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Address

Psychologia Wychowawcza
Akademia Pedagogiki Specjalnej im. Marii Grzegorzewskiej
ul. Szczęśliwicka 40
02-353 Warszawa

psychologiawychowawcza@aps.edu.pl
www.aps.edu.pl/wydawnictwo/czasopisma/e-psychologiawychowawcza.pl

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ELŻBIETA DRYLL

University of Warsaw, Faculty of Psychology

“UPBRINGING” IN THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM PARADIGM

Abstract: The article proposes a theoretical model of the phenomenon of “upbringing” embedded in the social constructionism paradigm. On a conceptual level, it refers to the living world shared by adults and children; it comprises both the content of the culture in which this world is situated, and the reality of the microsystem (families, dyads) created through participation and dialogue. In such formative dialogues, the inexperienced partner, i.e. the child, is introduced to the system of meanings used by the adult. This relationship is not symmetrical; it is a complementary one characterised by the constant, emotional relationship between the child and the person acting as agent, usually a parent.

This complementarity is expressed through a diversity of roles characterised by a distribution of responsibilities, which sets various duties and rights for the two partners. Control is enacted by a mechanism based around the self-fulfilling expectations that the adult has towards the child. The most important advantage of the proposed approach, analysing upbringing from a social constructionist viewpoint, is that it examines the relationship between the two participants from a supra-individual perspective.

Keywords: social constructionism, upbringing dialogue, participation, complementary relationship, control.

GENERAL OUTLINE

The most important principle of constructionism is the claim that both the culture and identity of an individual are constructed through a process of social interaction. “An individual becomes a person only when surrounded by other persons” (Schier, Zalewska, 2002). The shaping of current and future behaviour by the influence of direct interpersonal contacts is a key element in constructionism. Hence, as upbringing seems to be a central theme in this paradigm, there is hope that fuller description and understanding may be facilitated through the creation of new, inspiring and necessary content.

Social constructionism should not be confused with *constructivism* (Zwierzdzyński, 2012). *Constructivism* refers to human cognitive competences. It indicates that perception is an active process, and that information is processed using patterns formed as abstractions of previous experiences. Although *constructionism* also emphasizes the active building of cognitive units, it does not simply refer to the elementary psychological functions of a person, but more broadly, to the formation of a symbolic system of

a supra-individual nature. This system serves as a context for the life and development of societies; it is also a source of meaning, and generates not only cognitive effects, but also emotions and various other elements of culture such as values, aesthetic attitudes and customs. The developing individual learns the existing system of meanings and uses it to construct his own psyche, and over time, uses it to co-create culture on a larger or smaller scale.

The symbolic system is language, although in its broader, semantic sense. Natural language, together with all the other subsystems that carry information, constitutes a world of meanings in which “we live, move and are”. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1973) refer to it as a symbolic universe, Janet W. Astington (1990) a community of minds, and Paul Ricoeur (1985) a narrative of culture. Formerly, this layer of existence was called the “world of the spirit”, and was supposed to rule the world of matter. Language transports a human being to a reality distant from the immediate stimulus and the present: it organizes perception, enables recollection and planning, and indicates the criteria for assessing phenomena. It serves as a system that regulates social activities, and sets the location for other people and tasks.

However, there would be no language without interpersonal communication, thanks to which a person enters the world of meanings, led by the “more initiated”: the meaning of upbringing. Even at three months old, a child is capable of participation, with a so-called field of common meanings being created between his guardian and himself (Bruner, 1990). The simplest behaviours acquire communicative significance through their interpretation by adults; such interpretation takes place in accordance with their way of understanding the infant’s behaviour, which in turn, is based on their culture. A six-month-old child responds to pointing gestures forming a common field of attention, and a nine-month child understands intentions (Tomasello, 2002). In the second year of life, verbal communication begins to take shape. It is an adult who teaches language, this being his own language, along with the attitudes, values and patterns of reasoning that language carries. At the age of three, the child can efficiently use speech in everyday social situations, and for self-instruction. At four, the child discovers a world of fantasy and abstraction. At school age (around eight years of age) the child begins to understand metaphors, then irony. A 12-year-old composes narratives, and a 16-year-old can list events from his own life chronologically. At around 20 years of age, the adult can now build an identity narrative: an image of himself, immersed in culture, i.e. the reality derived from the system of meanings constituting his world, which becomes more complex and improves over the following years (Habermans, Ehlert-Lerche, Silveira, 2009). In the meantime, while at school, the individual learns huge areas of social knowledge accumulated over generations and chooses an area to specialize in. Such learning is also made possible by the use of language during interpersonal interaction; if not for this, few people would “voluntarily” acquire knowledge of all school subjects: it would be more likely to occur in the classroom, under the auspices of a teacher.

THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD

According to the constructivism paradigm, personal development takes place through a process of growing into culture (see: Dryll, 2013). This process is supported by upbringing, and its essence is the dialogue conducted between a child and an adult, who feels called upon to take part. Such dialogue does not only consist of verbal commu-

nication, i.e. spoken language, and as such its influence shapes more than just knowledge, understood as a resource of information. As argued by Lev Vygotsky (1971), each skill appears twice during development: first in the social plane, as dialogue, and then in the individual plane. Passing through the phase of internalized dialogue and egocentric speech (self-instructing), the dialogue undergoes automation and becomes part of a broader operational structure. All properties of dialogue with adults are internalized: both information and instructions, as well as emotions, values and criteria for assessments, together with prototypical relationship patterns. Thus, the way of existence in the world is formed, i.e. the attitude towards oneself and other people, as well as various phenomena and abstractions; this attitude is realised through the behaviour, feelings and thoughts of the individual. After being brought up within a specific dialogue, a person manifests its characteristic features through significant relationships, primarily with adult family members.

The use of the concept of “dialogue” to describe upbringing reality is crucial, in that it emphasises that a relationship is formed through the activities of both participants: its two agents, or subjects. To date, theories describing the upbringing process, although declaratively always referred to as *subjectivity*, were focused either on the actions of the adult, as the object of socialization in this model, or on the child, as an entity surrounded by such “developmental factors” as the presence and characteristics of the guardian. The former approach is based around behavioural and cognitive theories, whose premise was the engraving of experiences on the “unwritten card” of the psyche of the developing individual. The latter is its antithesis, being based around humanistic psychology, with all its arsenal of assumptions about human nature, demanding self-realization in favourable conditions.

The two paradigms share some characteristics. The direction of development is determined by the values held by one of the individuals, either the adult who “shaped” the child, or in the child itself, who in a sense was internally programmed: the grain metaphor. In contrast to these two approaches, the two-agent model implies that values that determine the correct development are external to the individual. The values are located in a culture towards which, and through which, development takes place. Adults act as its agents, but not its creators, and the family world acts as a “filter” for this content. The dialogue used for upbringing serves as a medium for the transmission of cultural patterns.

In the modern world, the dialogue taking place in the family environment is undoubtedly the most important form of intergenerational transmission. There is no indication that the biological bond of parents and their offspring alone guarantees love and attachment (Badinter, 1998), but the awareness of such a bond (“my blood”) fosters a sense of uniqueness and responsibility, which gives rise to the specific obligations and rights of both parties; thus is the parent-child relationship socially defined. The unilaterally-assigned responsibility for the child’s present and future situation imparts upon the parent the right to control the child’s actions, expressed as parental authority with which the child has to comply.

In addition, adults are obliged to take care of and raise the child, and tolerate the ignorance, mistakes and pranks for which the child has the right to engage in during childhood. Of course, parental authority can be exercised in a variety of ways; however, current approaches stigmatize any expectation of unreflective obedience and excessive invasiveness, and it is recommended to base parental dominance on authentic authority, reflected in by the lively care of the adult and the trust of the child.

Even so, although some of its elements are symmetrical, such formative dialogue is most certainly not a symmetrical relationship. Despite this, because it happens in the shared world of adults and children, it is nevertheless highly complementary.

PARTICIPATION

The creators of the common world are adults, most often the parents, and it is their behaviour that sets the framework for the contribution of others and determines the role and place of the child. Following from the concept of the *zone of proximal development* by Lev Vygotski (1971), Jaan Valsiner (1985) proposed two concepts, by which participation may be described. One of them is the *zone of free movement* (ZFM) and the other is the *zone of promoted action* (ZPA). Both are constructed by adults and relate to children. Within the ZFM, the task of the parents is to determine what is not allowed, while in the ZPA, they are to provide learning and support. Both zones are being constantly modified and moved “upwards”: as the child grows, he is allowed more freedom. Despite this, he is never allowed complete freedom – certain limits will always remain. Although the growth in competence also causes changes in the promoted content, the main directions of support may remain constant, i.e. in line with the values and parental preferences regarding the personal patterns prevailing in the culture. In both cases, it can be seen that an important role is played by the values entwined in organizational principles of the shared world, reflected in the everyday dialogue between adult and child.

Within the framework of the zone of free (and restricted) movement, the activities of the adult are reactive in nature. The adult takes action when the behaviour of the child oversteps the agreed boundary, when the child does something forbidden. Typical difficulties that may arise in such case are associated with unawareness of the child’s activities or the inability to effectively cause change. Both of these skills are sometimes considered in the context of control.

The ZPA comprises all these areas which the parent would like to develop. In this sense, the activities are of a proactive character. Although these activities are directed toward goals, these are not necessarily explicit or even verbalised, not always well thought out, and rarely ordered into a coherent system. Most likely, few parents think about what they would like to achieve and plan their actions accordingly; their aims tend to be driven by images of other children, family relationships and other parents, these being derived from observations of others, media productions, memories of their own childhood and other often accidental cultural influences. These are rather of a preferential-aesthetic nature than a rationally-created, abstract register of desired features.

Proactive parenting activities are more likely to be based on direct learning or modelling. In this case, the parents personally engage in demonstration, instruction and evaluation as well as correction of various activities. The difficulties associated with proactive activities may derive from disfunctions in the template used by interactive learning, for example, the adult is not always able to confirm that the children would also like to learn what they are presenting. An additional problem is that parents do not hear or understand where difficulties may occur, they may not be able to explain clearly what has happened, and most importantly, may experience anger and impatience. The dialogue may take on a taunting or combative character, which may

persist and be generalized to other events, such as functioning in school. Such intentional learning is also associated with the age-old problem of assessment: praising and scolding through rewards, punishments and feedback.

Modelling, (“look what I’m doing”), which often finds its way into the upbringing repertoire of the parent as an intentional teaching activity, may also have an unintentional involuntary aspect when the child naturally mimics the parent when performing various activities. Difficulties arise when the parent issues an instruction that contradicts their own conduct, and then criticises the same behaviour in the child.

Within the ZPA, the parents may also choose to organise the environment without participating themselves. This may affect various objects, such as educational toys, computer programmes, uniforms and everyday domestic objects, as well as their choice of institutions, such as by choosing nursery schools with special programmes and evening classes, and people, for example by the selection of “appropriate” friends and care-takers. When such conduct is predominant in the family, the parent-child dialog is strongly mediated by the context. It may be the case that the only time spent “face-to-face” with the parent is when the child is transported back and forth from further extracurricular activities. In addition, ambitious parents may expect the child to achieve above-average skills in response to their organizational and financial effort; if not fulfilled, this can bring disappointment and possible resentment on their part.

COMPLEMENTARITY

The shared lifestyle, such as that found in the family, and cooperation engaged in between adults and children, are based on principles which shape the cultural patterns observed by adults. The parents are the “directors” of events, for which the scripts are written by culture. Most daily events follow a typical format, and unusual events, such as holidays, are often characterized by permanent features. Children and adults play through such scenarios in certain ways and learn their roles.

According to the theory of symbolic interactionism (Goffman, 1981; Mead, 1975; Turner, 2012), the realizations of typical interactions are recorded in the form of schemes: i.e. games, scripts and “choreography” (Praszkier, 1992). These schemes, the most valuable concept that symbolic interactionism brought to constructionism, are action records; they serve as acts of action, a succession of subsequent elements within an interactive event, independent of its actors. This principle can be defined as the primacy of the event scheme (script) over the actor scheme. This thesis is of great importance for the theory of the upbringing process contained within the spirit of constructionism. It can be extended to account for the formation of a certain consistency regarding the behaviour demonstrated by a person playing a role in a permanent social system – in this case, an asymmetrical (complementary) family dialogue. By participating in numerous productions “directed” by adults, the child adopts prototypical patterns of social behaviour. Parental “direction” of these interactive events is based on a phenomenon called the self-fulfilling prophecy effect (the Pigmalion effect).

The Pigmalion effect (Chen, Bargh, 1998; Good, 1980; Rosenthal, Jacobson, 1968; Skarzyńska, 1975, 1977; Trusz, 2010) is also known as the *feedforward effect* in cybernetic modelling (Skrzypek, 1987). It is based on the principle that a speaker sends messages to an interlocutor according to their own expectations as to their contribution, thus unwittingly creating a framework in which the other person must

“sign in”, i.e. adjust their behaviour to allow meaningful communication. These expectations are based on an image of how an interactive event will take place and what the other person’s behaviour will be. Regardless of the content of such an image, it can convey hope or fear: depending on the purpose or function of the event, one can expect a favourable or unfavourable course. Expectations are not subject to conscious control (see: Chen, Bargh, 1989) and cannot be changed by persuasion (Skarżyńska, 1977).

The self-fulfilling prophecy effect is particularly pronounced when one of the partners is assigned responsibility for the course and effect of cooperation. Both the parent-child and the teacher-student relationship (see: Good, 1980) can be counted as such. The adult dominates, not only because of the authority he has, and his belief that he has it, but also because he has a huge competitive advantage (“he knows better”). Parental expectations tend to be expressed with regard to the child, either their permanent features (my child IS ...) or permanent behaviour characteristics (my child ALWAYS ...). Whether these expectations are positive (hopes) or negative (fears) is reflected by their formulation, i.e. their representation of the characteristics of the partner (child), and can thus be diagnosed (see: Dryll, 1995). The use of terms marked by a positive evaluation indicates optimistic expectations (“Jaś is independent, consistent, chatty”), while the negative is pessimistic (“Jaś is wayward, stubborn, mouthy”).

With positive expectations, an adult promotes behaviours considered good, i.e. those that are hoped for (see: Rosenthal, Jacobson, 1868). On the contrary, with negative expectations, the parent promotes those which are feared. The phenomenon of the emergence of new difficulties, or the exacerbation of existing ones, associated with negative expectations is described by Daphne Bugental (1992) as a series of consecutive, alternating behavioural acts between two partners. The first act is motivated on the part of an adult by a sense of duty, as well as the conviction that he or she cannot influence a child who behaves badly. Such messages are characterized by ambivalence, to which the child reacts by not demonstrating the desired change. The adult feels a defensive arousal, which engages resources and reduces the chance of finding an appropriate mode of communication. Feeling an increasingly marked sense of duty and inability, the adult employs defensive strategies based on coercion or integration. Both are counterproductive: coercion causes opposition, and despite pretending friendship, it is accompanied by uncontrolled, but visible, “leakage” of negative emotions. In both cases, the child withdraws from contact. The adult’s discomfort deepens, and intensifies the expectation of failure associated with controlling the interaction; it also serves as a label emphasising such negative characteristics.

Previous Polish studies have also identified a relationship between the adult-child interaction template and their expectations. The first, in which the experimenter’s assistant acted as a student, found that the type of information provided about a student can significantly modify the interaction pattern in a learning situation, despite the student not modifying their own behaviour between situations (Skarżyńska, 1975). The findings indicate that “pupils” recognized as capable were treated better than incapable ones, despite the latter needing more favourable treatment. Although the participants in the study were Pedagogy students, the results demonstrated that they responded based on expectations, on an automatic level, rather than according to their training.

A similar study by Dryll (1994) examined difficulties in upbringing rather than ability. Parents were presented with different descriptions of children: these were the

same in a descriptive sense, but differed in terms of evaluation and thus generated certain expectations about them. Four types of description were provided: “polite boy”, “difficult boy”, “polite girl” and “difficult girl”. After hearing a description, the parents had to choose from a set of interaction scenarios with the described child in conflict situations. As expected, the results confirm that the responses depended on the content of the characteristics: “good” children are talked to differently than “bad” children.

Dryll (1995) also examined the attitudes of mothers who differ in real expectations for their children. The mothers performed a gap-filling exercise regarding conflict scenarios with their children. Differences were observed in their responses, which indicated the existence of an expectation effect: in the compared groups, conflict scenarios were characterized by features based on negative expectations that clearly exacerbated these differences, or positive expectations that levelled them.

The final key study in this series examined narratives from mothers in response to the stimulus “please tell me about ... (child’s name)”. All mothers in the study had either experienced or not experienced upbringing difficulties with their children. The two groups received the same number of problem behaviour descriptions which did not differ in content. However, while the mothers who had experienced difficulties focused on searching for root causes, while those had not experienced them formulated a series of “golden maxims”: remedial strategies that could be successfully applied when difficulties arise. Content analysis of the maxims found them to be contradictory: no content was important. Knowledge of any strategy at all appears to eliminate the feeling of helplessness and thus bring a sense of agency – the belief that a parent can communicate with and influence her child.

CONTROL

Psychologists typically distance themselves from the concept of an adult controlling a child. This distance stems from the spirit of individualism and humanistic psychology. Both approaches assume that there is a positive potential in man, which only needs to be fostered in conditions of security and love, and any external influence of a modifying nature can destroy or disrupt this process. The most popular tools in current use examining the concept of upbringing attitudes, regard control as a defect in relationships: the opposite of autonomy, freedom or even love.

Within this concept, however, it is necessary to distinguish between cognitive and behavioural control (Kofta, 1989), or the control of outcome and agenda (Kruglansky, Cohen, 1973). Cognitive control is dependent on knowing and understanding what the child is doing, and must constantly be exercised, as required by parental responsibility. This is also how agenda control should be exercised, i.e. rules and regulations regulating the daily functioning of the whole family, including the child. Behavioural control, i.e. actions aimed at achieving change, may relate to a specific result, e.g. “you performed this task wrongly, correct it”, or to some characteristic or repetitive behaviour. It is easier to successfully realise an act of behavioural control if the standard towards which the change is heading is known and accepted by the child. This obviously requires effort on the part of the adult. At this point, it should be noted that control performed merely to serve one’s own ends or convenience, or the sense of satisfaction associated with controlling someone, is unacceptable. In the two-agent model, howev-

er, where values are placed outside the individual, selfish motivations and other standards can be more clearly identified and separated.

Undoubtedly, the ultimate goal of upbringing is to achieve self regulation in the child, but in a form that is in line with basic values and upbringing: raising a highly self-regulating thief is not a desirable outcome. Hence, the child must assimilate the standards of the guardian and be guided by them in the process of self-regulation. They should be able to behave in the manner taught by the adult without external monitoring. How can this be achieved?

Self-regulation and self-control are two of many skills. Of course, some children have less effective executive functions, but the same can be said for many predispositions which act as the foundations for a range of complex skills. Contrary to popular belief, when teaching self-control, it is not enough to simply withdraw adult activity. Analyses on cooperation patterns in studies on self-regulation and ways to help children (Dryll, 2002; 2001), indicate that the most self-sufficient children are those who tend to receive help to an extent appropriate to their needs, not those who do not receive help (“do it yourself”), or who are given too much of it. Contrary to popular observations, self-sufficient children ask for help, while those who are not do not ask, and are reluctant to accept help when offered. Upon deeper reflection, this is completely understandable. To ask for help, a child needs to identify the element of the activity that requires assistance. Therefore, the child must take responsibility for a specific part of a task and ensure its personal implementation.

In terms of cooperation, all mothers, i.e. those whose children are self sufficient and those whose are not, perform a variety of operations. For example, rather than correcting errors, the former tend to indicate sources of standards, encourage the structuring of activity (performing preparatory, finishing and control operations), and direct the child’s activity using subtle signals and questions, and demonstrate a lot of patience; Such an approach fosters self-regulation, or “freedom to”, which is the opposite of simple independence, i.e. “freedom from”.

A direct example of the relationship between upbringing success and the model of dialogue in which an adult dominates and exercises control over the relationship can be seen in correlation studies (Szymańska, 2007), in which the severity of upbringing problems and difficulties (both subjectively felt and observed in kindergarten) was found to be inversely proportional to parental directiveness. This applied not only to mothers, but also to fathers, and the effect was more pronounced when direction based around negative pressure was distinguished from that based on friendly emotions. Here, the effect was even more pronounced. Control is not the same as applying pressure. Lack of control is often perceived as abandonment or lack of interest by an adolescent, and its presence associated with care, concern, positive expectations and acceptance (Lubiewska, 2019). It is possible that modern parents refrain from controlling their children in a friendly way, as based on the prevailing message of popular psychology, they decided that it was inappropriate.

CONCLUSION

Raising children, especially in the home environment, is an extremely important issue for societies. Although it would seem that this phenomenon is so basic and natural that it is not influenced by culture, it is in fact strongly dependent on predominant ideologi-

cal trends and colloquial knowledge (Koops, Kessen, 2017). To a large extent, psychology plays a role in this. Unfortunately, such beliefs become a source of “holy truths”, repeated in the media, guidebooks and, worse, in clinics. These truths, which are in fact changeable, depending on their semantic context and immediate context, are treated as discoveries of natural sciences. Absolute truthfulness is ascribed to them, regardless of situation and addressee, as if they were derived by medical studies. Psychology, however, is not a natural science, but belongs to the humanities. Such disciplines do not formulate exceptional laws, and their findings do not explain the world, but help to understand it (Straś-Romanowska, 2008). It is impossible to describe any case of a child being raised using one or even several discovered, timeless psychological laws. Our understanding of a particular process, however, is based on an awareness of a register of possible factors that may be of significance, depending on the interpretative constructs available in scientific discourse. These contexts are created in the course of interpersonal communication; just as in the dialogue between adults and children, an understanding of the world is created in subsequent generations. Hence, in research on upbringing, it is important to maintain a distance from “holy truths”; this may be achieved by considering cultural context as a factor exerting a decisive impact on the quality of the upbringing process, thus placing Psychology among the humanities.

