those very foundations respective parts emerge; each of them has its period of particular domination until the moment of emergence of all the remaining components – at which point a functional wholeness is created"¹¹. Erikson's concept encompasses the whole span of man's life, which is eight developmental phases altogether. Since the developmental process inherently includes constant crises, where in each case an individual has to make choices between two important forms of relations which he or she manifests (or wishes to manifest) in relation to themselves and the world. Each phase "reaches a culmination point in which a crisis starts, and at the end of a given stadium a solution appears". Each stadium is a contribution to the formation of the whole personality – including one of the fundamental categories of ego quality – its strong side – the virtue¹².

According to J. Nikitorowicz „identity is a conjunction point of the present and the past with the anticipated future"¹³. A.S. Reber describes personal identity as "a collection of self-descriptions with the help of which an individual perceives himself, differentiating between 'Me' and 'Other People' according to the categories of 'Me' and 'not-Me'. Social identity is a collection of self-descriptions providing the means to an individual to describe himself, differentiating between 'Us' and 'Other People (Them)'"¹⁴.

An individual, through the process of getting to know and understanding him – or herself and his or her immediate cultural influences learns to see the complex, multifaceted nature of the world, other points of view and looks for the ways of mutual understanding, consensus and cooperation.

According to J. Nikitorowicz „the limiting, unification or negation of one's cultural heritage most frequently leads to the stagnation and loss of identity,

¹¹ E.H., Erikson, *Identity: Youth and crisis*, New York 1968, p. 92.

¹² E.H. Erikson, *Identität und Lebenszyklus*, Frankfurt 1966, p. 92.

¹³ J. Nikitorowicz, *Pogranicze. Tożsamość. Edukacja międzykulturowa*, Trans Humana, Białystok 1995, p. 68.

¹⁴ A.S. Reber, *Słownik psychologii*, Warszawa 2000, p. 767.

which may result in the growth of the feeling of one's incompetence as well as the conviction of inferiority of one's own family environment"¹⁵.

SOCIALIZATION AND SEXUAL SOCIALIZATION

The competence environment in which the child grows also plays an important role in the process of socialization and upbringing. It is assumed that an environment with a high potential (intellectual, physical, cognitive) enables a child to build flawless, almost perfect relations, thus allowing him to create a positive relationship with the world. In an environment with little potential it is the contrary. M. Falkiewicz-Szult notes that a child is, "involuntarily addicted to influence and elements of culture, through which he develops and acquires social maturity. This starts the mechanism of "assimilation", learning the language and encoding and decoding of meaning"¹⁶.

Transmitting cultural symbols is a phenomenon that strengthens deeply embedded beliefs, including beliefs connected with human sexuality. It consists in "transmitting from generation to generation social ideologies, resulting from experience accumulated by any social community"¹⁷. This also applies to beliefs and myths, including stereotypes about sexuality and the sexuality of the child. "The imposition and inculcation of views, attitudes, values, ways of thinking and behavior, ideologies are a form of backup that restores social order, with which the individual is familiarized in the process of socialization"¹⁸. In this case, it is primarily a broadcasting pattern of sexuality, as strong attributes determining the so-called internalized messages. The "bearing the mark"¹⁹ stage of development, one element of which is sexual curiosity. "An individual's defensive response to a situation can be directly attributed to personal flaw, and both the flaw and OWA reaction is seen as punishment for something the person, his/her parents or the group to which he/she belongs, have done once in their life"²⁰. In addition, the "individual expects due respect

¹⁵ J. Nikitorowicz, *Edukacja regionalna na pograniczach*, [w:] A.W. Brzezińska, A. Hulewska, J. Słomska (red.), *Edukacja regionalna*, PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 105–106.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 39.

¹⁷ M. Falkiewicz-Szult, *Przemoc symboliczna...*, op.cit., s. 39.

¹⁸ P. Bourdieu, J.C. Passerson, *Reprodukcja...*, op.cit.

¹⁹ E. Goffman, *Piętno. Rozważania o zranionej tożsamości*, GWP, Gdańsk 2005, p. 36–37.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 36.

and recognition which, according to his/her principles are due to the uncontested aspects of his/her social identity. Meanwhile the environment refuses to fulfill these expectations. Each family has its own norms or patterns which determine its course of action. Its inner resources set the framework in which it operates and creates an environment for the child.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural heritage is a highly important factor in the context of social group functioning as well as in interpersonal relations. "Heritage constitutes this part of culture which the past passes on to us"²¹.

Cultural heritage encompasses everything which has been inherited from former generations. Cultural heritages constitute, on the one hand, products considered as the most valuable – they become a unifying factor of the communities enabling group identification. On the other hand, cultural heritage also consists of conventions and social patterns not perceived by everybody as exemplary. Undesirable behavioral patterns from the social point of view are also inherited. As S. Ossowski points out, within the framework of cultural heritage that not only objects and values are passed on, but also dispositions in relation to the attitudes towards them and their accompanying experiences²².

One of the interactions transpiring between an individual and his territory is according to S. Ossowski a direct and personal relationship – „attachment to the environment, in which the whole or a significant part of life was spent, or – finally – the phase particularly susceptible to creation of permanent emotional ties, especially the time of childhood"²³.

This particular area to which a personal relation is formed is referred to by S. Ossowski as 'a private motherland'. However, the very fact of having spent a significant part of life there, even – especially – childhood, is not sufficiently conducive to the formation of such a relationship based on emotional experiences which is attachment to the environment that has – as S. Ossowski goes to explain – a character of 'warm personal emotional relationship'.

²¹ J.J. Smolicz, *Kultura i nauczanie w społeczeństwie wieloetnicznym*, Warszawa 1990, p. 53.

²² S. Ossowski, *Więź społeczna i dziedzictwo krwi*, Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza Książka, Warszawa 1948, p. 70–99.

²³ S. Ossowski, *Analiza socjologiczna pojęcia ojczyzny*, [w:] *O ojczyźnie i narodzie*, Warszawa 1984, p. 26.

The people who are devoid of such an emotional relationship, of this feeling of attachment – are referred to by M.S. Szczepański as “people without the private motherland”²⁴. A person without places in his memory to come to for comfort – even just in thought – is in a way devoid of the relations with other people...he or she is essentially alone²⁵.

Z. Melosik defines this type of personality as ‘a global teenager’ of ‘a transparent identity’. This is a person of whom one could say – ‘doesn’t have Home, just hundreds of homes’ The processes of globalization, the speed of information transfer and the possibilities of travel, result in a situation that young people encounter identical places everywhere, and begin to feel at home everywhere. A person devoid of his or her place – home, private motherland – is unable to notice the difference “not because he can accept the cultural differences or is full of multicultural empathy, but because he or she in fact fails to see those differences”²⁶.

H. Radlińska draws attention to the fact that through the process of forming and refining its culture, each nation contributes to and helps with the development of humanity. “Immortality and greatness of man lies in the fact that he can take advantage of all the achievements of human spirit, he inherits the results of all the actions undertaken in the years of the past by former generations – and is a creator of new goods for his nation and humanity”²⁷.

Man is formed in two contexts. On the one hand it is the context of time – each of us has our own history which begins at the moment of birth upon which we enter a long-standing family tradition connected with a specific local community.

On the other hand, all those structures have their own history, their tradition – things that happened in the past naturally influence the state of what is now, what transpires at the moment and, to a certain extent, they define the character and pace of future changes.

²⁴ M.S. Szczepański, *Ludzie bez ojczyzny prywatnej i edukacja regionalna*, [w:] T. Lewowicki, E. Trzebińska (red.), *Dwa wizerunki własnej osoby. Studia nad sposobami rozumienia siebie*, Warszawa 1996. p. 157.

²⁵ H. Kwiatkowska, *Czas, miejsce, przestrzeń – zaniedbane kategorie pedagogiczne*, [w:] A. Nalaskowski, K. Rubacha (red.), *Pedagogika u progu trzeciego tysiąclecia*, Toruń 2001, p. 64.

²⁶ Z. Melosik, *Kultura „instant” – paradoksy pop-tożsamości*, [w:] A. Nalaskowski, K. Rubacha (red.), *Pedagogika u progu...*, op.cit., p. 43.

²⁷ H. Radlińska, *Pedagogika społeczna*, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1961, p. 7.

The future influences the present in two ways. On the one hand, as A.I. Brzezińska suggests, owing to the fact that changing generations transfer things that are most important to them, gives us the feeling of permanence, lasting, continuation. Such a transfer of tradition encompasses knowledge and skills valued in respective groups, as well as visions of future action, ideals, values, rules and regulations of behaviour in various everyday situations, habits and customs, ways of organizing celebrations, rituals concerning various events in the life of family or community. On the other hand, however, the past may become a burden, something which is likely to limit the courage and potential of the search for something new and different, something which is likely to make it more difficult to look for ways of acting in an alternative fashion to those known so far and forged by tradition. The temporal context of our development, according to A.I. Brzezińska, is a characteristic for each individual history of life, a combination of signs from the past that we recall directly and pass on from generation to generation; it is a combination of possibilities and opportunities that the present offers and the challenges of the future.