The most important and, theoretically, most promising aspect of the phenomenon of upbringing in social constructionism is the supra-individual nature of its description. This is reflected in the simultaneous interest in the two main actors: the adult and the child. The defining feature of this relationship is the diversity regarding the status of the two partners and their rights and obligations. At the centre of the model lies the dialogue between the adult and the child: the process and effects of communication studied at many levels, especially that of meaning. Meanings, in turn, refer to the semantic context – the narrative of the culture in which this dialogue is immersed. Culture is changeable and “living”, therefore the upbringing practices and the descriptions of this phenomenon must both be fluid.

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Transl. Edward Lowczowski

MARIA M. STRAŚ-ROMANOWSKA

University of Lower Silesia, Faculty of Psychology

EDUCATION IN PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP OF MEETING

*It is during a meeting when a human being becomes a 'true I'
– a person: 'a human becomes I, thanks to You'*

Abstract: This article presents an outline of a personalistic model of education based on assumptions of a philosophy of meeting. The model is set against two classic models: pragmatic as well as voluntarist, pointing out their limitations, such as a deficiency of an axiological, that is – ethical aspect. It is emphasized that in an educational process partake two subjects, each of whom, thanks to personal relationship of meeting has a chance to open up to another and to derive an inspiration for development. As the most important aim

of education, sensitization to moral values and teaching these principles accordingly were indicated – for personal and community welfare. Consequently, three levels of educational process were distinguished, namely: pre-educational level (pre-education), educational level (education) and post-educational level (self-education).

Keywords: personal relationship of meeting, pre-education, education, post-education.

INTRODUCTION

Although an issue of education, in whose center there is a care taken to prepare a young human being to live in a society, has always been in scope of interest of both social scientists as well as practitioners – parents, teachers, caretakers or simply educators, nowadays, it is gaining a status of a priority. Reasons for that are intense, overwhelming civilizational and cultural changes and also accompanying difficulties of a young human being finding themselves in the world, which altogether generate numerous problems and therefore lead to a search for educational strategies, which would encourage development of social competencies tailored to personal and society's needs.

In the article, a model of education is described, which can be classified as a relationalist or meeting-based, and which refers to philosophical ideas of personalism (e.g. Buber, 1991; Levinas, 1994; Tischner, 2000). A background for this proposal was created using two most popular in the Western culture general models, which were referred to as pragmatic and voluntarist respectively. The first one is rooted in behaviourism, the second one, in turn, in the American humanistic psychology.

PRAGMATIC MODEL OF EDUCATION

A notion of education in its broadest meaning refers to conscious, intentional actions, whose main aim is to prepare an individual for an independent life in a community, in accordance with its norms. In a culture strongly associated with ideology of pragmatism, the aim of education comes down to preparing an individual for an effective, most possibly successful fulfilment of social roles, which actually can be described as an adaptation. This adaptation one can describe as external – to requirements of the surrounding world, family, school, professional and social environment ¹⁾. In the spirit of pragmatism, an essence of educational activity, as a specific educational practice, is forming a mind and personality of an individual with help of socially acceptable psychological-pedagogical methods or techniques. The practice is based mainly on assumptions of behaviourism, treated sometimes directly as ‘philosophy of psychology’ (Malcolm, 2002).

Behavioural theories define human personality in terms of a system of regulatory mechanisms, which develop on the basis of biological structures and are influenced by more or less controlled effects of external environment. From such perspective, in education an acting element is also present – which is intended for an educator in the first place, as well as a processual element – referring to psychological processes of a person who is being educated., their way of thinking, attitudes, aims translating into behaviours, which also are an object of educational actions.

Educational theories which are in line with behavioural applied psychology define their main aim as delivering to educators knowledge about strategies and techniques to evoke desirable, from a practical, adaptive point of view, changes in personality and behaviour of a person who is being educated. Such type of educational activity is sometimes described as a ‘technology of education’ (Konarzewski, 1982). Behavioural psychology delivered theoretical scientists and practitioners of education a fair amount of thoroughly documented, based according to the standards of positivist science, knowledge referring to efficiency of specific educational techniques, including mainly, broadly understood, rewards and punishments, which often have steering or even a manipulative character. It is one of the greatest scientific achievement of psychology and is used in various aspects of social life.

A certain benefit of using pragmatic techniques of education, classified under a general category of learning techniques, is making it easier for an individual to satisfy in a socially acceptable way their important, basic needs, such as a need for safety, group membership or social approval and also to undertake, in an effective and satisfying way, various roles and tasks at different stages of life journey. A benefit not without meaning is also a fact, that in a process of learning rules of conduct and realisation of tasks, an individual has an opportunity to compare themselves with other group members they belong to and therefore to acquire knowledge about themselves, own potential, limitations, preferences.

Despite an evident efficiency and usefulness in numerous aspects of social life, educational techniques based on behavioural assumptions, used in the name of a widely understood social interest, have some serious limitations. Using them exclusively can

¹⁾ Apart from adaptation to the external, social world, one can also distinguish such forms as internal adaptation – to own dispositions, and also existential adaptation – to absolute values (Straś-Romanowska, 2005).

even generate some negative effects. Among them, one of the most important is, apart from overestimation of an attitude of rivalry and instrumentalization of a relationship between an educator and an pupil, weakening of pupils' subjectivity or even objectification. An educator can, or even is obliged to such acting, using punishments and rewards, in order to achieve the aim which is formation of a style of behaviour of a pupil in accordance with specific environmental standards. Gratification is here ultimately the main, and often the only motive to obey these standards. What is more, numerous rules of functioning, especially those in professional or social environments where cultural changes are taking place, need to be modified, and the fact creates a pressure of ever-lasting re-adaptation and, as a consequence, puts an individual in danger of experiencing a permanent tension and a feeling of being underestimated. It should also be underlined, that an overdiversity of the roles undertaken and changes in their scenarios, together with external pressure regulated by the reward and punishment system, creates a danger for development and stabilisation of a feeling of identity of an individual. A world in which a change turns out to be a value in itself, does not encourage self-reflection and wondering about a purpose of one's life, which can ultimately lead to disorders of psychological functioning of an individual in a form of e.g. depression or addiction. This was also pointed out in the last century by e.g. Victor Frankl (1978), Rollo May (1989) or Philip Zimbardo and Floyd Ruch (1998).

VOLUNTARIST MODEL OF EDUCATION

The pragmatic model of education, based on assumptions concerning human being as a creature mainly psycho-physical and social, whose development is directed towards adaptation to the conditions of the surrounding world, in the second half of the 20th Century lost its importance, and the methods applied in its repertoire of educational engineering were under a scrupulous critique. This happened mainly due to popularity of American humanistic psychology, together with a large influence of social revolution from the sixties, which started in the US and reached almost all of Europe. Voices appeared which questioned traditions concerning social behaviours and interpersonal relationships.

Slogans declared by followers of humanistic psychology referring to individual freedom and also a right of an individual to self-realisation and self-determination, as key, indisputable, human values, caused a change of the pragmatic model of education which was promoting strategies serving almost a directive formation of an individual's personality – to the voluntarist model, which assured an individual a maximal freedom of functioning, restricting at the same time the role of an educator or even depriving them from the right to intervene in a process of development of a pupil. It was thought, that a pupil, as an equal subject in the educational relationship, is an autonomous person and has a full right to an independent decision-making, being directed in their own choices, by personal preferences, needs, likes or beliefs. In its extreme shape, the libertarian model, known as 'education without failures', was created to serve in the best possible way an individual to self-reflection and implementation of developmental potential only in accordance with his or her free will (Gordon, 1991).

However, radicalism accompanying the implementation of slogans of humanistic psychology to educational practice and social life, termed as a 'pedagogical revolution'

(Bauman, 2000), did not afford expected exclusively positive results, which significantly questioned its value. A lack of intervention in a developmental process of a pupil, avoidance of any, especially critical assessments or restrictions towards their incorrect behaviours and a guarantee of unrestricted freedom in making decisions, which then was turning into a quasi-freedom or wilfulness, turned out to be not only ineffective in reaching the assumed educational and developmental target, but also to be counter-effective, detrimental for both an individual as well as for social relationships and community's functioning. It was stated, that a young person indeed needs a direction for their actions, stable and clear points or a frame of reference and also a support, which all were not sufficient or even not existent in the libertarian model.

Despite that, one can point out, similarly as in the case of the pragmatic model, some positive aspects of that model also. An undoubted merit of its supporters is above all an estimation of an individual's subjectivity, noticing them already at the early stages of life and turning attention at a disposition of free will as a base of life choices. A fact was appreciated, that freedom is not only an individual's right, but it also constitutes a significant condition for a development of identity and self-fulfilment.

In the light of the before-mentioned benefits and limitations of the educational models: pragmatic and voluntarist, it so seems that an optimal solution would be a synergic model, combining the two, which would assume adaptation of an individual to an effective and satisfactory roles' fulfilment following from a social organisation of life, in such a way, however, so that respect towards pupil's subjectivity is in place. It should not therefore lead to psychological incapacitation and at the same time would help in making successful choices in accordance with social rules.

Nowadays, one can discern in a field of a broadly understood educational practice and social life space, a presence of both before-characterised educational models. A distinct echo of humanistic ideas is recognised in the overwhelming cult of individualism, underling individual's subjectivity as an autonomous, causative, self-determining, person who is also predisposed for taking independent actions and living in accordance with own self. On the other side, it is hard not to notice a ubiquitous and omnipotent influence of strategies inspired by behaviourism on life of modern humans. We are constantly under more or less evident influence which is steering our choices, way of acting, preferences or likes, and even lifestyle. The aim of these manipulative strategies is not so much shaping in people, including also children and adolescents, righteous from a community perspective needs or actions, as maximising a broadly understood success or even profit of influential people or social groups, who, minding their own interest try to 'manage' developmental potential of those who are under their influence.

One does not need to be an expert in order to see that both described models of educational practices: pragmatic and voluntarist, even in a convergent form, will not be enough to shape personality or character of a human being tailored to their potential and developmental aims, and also society's needs. Their competitive co-presence in a social space has a number of negative consequences – it leads to axiological disorientation, to cognitive and motivational chaos, it makes self-awareness more difficult, it encourages emotional tension, weakens a feeling of psychological safety and eventually increases inner emptiness. As a result, we are dealing with a paradoxical picture of a modern human being – an individualist who is not him or herself.

MEETING-BASED MODEL OF EDUCATION

When referring to a statement shared by many researchers, concerning a presence of two main dimensions in a psychological structure of humans – causal-competence and moral ones – through whom perceiving of one self and other people occurs, a remark occurs, that for a modern human, the first dimension has a greater meaning than the second one, which is indirectly suggested in results of studies in social psychology (Wojciszke, Baryła, 2005). Moral dimension, responsible for community's life, is appreciated mainly at a declarative level and implementation of values belonging to it has a smaller influence on self-assessment and a feeling of life quality when compared with an implementation of the values referring to causality, which is determined by skills and competencies (Wojciszke, 2010). Admittedly, during a life course (especially among children and adolescents) preferences of declared values undergo a change, which is in connection with developmental processes (Cieciuch, 2013). However, attention-grasping is an increase of a rank of hedonistic and individualistic values in modern Polish society and an accompanying increase of moral relativism, together with a simultaneous lowering of moral values' rank, marked in numerous sociological studies, (Mariański, 2017). It seems, that an intensification of worrying phenomena, such as violence, abuses of all kind, addictions, weakening of interpersonal relationships, suicidal attempts or depression, can with a significant probability be thought of as a consequence of, among others, undergoing a pressure of rivalry, generated by an extreme pragmatism and consumerism, and on the other hand – a result of a cult of individualism and a misunderstanding of freedom as a limitless liberty (lawlessness), marginalising higher ethical values.

In the light of anthropological knowledge about a human being as a multidimensional creature, not only psycho-physiological, social and subjective – meaning free and self-determining, but also spiritual – meaning sensitive to higher values, including moral ones (Straś-Romanowska, 1992), both approaches to the issue of education – pragmatic and voluntarist – should be considered reductionist. They narrow the essence of educational activity, on one hand to forming of a pupil's personality not appreciating their subjectivity – in a style of behavioural engineering, on the other hand to ensuring a pupil with a maximal liberty of self-determination under slogans of individualism and extreme freedom, which are based on misunderstood and selective ideas of humanistic psychology. They omit, or at least marginalise, a traditional, ethical aim of education, whose essence is to sensitise to moral values, such as honesty, decency, fairness, loyalty, respect for one another and so on. With an implementation of such kind of values, a responsibility comes not only for oneself, but also for another human being, for a community, and also for natural environment.

Admittedly, human being, due to a personal nature, has an in-born axiological sensitivity, is – everyone according to their own measure – open to the world of higher, absolute values. However, this sensitivity, similarly to other senses' sensitivity (which was pointed out by Scheler, 1999), while being exposed to environmental influences, can be sustained, strengthen, or weakened. Implementation of most important values, acting in accordance with (quoting V. Frankl, 1978) – 'responding to the value's appeal', requires appropriate environment, inspiration coming from significant people, as also appropriate patterns of behaviour. Therefore, so significant in the process of education remains the role of an educator, and also of all important persons from pupil's environment, who usually is a young human being. Members of a community,

by directing their choices by values and setting a behavioural example, inform about an importance of the values and, at the same time, motivate to respect them during every-day choices and life activities. An important effect of following higher moral values, which go beyond a logic of utilitarianism and often a pragmatic, external adaptation, is an experience of a specific, available only for a human being psychological state which is a feeling of purpose, accompanied by a feeling of own dignity, treasured more than self-assessment based on social comparisons referring mostly to capacity's aspects (Straś-Romanowska, 2010).

Anthropological assumptions about human nature, as a personal creature, whose specific attributes are: sensibility, axiological sensitivity, free will and relationalist attitude – seen in a striving towards a direct, honest being with another person, towards another person, and for another person, together with a potential for a constant development (e.g. Straś-Romanowska, 2005), justify a formulation of a higher aim of education as a realisation of developmental potential, aiming in a direction of a personal ideal. In a centre of this ideal, there is a moral responsibility – for another human being, community, and for oneself, which requires of an individual self-restriction and self-perfecting. Moral responsibility is therefore the highest manifestation of a personal existence of a human being. What is important, education, whose aim is to shape a character in a direction of personal ideal, refers in the same degree to a pupil as well as an educator. The view is shared with representatives of the philosophy of meeting i.e., among others, with Martin Buber, who was quoted before, Emmanuel Levinas, Józef Tischner, and also by philosophers representing different philosophical currents, e.g. Leszek Kołakowski or Zygmunt Bauman.

The sketched model of education, taking into account an importance of moral values, can be compared to a valued in ancient times educational system called *paideia*, in which knowledge, wisdom, and beauty of a human being (including health, physical fitness, and agility) were closely related to a character, nobility, decency, goodness, and the higher aim of education was a shaping of character's virtues according to the perfect templates, which were personal ideals (Jaeger, 2001). Admittedly, decency, righteousness, and personal culture are values which are not questioned in other models of education, however, in the personalistic-meeting-based model they gain a rank of priorities and become an aim in themselves, whereas in e.g. pragmatic model they are sometimes treated instrumentally, as a way of gaining acceptance, approval, or as a conducive factor in becoming successful.

It seems, that turning *paidei* into a leading idea within a reality of modern schools, which are functioning more according to rules of corporation rather than community, would not be an easy undertaking. It would require changes in a broadly understood education, which would rely upon appreciating, taking aside those measurable in points – skills and knowledge of students, but also ethical competencies of students, moral sensitivity, civic attitudes, prosocial and social attitudes. It would need to be related to a re-definition of a role of a teacher, with taking away formal and administrative duties from them in favour of a more often, closer and more friendly contact with pupils, and also with a modification of an education program preparing for a role of a teacher at the start. It is a long way, but maybe it is worthwhile – in a face of cultural challenges – to be inspired by the tradition and also by modern personalistic thought in order to bring to an educational practice more humanistic, personal character.

Being inspired by a modern anthropologist thought, developed in a spirit of personalism and a philosophy of meeting (Buber, 1991; Gadacz, 1991; Levinas, 1994; Tischner,

2000), apart from noticing an unquestionable importance of the axiological factor in a process of education, it is also worthwhile to underline a significance of another important aspect of a human nature, namely relationalism. A notion of relationalism, close to, although not interchangeable with a notion of interaction (Dryll, 2001), refers to a disposition for being with another human in a specific, subjective relationship, which is termed a meeting or a dialogue (Buber, 1993). A dialogical or a meeting-based relationship is characterised by a fact, that each person is open to another one, to their diversity, being special, to their secrecy and unconditional value, and also their limitless potential for a personal development, activated by environmental and cultural factors.

Referring this thesis to an issue of education one can state, that education is a meeting of two subjects, where one – an educator – should support a development of another one – a pupil. An essence of a personal, relational meeting is, apart from openness to Another one and unconditional acceptance, listening closely to their voice, with an honest will for understanding and sympathy. An attitude of openness, above all, should be characteristic of an educator, who by self-expression, their authentic I, has an opportunity to show a pupil important, treasured values, testifying with their own behaviour their meaning and at the same time inspiring to reflect upon them. Crucial here is not only a content of revealed or encouraged values, but also a way of implementing them, authenticity, which has a power to invigorate axiological sensitivity and to shape a will directed towards values. There is not a more effective educational method than being an example, a personal testimony for a righteousness and importance of what one is convinced about. In order for an authentic, personal meeting to occur, a maturity of an educator is necessary, their clear identity, grounded in a stable system of values, present in their actions, and also a disposition for self-development.

The conditions named above build an educator's authority and create a special climate helping a pupil to get to know themselves, develop their identity and become a subject, with a simultaneous shaping of character's virtues. An educator, while sharing with a pupil personal experiences, being an example of how one should act and why it is worthy, being directed in life by values higher than merely utilitarian and hedonistic ones, showing at the same time an approval for pupil's individuality, in a way is sharing him or herself with pupils and therefore has a power to pull them towards a common ideal. An educator not only teaches how to live, not forcing anything, but, using wise arguments, kind persuasion, and above all a testimony of a righteousness of what they claim, inspires to undertake resolutions based not, or not only, on a will, needs, or a rational calculation, but above all on a feeling of duty and responsibility – due to higher ethical values which make life more meaningful. An educator also encourages a consequent behaviour in accordance with the values, ensuring at the same time safety of a pupil and strengthening their self-value. An educator is a master or a guide on a way to self-development of their pupils. In order to achieve a status of an educator-guide, one should go through their own path towards self-development and stay on it in a readiness for further self-perfection.

MULTI-LEVELS OF THE PROCESS OF EDUCATION

Following the presented assumptions, taken from the personalistic anthropology and the philosophy of meeting, and leading to the conclusion, that the aim of education is an adaptation of an individual for a meaningful and serving a community's good

shaping and perfecting of character's virtues, one can differentiate three levels at the path of a pupil.

The first level can be seen as an introduction, preceding an actual educational activity. At this level a 'pre-education' occurs which is a preparation for a fundamental educational process. It relies upon creating conducive conditions for a child's development within all dimensions of their personal nature, and is happening already at the earliest stage of life. The conditions, in a form of unconditional love, acceptance, and security, were correctly recognised by Abraham Maslow (1986) and Erik Erikson (2004), and were also appreciated by contemporary authors of the Theory of Attachment, underlining an importance of an appropriate emotional climate and the first contact of a child with a close person for a process of a trustful opening for the surrounding world, including also the world of values, and also for revealing and invigorating developmental potential. Relationships with the closest people, parents or caregivers, and also patterns of behaviour they employ in everyday actions, have a meaning hard to overestimate for a child's development: they prepare a ground, on which a personal condition of a pupil will develop, including sensitivity to values.

The next level of the educational process is a fundamental one, which can be termed 'educational'. The education at that level requires a conscious, wise engagement of an educator and a trustful attitude of a pupil. The role of an educator here relies upon directing a personal potential of a pupil at aims which stay in accordance with his or her capacity as well as with values of a society he or she belongs to, and also upon activating in a pupil a feeling of responsibility for undertaken actions. Appropriate strategies serve this, among them and above all – a dialogue, whose content should be made realistic and shown through examples of (in the best scenario) educator's behaviours, which was mentioned before. It should be added, that education occurs within a personal meeting-based relationship and, what is more, it teaches in a natural non-directive way rules of making a conversation, attentive listening to a subject of an interaction, while respecting their subjectivity. One can say that it is a specific educational workshop focusing on interpersonal communication. At the educational level, there is also a space for positive reinforcement of desired behaviours of a pupil and for creating boundaries for their freedom, which in a meeting-based, dialogue strategy has mainly a persuasive character, which also explains the aim of those limitations. Such strategy encourages directing will at noble targets, strengthening it, and also a determination for practice within one's capacities of such forms of activity which rely upon self-restriction and self-perfection. Shaping of a will is closely related with evoking a feeling of responsibility and sense, and seems to be the most important element of education in spirit of personalism and philosophy of meeting.