The second context of our development is the sociocultural one. It is a multilayered, unusually complex structure of social relationships of various types: from the direct interactions in 'dyads, triads and polyases' in family, through the peer, colleague and neighbour groups, work environments, institutions and organizations to collectivities, local communities, societies, nations and civilizations²⁸.

E.H. Erikson uses the term 'space-time continuum' and believes that in order to fully comprehend what is currently happening to us and how we are functioning, we have to learn about the following: the history of life of our family, the history of our family's migrations, the history of all meaningful changes – for example, religious ones (conversions and apostasies) – and their connection to the family's position on the social ladder (change of social class – or lack of it), history of potential attempts (successful or not) to assimilate with a given community (specific class of it).

According to the above-mentioned researcher, however, the most important objective is to discover the last meaningful step in the family's history which gives a strong feeling of cultural identity to its respective members and the family as a whole²⁹.

²⁸ A.I. Brzezińska, *Dzieciństwo i dorastanie: korzenie tożsamości osobistej i społecznej*, [w:] W. Brzezińska, A. Hulewska, J. Słomska (red.), *Edukacja...*, op.cit., p. 47–49.

²⁹ E.H. Erikson, *Dzieciństwo i społeczeństwo*, Poznań 1997, p. 255.

THE CHILD'S SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT. THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Teachers feel insecure in the face of children exploring sexual behavior, and the cause of this may be a lack of confidence in their own knowledge³⁰. It sometimes leads teachers to use restrictive measures against children, such as scolding or shaming. The sexual sphere has always given rise to emotions which are often extreme, and despite the passage of time in the development of education, little has changed. In this situation, in order for the child's sexuality to thrive and not become the subject of repression, teachers and school teachers must be provided with adequate knowledge to explore appropriate behavior toward the child, and with skills, which will guarantee the right way of correcting students' behavior³¹. The best time to enable the achievement of such results is the first step of the education of future teachers. In college candidates can acquire these particular skills, gain reliable and professional knowledge and obtain information on how and when to report violence, not only sexual, to certain authorities³². It is a way to create skilled staff that can solve educational, psychological and social problems (Karamustafaoğlu, n.d.). The teacher must be aware that in the current world millions of children of-fal victim to sexual violence³³ and one of those children may be his student.

³⁰ J.D.G. Goldman, *Primary school student-teachers' knowledge and understandings of child sexual abuse and its mandatory reporting*, "International Journal of Educational Research" 2007, 46 (6), pp. 368–381; F. McCallum M. Baginsky, *A comparison of pre-service training to identify and reports suspected Child abuse and neglect in Australia and the UK*, Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Seattle, April 2001, pp.10–14.

³¹ J.D. Goldman, P. Grimbeek, *How university student-teachers for primary school-learn about department of education policy on child sexual abuse, and mandatowy reporting. The sources of their Professional information*, "High Educ" 2009, 58, pp. 221–239; M. Baginsky, P. MacPherson, *Training teachers to safeguard children: developing a consistent approach*, "Child Abuse Review" 2005, 14, pp. 317–330; C. Wakefield, *Preventing and reporting child abuse and neglect: guidance for school personnel*, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting, Colorado 2002.

³² J.D.G. Goldman, G. Torrisi-Steel, *Education about child sexual abuse on interactive multimedia CD-Rom for undergraduate teachers*, "Health Education Journal" 2004, 63(2), pp. 127–144; J.D.G. Goldman, *Primary school student-teachers' knowledge...*, op.cit., pp. 368–381.

³³ K. A. Obisesan, A.A. Adayemo, R.A. Onifade, *Childhood Sexuality and Child sexual abuse in southwest Nigeria*, "Iobstet Gynaecol" 1999, 19 (6), pp. 624–626.

They should use their ability to identify and detect any signs of sexual abuse against children, using observed evidence and fact³⁴. A child who is a victim of violence (not only sexual abuse) suffers and exhibits serious health issues, behavior problems and educational difficulties³⁵, and the ability to quickly detect the source of the problems allows “rescuing” the child. However, this requires from the teachers appropriate behavior towards child victims of violence, especially sensitivity and tact³⁶.