A specific education, which is happening in a personal relationship of a dialogue, leads to the next level of the educational process, which is self-education. At this level, both current and potential educator adopt a role of a pupil. They create requirements towards themselves, try to fulfil them consequently and execute possible omissions or negligence. Entering the level of self-education, which formally is a post-educational level, requires meeting of conditions, which, following Kazimierz Dąbrowski, can be determined as self-awareness, self-choice, and self-confirmation. Self-education is in a way a culmination of the named processes and states, and is leading to the personal ideal (Dąbrowski, 1975; Mróz, 2008). It is equal to reaching the highest, fifth level of human development, as described by the author of the Theory of Positive Disintegration. It reaches this level thanks to a personal engagement, deepened reflection about a mean-

ing of own life, based upon a realistic knowledge about oneself and about the world – by making a conscious choice of values and also by taking care of determination in order to realise them in a face of an ideal, which is in truth distant, however it remains attractive, because it is meaningful and is serving community's good. An educator with such a personal profile, directed at a constant self-perfection, has the highest power of eliciting the best predispositions from a pupil and taking part in his or her personality by paving the way towards an essence of humanity. Educational activity attributed to the third, post-educational level as such, should actually precede the activities attributed to the earlier levels and accompany them at all times.

SUMMARY

Education, understood in the spirit of personalistic anthropology and philosophy of meeting is a constant and never-ending activity, directed towards supporting a personal development, perfecting and strengthening character's virtues. Therefore, it is an activity oriented towards a life in accordance with virtues, which is taking place within a context of relationship of personal meeting. Such understood education refers with the same degree to a pupil as well as an educator.

Education is both an activity and a process – it starts with shaping of a character of a potential educator, who, by his or her actions, evokes and directs a personal developmental process of a pupil, taking care at the same time of perfecting own personal condition, thanks to which they can become an even better master for others.

A complexity of a phenomenon of education, its multiply levels, and requirements concerning tasks faced by an educator, lead to a conclusion that it is the most demanding art. While teaching responsibility, an educator is obliged to take care of their own responsibility – for a pupil and for him or herself, and also for a community where both subjects of the personal relationship of a meeting belong to.

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Transl. Ewa Butowska

MARIA LEDZIŃSKA

University of Warsaw, Faculty of Psychology

SELF-EDUCATION – OLD PROBLEM, NEW CHALLENGES¹⁾

Abstract: While joining a social debate about self-education, the Author turns attention to the continuity of reflection initiated by the Ancient and undertaken contemporarily by representatives of different divisions of humanities. The Author underlines, that a starting point in a process of self-education is getting to know oneself, which requires engagement of internal attention, thinking, and dialogues with

one's surroundings as well as with oneself. She proposes a thesis, that cultural changes from the turn of the twenty first century – connected with expansion of information technology – foster self-education as long as they are accompanied by self-reflection.

Keywords: self-education, self-knowledge, personal standards, internal attention, dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

The word 'self-education' can be encountered in both scientific and common language. According to Bogusław Śliwerski (2007), it was introduced by Marja Hornowska (1912) at the beginning of the last century. The same author notices, that an explosion of terms with the prefix 'self' occurred at the end of the 19th century in order to underline a fact, that a person or a thing occurs and acts in their own right, independently. Equivalent or similar in meaning terms can be found today in large numbers: self-perfection, shaping of will and character, self-mastering, self-determining, self-steering, self-regulation, self-control. This intuitively accessible phenomenon encourages to seek for an answer for questions concerning an essence of self-education, what is its aim, motives, ways of implementation, what should one start with, what do we gain when initiating this form of activity and finally – if it is possible in the 21st century. Basing on my own research experience I would like to present more closely an issue which is important from both research and practical perspectives, which is also described in an impressively rich literature. I would like to focus on the following issues in particular: firstly, I will refer to self-knowledge as a starting point, necessary, however not sufficient for the process of self-education, treating it as a subjective correlate. Secondly, I will focus on an individuals' activity confronted with internal standards in dialogues with one-self, understanding them as an inalienable condition of self-education. Thirdly, I will also consider lifestyle following from culture predominant in the 21st century, seen as a situational factor.

Correspondence address: marial@psych.uw.edu.pl, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1961-550X>.

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The text has a status of an opinion within a discourse, for which I also encourage other Authors. I am aware of the complexity of the issue and obstacles following from it when it comes to a concise presentation of the issue. They follow, among others, from a fact, that self-education refers to a human being as a person, which goes beyond the scope of psychological functioning. More narrow perspective presented in the text – focusing solely on the psychological dimension – although reductionist, implies also referring to complex characteristics of cognitive, emotional-social, and personality-based functioning. What is more, issues concerning essence, specificity, and dynamics of changes which are included in a set of activities referred to as self-education – although referred to in several different ways – can be found in all, so-called classical psychological concepts.

STATUS OF SELF-EDUCATION

Texts concerning the issue of self-education come from various historical periods, from antiquity to the 21st century. It speaks about the importance of the issue and its universal character. Self-education – analogously to education – is nowadays associated with self-development and self-learning. Together they create a kind of triangle when thinking about ways of self-perfection of a human being who is capable of co-creating him or her-self (Kozielecki, 1999; Jarymowicz, Szuster, 2014; Oleś, 2011). In modern times, the topic is undertaken mostly by representatives of humanities: psychology, pedagogy, resocialisation (cf. Delors, 1998; Kulpaczyński, 1979; Śliwerski, 2007, 2010). A separate current is created by studies based on theology (Trusewicz-Pasikowska, 2015) and philosophy – mainly personalism (Bagrowicz, 2008; Granat, 1985). In works of authors representing different disciplines one can find similar points, among which there is a hardship of self-education, its inalienability and complex conditioning. In the works of last decades, self-education is referred to as an art (Zalewski, 2007) and it challenges contemporary times (Golek, 2017). I refer to the last statement in the current article.

As I have already stated, it is hard to describe even only chosen issues in a short form, therefore I refer the interested readers to review articles (e.g. Balcer, 2017). The topic is worthy also a complementary approach from historical psychology perspective (Dymkowski, 2003). I am writing the current article as a scientist who is combining two aspects of psychology: individual differences in cognitive functioning and also an issue of teaching. I treat self-education as a form of self-activity, significant during one's life course. Education is captured by developmental researchers as one of the factors of development, apart from biological and environmental influences. Broadly understood self-activity contains – in case of an adult – mostly learning and work, but also, as underlined by Karen Horney (1976), working on oneself. The author treated it as a privilege and duty, noticing also some evident benefits such as independence from negative influences of various environments of life. This stand is shared by many researchers, which I will refer to in the course of further considerations.

Chronologically, self-education occurs later than education initiated by main socialising environments, such as family and school. Not everyone, also, undertakes this type of effort. A starting point of self-education is gradually increasing self-knowledge, which then encourages a revision of thinking and behaving in the light of accepted standards. It leads, in the first place, to building knowledge about oneself, which

is self-knowledge. It is a preliminary condition to change oneself, necessary however not sufficient. Self-knowledge fulfils important functions: it allows and facilitates orientation in oneself and in one's surrounding, planning, decision-making and acting, and also correction of thinking and behavioural paradigms (Dymkowski, 1993; Jarymowicz, 1999; Koziński, 1986). Efforts directed towards self-shaping require also causative power. Motivation is directed mostly by personal aims, standards and needs, among whom one of the most commonly named is a need for cognition and growth (Cacioppo, Petty, 1982; Petty, See, 2007).

Self-education – just as every human activity – takes place in a certain context. The broadest of them is culture, influencing prevailing patterns of thinking and behaving. I am putting forward a hypothesis, that cultural changes from the turn of the 21st century – connected with the expansion of information technology – favour self-education in as much as they encourage thinking, and therefore stimulate reflection. In such a way I am referring to a statement concerning relationships between the specificity of a given historical period and development, broadening and modifying earlier argumentation (Ledzińska, 2017).

Reflections on self-education are part of a broader trend of considerations about possibilities of perfecting a human being. As Józef Koziński (1999) writes, there are three main ways to make a change. Solutions known best and most commonly used refer to using cultural transfer; education with upbringing and psychotherapy is referred to by the author as 'mems' Self-development and self-education are in turn connected with a potential for self-creation (Kowolik, 2010). The third way is connected with correction of a person while interfering within an organism. Many contemporary experts tie together genetic therapy, biotechnology, and reconstructive medicine with a hope for improvement and refinement (Harrari, 2018). The hopes are accompanied by numerous doubts and apprehensions of psychological and ethical nature. This issue, although important, interesting, and up-to-date – goes beyond the scope of analysis performed here.

THE PRELIMINARY REQUIREMENT OF SELF-EDUCATION – LOOKING INSIDE ONESELF

Self-education seen as a process, requires self-awareness as well as the ability of directing attention from the outer world towards oneself. Attention in this process plays a role of an 'inner eye', enabling a memory search, assessment of thinking, and employing imagination. The idea is well-known within European cultural circle, and the calling 'Get to know yourself' belongs to one of the best known Greek sentences. It was at the pediment of the Delphi temple of Apollo, the most famous maxim of the Ancient times was engraved: *gnōti seauton*, which is better known in its Latin version: *cognosce te ipsum*. A statement, that all wisdom starts in getting to know oneself, was not the only sentence written on the Delphi sanctuary. Krzysztof Bielawski (2018) writes about close to one hundred five maxims. Placed close to the entry, they were read by everyone, who wanted to know their fate foretold by the oracle, priestess Pythia who was speaking – as it was believed – in Apollo's name. Read, repeated, and then passed on to inmates and friends, they were the base of Greek education – *paideia*. They survived up to today's world in a form of known quotes or their paraphrases. We appreciate their content and admire concise form. Here are some chosen examples: 'know

the right time', 'stay away from corruption', 'be yourself', 'manage yourself', 'exercise mind', 'nothing in excess', 'respect yourself', 'risk wisely', 'manage expenses', 'enjoy what you purchase', 'use luck', 'live without sorrow', 'exercise modest silence', 'aim courageously towards the end' (Wodziński, 2015).

The maxims named above refer to all areas of human functioning being recognised by today's psychology. The spirituality of Delphi's wisdom can be found in the first sentence, which goes 'follow god'. It can be understood as an acceptance of the human condition and of not fighting against a higher power. The area of cognitive functioning is referred to by numerous postulates considering control over one's attention or mind-training. A certain number of maxims are – using today's language – recommendations of self-control in the area of emotions and relationships with other people: 'talk straight', 'give what you can give', 'despise slander', 'control fear', 'do not boast about your strength', 'stay away from what does not belong to you', 'love who you create' 'hold your tongue'. An echo of Delphi maxims can be found in today's numerous psychological concepts which are underlining the role of self-control and self-regulation, seen as metacognitive skills (among others: Baumeister, Tierney, 2013; Dunlosky, Metcalfe, 2009; Niedźwieńska, 2008; Vohs, Baumeister, 2017).

The calling 'Know yourself' is an abbreviation signalling a complex process. It was given various meanings in antiquity and in modern times. Marius Reiser (1993) underlines, how broad this interpretative spectrum is. In ancient Greek times this postulate was seen as a need to become aware of limitations created by nature, which were simply self-limitations. In a similar explanation (Reiser, 1993) a need for realistic self-assessment together with a discovery of truly possessed knowledge and skills were underlined. Become aware of what you are capable of as a creature who will die one day, get to know your potential. It was a sort of a warning against arrogance and conceit. Self-knowledge was therefore connected with a critical reflection upon oneself, directing attention not only to the outer world, but also towards inner-self, with conversations not only with one's surroundings, but also with oneself.

In the Christian world, self-knowledge was given yet another meaning, connecting it with a spiritual development. Origen notices a double 'benefit' from looking inside oneself: moral and speculative. In modern times, a conviction, that getting to know one's soul leads to God, can be found in works of well-known authors (e.g. Merton, 2015; Newman, 2003). In texts originating from the area of Christian spirituality it is underlined – which also is characteristic of them – that self-knowledge can be occurring thanks to the grace of God and a constant cooperation with it, it is not solely within human capacity and efforts.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ONESELF AS THE EFFECT OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

In psychology understood as empirical science, the category of self-knowledge is present in many concepts, including developmental and cognitive-social ones. The last ones refer to functioning of mind and personality (Bruner, 1978; Piaget, 2006; Wygotski, 1978). An influential trend in this area is created by research studies concerning 'self', relationships towards oneself and others. In contemporary psychology it is one from the so-called 'great topics' (Dymkowski, 1993; Koziński, 1996; Łukaszewski, 2008).

While writing about self-knowledge, I refer to the concept of human being as a subject of actions, proposed by cognitive psychologists (Koziński, 1996; Nęcka,

Orzechowski, Szymura, 2006). From such perspective, human being is an active and initiative individual, processing received information and influencing their life history. He or she builds knowledge about themselves and is able to reflect upon it, and the results of such activity he or she can use for a correction of self-image and behaviour following from that image (Kozielecki, 1999). It is a declarative and open knowledge. I emphasise one more time, that human capacity for self-awareness and reflection is a condition for creating self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge is a general term encompassing everything we know about ourselves and – as I have already mentioned – it requires a usage of the category of ‘self’. Researchers of different orientations emphasise its complexity (Bąk, 2017). There are also many ways of describing and classifying ‘self’ (Suszek, 2007). I’m citing one of the oldest and best known classification, which is dichotomic: self-as-object and self-as subject (James, 1890). The reflections presented here refer to self-as-object, which is a psychological capacity to treat oneself as an object of own attention and a conscious, intentional thinking about oneself. A notion of identity close to ‘self’ refers to a conviction about our immutability, despite passing time and resulting changes in ourselves and in our social surrounding (Oleś, 2009).

Self-knowledge is built on – analogously to knowledge about the world – cognitive representations and schemas. It also changes in a similar way. Its content, rules of organisation, way of using and – what I emphasise – reference of an individual to knowledge encoded in autobiographical memory – they all can be and indeed are modified (Maruszewski, 2005). An important remaining component is going beyond personal experiences and also emotional and intellectual analysis of those with one’s mind and will. It is an important element of self-education. A majority of psychologists emphasise the meaning of early childhood experiences influencing the way we perceive ourselves and our surroundings. They also underline that attitude towards oneself is a function of own actions; assessment and successes in areas which are subjectively perceived as important. This assessment is then generalised to an overall judgement about oneself and one’s own value. Positive attitude toward oneself and others plays an important regulatory role: it shapes individual’s well-being and enables trust toward others, it also favours a search of optimal solutions in every-day life difficulties, which enables an acquisition of new competencies and keeping faith in own effectiveness (e.g. Greenberg, Arndt, 2011). Self-value is correlated with positive emotions which are fundamental for well-being and comfort. Perceiving oneself as a person who can be characterised by valuable and desirable traits builds a high self-esteem, and one of the most important consequences of this self-esteem is a feeling of safety.

This element of self-knowledge created by convictions about oneself has therefore a complex social conditioning and is characterised by hard-to-overestimate functional properties. Self-image which is gradually created is – as already mentioned – generalised to others, and in turn, a coherence between different components of ‘self’ in our psychological functioning leads to fewer conflicts (Jarymowicz, 2008). What follows from here is a higher chance of using resources in interpersonal relationships, also in helping others. Self-knowledge is therefore in essence a process of getting to know oneself, which occurs over a period of time. An insight into oneself enables a correction of that image and behaviours following from it. It is a key component of self-education.

DYNAMICS OF SELF-CHANGE

The significance of yearning for knowledge

When talking about issues of impulses of human behaviour, psychologists do not speak with a single voice. Differences in opinions aside, I want to remind about an obvious fact, that an important driving mechanism of human actions are our needs (Reber, Reber, 2005). A significant contribution to the scientific knowledge about needs was made by Abraham Maslow (1968/1986), one of the main representatives of humanistic psychology. Whoever a human being can be, they have to become one, Maslow was writing in the first text presenting own concept of the hierarchy of needs, where specified needs relate to a lack of something or to a desire of growth (Maslow, 1943).

An important dynamics of human's actions is a need for knowledge, classified as one of the growth needs. It decides about undertaking of effortful cognitive activities. Persons with developed cognitive need seek for information. They also like to analyse complex situations and to solve difficult problems, which is for them a source of joy (Reber, Reber, 2005). Arthur R. Cohen, Ezra Stotland and Donald M. Wolfe (1955) in turn, describe the need for knowledge as an intention to engage in making things meaningful and searching for a comprehensive structure of significant events. It is therefore an aspiration to understand and to make a rational justification of rules which are in place in the world. Deponents of such need do not need an external motivation in order to more deeply process information, as the very process is rewarding for them. Jojn T. Cacioppo and Richard E. Petty (1982) underline in turn, that the need for knowledge has a motive character. It does not inform about cognitive skills, but about engagement on and enjoying completing actions. It can be seen in a quest for gaining an orientation not only in one's surroundings, but also in efforts to purchase self-understanding practices and a care for inner coherence. So many aim for realisation of aims which are important for them and also for keeping of their standards. It is a second important driving factor of self-education.

The role of personal standards

As I have already noticed, self-education is connected with a necessity of going beyond external conditions shaping psychics which refer mainly to the influence of educational environments. In this process, a key and irreplaceable role is played by reflectivity, which is humans' thinking about oneself and about the world (Dymkowski, 1993; Jarymowicz, 2008; Jarymowicz, Szuster, 2014). Empirical evidence supporting the claim, that thanks to reflection one can go beyond personal experiences come from different disciplines. Most often named are: psychotherapy, a concept of self-settled trust or posttraumatic growth (Heszen, 2013).

Supporters of various theoretical perspectives point to two possible ways of interpretation of individual experiences: automatic, which is unconscious, and reflective, which is happening with an aid of critical thinking. A person can think about others, things, and events, but also about they way they think about themselves in light of different experiences, especially those from early family life, which have an influence over basic personality structures. The way a person thinks is a base for the next differentiation, significant in the light of undertaken analysis. 'Experiencing self' is created

on the basis of affective experiences. 'Reflective self' in turn, follows from a reflection about what we have encountered in life (Bąk, 2017; Jarymowicz, 2008; Trzebińska, 1998).

The mutual reference mentioned before between the areas of rationality and emotions ('mind and heart') are captured in different ways. I am citing one from a number of propositions by Maria Jarymowicz (2001). The Author specifies two ways of evaluating – affective and reflective. Her basic thesis – referring to the concept of personality by Janusz Reykowski (Gołąb, Reykowski, 1985) – is that evaluating of the world can become an automatic affective reaction or an articulated assessment. Affective reactions are developmentally inferior and are created at the lower stages of neural system. They do not require an awareness and are assigned to survival and adaptive needs. They play a substantial role in haemostatics maintenance and survival. They are connected, however, with a lack of a conscious control over own behaviour.

Gradually, this automatic regulation is enriched by emotions termed civil and therefore connected with consciousness (Imbir, 2018). Assessments engage thinking and a base for this assessment are verbalised standards, clear criteria, thanks to which one can formulate thought-through judgements about oneself and others (Gołąb, Reykowski, 1985). This increase in the ability for reflection means, in practice of social life, taking into account a number of factors and taking different perspectives – and therefore going beyond one's own point of view. As Maria Jarymowicz (2008) writes, a development of reflective thinking favours a creation of phenomena going beyond the affective assessment. Gradually, we are becoming able to respect others, forgive misdeeds to undertake a critical self-assessment. The last one is a starting point for undertaking changes in thinking and acting, which is self-education itself.

Both value systems are not independent. On the contrary – they affect each other, which is confirmed by results of numerous studies. Automatic reactions, being very quick, affect thinking and assessment (Zajonc, 1985). Conviction and assessment shaped on the basis of reflective contact with oneself and with others can limit influences of automatic processes over human's functioning (Jarymowicz, 2008; Jarymowicz, Szuster, 2014). A tendency for reflection weakens a tendency to give abrupt judgements and initiates a search for justification for own judgements. Development of reflective thinking plays therefore, in the educational process, a key role, as it evokes a change in the whole personality, also in its unconscious structures, created on the basis of early childhood experiences. The ability to reflect is therefore one of the main developmental paths of a human being, deciding about our subjectivity. A human being can consciously direct one's life, and, being self-aware – make important decisions in a well thought-of way.

A process of evaluating is connected with having standards, which are differently classified. Janusz Reykowski divided them into ones concerning oneself and the external world. It is assumed, that an indicator of development of the standards of 'self' is how well the standards of 'desired self' are developed. They are connected with a vision of who I would like to be. Edward Tory Higgins (1982) claims, that there are two types of 'desired self'. The earlier 'should self' is an internalisation of the surrounding's expectancies. In turn, the later 'ideal self' has its source in visions of oneself created during one's own thinking. A relation of 'ideal self' to 'should self' is called a stage of 'self' standards' development. Interestingly, its role in limiting influences of affective standards of evaluation over actual assessments made by an individual was empirically confirmed.

The capacity for creating visions of ‘ideal self’ is treated as irreplaceable in the process of self-education. In a light of studies’ results, creating a vision of ‘ideal self’ makes it more probable to implement (Łukaszewski, 2008). Anna Chrzanowska (2010) cites as an empirical evidence confirming this thesis a result of her own study informing, that a vision – accepted as a result of reflection – of oneself as an open person, makes an individual (on the unconscious level) indeed more open.

The meaning of dialogue

In this part of my essay I will refer to the before-mentioned meaning of the ability to reflect in process of self-education, turning attention to a helpful role of dialogue. Dialogue (Greek: *dialogos*) means a conversation of two or more people and is a basic way of communication between people. What is more, second signalling system decided about humankind development and is influencing life-course of all of us (Przetaczniak-Gierowska, Tyszkowa, 1996; Wygotski, 1978).

While being a conversation of at least two persons, it goes beyond, in its essence, a common everyday life communication whose main purpose is to exchange messages. It is characteristic of dialogue to exchange some thoughts, and it decides about its specificity. Partakers of dialogue remain partners in a reflective conversation. Mutual contact requires then not only a mastery of speech. It also engages attention, imagination, memory, decision making processes, and thinking.

Dialogue becomes possible after listening to another person. Referring to heard statements is accompanied by understanding of a logic of those, minding the other person’s perspective. It requires concentration, decentration, consideration, and modesty. Attention is present everywhere. It is treated as the main mechanism of processing, engaged at different levels of data processing. Its role was noticed and exposed in the 20s and 30s of the 20th century by Lew Wygotski himself (1978). A key role in development was given by him to speech precisely. He treated it as (1) a tool, (2) a carrier of meaning, (3) a unit of psychological analysis. He emphasised that a development of language is possible thanks to development of a child in a social environment, second signalling system in turn, fulfils various functions at different levels of development. While mastering speech, a child discovers their surroundings not only directly, but also through other people. Interpersonal relationship based on dialogue is therefore in a natural way an educational situation.

A dialogue with oneself and with others is based on the ability to reflect, which is treated together with actions following from it – as one of the most important achievements of the phase of adulthood (Turner, Helms, 1999). I would like to emphasise, that a change in this period of life does not happen automatically. It is captured in categories of potential. Dialogue remains in these efforts an important tool to work with. It turns out to be irreplaceable in searching for and in finding a meaning of own existence (Frankl, 1984; Straś-Romanowska, 1992).

A reflective dialogue with oneself can take various forms: diaries, autobiographical stories, notes, and so on. In recent years, one can notice an increase in humanists’ interests in autobiographical narratives (e.g. Cierpka, 2013; Dryll, Cierpka, 2011; Straś-Romanowska, Bartosz, Żurko, 2010). An inspiration for most of the studies are the main assumptions of hermeneutic philosophy of Paul Ricoeur (1991). A story – understood as a text – fulfils according to the Author a mediating function, mediating between a human being, the world, and other people. The world, an individual, and

other people are a unity connected by dialectic relationships. We write in order to understand and to be understood. It means, that each form of understanding has a narrative character. Everywhere, where there is understanding, there is someone, who can talk about it. There is also present an object, which the story is about. A person's identity – as claimed by Ricoeur – is a narrative identity.

It is impossible to omit a stand by Jerome Bruner (1990), a well-known representative of constructionism. Narrative is for him a type of thinking. The researcher claims, that we do not have any other way to describe the time we lived. Narrative is a specific way of creating the world. Stories about passed time are also a way of self-creation. There are many ways of expression, and they are delivered by the culture. Let's quote the words of a classic '... in the final settlement, cognitive and linguistic processes shaped culturally which direct a self-narration about life, reach a power of structuring perceptual experience, organising memory, segmentation and deliberate building of very 'events' from life. Finally we are becoming autobiographical narratives, through which we tell a story of our lives. And taking into account the cultural conditioning I referred to, we are also becoming variants of the spiritual forms of our culture' (Bruner, 1990, p.6).

Reports from own life are an example of complex dialogue, which is happening between a talking and a listening person and a specific social surrounding. Writing them has a self-knowing value, as it encourages organising, understanding, and acceptance of experiences. Through this form of inner activity we get to know better conditions for development, which we can analyse and use in a process of directing own life. In dialogue with oneself we gradually gain a new perspective, becoming a subject and co-author of life course.

CONTEXTUAL CONDITIONS OF SELF-EDUCATION – THE MEANING OF PREVAILING CULTURE

Culture of the turn of the twenty first century

In the final part of my statement I would like to undertake an issue of relationships between domineering culture and self-education. A known German philosopher was to say a sentence that 'there is nothing more unspecified that the word culture and nothing more deceptive as using it with reference to whole nations and whole epochs' (Herder, 1962, p.4). In common understanding, culture is deemed an entirety of both spiritual and materialistic heritage of societies. Referring to a concept of the two layers of cultural phenomena by Stefan Ossowski (2000), psychologists as an essence of culture deem prevailing patterns of thinking and behaving. In the course of my further considerations I will refer to this way of understanding culture, which according to Neil Postman (2004) is always connected with a leading technology. The driving mechanism of the changes of the 20th and the 21st century is information technology. Present in every area of life, expansive, constantly improving, they lead to great changes in culture. The researcher termed it a culture of technopoly and a technopoliation of life.

Technopoly (or a totalitarian technocracy) is – according to Postman – the third type of culture, which occurred after the epoch of tools and technocracy. It means assigning all forms of life to technique and technology. Technopoly is also considered by

Postman as a characteristic attitude of a human being towards technology; its indicator is giving a priority status to technology, and therefore treating it as a higher value. Postman claims with sorrow, that many people almost ‘preach’ technology, treating its development as the highest achievement of humankind. They also consider produced on a massive scale information as an unquestionable blessing. There are even stronger views, e.g. those concerning cultural imperialism of internet (Szpunar, 2017).

The prevailing influence of technology on every-day life was mentioned also by David Bolter (1990). The researcher claimed, that current technology creates a new perspective adopted by people. Additionally, many of its users look at others and evaluate them through the lens of modern technical tools, and also assess others mainly in the context of how effective they are. An idea of actions’ effectiveness influenced all areas of life, including science, and becoming one of the most important rules of functioning of contemporary societies (e.g. Ritzer, 1999). Effectiveness (efficiency) refers to the quantitative aspect of functioning, not considering the before-mentioned qualitative changes. The last ones refer not only to the hierarchy of one’s values, but also to specificity of relationships between humans and the environment. I will present them shortly in the next turn.

Chosen psychological consequences of cultural changes

When addressing a question of specificity of changes in a way of thinking and behaving, which are also influencing self-education and are connected with the culture of technopoly, I am presenting a concise, general reflection and also more detailed personal reflections. The first one is expressed in a single sentence, that variety and speed of changes occurring in our life environment is so great, that the contemporary world is hard to understand. As Alvin Toffler (1998) writes, in the past, changes were not discernible within a life course of a single generation. There are also no theories allowing to undertake a theoretical reflection and empirical studies. A remaining solution is to base on so-called paradigm of civilizational changes. Referring to them for the past two decades, I focus on a phenomenon of a universal character, which is also a basic phenomenon in life. What I mean is an information exchange between a person and surroundings, called by Antoni Kepiński (2003) information metabolism. I notice at least three trends leading to its deformation, which are not indifferent in relation to the process of self-education (Ledzińska, 2001, 2009, 2016).

The first one is an increase in a number of signals – received by a human being – with reference to the speed of brain’s functioning. In a time period before humans mastered language, a scope of information accessible to them was restricted by memory capacity. It is a capacity hard to determine, but I will estimate it as around 10 million of bites. In the time when the capacity for information sharing – thanks to technology – increased by over a dozen times, human brain did not change and is a mechanism of signal transmission a million times slower compared to a modern computer.

The second one is connected with a hugely increasing growth in data. Modern technology facilitates information searching, its storage, processing and sending over a distance. Above all, however, it favours contents creation and also their publishing. As a result of these changes, we are dealing with – unprecedented in the past – disproportion between information captured in a quantitative dimension and capacity for its processing. Main cognitive barriers are connected with functional properties of atten-

tion and memory. From the evolutionary perspective, we can say that cognitive abilities of human brain (mind) do not increase with such speed with which the amount of information increases (Ledzińska, Postek, 2017). The increase is illustrated by the following indicators. A few years ago the Internet generated in two days so much information that it was comparable with a whole information resource created from the beginning of our civilisation up to the year 2003. It is estimated, that currently every 12 months the amount of information increases by around 40%. The phenomenon is termed 'information flood' (Spitzer, 2013).

The third one is connected with a specific attitude, and actually – a cognitive preference. There are several elements which compose it. In the first place there is an increase in the length of information gathering phase in relation to the processing stage. What I mean here is a proportion of time and energy invested in searching for content and its later processing (understanding, consolidation, relating to the previously acquired knowledge). Its equivalent – on the level of energy metabolism – can be an intense, lengthened in time consumption, depriving an organism of an opportunity to digest and assimilate nutrition. It is happening, among others, as a result of a specific attitude towards content, which is the second component of the characterised attitude. Many treat information as a higher value, search for it intensively, often accept it without any critique, and sometimes equal it with knowledge (Roszak, 1994). Such behaviour makes a process of selection, processing or integration of received information with pre-existing knowledge very difficult or even impossible. Similar in terms of results is collecting copies of material without their attentive reading, termed by Umberto Eco (2007) as a sign of so-called xero-culture.

A question about the results of before-named changes – approached from the perspective of self-education – seems justified. Two of these questions seem especially important.

Firstly, acting on the basis of information (concentration on it and a constant search for it) coming directly from surrounding reality, is easier, but it remains characteristic of the sensorimotor stage of development and intuitive development of intelligence. Acquisition of knowledge, which is created on the basis of information, but it is not equivalent to it, requires an effort of reflective thinking and is typical of concrete and formal operational stage (Piaget, 1966, 1981). David Wiener (2009) wrote a decade ago, that focusing on information in the times of its constant growth together with an unrestricted access to it, regresses us as human beings.

Secondly, giving into information pressure is connected with a specific attention allocation, which is a constant directing it towards external world. David Shenk (1997) wrote years ago about a permanent 'bombarding' of people's minds, and also about an unprecedented fight for receivers' attention, which are led with a help of numerous marketing tools. This fierce fight results from a fact, that information has not only cognitive value, but also economical one. At the same time, self-education implies a necessity for attentional control, directing it towards the inside and confronting behaviour with personal standards. Self-education requires therefore a resignation from activism and uncontrolled chase of novelties, undertaking instead a self-reflection in the light of accepted values. Way of life dictated by technopoly culture discourages self-education, and it is endangering building of subjectivity. It discourages it, it does not however make it impossible.

Reality of self-education

Does self-education, in the light of presented consideration, remain merely an idea, or does it stand a chance of implementation? Supporters of technology determinism write about an almighty, one-directional, decisive influence of technology over human life (McLuhan, McLuhan, 1992). A psychologist cannot accept this viewpoint, which I turned attention to while mentioning the educational environments' influence. Influences of technopoly culture are without a doubt very strong, they are however not deterministic. Self-education has always had an elite character and we can see that especially clearly nowadays. Within the community of Polish psychologists, numerous researchers emphasise a meaning of personal contribution to individual change in thinking, experiencing, and acting (e.g. Dymkowski, 1993; Jarymowicz, Szuster, 2014). Its sense remains – cited in the text – a transition from automatic to reflective evaluating.

This transition can be slowed down by emotions connected with a fact that the 21st century is full of surprises (Abeles, 2008). I will now turn attention to a couple of paradoxes. The first one refers to – signalled before – informative trend of worldwide changes. A richness of content and its accessibility are accompanied by a difficulty in choice of the important and needed ones (Woods, Patterson, Roth, Christoffersen, 1999). A fascination by the richness of data is accompanied by an anxiety connected with compulsory selection. This, in turn, demands a disposal of criterions, among whom the most important one is knowledge and a system of values. A constant growth of knowledge from different disciplines of science does not correspond with an ease of building individual knowledge. Generally speaking, a tension between technological progress – which is an element of materialistic culture – and a spiritual culture became a surprising phenomenon. Its reduction is seen as one of dynamics of both self-development as well as self-education. It requires an absolute critical reflection over prevailing culture and the lifestyle it promotes. Many contemporary people are familiar with reflective efforts. They seek for ways of self-determination and perfection; they think, dispute, undertake special studies, therapies, they read texts related to great spiritual European traditions, and so on.

At the end of my reflections I will point two similarities between learning, which is one of the two dimensions of my research interests, and education, which is inseparably connected with it and which is also presented in the current article. The essence of change is – in case of the former one – a transition from learning directed from the outside to self-regulated learning (Azevedo, Aleven, 2013; Ledzińska, Czerniawska, 2011; Littleton, Wood, Kleine Staarman, 2010; Vohs, Baumeister, 2017). The situation indeed looks similar in case of education; however, the transition from being educated to self-education seems longer and more difficult. It remains undertaken by those, who want to change themselves and undertake in this area intensified efforts.

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Transl. Ewa Butowska

EWA CZERNIAWSKA

University of Warsaw, Faculty of Psychology

IS THE INTERNET A GOOD OR A BAD EDUCATOR? A COGNITIVE PROCESSES PERSPECTIVE

Abstract: The paper discusses the impact of modern technologies, especially the internet, on the functioning of young people. The following thesis was formulated: usage of modern technologies have both a negative and positive influence on cognitive processes. The internet is taking educational functions, that were to date reserved to the family and school. It is

a great challenge for the society and scientific reflection. For a positive educational influence of the internet to happen, it is necessary to take into account in teaching and educating the development of meta-cognitive knowledge and skills.

Keywords: Internet; modern technologies, cognitive processes, electronic dementia.

INTRODUCTION

Considering the whole history of mankind, modern technologies that triggered rapid expansion of the internet have emerged relatively recently. The first major revolution that increased the amount of information was the invention of a printing press, which made the data accessible to considerably more people. Yet, it was the common availability of personal computers and the internet that made the amount of information to increase steeply, and to such an extent that it became impossible for an individual to absorb it. Additionally, thanks to electronic media, the processes of globalization have accelerated (see e.g. Ledzińska, 2012). Like any revolution, also the technological one arouses hopes, but raises doubts, as well. One of them regards the fact that the internet is taking over educational functions that had been so far reserved for family and school environment. Does the pervasiveness of the internet in the life of the young generation really affect their development? If yes, is this a positive or negative impact? And finally, what are the mechanisms underlying this process? Considering the Author's scientific interests, the paper focuses mainly on the impact of the internet on cognitive functioning, with little reference to emotional and social functioning.

One of the first publications describing the internet was published in 1999 (Wallace, 1999) and it focused primarily on social functioning in the virtual world. It shall be noted that there are still more papers on this aspect of human's life than on the potential impact of modern technologies, including the internet, on cognitive functioning (Castells, 2003, 2007; Van Dijk, 2010). The public also concentrates more on the risks related to social life and emotional state that result from the pervasiveness of

electronic media. However, more and more findings indicate that using modern technologies affects cognitive functioning. Nicholas Carr (2013) presents an unequivocal viewpoint in this respect, which can be seen in the title of his book *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. So does Manfred Spitzer in his *Digital Dementia. How do we deprive ourselves and our children of reason?* Potential negative and positive consequences of using modern technologies for cognitive functioning are discussed further.

COGNITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF USING THE INTERNET

Long time spent online is commonly agreed to have numerous potentially negative consequences, such as: shallow information processing, quick attention shifts, poor skills of selecting information as regards their importance, difficulties in assessing the reliability of information, equating information with knowledge, multitasking, or finally, digital dementia (see e.g. Ledzińska, Czerniawska, 2011b; Spitzer, 2012).

At the same time, education theorists and organizers analyse the possibilities of using modern technologies to facilitate the process of learning and teaching, including sharing curriculum content or running courses *on-line*. They assume that such activities are beneficial to gaining knowledge and skills and offer practical recommendations (Hill, 2003; Petty, 2010; Tanaś, 1997). Nowadays, the majority of authors do not ask whether modern technologies shall be used in education, but how it should be done effectively (Dinevski, Radovan, 2013; Sijko, 2012). In general, information and communication technologies are defined as computer (hardware and software) and communication technologies using the latest electronic solutions (Matusiak, 2011). The variety of particular solutions used in education is enormous. The authors mention: text editors, software for brainstorming and organizing ideas, tools to gather, analyze and visualise data, software for communication and collaboration, educational multimedia, interactive educational applications, databases, internet resources, motion detection technologies (Pitler, Hubbell, Kuhn, 2015).

In her studies, Joanna Piechocka offered a different classification (2015), distinguishing: interactive boards, educational mobile applications, webinars, online tutorials and courses. These were distinguished based on the medium and the kind of user's activity. According to a survey (Batorski, 2009) and statistical data (CSO, 2015) published a few years ago, the vast majority of the Polish society uses new technologies and has access to the internet, and pupils and students admit to frequently use computers to learn. Undoubtedly, these indices are even higher nowadays. A study of Piechocka (2015) showed lack of differences as regards knowledge of various educational technologies between secondary school students and university students, yet, the latter declared to use them more often. Interestingly, the awareness of particular technologies differed considerably. For instance, 95% of secondary school students and 84.7% of university students were familiar of educational mobile applications, whereas only 9% of secondary school students and 24.7% of university students declared to have known webinars. Also the percentage of those declaring to use particular technologies varied considerably. For example, 60% of secondary school students and only 24.7% of university students had not attended online courses, interactive boards were not used by 21% and 45.9%, respectively. These examples support the thesis that changes related to the spread of new technologies are extremely rapid.

Therefore, the words of Noam Chomsky come as a warning (2012, p.37): “Education is all about developing skills of searching for what is important, about constant readiness to ask questions whether you are on the right track, regardless of what you use – computers and the internet or paper and books”. The issue of teaching how to use the internet wisely is considered further in the text.

Nevertheless, some concerns are raised about the possible negative consequences of the long-term use of electronic media for learning processes and achievements. For example, Jomon Paul, Hope M. Baker and Justin D. Cochran (2012), who conducted a study on this subject among students, identified a significant negative correlation between the time spent in social media and academic achievements. Interestingly, students having greater attention span spent less time on the internet. There are two possible directions of this relationship: either the smaller attention span promotes being online longer or being online longer negatively affects the attention span. However, not all data show a negative relationship between time spent in the digital environment and attention. Some research including people playing online suggest different relationships, described later in the article.

It is worth considering the selected empirical data on the impact of using modern technologies on cognitive functioning. Does using modern technologies influence memory processes? In a series of studies, Betsy Sparrow, Jenny Liu and Daniel Wegner, 2011 (as cited in: Mills, 2016) showed the impact of taking notes on a computer on remembering the original content. For example, they presented participants with 40 statements and informed them about the possibility to type them on a computer. Some respondents were warned that the files would be deleted. These participants remembered significantly more than those convinced that their records would remain available. Typically, people have problems with monitoring the source of information, whereas in this case, an adverse memory effect was found (cf. e.g. Jagodzińska, 2008). Previous studies have shown that in general, people remember the information better than where they got it from. In contrast, people who took notes on a computer remembered the file where they could find the information better than the information itself. In a broader sense, transactional memory has its benefits – numerous data do not have to be memorized as they can be found in external sources, e.g. in other people, in printed works or electronic media (Szpunar, 2015). Therefore, not remembering the information but knowing its location online can have positive and negative consequences. The positive consequences include relieving memory of enormous amount of data, usually of little use, which people deal with everyday. Maria Ledzińska (2009) points to the experience of informational stress emphasising the problems resulting from information overproduction. Because of the electronic media, we encounter a cognitive economic phenomenon of no need to remember “everything”. On the other hand, negative consequences include the lack of intentional cognitive efforts to remember, which may further limit the ability to use one’s own memory.

Studies on false memories suggest other unexpected consequences of using the internet. Previous data from laboratory and field studies indicated how easy it was to implant false memories (cf. Jagodzińska, 2008; Piotrowska, 2005). Numerous studies were conducted particularly in the 1990s, addressing the issue of the reliability of eyewitness testimonies and the so-called recovered memories. In general, it was concluded that the utmost caution shall be exercised as regards the trust in the accuracy of memories. The expansion of social media provoked research into the

possibility of forming false memories with the use of these media. Kimberly Fenn, Susan Ravizza, Nicholas Griffin, Mitchell Uitvlugt (2014) analysed the impact of false information presented via Twitter on previous memories. It occurred that the effect was weak and the participants had doubts about the credibility of the provided information. The authors indicate that shallow processing of information is the one that dominates when using social media, which is not conducive to creating permanent memory traces. However, such an explanation raises doubts, because usually it is the shallow processing that fosters the formation of false memories. The false fame effect would be a great example – it emerges mainly when the information is provided in a situation of divided attention (cf. e.g. Anderson, 1998; Gluck, Mercado, Myers, 2016; Jagodzińska, 2008). Perhaps other factors play a crucial role: the multitude of retrieved data, not paying attention to the information provided, or the lack of trust for certain messages.

The changes in some aspects of cognitive functioning discussed earlier raise questions about their mechanisms. Does long hours online affects brain functioning? The previously-mentioned titles of the two books on the subject (Carr, 2013; Spitzer, 2012) seem to answer this question clearly. The authors assume that the internet is a permanent and infinite source of data that is easy to obtain at any time (obviously, if an individual has access to the internet). Knowing that one can always reach for this huge and constantly expanding ocean of data, people might lose motivation either to remember them or to process them deeply. “Digital dementia” was first mentioned in Korea, where doctors described severe memory problems in young people who often used digital technologies (Carr, 2013). The term was adopted and popularised by Spitzer. In his opinion, the flood of information prevents from their deep processing, which contributes to poor cognitive activation. Thus, various neuronal circuits in the brain are stimulated insufficiently to create permanent memory traces. However, an alternative conclusion can also be drawn. The flood of information makes people deal with more data, which means they could potentially benefit from staying online longer in search for information, even if the information is processed shallowly. Yet, probably Spitzer’s claims are closer to the truth because of the characteristics of human cognitive system. First of all, the capacity of attention and working (operational) memory is limited (Nęcka, Orzechowski, Szymura, 2013). With the rapid flow of new information and the disappearance of older ones, it is not possible to concentrate only on the selected data, and thus, to process them deeply. In addition, the awareness of the availability of data online inhibits the tendency to consider them longer, because it is always possible to return to them, at least, theoretically. However, new data arrive over and over again and thus, distract from returning to previous ones and processing them deeper.