According to S. Wanzeck-Sielert the teacher, as part of his pedagogical and educational tasks, is also supposed to help and support the child in his/her ability to recognize and express feelings, to help the child always treat other people with respect and dignity, to support the child’s capacity to receive impressions using all the senses, and maintain the child’s positive body image.

CONCLUSION

There is a need for change in the teacher training program³⁷. Teacher training, as mentioned above, contributes to the growth of knowledge, professional development, and thus to the creation of positive attitudes towards sexual behavior in preschool³⁸. At the same time, it increases awareness and improves the quality of education programs, which has a high impact on child development³⁹.

³⁴ G.B. Melton, *Mandated reporting: A policy without reason*, “The International Journal of Child Abuse and Neglect” 2005, 29, pp. 9–18; S.N. Brilleslijper-Kater, W.N. Friedrich, D.L. Corwin, *Sexual knowledge and emotional reaction as indicators of sexual abuse Young children: theory and research chalanges*, “Child Abuse and Neglect” 2004, 28(10), pp. 1007–1017; B. Mathews, *Teacher Education to Meet the Challenges Posed by Child Sexual Abuse*, “Australian Journal of Teacher Education” 2011, 36(11), pp.13–32.

³⁵ K. Walsh, R. Bridgstock, A. Farrel, A. Rassafianim, R. Schweitzer, *Case, teacher and school characteristics influencing teachers’ detection and reporting of child physical abuse and neglect: results from Australian survey*, “Child Abuse and Neglect” 2008, 32(10), pp. 983–993.

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ Ibidem.

³⁸ F. McCallum, M. Baginsky, *A comparison of pre-servic...*, op.cit.

³⁹ W.B. Crenshaw, L.M. Crenshaw, J.W. Lichtenberg, *When educators confront Child abuse: ananalysis of the decision to report*, “Child Abuse and Neglect” 1995, 19(9), pp. 1095–1113.

The professional development of teachers in the context of children's sexual development is an investment that benefits the children (both unaffected and victims of violence) and also helps teachers to develop their social skills, teaching them sensitivity and tact⁴⁰.

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⁴⁰ B. Mathews, *Teacher Education to Meet the Challenges Posed by Child Sexual Abuse*, "Australian Journal of Teacher Education" 2011, 36(11), pp.13–32.

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SUMMARY

This article will focus on the transmission patterns of behavior in the family, culture and among teachers. This requires immense tact and parenting skills. We are particularly interested in the suitability of these messages and the way in which they determine the subsequent ways of functioning in a completely new family. Each of the family environment has representatives in the form of significant “others” who influence the personality of the individual and impose a specific set of standards and systems. Moreover, in each period of evolution of human identity – including sexual identity – we can talk about different forms of interactions per unit. The passing on of cultural heritage takes place through the acceptance of values present in the direct, natural and cultural environment of man. The family as a natural educational and cultural milieu cultivates and revitalizes in new conditions the familial and regional traditions which formed the first cultural community, as well as maintains and develops the indigenous cultural values. The life of each man is immersed in the history of the family, the local community, the society, the nation and the country. Family constitutes a group which collects and preserves experiences of numerous generations and enables the active participation in the present as well as the forming of the future.

Key words: teachers, childsexuality, family, identity, culture-forming.

ROLA NAUCZYCIELA, KULTURY I RODZINY W KONTEKŚCIE EDUKACJI SEKSUALNEJ**STRESZCZENIE**

Celem artykułu jest pokazanie zależności między systemem rodzinnym, kulturą i systemem edukacyjnym a edukacją seksualną. Sfera seksualna zawsze wzbudzała emocje, często skrajne i mimo upływu czasu w świadomości edukacyjnej niewiele się zmieniło. W tej sytuacji, by seksualność dziecka mogła prawidłowo się rozwijać i nie stanowić przedmiotu represji ze strony nauczycieli, rodziców i szkoły, to wszystkie reprezentujące je podmioty muszą zostać wyposażone w odpowiednią wiedzę, by móc eksplorować właściwe zachowania wobec dziecka oraz posiadać umiejętności, które gwarantowały właściwy sposób reakcji na zachowania dziecka. Dziecko przecież nie rozpoznaje świata samodzielnie lub w izolacji, ale w bezpośredniej relacji z innymi.

Słowa kluczowe: nauczyciele, seksualność dzieci, rodzina, tożsamość, kultura.