The limitations of the cognitive system are a fact, but can such a ubiquitous medium like the internet change the functioning of the brain? Internet users spend a lot of time online, the stimuli it provides are strong, diverse, but also repetitive. Considering the plasticity of the brain, it can be expected that the delivered stimulation and its processing will translate into changes in the brain activity as well. Some research indicate that prolonged use of the internet increases the brain activity, and even a fairly short, several-day training changes the level of activity, e.g. in the prefrontal cortex (see Carr, 2013). It should be assumed that such changes will take place even faster and produce a greater effect in the youngest internet users due to the lower maturity of their central nervous systems, and much more frequent contact with new technologies, both at school and in the out-of-school environment.

Some findings suggest that the internet usage can have a positive impact on cognitive development by providing numerous stimuli and interactivity (Johnson, 2010). In particular, it contributes to the acquisition of visual-spatial skills, accelerating the learning of reading. Moreover, the use of the internet is not limited to images, but it forces reading, thus positively influencing the further development of this skill.

It is also worth referring to the data on the influence of computer games on various aspects of functioning. Primarily, negative effects are considered, including the increase in aggression through priming emotions and scripts stored in memory (Anderson, Bushman, 2001) and reducing sensitivity to violence (Carnagey, Anderson, Bushman, 2007). However, one can also easily find studies that show the beneficial effects of computer games. Earlier in the text the positive impact of the internet on visual-spatial skills was mentioned. Similar relationships are also found for computer games. C. Shawn Green and Daphne Bavelier (2012) showed that people who often play action games have better visual selective attention, are more efficient in making mental rotations and allocating attention. It was also shown that players, compared to non-players, have higher achievements as regards performing multiple tasks simultaneously (Boot, Kramer, Simons, Fabiani, Gratton, 2008). However, based on their meta-analysis, Walter R. Boot, Daniel P. Blakely and Daniel J. Simons (2011) recommend caution as regards drawing far-reaching conclusions on the positive impact of games on the functioning of attention due to methodological doubts concerning some research. Nevertheless, numerous empirical data seem to confirm that playing computer or video games, besides negative effects on emotional and social functioning, may also have positive effects on cognitive development and functioning.

Considering the impact of new technologies on people's lives, the issue of multitasking shall be also discussed. The use of mobile devices in various life situations requires shifting attention between tasks, e.g. listening to lectures and reading text messages or emails. Studies on the possibility of performing two activities at the same time confirm that if one of them is automatic, doing them simultaneously does not necessarily deteriorate the performance (see e.g. the review in: Nęcka, Orzechowski, Szymura, 2013). However, this requires a long-term training. It is commonly believed that young people who have had contact with mobile devices for most of their lives are much better-prepared for multitasking than representatives of older generations. Laboratory research including simple tasks as well as studies conducted in school or university environment confirm that numerous pupils and students engage in activity on mobile devices during classes and self-study. Most results indicate the deterioration of performance in a multi-tasking situation, or at least an increase of the time needed to perform a specific task. Again, this can be explained by the limitations of the human cognitive system, having insufficient resources to successfully perform two tasks engaging thinking simultaneously. A comprehensive overview of the data on this topic can be found in the book by Jeffrey Holmes (2019). It is worth noting that in fact, there is no evidence that representatives of the younger generations are more efficient in multitasking than people of earlier generations.

How can changes in cognitive functioning resulting from long time spent online, translate into the educational role of the internet? First of all, it shall be underlined that these changes include both negative as well as positive effects. The multitude of data processed shallowly can result in excessive trust in the received information and taking unverified information for granted. Therefore, the internet is perceived as a source of true knowledge, which does not have to be verified. This might lead to val-

uing this knowledge more than the wisdom of educators and thus, questioning their competence. At the same time, the internet provides a lot easily accessible resources that can be used for deep processing and building own knowledge, with no need to use any other types of sources. Undoubtedly, the internet becomes a source of knowledge or even authority for many people. It is rightly believed that everything can be found online, but some also wrongly assume that all the information online is reliable. The latter assumption is especially worrying because it confirms lack of critical assessment of the available data.

EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE FREQUENT USE OF THE INTERNET

How does using the internet impact the emotional and social functioning? Like in the case of cognitive functioning, also here, the potentially negative consequences are commonly considered (e.g. Brignall III, Van Valey, 2005). The sense of being anonymous online encourages exhibitionism, and establishing shallow social relationships that are hardly controllable (contact can be started or terminated at any time). Limiting social relations to the virtual ones can hinder the development of social skills in real life situations, or even replace them. Online communication is fast but also brief, which provokes frequent use of schematic formulas or emoticons. Some results confirm negative impact of contacts established online on social functioning, but some others prove that virtual contacts can contribute to deepening relationships in the real world (Žurko, 2018).

It is also worth considering the issues of potentially positive effects of using new technologies on emotional and social functioning. First, the aforementioned computer games can model aggressive behavior and lead to desensitization, but they can also serve as a catharsis for some people, helping them release negative emotions in a symbolic way. Second of all, and more importantly, modern information and communication technologies require the activity of the person using them. It is up to an individual to initiate the contact, control its course or decide on its termination. The same applies to computer games, which, additionally, seem to promote determination in achieving one's goals (Adachi, Willoughby, 2017). Thus, internet user or player learns to regulate social behavior on their own and the sense of autonomy and competence, being extremely important, is strengthened (see Ryan, Deci, 2000). Thirdly, the virtual world offers both, negative and aggressive as well as positive content. For example, some computer games for children teach how to take care of pets, which promotes the desired social behavior. Fourthly, staying online does not necessarily mean loneliness or isolation, but it can contribute to establish and maintain social contacts. For example, social media might play such a role – thanks to them, many people find long-lost and unheard friends or acquaintances from near or far. Computer games requiring cooperation between players are evidenced to strengthen pro-social behavior towards other players, even if they contain aggressive content (Ewoldsen et al., 2012; Gentile et al., 2009) and to satisfy the need to be a part of the community (Stoll, Colett, 2014). Considering the above, the use of modern technologies can have numerous positive consequences for emotional and social functioning, and play a beneficial educational role.

In extreme cases, however, negative effects might occur and lead to internet addiction, which might manifest itself in various ways. One of them is the belief that being

online is a *sine qua non* for existence. “If you’re not on Facebook, you don’t exist.” As a result, people might suffer from difficulties in postponing reactions, especially those related to using electronic media. They might feel the need to be online constantly, check messages sent via the internet or a mobile phone. Social media allow for an immediate update of data. In response to restricting the access to the internet, strong negative emotional reactions might occur.

WISE USE OF THE INTERNET

Pedagogical inversion, being the younger teaching the older, is more pronounced nowadays than it used to be in the past. This results from younger generations having better digital skills and thus, their tendency to treat the older as inferior. They often underestimate the wisdom of the elderly (Google knows better ...) and do not let them into their virtual world. Older people may experience a sense of exclusion and being not adapted to modernity. Dominik Batorski (2009, p. 49) describes a digital division that “refers to the differences between those who have regular access to digital and information technologies and are able to use them effectively, and those who do not have such access”. Such a crisis is considered positively solved when the older take on the role of students, learn how to use modern technologies, and undertake digital activity together. The last leads directly to the conclusions on supporting young people in wise use of the internet.

The idea of teaching to use the internet wisely requires defining wisdom first. Jacqui Smith and Paul B. Baltes (1990) list the following characteristics of wisdom: broad life knowledge, broad procedural knowledge, life-span contextualism, and uncertainty. These might be referred to educational interactions related to using the internet. As opposed to children and teenagers, adults certainly have richer life, declarative and procedural knowledge, as well as greater chances for contextualism and coping with uncertainty. Thus, they can and should play a crucial role in teaching children and young people the approach to the internet and its content that would reduce risks and increase the chances of reaping benefits of using it. This might be possible when they use the internet together. Adults should take on the role of a critical analyst, showing that some of the data available online are true, but the false ones might be found just as easily. Young people, in turn, should use their technical skills to support the older. However, stressing the differences in the quality of data available online is not enough. It is necessary to develop the skills of information selection, criticism and deep information processing. In general, this also means there is a need for developing metacognitive competences, understood as awareness of one’s own knowledge as well as the ability to use cognitive strategies, strategies of planning, monitoring and regulating to optimize these cognitive processes (Ledzińska, Czerniawska, 2011a, 2011b).

It is essential to make young people able to distinguish between information, knowledge and wisdom. Information is like a brick that might be used to build knowledge and its accuracy shall be always carefully verified. This is not an easy task because to consider information accurate, it is necessary to have the appropriate prior knowledge. In addition, it is crucial to make a distinction between cold knowledge – the one that is scientifically verified and hot knowledge – the one acquired as a result of real-life experience. Sometimes they conflict with each other, and fake or wrong ideas or knowledge are difficult to eradicate. School should play a central role in this case

and encourage to process information deeply, but too often it does not properly fulfill this role. Shallow processing of the curriculum content results in the so-called fragile knowledge syndrome (Czerniawska, 1999), which consists of four components. First of all, the syndrome involves gaps in basic knowledge that usually result from the lack of knowledge consolidation. Secondly, it also includes dead knowledge that students cannot actually use. The third component includes naive concepts of the phenomena in the world, also known as misconceptions or synthetic models (Vosniadou, 1994). And finally, the last component refers to ritual knowledge that is useful only in the context of school education (Perkins, 1992). In the case of fragile knowledge syndrome, the possibility of using such knowledge to assess the data available online is rather problematic. What is even worse, attempts to analyze the available data having incomplete or false knowledge leads to considering them true, even if it is unjustified.

Furthermore, it is crucial to teach critical thinking, using active teaching methods, such as group discussions, problem-based teaching, etc. Numerous specific examples of such methods can be found in the generally available publications (e.g. Petty, 2010; Schwartz, Tsang, Blair, 2017). The cognitive activity of learners requires the analysis of information, referencing new information to their own prior knowledge as well as scientific data, drawing conclusions and convincing others. It should be noted, however, that the effectiveness of active methods is determined by numerous factors: the organization of education, prior knowledge, the appropriateness of the discussed problems to the current level of thinking development, individual differences, preferences ... Learning focused on learners places high demands on them because they must plan their activities very carefully and monitor the progress on an ongoing basis, ensuring that erroneous conclusions do not appear or persist. Learner-focused teaching principles are discussed further in the text.

It is also important to persuade young users that the internet is just a tool that can be used for or against the good of the individual or society. The commonly used concept of “digital world” penetrates into human consciousness making it seem like it is more than just a tool. Such deification certainly does not foster the education for a successful life “in real life”. If a young person with low skills of critical thinking believes that the virtual world is the only real one, the internet can become a “bad” educator. On the other hand, the belief that the virtual environment has positive as well as negative aspects is conducive to keeping the retrieved data in perspective, which reduces this risk.

What might be helpful when considering the wise use of the internet is cognitive approach, the one focused on the learner (Bednar, Cunningham, Duffy, Perry, 1991; Winn, 1991). The presentation of all fundamental assumptions exceeds the scope of this article, therefore, we focused on the most relevant ones as regards the discussed issue.

In contrast to the so-called conventional, “giving” education, in cognitive approach the priority is given to learners themselves and their cognitive activity, and the main goal of education is to teach how to think and act. It is not, however, about any kind of thinking or acting, but about situated cognition, anchored in a particular discipline, leading to acquiring and developing mental models relevant to the particular field of knowledge (Brown, Collins, Duguis, 1989). It is easy to indicate the usefulness of such an approach as regards the wise use of modern technologies – it is necessary to use the tools and resources used by the youth on a daily basis and that are attractive to them. Thus, teachers (but also parents) should organize numerous, diverse activities with the use of a computer or a smartphone.

As indicated previously, it is crucial to focus on the processes of learning and thinking of learners, including cognitive, affective and metacognitive processes. Cognitive processes involve processing content and lead directly to observable results: learnt facts, understanding, using the knowledge (see: Czerniawska, 1999; Dembo, 1997). Affective processes help coping with emotions and motivation, so as they facilitate the process of learning (Boekaerts, 1991). Metacognitive processes monitor and regulate the cognitive and affective processes. Even though they do not affect the outcomes of learning directly, they determine the conditions of the process of learning. Such processes include: planning, monitoring the process of learning, diagnosing problems, undertaking corrective actions (Czerniawska, 1999; Ledzińska, Czerniawska, 2011b). To refer this to teaching how to use the internet it is necessary to indicate different processes, strategies supporting these processes and ways of using them in digital environment.

Modern teaching also implies the need for a teacher to gradually relinquish the control over the learning process. Even though it is the teacher who plays a more important role in the early stages of acquiring new knowledge and skills, the learner should become his own teacher as he progresses. Therefore, teachers are responsible for showing learners how to exercise internal control and regulate learning processes (Palincsar, Brown, 1984; Vermunt, 1998; Volet, 1991). Such a principle is supported by the concept of the zone of proximal development of Lev Vygotsky (1971, 1978, 1989). Teaching shall aim at learners' independence in the wise use of the internet, and not at constant controlling the activity of young people.

Seemingly, the next postulate seems inconsistent with the demands placed on education. It refers to producing constructive frictions, i.e. provoking situations of lack of harmony between the demands related to the process of teaching and the used methods of learning (Vermunt, Verloop, 1999). Disharmony might foster the development if the given tasks require using different strategies than those used previously. An experienced teacher would easily find "online" tasks unknown to their students, making them learn new methods of acting.

It is crucial to pay attention to learners' motivation and promoting their cognitive motivation. Teachers should be aware of various motives for learning, be able to diagnose them, and propose open tasks that would encourage learners to choose the topic and the method themselves. People have various interests and that should be used in teaching. If learners want to spend a lot of time online, this should be taken into consideration to make learning attractive. Offering learners to express their own interests in the way they prefer, e.g. using computer presentation, indicates their taking responsibility for their own learning and thus, increases its effectiveness as well as students' motivation (McCombs, 1991).

The offered rules and methods are not the only ones available, but using them will considerably enhance the wise use of the internet.

FINAL REMARKS

Living in the times of the expansion of new technologies, pervasive internet and mobile devices pose new challenges to human's functioning, including cognitive and social functioning. The presented data indicate that their impact cannot be unambiguously considered positive or negative. There is no conclusive evidence that frequent

immersion in the digital world deteriorates the ability to think, even though many cues might suggest so. It should be noted that electronic media also have positive cognitive consequences that might be observed among adults as well as children. The older generations might find it comforting that even though they were not born knowing computers backwards and forwards, the potential interference caused by multitasking also affects the younger generation.

Another problem relates to cultural differences. One of the commonly considered dimensions is the individualism versus collectivism (Hofstede, 2000). In individualistic cultures the highest priority is given to the individual, individual needs and their realization. For example, the United States of America are this kind of culture. Collectivist cultures, in turn, e.g. in Asian countries, groups and their good are considered more important, and more attention is paid to the wisdom of older members of society. It might be assumed that in the latter type of culture, it would be more difficult for the internet to become the educator. However, the data on the frequency of using the internet and the number of people addicted to the internet indicate that it is not true. This seems particularly distressing considering the differences in perceiving abilities and wisdom in different cultures. Collectivist cultures praise developing skills through learning and working. They also underline the meaning of learning based on life experience, also the experience of other members of society. Wise are those who listen to the older and who use their previous knowledge. Individual cultures, in turn, consider skills as inborn and value originality, uniqueness and criticism higher. Wise are those who question the current knowledge and draw new conclusions (Greenfield, 1997). Since adverse consequences of using the internet are particularly severe in collectivist cultures, this might suggest the erosion of some traditional values, the internet becoming a mentor and internet users subordinating to what the internet offers. Thanks to the recognition of criticism, members of individual cultures have greater chance to get resistant to this impact. The indicated problem requires in-depth reflection as regards designing the activities teaching the wise use of the internet.

Finally, a “cunning” plan might be formulated – to defeat the enemy with his own weapons. Since the pervasiveness of modern technologies has become a fact and there are no prospects of reducing their role, they should be promoted in education as widely as possible, massively affecting learners by demonstrating proven knowledge and encouraging them to verify everything that appears online. Parents and teachers, grab your laptops, tablets, telephones and all other devices, and be the first ones to walk with them in front of the young!

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Transl. Aleksandra Jacukowicz

ADAM ANCZYK, HALINA GRZYMAŁA-MOSZCZYŃSKA,
AGNIESZKA KRZYSZTOF-ŚWIDERSKA, JACEK PRUSAK

Ignatianum Academy in Krakow, Institute of Psychology

MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORK OF PSYCHOLOGISTS: ETHICS AND PRACTICE IN A CONTEXT OF CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS AND THERAPEUTIC WORK

Abstract: The article contains a review of basic notions connected with the consequences of an increasing multiculturalism of Polish society for the professional ethics of a psychologist in a clinical context. In the first part the issues connected with a psychological diagnosis of people of different cultural background are presented. Also, a notion of a culturally sensitive diagnosis and a specificity of interpersonal communication in a multicultural environment are described. In the second part, issues regarding psychotherapy and psychological help for people of different

cultural backgrounds, with a particular attention drawn to a therapy of families culturally diverse, where the rules of communicative school of the system therapy gain an additional value are described. In both parts of the article, a particular attention is given to the contemporary understanding of the notion of cultural competency in the work of psychologists-practitioners.

Keywords: cultural factors in psychological diagnosis, psychological diagnosis, ethics of psychologists' profession, intercultural communication, cultural differences.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the socio-cultural perspective on research into the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders has contributed to the fact that within behavioural sciences it has become clear that patterns of both physical and psychological disorders in a given society can change over time with changes in socio-cultural conditions. It is now explicitly stated that mental disorders are defined only in relation to cultural, social and family norms and values (APA, 2013). The influence of urbanization, modernization and industrialization processes on cultural variables, which have thus become multifaceted (Hogan, 2007; Wakefield, Garner, Pehrsson, Tyler, 2010), is also emphasized. These discoveries introduced new, important threads to contemporary views on mental disorders, which in consequence placed the need for psychologists and psychother-

Correspondence address: Adam Anczyk, e-mail: anczyk.adam@ignatianum.edu.pl, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6906-3104>; Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2751-3204>; Agnieszka Krzysztof-Świdorska ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0819-0350>; Jacek Prusak ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3204-2251>.

apists to develop a new level of self-awareness and new requirements for their knowledge (Wakefield et al., 2010, p. 2).

First, it has been shown that despite the occurrence of certain universal symptoms and their patterns, socio-cultural factors most often decide which disorders will develop, what form they will take, how often they will occur and how they will occur. Cultural differences may also apply to the prognosis or effects of mental disorders (Butcher, Hooley, Mineka, 2017). Second, it was found that in addition to the influence of culture on the symptoms of individual disorders, there are also cultural differences in the entire symptom patterns between cultures of different parts of the world referred to as “folk illnesses”, “cultural illnesses” (cultural illnesses, culture specific illnesses) that cannot be referred to biomedical disease entities.

These diseases are sometimes specific to a given culture, sometimes for a wider geographical and ethnic region, and sometimes their counterparts can also be found in distant cultures (Penkala-Gawęcka, 1994). The term ‘culture-bound syndromes’ (Simons, Hughes, 1985) was created to describe them, which nowadays in the classification of mental health disorders (DSM-5; ICD-10) is called culture-related syndromes (Shahrokh, Hales, 2009). In addition, DSM-5 also defines cultural idiom of distress, i.e. culturally embedded terms for suffering, as well as cultural explanation or perceived cause, which allows the diagnosis to cover the entire spectrum of psychopathological conditioned phenomena culturally (APA, 2013). According to the authors of DSM-5, these three concepts include cultural ways of understanding and describing disease experiences that may occur during a clinical meeting.

CULTURAL COMPETENCES OF A PSYCHOLOGIST

In addition to the diagnosis taking into account cultural issues postulated, among others by APA as a part of psychological assistance, talk began about therapy sensitive to cultural differences, also called multicultural, transcultural therapy, taking into account cultural differences (Mohamed, 2013). Collecting data from reports presented at the Western Association of Counsellor Education and Supervision (WACES) Conference 2008 and Association for Counsellor Education and Supervision (ACES) Conference 2009, the American Counselling Association published a model of analysis of cultural spheres particularly relevant for the development of competences of persons dealing with psychological counselling in various fields (Wakefield et al., 2010). The publication of official guidelines of this kind demonstrates the importance of the issue. It emphasizes again, referring to earlier literature, the importance of knowledge of research in the field of specific cultural dimensions. The important role of critical reasoning and self-awareness as well as improvement of diagnostic capabilities in a multicultural environment was pointed out. This is important not only for effective practice, but also for social trust among representatives of other fields towards the profession of a psychologist (Wakefield et al., 2010). Therefore, according to these guidelines, in an era of a diverse and open society, a culturally unaware psychologist, and even less ethnocentric, is doomed to lose social respect. According to the authors of the publication (The Critical Counsellor Domain Model, in short CCDM provides a structure for self-analysis in the context of the development of culturally competent psychological counselling (Wakefield et al., 2010).

Applying a measure of culture to the relationship of psychological or therapeutic help between a psychologist and a client / patient is a complex process. Both clients / patients and psychologists at any latitude can be influenced by many different cultures. In the era of globalization, migration and new media, it cannot be assumed that each of the participants in this relationship was shaped by one culture, undisturbed by other influences. The same applies to the context of treatment, which can also reflect a mosaic of diverse cultural influences (Wakefield et al., 2010). Therefore, challenges related to the clinical evaluation of patients in hospitals and outpatient clinics, as well as clients of therapeutic offices coming from other cultures, concern both the features of the test tools themselves and socio-cultural factors, such as relationships, behaviours and types of psychopathology occurring in a given culture (Butcher, Hooley and Mineka, 2017). The growing number of clients / patients with a two- or multi-ethnic identity should be taken into account (Diller, 2007). What is more, it should sensitize professionals to the dangerous temptation to maintain traditional principles of contact with clients developed on the basis of predominantly Eurocentric ideas, perceived as leading to best practices (Wakefield et al., 2010, p. 2).

Psychologists experience various difficulties in contact with clients / patients from foreign cultures. The authors of this publication draw attention to communication problems and problems resulting from a lack of understanding of clients' worldview, including their values (Wakefield et al., 2010, p. 3). Cultural norms exert a great influence on the way people seek help and on the factors that determine what is considered problematic in a given culture, and thus requires medical intervention. It is therefore very important for the psychologist to be aware of issues that may be relevant when making clinical assessments and diagnoses of people from different cultures, and to use test procedures tailored to the needs of such clients and having confirmed psychometric accuracy. These skills fall under the so-called cultural competence of the psychologist (Hays, 2008) and determine the professionalism of the clinician (Gabbard et al., 2013). Therefore, two areas of special importance in psychological assistance and therapy sensitive to cultural differences, to which we would like to pay special attention in the following part of the text are: (1) language and manner of communication with the client, and (2) dynamics of power in the therapeutic relationship (Mohamed, 2013).

Therefore, the literature on the subject speaks of the following competences (knowledge and skills) to provide psychological help and culturally sensitive therapy:

- awareness of the assumptions that the specialist brings to the therapeutic process (including recognition of all prejudices, attitudes, stereotypes and manifestations of racism both in himself and in the society in which the therapeutic activity takes place);
- knowledge of the history of one's own culture and knowledge about other cultures;
- knowledge of the history of oppression and racism, which is the context of working with clients from different cultures;
- ability to function in various cultural contexts;
- willingness to verify and change one's beliefs and attitude on issues related to racism and culture;
- dedication and perseverance in conducting anti-discrimination activities (Mohamed, 2013, p. 413).

In turn, Derald W. Sue with colleagues (1995, pp. 624–644) indicates the following competences of a culturally sensitive therapist:

- a sense of comfort in dealing with clients of a different race, from a different ethnic group or culture or with a different worldview;
- understanding the impact of race, culture and ethnicity on personality development, choice of profession, mental disorder, as well as how to seek help and choosing a therapeutic approach;
- awareness of one's own negative emotional reactions towards certain social groups, which may adversely affect clients or patients. The therapist should be prepared for the fact that he will have to confront his beliefs and attitudes with the beliefs and attitudes of clients (patients) from other cultures;
- recognizing one's own restrictions on professional competences and skills;
- readiness to consult with healers or religious or spiritual leaders in cooperation with clients (patients) who belong to different cultures.

It should also be emphasized that professionalism within cultural competences also means resistance to excessive submission to cultural expectations and therefore exceeding certain ethical professional boundaries (see Gabbard et al., 2013). Norwegian cultural anthropologist Unni Wikan (2002) conducted very important analyses in this regard, discussing the attitudes of Norwegian society towards cultural practices not accepted in Norway in immigrant groups (circumcision of girls, child marriages). These behaviours were sometimes left unsaid or tolerated “in the name of respect for the specificity of a given culture” of a given group of immigrants. Such attitudes, sometimes found in some European countries, show a dead end to social practice, which treats culture as a reason for accepting any behaviour. In this context, Article 3 of the Code of Ethics of the Psychologist of the Polish Psychological Association, concerning the primacy of Human Rights over culture, is gaining importance (PTP, 2018).

TOWARDS A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE DIAGNOSIS

The basis of culturally sensitive therapy and psychological counselling is undoubtedly culturally sensitive diagnosis (Guindon, Sobhany, 2001). The American Counselling Association also indicates the need for a diagnosis that takes into account the cultural context (Wakefield et al., 2010). Statistics show a growing need to develop skills in this area. James N. Butcher, Jill M. Hooley, Susan Mineka (2017) state in their research that in recent years more and more psychological opinions have been made for clients of various ethnic backgrounds. This is due to the growing number of immigrants and refugees both in Poland and in other European countries that require such an assessment for the needs of medical treatment or legal proceedings (e.g. Poland in 2017 issued the most residence permits for non-EU immigrants from among European Union countries: “In 2017, one out of five first residence permits was issued in Poland (683 000, or 22% of total permits issued in the EU)” (EUROSTAT, 2018). Many of them have difficulty adapting to new living conditions in a culturally different environment.

People culturally unsuitable for the environment in which they live receive tests and interviews that indicate more serious disorders (Okazaki, Okazaki, Sue, 2009). For example, this may happen in the case of Asians, in whom a high level of collectivism can lead to a diagnosis of dependent personality or in the case of psychotic disorders in members of cultures, where belief in the possibility of ghost interference in the

physical world is more common (Anczyk, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2013). Therefore, it is very important for the clinician to accurately assess which environment the client (patient) comes from, what values and what attitudes he presents – then it becomes possible to reduce the negative impact of these factors on the decision making process regarding diagnosis and treatment (Wakefield et al., 2010).

For example, the psychological suitability of a test for a given population should be determined, because the sense or cultural significance of individual test elements should be similar for different cultural groups, and the standards adopted for comparing clients (patients) – appropriate. When using tests developed in Western culture, factors such as the client's (patient's) language, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, religion, and sexual orientation should be taken into account. To assess whether a version adapted to the conditions of another culture measures the same variables, a psychologist in the name of professionalism should know the available research results on the use of the tool in the target population. In addition, clinicians must also pay attention to the reliability of the test tools used and their impact on clients or patients from various ethnic and cultural groups.

For example, the formulation of test items may have completely different emotional overtones depending on the culture of origin of the subject. As a consequence, representatives of individual groups may achieve different or even out-of-norm results on individual test scales (see Butcher, Han, 1996; Butcher, Tsai, Coehlo, Nezami, 2006; Hays, 2008). The Code of Ethics of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2002) therefore recommends that in order to treat people from a different cultural background or ethnic minority fairly and effectively, psychologists should take into account various factors that may affect the way the test is resolved. It is important that any aggravating factors do not affect reasoning in the overall assessment process. For example, it can be a way of understanding and context of individual concepts, how to perceive space, and even the ability to solve a test. Not to mention such seemingly obvious matters as other traits of the assessed person, such as situational, linguistic and cultural differences that may affect their judgments or limit the accuracy of their interpretation.

Diagnosis is therefore the beginning of a common path of a psychologist or psychotherapist and patient towards agreed goals. It should be absolutely remembered that the correct purpose of diagnosis is help, which in itself may avoid many ethically questionable strategies in a diagnostic situation. For example, provoking undesirable emotional reactions. Of course, the diagnosis, especially psychiatric or psychological, in terms of cultural differences is much more difficult and carries a greater risk of abuse. The most obvious of these is the assessment of customer behaviour from an ethnocentric perspective, which is associated with a lack of awareness of the relativism of cultural norms.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE CLIENT / PATIENT IN THE AGE OF MULTICULTURALISM

The means to achieve the goal of diagnosis is to obtain information that allows adequate treatment. Language is the first barrier here, which is only partly solved by the knowledge of adequate words or the help of an interpreter. It is worth remembering that the presence of an interpreter is the third element of a diagnostic meeting and,

like any other element, has a significant impact on the interaction effect, even by its very presence or possible change in the atmosphere of the meeting (de Barbaro, 1999; Wądołowska, 2014).

It should also be remembered that diagnostic work with the interpreter has its own specificity and rules that must be followed. The quality of cooperation and the establishment of an alliance with the interpreter affect the quality of communication in the process of diagnosis and patient assistance, which in turn affects the quality of the diagnosis itself and the effectiveness of assistance. It is also worth remembering that the interpreter can also act as a cultural consultant, which can be a truly invaluable help (Wądołowska, 2014). The diagnosis, no matter what sphere of functioning it is, is always a transition from the phenomenon to the system (Wciórka, 2011).

In other words, everything that happens in the diagnostician's office and is experienced by him is a diagnosis base in which we finally group the symptoms to assign them to diagnostic units under the current classification and based on this classification we determine possible ways of help. Therefore, verifying the understanding of observed and experienced phenomena is the first step to effective help. Consultation, not only linguistic, but also cultural, understanding phenomena taking place in the comfort of the study can make it more adequate. In the process of diagnosis – therefore the communication situation – in addition to words alone, we are dealing with the language context and its cultural semantic layer. An inseparable feature of interpersonal communication is its multilevelness and complexity. And so we can come across its actual level, where exchange is free, instrumental, where the people involved pursue specific goals and the affective level, accompanied by a higher level of involvement and emotional exchange (Dobek-Ostrowska, 1999).

From the point of view of cognitive psychology, we can consider various processes involved in communication: thinking, coding and decoding a message (Shannon, Weaver, 1964). In interpersonal communication, one can also speak of verbal and non-verbal levels (Nęcki, 1992). Interpersonal communication is not only about information exchange. It is also an exchange at the symbolic level, which produces specific effects and leads to a series of feedback (Budzyńska-Dawidowski, 1999). Therefore, it also has its clear systemic aspect – thus affecting many levels of social reality organization (Drożdżowicz, 1999). It is because of the possible effects not only for individuals but also for their entire groups that interpersonal communication has an important ethical dimension. The importance of the ethical dimension of appropriate communication by participants in psychological procedures is indicated by the Psychologist's Code of Ethics (PTP, 2018). Points regarding the need for clear information on procedures and results in the process of intercultural communication gain additional context.

The systemic dimension of interpersonal communication clearly corresponds to the issue of its context, in the sense of the influence of the social environment, but also in the sense of the cognitive context understood as a certain baggage of experience. Both understandings of the context include the so-called cultural context that enables accurate interpretation (decoding) of the message in a given culture. Culture carries with it a certain system of meanings and symbols shared by a given community (Hańderek, 2015). Therefore, the message has a symbolic dimension, inherent and necessary for its understanding. In some cultures, it is the context that determines the means of communication or the choice of language used (Matsumoto, 2007).

All these levels, aspects and processes between interlocutors or their groups are important for understanding the nature of intercultural communication, also in the

psychologist's office. In addition, migration experience, as a baggage of specific and often very difficult experiences, seems to complicate interpersonal communication. Knowledge of the language, which allows coding and decoding information, is the easiest barrier to cross. However, it should be remembered that language is, in its subtle layer, also a carrier of values characteristic for a given culture, and also in itself plays a culture-forming role (Chiu, Leong, Kwan, 2007). However, what really challenges us can be discovered beyond words. Classical cultural competence in the field of communication seems to be favoured not only by knowledge of cultural differences, but also by the knowledge of the complexity of interpersonal communication in general (Sue, Constantine, 2007). At the interface of these two areas of knowledge, awareness of ethical challenges of interpersonal communication is born in the era of growing multiculturalism of European societies, including Poland.

There are many challenges especially when interpersonal communication takes place at the instrumental level – individual persons or groups have specific intentions, pursue specific goals, which may or may not be supported by cooperation or agreement. It seems that neither free nor affective exchange carries such a high risk of communication abuse. An example of an unobvious instrumental situation can be the situation of using counselling or psychotherapy, where the apparent convergence of goals can be accompanied by completely different, culturally conditioned, but also related to the cognitive context – baggage of experiences – their understanding (Stangierska, Horst-Sikorska, 2007). Patient or client comes for help. An advisor or psychotherapist wants to provide this help. And here comes the first communication difficulty, and thus the ethical challenge. Understanding what “help” is and what it is not, and what its sanctioned cultural boundaries in a particular context can be very different if they use a different system of meanings, patterns of behaviour and values. It can also be said that often the cultural difference “takes place not in space, but in time” – a world in which one generation grows up is a world completely different from the one that shaped the other. This kind of look at cultural differences opens the way to a broader understanding of cultural competence as the ability to deal with all the differences, often of a much less obvious nature (Chiu, Hong, 2018; Hansen, Pepitone-Arreola-Rockwell, Greene, 2000, p. 653). The importance of an appropriate attitude towards cultural differences is also indicated in article 4 of the Polish Code of Ethics of a Psychologist (PTP, 2018).

RELATION OF HELP AND AUTHORITY DYNAMICS

The relationship of helping a person from another culture brings many specific, potential disturbances in the communication process related to stereotypes or ideas about other cultures (Wakefield et al., 2010). The basic issue is the potentially unconscious ethnocentric attitude of the diagnostician, which, although natural at some stage of contact, at a subtle level may interfere with the relationship of help (Barzykowski, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Dzida, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Kosno, 2013). Assessing other cultures from your own perspective can lead not only to a lack of real understanding and therapeutic alliance, but even to a more severe diagnosis. Where we are accompanied by a sense of superiority, we go beyond the relationship of help, and even unconsciously and unknowingly enter into the relationship of domination over another person.

The traditionally understood goal of psychotherapy and psychological help is the good of the patient or client. And this can be understood in many culturally shaped as well as very individual ways. Does the psychologist have the right to help the patient in violation of his understanding of help and using his own definition of “patient’s good”? In the context of multiculturalism or modern value pluralism, the answer is not clear. The right of recipients of psychological assistance to their own definition of good and happiness is an important subject of discussion in the literature on the subject (Sikora, Bogatyńska-Kucharska, Szafranski, 2017).

Issues seemingly clear in the context of multiculturalism can become a challenge: not everyone values their own comfort, which in the world of “Western” individualism seems so obvious. Communication, which comes from the point of view of collectivist values, may use other meanings, if only because these values affect the scope of freedom of expression or openness to new ideas (Hitchcock, 1994). These values define what “I” means and what “we” means for a given person. In this context, it is easy to confuse the cultural difference with tendencies to excessive dependence on the environment or even with some kind of difficulty at the level of sense of identity. In addition, it should also be noted how the so-called communication issues in psychotherapy are influenced by the so called high- or low-context culture – emphasis placed on verbal or non-verbal elements of communication (Matsumoto, 2007).

Culture is also a source of communicative behaviour. What in one cultural perspective is an important context for the words spoken, in another is just an information noise that should be ignored for the sake of understanding between the parties to the discourse (Głodowski, 2006). The counsellor, and especially the psychotherapist, must therefore pay special attention to controlling the non-verbal aspects of his communication with the client or patient, especially when dealing with a person from a high context culture. In high context cultures, it is mainly appropriate behaviours under certain conditions that form the content of the message. Unaware of this difference, a psychologist or psychotherapist can become a proverbial elephant in a china shop. Apart from information outside the language, he can cross the customer’s borders without even knowing it.

Therefore, the key to agreement with the client or patient and joint implementation of the objectives agreed in this discourse seems to be high self-awareness, but also awareness of the complexity of communication in the conditions of multiculturalism, as well as its importance for the functioning of individuals and entire social groups as various types of interconnected systems (Budzyna-Dawidowski, 1999). In some respects, this property is called the cultural competence of a person dealing professionally with help (Kwiatkowska, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2008). More philosophically, we can talk about a kind of going beyond our own cultural conditions to meet another person, where dialogue has a community-forming dimension, because it is a form of joint search for values (Drózd, 2015; Kłoczowski, 2006).

Problems in communication with the patient may be an incentive to supervise possible diagnostic and therapeutic problems. Ethnocentrism, or the often stereotypical perception of representatives of other cultures, may hide in its core the problem for deeper supervision work, as well as its own therapeutic work. No therapist is free from the individual cognitive context of his own experience and it should be subject to constant reflection. Without this reflection, in the diagnosis process you can mistake information noise for relevant contextual information or assign completely different, culturally or relatively conditioned meaning to information flowing from the patient (Kaslow, 2004).

An anecdotic, though true example, in psychodynamic psychotherapy is confusing a sense of humour, which is a mature but culturally specific defence mechanism, with cheerfulness, which can be a symptom of psychosis. This can happen when the diagnostician did not understand the joke told by the client / patient, and at the same time did not have sufficient cultural competence to draw attention to his own cultural background and to question his understanding of the statement he heard. Namely – in the situation cited – a healthy person from a different cultural background almost received a diagnosis of psychosis.

The approach most frequently mentioned in the literature on the subject to the diagnosis of a patient from a different culture is quite obvious – the clinician must acquire knowledge about the patient's cultural background in order to be able to approach it competently. If such competences are lacking, it is suggested that during meetings with a given client (patient) he should ask for instruction in this matter (Gabbard et al., 2013). However, the cultural competence of the psychologist in the role of a diagnostician is understood not only as knowledge about differences and their possible consequences. It is also the ability to reflect on one's own cultural background, which, supported by language and cultural consultations, as well as a deeper supervision consultation, would allow to avoid various types of threats. The focus of attention should be on awareness of the primary purpose of the diagnosis, which is help free from the desire to dominate resulting from unknowing and natural ethnocentrism (Barzykowski et al., 2013).

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING AND THERAPY TOWARDS THE CHALLENGES OF MULTICULTURALISM

The effectiveness of psychological counselling and therapy depends to a large extent on whether a specialist can create together with a client (patient) a bond based on mutual trust and willingness to cooperate (Cooper, 2010). To obtain cultural competence, clinicians must refer to a particular model of conduct. One of them is cultural awareness and sensitivity, which is an honest attempt to see that each client (patient) has grown in a specific cultural context that must be taken into account when creating his overall profile. In this case, DSM-5 (APA, 2013) proposed a structured interview diagram that focuses on understanding the patient (client) approach to their own problems.

Interview on Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI, Polish version see Krzysztof-Świdorska, 2015) contains sixteen questions that the clinician can use during the process of evaluating the patient (client) to obtain information on the potential impact of the culture from which the patient (client) is on decisions regarding his mental state. These are questions about the attitude of the client (patient) to his current problems, about his perception of the influence of other people on his problems and about how the culture from which it originates can affect his ability to cope with the hardships experienced. In addition, the interview also includes questions about the client's (patient's) experience related to seeking help in currently worrying problems within their own culture. The purpose of the interview is to try to find out the views of the subject on their own disorders from their cultural perspective, without labelling these problems from the diagnostician's perspective.

Another model of clinical management is the so-called cultural empathy (Gabbard et al., 2013), which consists in authentic appreciation of the client (patient) experience

gained on a life path, different from the path taken by the clinician. Mentalizing the inner and outer world of another person is the basic skill that a clinician must have if he wants to be a good specialist in assessment, diagnosis and psychological help. For in order to see the point of view of another person without undue judgment or hidden disdain, one must go beyond one's prejudices and narcissism. In this model, great emphasis is placed on developing ongoing awareness of how at any time the interaction between the clinician and the client (patient) their cultural experiences interact, or – using the language of psychoanalysis – on culturally sensitive transference and countertransference analysis, and resistance (Mohamed, 2013).

According to some theoretical concepts, focused on less directive methods of working with clients, both psychoanalytical and humanistic, therapists should wait to raise certain issues until clients take up the topic themselves. Others, in turn, emphasize that it is for therapists to indicate the differences between them and clients (patients), and thus to encourage them to talk about this subject while marking the asymmetrical division of power in the therapeutic relationship. It is believed that therapists who work through these issues will be able to cooperate more creatively with people from other cultures (Mohamed, 2013).

FAMILY THERAPY AS A SPECIAL CHALLENGE IN THE AGE OF MULTICULTURALISM

In the context of therapy, the issue of culture is connected with the issue of family in at least two ways. First, the family is the environment in which the culture-forming process takes place (Dyczewski, 2003). Culture is transmitted, revised and reproduced in the family and other social systems and institutions (APA, 2013). Secondly, the multicultural context of diagnosis and therapy, as well as the ethical dilemmas arising from it, also affect the process of diagnosis and therapy of families, where, especially according to representatives of the communication school that has developed as part of systemic therapy, communication problems are behind almost every experienced difficulty (Harwas-Napierała, 2014).

The media example of how seemingly obvious concepts are culturally conceived in relation to the family is the situation of Polish families in Norway. Understanding the good of the child in the local cultural context is highly individualized, while in Poland, even in the context of the letter of the law, it is closely linked to the family system in which the child develops and grows towards the ability to perform various social roles (Krzysztof-Świdorska, 2018). The consequence of this difference is the choice of how to help the child. In the Norwegian cultural context, it is easier to decide to move a child to another family, who will take care of him, ensuring him an optimal level of development during the period of work on improving family conditions. In the Polish context, on the other hand, help for a child is implemented through the support that his whole family receives, of which he is a part.

The role of the psychologist in supporting a culturally diverse family can be metaphorically defined as the role of the “interpreter of emotions” that may appear in various contexts of family life. This metaphor is even more important as part of a communicative approach to family therapy, in which each gesture, act or situation carries a message and leads to feedback in the system, which is the family (Budzyńska-Dawidowski, 1999). Thus, all behaviours generated by family members are not only information for other

family members, but also carry a certain emotional load, which also causes their interaction in a way that makes it impossible to distinguish between effect and cause. The own psychological state of its individual members is also information about the importance of a given behaviour. In a monocultural family it is so subtle that it is almost imperceptible, and in a multicultural family it can be a real challenge.

Both intercultural psychology and modern family psychology based on a systemic approach lead us to the same conclusion: the correct reading of the meanings of behaviour within the family is the only way to its good functioning and development. The metaphor of the psychologist in support of a culturally diverse family as an “interpreter of emotions” shows that a psychologist working in the field of assistance to a multicultural family is subject to all these rules and restrictions that apply to interpreters working in providing psychological assistance to foreign-language persons from a different culture (Wądołowska, 2014). Therefore, he should take into account the moral differences in understanding the context of the utterance and giving them meanings that occur between the cultures of individual family members as well as those cultures and his own culture. The latter is very important not only to avoid misunderstandings, but also to avoid the trap of ethnocentrism as a natural response, especially in the case of multicultural counselling (Barzykowski et al., 2013). It should also be noted that in certain cultural configurations – when the psychologist shares the culture of origin with one of the family members – the risk of entanglement on one side of potential conflicts increases extremely, and therefore it is more difficult for the psychologist to maintain neutrality and position of a helping and accompanying professional family.

Reflection on one’s own culture and its limitations may also have the value of a model of behaviour in the situation of intercultural differences, that is be a kind of standard. Within certain limits, it can therefore be open to people whom the psychologist provides help – we can talk to clients and patients about what makes us different. The boundaries of these conversations are related to the demarcation between reflection on one’s own culture and personal reflection. The latter should be kept for the most part during supervision meetings.

It can therefore be said that working with a multicultural family requires even more self-reflection and better self-control than psychological work with a family from one’s own culture. This is undoubtedly a significant part of the so-called cultural competence related to openness in situations of different types of differences (Hansen, Pepitone-Arreola-Rockwell, Greene, 2000). Children, whose identity is built by parents who are educationally aware, become richer and better integrated in terms of diversity, which prepares them to function in conditions of constantly growing cultural diversity (Schwartz et al., 2009).

When working with a family, especially with a multicultural family, some awareness of the systemic importance of their role as a psychologist is also extremely important. A psychologist, as a person with his own cognitive context, that is a certain baggage of experience and his own cultural background, never remains indifferent to the family, even with great importance attached to his own neutrality and professionalism (de Barbaro, 1999). It becomes, or at least should become, an additional element of the system, affecting it in a subtle, non-directive and thus extremely effective way. The psychologist, understanding his role as a kind of translator of otherness and a companion of a common path, does not show a tendency to exceed the limits of family intimacy and privacy, as well as to impose his vision of well-being of the family system or the nature of assistance provided.

It should be noted that these are current standards for working with the family in general. However, in a multicultural situation it is much more difficult to fulfil them. Especially that they require a huge cultural self-awareness, which is consistently followed by humility, mindfulness and sensitivity to different perceptions of reality resulting from different values (Hitchcock, 1994). It is the maintenance of the role of such a “interpreter of emotions” that can appear in various contexts of family life, is the greatest challenge of working with a multicultural family. In a certain way, though not sufficient for the needs of clients with a different culture, it mentions respect for differences, including different value systems, point 4 of the current Code of Ethics of a Psychologist (PTP, 2018).

SUMMARY

Cultural competences enable an accurate diagnosis and increase the effectiveness of treatment. Sensitivity to cultural issues improves the level of sensitivity to the point of view of a person seeking psychological help and strengthens the therapeutic alliance. Thanks to cultural competences, the clinician’s understanding of phenomena such as stigmatization, norms, differences, pathologies and deviations is sharpened, and thus clinical knowledge is broadened and the professionalism of services rendered. Cultural competences also allow for a better understanding of the various ways of functioning of the human psyche and the condition of a person who, seeking help, reported a specific problem to a mental health professional.

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Transl. Joanna Siemieniuk

DOMINIKA WIŚNIEWSKA

The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Institute of Psychology

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CONTEXTS OF DIAGNOSIS OF HEARING CHILDREN OF DEAF PARENTS

Abstract: Ethical and methodologically correct diagnosis of a hearing child of Deaf parents requires a specialist with extensive knowledge. In every society there are people who use the visual-spatial language – they are deaf people. They are perceived by the majority as disabled people, less frequently as a cultural minority. The adoption of a particular attitude towards the perception of deafness determines the context of the psychologist's assessment. Diagnosis in such a specific situation should

be viewed from the perspective of a child hearing as a bi-cultural person, a descendant of a Deaf parent – a representative of the Deaf culture and himself a psychologist representing the cultural majority of hearing people

Keywords: Kids of Deaf Adults, diagnosis of hearing children of Deaf parents, intercultural differences, Deaf culture, ethical aspects of the study of hearing children of deaf parents.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the widespread phenomenon of migration and emigration of minority and ethnic groups, the debate on the cultural competences of psychologists is becoming vivid (Boski, 2009; Hays, 2008). In addition to knowledge about the standards of psychological diagnosis, rules for conducting test and questionnaire studies, knowledge of psychological theories, developmental and clinical psychology, in some cases the knowledge of the culture from which the recipient of the diagnosis originates is the key to proper understanding of the client and his problems (Wiśniewska, 2012). Under Polish conditions, difficulties have already been described and forms of adequate support for the development of ethnic minority children, e.g. Roma (cf. Barzykowski, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Dzida, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, Kosno, 2011; Krzyżanowscy, 2011; Mirga, Łój, 2013), children of foreigners (Błaszczewska, 2010), children of refugees (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2000; Nowak, 2015).

However, the needs of hearing children of Deaf parents are still unrecognized – KODA (abbreviated from Kids of Deaf Adults, hearing children of deaf parents, up to the age of 17). There are still few descriptions in the literature about the belonging and cultural identity of these children. 90% of deaf couples have hearing children (Preston, 1994). Their natural cultural environment is the culture of the Deaf, with visual-spatial sensitivity, with the dominance of visual perception of the world, and

above all with Polish sign language (abbreviated PJM) as a communication tool. In the public awareness, KODA are absent. There is no data on the size of this group. Nor are the difficulties encountered in the education system recorded. Knowledge about experiences, traumas, unmet needs comes from interviews with adult hearing people of Deaf parents (Children / Child of Deaf Adults, CODA, adults, hearing children raised by deaf parents) (Bartnikowska, 2010; Preston, 1994).

As recipients of the services of psychologists and psychotherapists, they are bimodal, bilingual, with a dual identity. However, a psychologist wishing to conduct a professional and ethical psychological diagnosis will find it difficult to obtain comprehensive information on the specifics of KODA development and cultural nuances relevant to clinical inference. Due to the fact that a child who speaks superficially and does not differ from hearing peers gets into the office, it is easy to succumb to the Eurocentric idea of traditional contact and diagnosis principles (Wakefield, Garner, Pehrsson, Tyler, 2010; Wiśniewska, 2019a).

The principles of professional psychological diagnosis in intercultural situations were described by Katarzyna Stemplewska-Żakowicz (2011). It consists of, among others identification of the cultural context with which the person comes into contact with the clinician (in the case of KODA, a child raised in a culture marginalized and devalued by the majority), analysis of the impact of culture on the test-diagnostician relationship (a psychologist may be perceived by KODA as a representative of the majority culture, discriminating the deaf parents), awareness of own fears and stereotypes towards representatives of another culture (lack of knowledge or personal beliefs of a psychologist about Deaf people, Deaf culture, Polish sign language). In the case of the Deaf community, it is easy to find ethnocentrism – the belief that the culture of hearing people is common and more valuable than the culture of Deaf people (Benedict, Sass-Lehrer, 2007).

Grasping the essence of the KODA child's psychological diagnosis process requires a deeper look at the three people involved in it: the hearing child of Deaf parents, the Deaf parent, and the psychologist. Only the awareness of the influence of the beliefs of all three sides of the diagnosis will allow it to be conducted in a reliable and fully ethical manner.

A HEARING CHILD OF DEAF PARENTS AS A SUBJECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DIAGNOSIS

It is impossible to understand the difficulties experienced by KODA without knowing the cultural context in which they are being brought up. Hearing children of Deaf parents acquire their first language (Polish sign language) and are brought up in the culture of Deaf people. Initially, they do not notice the difference between their family and other people. They learn deaf people's characteristic forms of attracting attention, contact in close physical distance, conducting face-to-face conversations, traffic lights instead of sound. As they grow up, they realize that they hear and will not fully belong to the Deaf community in adulthood (Kamińska, 2007). They realize that for them some physical aspects of the outside world are available and not for their parents. They learn the native language and slowly learn the rules of hearing people. Often in the exploration of the dominant culture no one helps them, they learn from their own blunders and mistakes. They experience consternation when, for the same behaviours, e.g.

starting conversations by touching the arm, they are rewarded in one communication context (deaf community) and punished in another (community of hearing people).

The “majority” social context is also important in which the Deaf culture and Polish sign language have a low social status. KODA’s children quickly realize that PJM evokes negative social feelings. They hear what hearing people say about them and their parents when they communicate in sign language. Visual-spatial languages around the world have been recognized for many years as defective means of communication (Bishop, Hicks, 2005). In Poland, the Polish sign language has been officially recognized in the Act of 19 August 2011 on sign language and other means of communication (Journal of Laws 2011 No. 209, item 1243). Statutory acceptance, however, is not tantamount to widespread recognition as an equally valuable way of communication as the oral language (Czajkowska-Kisil, Klimczewska, 2016). The use of visual-spatial language carries with it an additional distinctive aspect in the crowd. It is impossible to communicate unnoticed in the environment. Wanting to communicate with parents, KODA involuntarily puts out the attention of bystanders and their reactions. Because KODA children speak sign language, they are considered deaf, which encourages people who hear to comment on the whole family with impunity.

One of the sources of KODA’s problems are their personal relational experiences: they have often been ashamed of their parents, their ignorance, lack of competence in many areas, and they themselves performed tasks appropriate for adults. The specificity of Deaf people as parents is that most of them do not speak Polish (they do not read written texts). Deaf parents were often brought up in boarding schools, so they do not have intergenerational parental care patterns. They cannot help their hearing children in learning (Wiśniewska, 2019b). They are unable to convey to their children the cultural patterns of hearing people. Therefore, KODA leave the role of a child early, which generates huge emotional tension and causes a change of roles in the family system, delegating the child to being an adult (parentification). KODA are often afraid of hearing people’s poor assessment of their parents. Bilingualism can be aggravating in their case. Especially when the child is caught up in adult problems as a translator. They take responsibility for the successful settlement of matters, e.g. official, financial. At the same time, they remain objectively defenceless against violence. Deaf parents without hearing, e.g. aggressive messages addressed to their children, cannot effectively defend them. KODA realize quickly that they have cope with matters by themselves. They can only count on themselves. It generates a sense of loneliness (Bartnikowska, 2010).

KODA children and young people are often participants of many years of intercultural mediation, which often causes painful experiences due to the dominant negative views about Deaf people in the hearing environment (see Bartnikowska, 2011; Line, Hoffmeister, Bahan, 1996; Teper-Solarz, 2016; Weigl, Wiśniewska, in press). In this context, their cultural identity is shaped, unique and demanding. It is not easy to meet it and develop an affirmative dual cultural identity (Nikitorowicz, 2004; Wiśniewska, 2016, 2019c).

Hearing children of Deaf parents are a heterogeneous group. The specificity of the experiences of children from borderland cultures may be evidenced by the fact that some of them associate in the community, and some avoid contact with other people with a similar life path (Bishop, Hicks, 2009). The psychologist’s task is to learn about and understand the individual life line of a hearing child raised by Deaf parents.

DEAF PARENT AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT A HEARING CHILD IN THE COURSE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DIAGNOSIS

It is the parent who reports the problem and expresses the will to subject the child / family system to psychological diagnosis. The parent defines the problem in accordance with the values of the culture in which they live. They communicate these in a language they know. Here the key communication barrier appears. In Poland, not many psychologists know Polish Sign Language fluently, it is necessary to use an interpreter when meeting a parent. His very presence modifies interactions, and can also affect the atmosphere of the meeting (Wądołowska, 2014). From the Deaf person's perspective, the basic principle of face-to-face contact is disturbed. The psychologist speaks to the translator looking at them, not the client. A deaf person also divides attention between reading non-verbal messages from the psychologist's face and receiving messages blinked by the translator. The number of translators in the deaf community is limited, which puts anonymity and confidentiality at risk. The availability of translators and how to pay for their work is also a problem. Sometimes the financial or organizational barrier forces a Deaf parent to meet a psychologist without an interpreter or he expects KODA to translate the meeting. This is not the right form in terms of diagnostics or ethics. You cannot put a child as an interpreter in their own case. It is highly unethical and unprofessional to use a teenage or younger child for work that adults, properly educated and prepared, should do.

Sometimes a Deaf parent's meeting with a psychologist is held on the recommendation of the court, social welfare bodies or educational institution (Ratynska, 2019). In the perspective of a Deaf parent, these institutions do not support them, and the psychologist as a representative of the dominant culture is not perceived as a friendly person. The parent who is obliged to contact may display high reserve and low openness to contact with a psychologist.

In the relationship with the clinician, the Deaf parent brings their stereotypes about hearing people and their attitudes towards Deaf people (paternalism). They read nonverbal messages of the psychologist in accordance with the Deaf culture model. So if the psychologist breaks eye contact, it means the end of the conversation or a change of subject. Deaf people are very sensitive to the communication inconsistency of spoken content with facial expressions and gestures.

In the field of information about their own child, a Deaf parent may not feel competent. Deaf parents find questions about the development of speech in their children inappropriate and undiagnostic. They can't tell when their child was babbling what words they were saying. They will be happy to tell you what characters were shown first, what characters the child invented himself – unfortunately, such questions are not usually asked. A parent may have insufficient knowledge of their child's education, peer relationships at school. Questions regarding compliance with social norms may be inadequate and frustrating. The use of courtesies typical of the hearing culture is inadequate in the Deaf culture, in which everyone, regardless of age, should be addressed directly. Asking questions about the culture of hearing people can lead a Deaf parent to feel a lack of sufficient knowledge, putting them in the role of someone who should know the answer and does not know it. Proposing to the Deaf parent to fill out the documentation may embarrass them if they do not speak Polish. Often, psychologists naturally reach for a piece of paper and write messages to a Deaf parent.

However, they do not ask them if they know Polish. Generally, in such situations, the Deaf parent pretends to read. Nods. They do not want to fall out in the eyes of a specialist. The psychologist's lack of knowledge of the principles of effective communication with a Deaf person can result in incorrect clinical reasoning, and lead to the collection of information that is not confirmed in reality. Communication difficulties can also induce unwanted emotional reactions in a Deaf parent. A psychologist discouraged from deepening the interview or resigned may become part of the image of the discriminating and looking "down" hearing person.

Lack of knowledge about the school education program, lack of helping the child with homework can be treated by the psychologist ethnocentrically as parental neglect. And it is a consequence of not knowing Polish. In the environment of the Deaf people it is a common phenomenon inscribed in the Deaf culture. Primacy has visual-spatial means of communication. A person who does not read in Polish is not stigmatized there. For a representative of a hearing-hearing culture, this can be strange, interpreted as intellectual disability. Such personal beliefs of a psychologist can affect the relationship with a Deaf parent of a child. Lack of access to the information carrier, which is writing, also makes it less possible to obtain information on raising a child, proper development, and ways of supporting a child by a Deaf parent. Their possibilities of obtaining information are much poorer than those of a hearing parent. This specificity of functioning as a parent should arouse empathy of the psychologist, and is often perceived as a lack of parental competence.

An additional factor hindering the good deployment of Deaf people as a parents is the lack of intergenerational patterns. Deaf children who attended special schools for deaf students were raised from an early age (kindergarten) by a boarding school. They returned to their family homes only on holidays and weekends. Over 90% of deaf children (and later adults) had hearing parents, who mostly did not learn Polish sign language. In the absence of effective communication with their own parents, later Deaf parents often did not have deep relationships with them. They also did not receive the parental care pattern. The birth of a hearing child is a challenge for Deaf Parents. Without their own good practices, without full access to information transmitted largely through written and spoken text, they face the task of building a secure and developing relationship with their own children and for their own children.

PSYCHOLOGIST IN THE PROCESS OF DIAGNOSIS OF A HEARING CHILD OF DEAF PARENTS

The way to make an accurate diagnosis is to obtain full information about the child's functioning as an individual, but also about their functioning in the family, peer group, care and educational institutions. For the "good of a small client" a psychologist needs to establish a good relationship with them, during which it will be possible to infer about the child's resources and deficits. You also need a trust-based relationship with your child's adult guardian. A disturbing factor can be a communication barrier if the psychologist does not know sign language and is not familiar with the cultural context in which the child is being raised (Barzykowski, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2015).

Examination of language competences of Deaf parents of hearing children can be difficult for the youngest children. Especially if the child speaks Polish sign language as the first language and the spoken Polish is less developed. Such a child can-

not be diagnosed with speech retardation (Singleton, Tittle, 2000). A bilingual child has the right to different competences in particular languages. The expectation that a child should first of all speak is a typical example of the ethnocentrism of a psychologist raised in the culture of sound and phonic speech. A typical stereotype functioning in the hearing society is the belief that developed phonic speech is the most perfect form of communication and no other can match it (Moroń, Zarzeczny, 2014). If the psychologist even unknowingly adheres to this view, they will be biased in assessing the level of development of the hearing child of Deaf parents. They will strive for the child's rapid development of audio speech and incorrectly assess parents' efforts to support the development of audio speech.

Deaf parents find the psychologist's questions about the cochlear implant as particularly tactless and painful. Received as the psychologist's expectation that the parent should undergo implantation. Such a question is for the Deaf parent a proof of treating them as a disabled person, and not as a representative of a cultural group (Levy, 2007; Tomaszewski, Moroń, Sak, 2018). For a psychologist who uncritically accepts the media message of "restoring hearing", a deaf parent is defective, "broken" – so they need to be fixed. The specialist does not know that modern medical technologies, such as cochlear implants, are very critically accepted in the Deaf community (Hintermair, Albertini, 2004; Tomaszewski, Kotowska, Krzysztofiak, 2017). Deaf people want to have the right to choose a way of life without having to have hearing. It is not a prerequisite for defining a sense of happiness (Wiśniewska, 2015).

One of the basic cultural competences of a psychologist should be skilful differentiation of the client's origin from an individualistic culture vs. collectivist (Boski, 2009). The culture of the Deaf is a culture in which collectivist features are clearly present, including a sense of commitment, duty and dedication to one's own group. Therefore, using a hearing-impaired child for translation was not considered inappropriate in the Deaf community. Making the Deaf parents aware of the far-reaching consequences of such practices for the child's psyche sometimes causes the rejection of psychological help and seeking other people who can help them. KODA's child, brought up in a sense of duty towards the group, does not rebel, they take their translator role as obvious. The literature describes cases where people from cultures with a high level of collectivism are diagnosed as dependent personalities (Wakefield et al., 2010). The psychologist should be able to assess KODA's behaviour, emotions and beliefs in the context of the Deaf culture (Wiśniewska, 2016).

In the process of obtaining information about the subject, the psychologist has the right to broaden the interview, ask questions to other relatives of the child to verify the information obtained so far. In a situation of contact with Deaf parents, a context appears that does not occur in hearing families. For a psychologist, it is much easier to contact e.g. a hearing grandmother than a deaf mother of a child. The lack of a communication barrier is conducive to establishing a good relationship and obtaining information quickly. This situation may provoke the exclusion of a Deaf parent from the diagnosis process. It can also strengthen the belief of hearing grandparents that they are more competent in caring for their grandchild than Deaf parents. This is a common psychological problem in families with the following structure: hearing grandparents – deaf parents – hearing children. Hearing grandparents often want to take care of a hearing grandchild. In their sense, they want to protect the child from the Deaf culture. It is extremely important that the process of psychological diagnosis does not become a factor strengthening this attitude of grandparents. The psycholo-

gist's role is to strengthen the Deaf parents in their competences. With a good relationship, Deaf parents are happy to use psychological support, counselling, and sometimes psychotherapy.

The deaf parent's reluctance to make a diagnosis or their defensive attitude against revealing information about themselves and the child may be perceived by the psychologist as a refusal to cooperate, a reluctance to accept help. However, it is worth knowing that in the environment of deaf people, the use of psychological help is even less common than in the environment of hearing people. In turn, every case of unfair treatment of a Deaf parent by a psychologist is quickly disseminated and commented on in the community. This does not build an attitude of confidence in the profession of psychologist.

The described contexts of psychological diagnosis of deaf parents of a deaf child can be summarized by signalling good practices and necessary standards in the field of professional and ethical diagnosis:

1. The psychologist should be aware of their own cultural affiliation and its influence on the assessment decisions made.
2. It seems advisable to go through appropriate anti-discrimination workshops. They can identify unconscious prejudices and stereotypes about Deaf people.
3. The key to proper reasoning is to ensure full and free communication between the psychologist and the child and their Deaf parents, through the presence of a certified interpreter of the Polish sign language or its knowledge by the psychologist.
4. Knowledge of the Deaf culture and its impact on behaviours, beliefs and ways of expressing emotions by the hearing child of Deaf parents will allow to separate clinical symptoms from the manifestations of Deaf behaviour typical in the culture.
5. Psychological diagnosis should be prepared and understood in the context of the Deaf culture, without stigmatization, respecting the differences with the culture of the hearing.
6. Knowledge of the specifics of intergenerational transmission: hearing grandparents – deaf parents – hearing children, will allow the psychologist to deepen understanding of relationships in the KODA family.
7. Forwarding a written opinion to Deaf parents requires first to translate it into Polish sign language and to clarify the consequences of its provisions.

SUMMARY

It is impossible to make a good diagnostic inference without knowing the specifics of how people from the Deaf culture are functioning. The psychologist, apart from general knowledge about intercultural psychology, should get to know the Deaf culture well or use support in the interpretation of results, observation of a competent person in this respect (see Kwiatkowska, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2008; Mohamed, 2013; Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch, Wang, 2009). Hearing children of Deaf parents are brought up in a specific context, a cultural minority with an additionally stigmatized form of communication, which is the Polish sign language. They may experience minority stress in this respect. The communication barrier that their Deaf parents struggle with causes them to remain alone in many social situations. They need the diagnostician's emphatic attitude and understanding for the difficulties they face.

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Transl. Joanna Siemieniuk

ANNA BOGATYŃSKA-KUCHARSKA, KATARZYNA SIKORA,
MAŁGORZATA STEĆ

Polish Psychological Association, Cracow Division

AMENDMENT OF THE ETHICAL-PROFESSIONAL CODE OF A PSYCHOLOGIST – ASSUMPTIONS AND BASES OF THE PROJECT¹⁾

In November 2015 during the General Meeting of Delegates of the Polish Psychological Association a decision was made to commence works on an amendment of the Ethical-Professional Code of a Psychologist. This challenge was given to a team of professionals who have been preparing substantively for it for the last couple of years. In the team, there are four members of the Cracow Division of the Association, professionally active psychologists, performing both psychological practice as well as scientific research and academic teaching. Two persons obtain, apart from psychological education – also a diploma in philosophy and publications in an area of general ethics, one person obtains a diploma in law.

A decision of the General Meeting was motivated mostly by a desire to amend the existing Code to the current conditions of psychological practice. The code which was in use until December 2018 – the Ethical-Professional Code of a Psychologist, in its first edition was created in year 1986, and it was re-edited in year 1992. Since that time not only legal circumstances of performing psychological practice have changed, but also some new forms of it emerged, such as on-line psychological services. What is more, a need emerged for amending the existing Code to the guidelines of the Meta-Code of the European Federation of Psychologists Associations (EFPA), as the previ-

Correspondence address: Anna Bogatyńska Kucharska, e-mail: anna.bogatynska-kucharska@ignatianum.edu.pl, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7762-9518>; Katarzyna Sikora ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5693-6639>; Małgorzata Steć ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1841-9542>.

¹⁾ The article refers directly to the project concerning an amendment of the Ethical-Professional Code of a Psychologist created by a team including: Anna Bogatyńska-Kucharska, Katarzyna Sikora, Małgorzata Steć, Marcin Szafrąński, which is presented in a different part of this issue of the journal. The aim of the article is to present justification for the proposed project. The described project was presented to delegates of the Polish Psychological Association during the General Meeting which took place in Warsaw from the 30th of November to the 2nd of December 2018. After implementation of some revisions raised by the delegates, the project was accepted on the 2nd of December 2018 as currently in force Ethical Code of a Psychologist replacing the Ethical-Professional Code of a Psychologist of the Polish Psychological Association which has been in use before.

ous Code was overall in agreement with those in content, however it differed significantly in the form.

The team members decided to conduct the works in a mode similar to one performed by a team preparing the *Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Psychologists* (cf. IUPsyS, 2010; Gauthier, 2010). Several dozens of ethical codes were analysed in detail as well as regulations of national associations of psychologists, and also international and professional regulations. The current literature on the topic was also familiarised with by the team. Finally, a decision was made to attempt to create the rules of the updated Code from the beginning, instead of introducing new fragments to the existing text. Still, the new version of the Code was supposed to maintain not only the spirit but also parts of literal fragments of the old version. What is more, a decision was taken to make the process of creating the new Code public: sending information concerning a progress in works to the General Board of the Polish Psychological Association, informing members of the Association by distributing information to its Sections and Divisions, and also by organising a thematic session during the XXXVI Scientific Congress of the Polish Psychological Association in Gdansk in September 2017. The session was devoted, among others, to a justification of the bases of the mode of work undertaken and to the presentation of the proposed Preamble. In November 2017, the team, in cooperation with the Cracow Division of the Association and Ignatianu Academy in Cracow, organised a national conference ‘Ethical Dilemmas of Psychologists’, during which one of the plenary sessions was devoted to presenting the Preamble and General Rules of the proposed Code. The text gained its final form in March 2018 and was sent for a review to members of the Association through Sections and Divisions, and in June – after considering the remarks of those – it was passed on to the General Board for further works. Accepted at the General Meeting of Delegates of the Polish Psychological Association in December 2018 text of the Ethical Code of a Psychologist, based on the project created by the team, can be found on pages of the current issue of the journal. Below there are presented, necessary in the team’s opinion, explanations and justifications of the decisions made.

ETHICAL CODE AND ETHICS OF A PROFESSION. CODE’S FUNCTIONS

Ethical codes do not exhaust a whole of professional ethics or references of professional issues to general ethics. They rather stay in a certain hierarchy: general ethics – more specific ethics (including professional ethics), ethical-professional regulations.

Mutual relations between general ethics and professional ethics are a subject of research and discussions (Galewicz, 2010; Górnicka et al., 1994, pp. 168–206), however their detailed analysis is not a subject of the current article. A professional ethic alone can be treated as a set of norms a. accepted, b. implemented, c. referring to a certain group of professionals (Galewicz, 2010, pp. 33–37), wherein norms a, b, and c are not always coherent. As a difference between norms a and b concerns a potential discrepancy between proclaiming ethical rules and their implementation (which sometimes can have some negative consequences), a difference between norms a and c in turn leads to a question of who should formulate ethical rules of a given profession. It seems, that norms referring to representatives of a given profession can be formulated not only by professional environments, but also by stakeholders, which means

the people using services of given profession's representatives. They formulate not only expectations, but also conditions under which they will want (or not) to use professional services of given representatives. In this context, a receiver gains a significant importance not only as an 'object' of ethical actions of a psychologist, but above all as an equal subject in formulating ethical-professional rules.

In the discussed text of the new Code, a term 'receiver' appears and is replacing traditionally used in codes word – 'client'. The term, proposed a couple of years ago (Sikora, 2013) was widely accepted and is gradually finding its place in a Polish psychologists' dictionary. It is more capacious than the term 'client'. Professional relationships in psychologists' profession refer not only to people traditionally referred to as clients (people in a process of diagnosis, therapy, consulting, and so on), psychological services are offered also to students (psychological education), people taking part in workshops, people under supervision, and also partakers of scientific research in psychology. The team proposed to refer to all of these people as receivers of psychological actions. A certain drawback of this term is some sort of passivity it implies, while persons who use services of psychologists are most often active partakers of these actions. However, a similar critique can be applied to the term 'client', and a broader meaning of the notion 'receiver' seems to speak in favour the decision of its use.

If a base of the ethics of psychologists' profession is a contact, relationship with another person, it can hardly be expected that complexity and richness of these relations can be fully captured in any written document. The code is therefore merely a fragment of the professional ethics of psychologists. Basic questions which should be asked are: what is the code needed for? What is its role and possible dangers related to codification of moral norms concerning performing a professional role?

Opponents of professional ethics – or more precisely – opponents of creating ethical-professional codes turn attention, among others, to a danger of reducing a human being as a moral subject of interventions to a role or function they fulfil in their social life. It can sanction actions, which, from a perspective of general morality, are at least morally doubtful or simply wrong (Górnicka et al., 1994, pp. 168–206; Kołakowski, 1967). In turn, advocates of the professional ethics notice, that the professional ethic above all regulates relationships between certain social groups, and is not replacing common morality, but completing it. It does not relativize general morality, it serves different functions e.g. it creates standards or patterns of ethically correct behaviour and it also points to professional virtues (Środa, 1994, pp. 167–169).

From such perspective the ethical-professional code can be seen as a kind of public oath to maintain some ethical standards, and also is a part of a contract between psychologists as a professional environment and receivers of their services. The described project of the Code should then point to significant ethical values for performing the profession of a psychologist, to whom general rules of the project refer. It should serve a helping function in resolving moral dilemmas and also in a process of educating future professionals. What is more, it should serve to regulate relationships between psychologists and receivers of their services, defending above all receivers, but also – what is a novelty in the proposed project – taking care of psychologists' rights as partakers of a professional relationship. As such, it can be a base for an ethical assessment of a specific psychologist towards a specific receiver – in this respect it serves a regulatory function, pointing to the right direction of acting or even promoting specific behaviours. The code, fulfilling a consulting func-

tion, can be seen as a basic point of reference in a situation of uncertainty resulting from values' or norms' conflict. In a case of psychology, such conflicts are common, dilemmas in turn can occur in each branch of psychologists' work, independently of a function held by them. The code can help psychologists by being a sort of a guidepost; especially there, where a time pressure or a necessity of a public justification of own decisions occur. The code alone, however, does not exhaust the ethical-professional issue, and being familiar with it will not replace a broader ethical awareness and a personal sensitivity of a psychologist.

FORM OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Language of the Code

In accordance with a concept, that a way of speaking is a way of thinking, the team members devoted a lot of consideration to a language of the proposed code. Main dilemmas concerned a mode to be used – whether it should be declarative or obligatorial and also using personal pronouns. The aim was to write a text using a language, which on one hand will not be exclusive, and on the other will be in accordance with linguistic practice and also understandable and acceptable (accordingly to a contract's perspective) both for psychologists and for receivers.

In the chosen project, a declarative language was chosen, e.g.: *a psychologist acts*, instead of: *a psychologist should act*. Such language is in use in e.g. common law bills. Despite an absence of a predicative *should*, it expresses an obligation to described actions, and in essence it describes psychologists' duties. The code serves an aspirational function, and hence shows a psychologist and actions undertaken by them from an idealistic perspective, which, however, should not give a Reader an impression of trying to achieve a professional Utopia. Statements in declarative language serve this cause much better than obligatorial language. Additionally, in the case of the latter, an overall impression after reading the Code would be that a reality of psychologists' work does not look yet as it should look, and the Code is persuading to pursue it. In a case of declarative language, a psychologist's activity is shown as it is, with an assumption that some exceptions from the accepted rules can occur from time to time.

A more controversial issue turned out to be establishing what kinds of personal pronouns to use. A specificity of Polish language requires a choice between male and female forms, which is significant in psychologist's profession, because a vast majority of profession's representatives are women, however in many documents, including the existing Code, male forms are in use. Attempts were made to create the Code using both forms ('(s)he should always care for well-being of his/her receivers') and with a usage of plural forms (such solution was used in many Codes, e.g. in the British Code we will find a form *psychologists* and in the German one – *Psychologenund* and *Psychologinnen*) receiving in both cases a text ideologically correct, however hard to follow and inconsistent with lingual practice. Finally, it was decided that in the text an existing male form will remain in singular case, forms in present tense will not determine gender. What is more, a definition of the term 'psychologist' in a supplementary dictionary, will contain a note, that this term refers to all representatives of the profession, independently of their gender.

Code's structure

Accepted in December 2018 text of the Code consists of the following parts: Preamble, General Rules, Receiver's Rights, Psychologist's Rights and Dictionary. Notes preceding the Preamble determine a range of Code's applicability – it should refer to members of Polish Psychological Association, and also *other persons who declared to follow it*. The last note is significant in a context of introducing in Poland the European Certificate in Psychology (Euro-Psy) – one of the conditions to obtain the certificate is to sign an obligation to follow the Code. The certificate is available also for people who are not members of the Polish Psychological Association. Sharing the Code also with psychologists who are not part of the Association in large degree will make the process of certification easier. At the same time, thanks to it, the document will become more universal, and will not hold a label of a 'local' agreement or an inner regulation of the Association.

Preamble

In the body of the Preamble attention is turned to two sources of deepening psychological knowledge: science and professional practice. In professional practice it is necessary to base on results of scientific research, and at the same time in a range of practice new actions are postulated, which only after some time can be scientifically verified, e.g. with respect to their efficiency. During creating or introducing such actions, a carefulness regarding their ethical dimension becomes even more significant, as well as an awareness of their boundaries: both the boundaries of psychologist's capacities and also limitations of interventions used. Both within a range of scientific research as well as in a broadly understood professional practice, a psychologist enters a direct relationship with another human being, and this experience of another person should be a starting point for the professional ethics (cf. Tischner, 1993).

The text of the Preamble of the proposed Code, similarly to texts of many other ethical codes of psychologists, cites the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations as the most basic document with international, humanistic meaning. It also refers to common law and rules of social coexistence.

In the preamble, attention is directed towards a particular character of professional relationships connecting a psychologist with a receiver. It refers to, among others, a lack of symmetry in a professional contact of a psychologist with a receiver, resulting from, on one hand, an advantage of a psychologist in a range of skills and knowledge referring to human's behaviour and psychics, and on the other hand, a specific, confidential character of information shared in the contact (a psychologist usually knows about a receiver much more than a receiver knows about a psychologist). Because of that, one of psychologist's tasks, resulting from the Code's content, is trying to level possible negative consequences of this advantage by obligating psychologists to follow the ethical norms.

General rules

In the presented Code, six ethical rules are proposed: respecting human rights and dignity, caring for receiver's well-being, competency, responsibility, honesty, and pro-

professional solidarity of psychologists. These are the rules which can be found in almost all ethical codes of psychologists around the world (cf. Leach, Harbin, 1997).

It is obvious, that a general rule of respecting human rights and dignity should be respected in every form of psychologists' activity. From the rule of respecting dignity, a rule of respecting autonomy follows, which is especially significant for the Western culture (cf. Sikora, 2013). It is however worth noting, the notion of autonomy can refer to persons (Benn, 1976, in: Beauchamp, Faden, 1986, p. 236; Dworkin, 1988), actions (Beauchamp, Faden, 1986, pp. 235–269) or rules (Łuków, 2005, pp. 195–235). Each of the concepts named can be useful for understanding and acting in accordance with the before-mentioned rule. A concept of autonomy as referring to actions is particularly useful in a situation of contracting or consenting to take a part in scientific research. During psychological services like consulting or helping, the concepts of autonomy referring to persons can turn out to be important.

In the proposed project, role of the autonomy rule is underlined in completing a rule of receiver's well-being. Determining the receiver's well-being is not an easy issue, and the very notion is hard to define. In psychological actions there is a pluralism of goods (Galewicz, presentation during the conference 'Ethical Dilemmas of Psychologists', 29.11.2017), which means that there are several categories of 'goods' which we should be directed by: a. prudential values – so-called personal goods (what is good for a given person minding their own interest), b. moral goods, c. a total ethical value (which means everything what is good considering all the things, so both personal and moral goods). Various conflicts are possible between specific categories, and moreover, a discrepancy between what a receiver specifies as what is good for them and how it is perceived by a psychologist. The presented project seeks to sensitize psychologists to such situations and turn attention to a right of a receiver to specify what is good for them in their own mind. A psychologist, in turn, following their own right to professional independence, informs whether he or she is capable to pursue a realisation of the goods chosen by a receiver. During making a contract a possibility exists of negotiating aims of psychological actions. While following a rule of pursuing the receiver's well-being, a psychologist cannot break a rule of honesty.

Already in the Preamble, a direct reference to one of the fundamental rules of psychologists' activity, which is caring about receiver's well-being, is made. The rule of being directed by receiver's well-being can be interpreted negatively as a prohibition of harm or positively as an injunction to act for this well-being. The (new) Code points to different types of goods; individualistic and social, seen as being part of various social groups. In its intention, the fragment should point to underappreciated in psychology values connected with being a part of different social groups (Doherty, 1995) as well as refer to cultural differences with respect to choosing individualistic or collective values, culturally determined. In this range, the Code would stay in accordance with the broadest ethical regulation in psychology – Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Psychologists (IUPsyS, 2010; Gauthier, 2010).

In this document reaching outside borders of the north Atlantic culture, there were fragments equating the rights of *persons and peoples*, which are at the same time binding psychologists to respect as equal an individual dignity of each person as well as their social-cultural membership. The proposed project however, keeps a distinction between direct and indirect receiver. Usually a direct receiver is a person towards whom psychological interventions are undertaken, so for example a person under diagnosis, psychological consulting or a person who needs a psychological opinion, and

not necessarily a person who is commissioning tasks for a psychologist. A person delegating a task, similarly to other persons who will be influenced by psychologists' actions, can be seen as more distant, in other words – they are indirect receivers. In the Code a specific position of a principal is classified as a person often responsible in legal terms for the direct receiver (e.g. a parent toward a minor) or as a person with an influence on their experiences in significant issues (e.g. an employer towards an employee).

A rule of competency is not in a strict sense an ethical rule, as competency as such is more of a prudential rather than an ethical value. The rule however is commonly seen in Codes of professional ethics of psychologists (cf. *APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*, *EFPA Metacode of Ethics*, *The British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct*, 2018), it also is a certain completion of an incentive of caring for the receiver's wellbeing. A self-awareness of a person performing a profession of a psychologist is a significant element of competence. Competence is also an awareness of own well-being and a necessity of taking care of it, in this place: an order to maintain a high quality of performed service. A psychologist, who would be unaware of an importance of what is good for him or her, is in danger of a selfless, repeated putting of receiver's well-being before their own. Such situation creates a possible risk of a serious frustration of psychologist's needs, and therefore also – in a further perspective – a decrease in quality of services and interventions performed. A perfect situation is then to obtain self-assessment competencies regarding an importance of own well-being in order to ensure an appropriate realization of receiver's well-being.

The project presented underlines an influence of various characteristics of a psychologist (broadly understood psychological state, but also cultural or social conditions) on a quality of performed services. A psychologist is in him or herself a tool of their own work (Engel-Bernatowicz, 2013), especially in a context of a direct diagnostic or consulting contact. His or her own conditioning, including various kinds of limitations, significantly influences a quality of professional interventions. Therefore, an awareness of this conditioning and a reasonable deciding about a possibility of specific professional interventions can be seen as an ethical duty of a psychologist. In the project presented it is underlined, that competencies concerning professional ethics are included in professional competencies.

The amended Code places an emphasis on an issue of psychologists' responsibility. It results from an asymmetric relationship between a psychologist and a receiver. It is not however, a responsibility 'for' a receiver. An emphasis existing in the Code concerning a question of autonomy of the receiver excludes such understanding of responsibility. A psychologist responsible 'for' their receiver would be limiting their autonomy.

It seems, that a psychologist's responsibility should be understood as: firstly – responsibility for oneself and therapeutic or diagnostic process. Therefore, what we have here is a responsibility of a specialist for a procedure within which he or she has the competencies and applied expertise. Such an understanding of responsibility would be in accordance with Latin etymology, pointing to a term *auctor/autoritas* (precursor, founder/meaning, leadership). Second meaning, more metaphorically, could refer to a specific responsiveness of a psychologist (which follows from a sound of the word 'responsibility' alone) towards the needs of his or her interventions' receiver – to be more precise – their own well-being.

A psychologists' responsibility should be also connected with a rule of professionalism: as the responsibility assumes an awareness of limitations, and it is an important

trait of a professional. In the newest literature concerning the ethics of psychologists' profession an issue of responsibility is usually reduced to its legal aspects, and therefore to a question of legally determined responsibility which lies upon a psychologist. Dorota Bednarek (2016) writes, however, not only about criminal, civil, and disciplinary responsibility of a psychologist but also about professional responsibility as an additional specific form of responsibility. The professional responsibility of a psychologist is also joint with an issue of professionalism, it should ensure, or be related to ensuring a high quality of interventions during a professional practice of a psychologist. Bednarek (2016, p. 62) calls such type of responsibility a 'basic instrument of control over an appropriate practice of a profession of public trust' and at the same time points to a fact of insufficient regulations of an issue of professional organisations' membership among psychologists in Poland, which results in psychologists not bearing disciplinary professional consequences. The new Code is therefore the only normative act, which is concerned about the issue of professional responsibility from the perspective of the ethics of performed profession.

In a new edition of *The ethics of Psychologist's Profession* edited by Jerzy Brzeziński, Barbara Chyrowicz, Zuzanna Toeplitz and Małgorzata Toeplitz-Winiewska (2017) a meaning of responsibility of a profession's good name is underlined. It is closely related to the idea of promoting of professional practice standards and also ethical rules. It is closely related to a promotion of psychologist's profession and sharing knowledge concerning a range of his or her interventions. It turns out to be incredibly important in a context of still functioning in a society stereotypes concerning a perception of psychologists' job and psychologists themselves as specialists. Part of the care of a social dimension of psychologists' image, which is related to responsibility, is a specific sensitivity of the psychologists' community to all derogations from professional or ethical standards.

A notion of fairness is closely tied to the issue of responsibility. This notion also corresponds to other issues, connected to the quality of interventions performed by a psychologist. What we have here is e.g. reliability, which is something what validates methods and procedures used by a psychologist. This reliability concerns not only carefulness in an applied practice, but also overlooking whether the methods or procedures were used in a correct way. Professional honesty means also that a psychologist cannot work with every receiver. Strong emotions connected with some relationships can lower psychologists' ability to think objectively, which is necessary to ensure receiver's well-being. An honesty in this respect will influence a psychologist's decision concerning entering or not a situation, which can directly harm a realisation of receiver's well-being. A psychologist honest with her or himself, their profession, and above all with their receiver, will try to back up from similar situations. As can be seen in this case a factor of professionalism is in the game, but also responsibility, which only shows a rich network of connections between normative ethical norms of a psychologist's profession.

The described Code introduces to the General Rules some fragments concerning professional solidarity, seen as mutual support within psychologists' community in a care of the highest possible quality of performed services. The solidarity concerns a specific particular bond which is created between people following from a fact of performing the same profession, and also a postulate of helping adepts of the profession and less experienced colleagues. Professional solidarity is seen as a readiness for an individual and institutional support for developing high standards of psychol-

ogists' work. This attitude of professional solidarity is especially important in situations in which psychologists in a given institution are the only representatives of their profession. In such circumstances a high probability will occur of the requirements of psychologists' work not being obvious for representatives of other professions. Undertaking of informative actions in regard to it seems important. The fragments concerning professional solidarity proposed in the project by no means imply hiding mistakes in professional interventions of psychologists or defending particular interests.

Receiver's rights

Receiver's rights result directly from an accepted concept of the profession and bases of the professional ethics. The Code obligates psychologists to follow these rules – one can say that the receiver's rights are psychologist's duties. The fragments concerning psychologists' rights, in turn, should support psychologists in reaching for professional independence, to ensure conditions of the highest quality of services performed, and finally: they should protect psychologists within the range they become the tools of their on work.

The rights of a receiver named in the Code are: right to autonomy and subjectivity, right to confidentiality and privacy, right to a high quality of psychological services. They are directly rooted in the General Rules. The right of a receiver to autonomy and subjectivity is mainly founded upon the rules such as: respecting human rights and dignity, caring for receiver's well-being, fairness, and responsibility. A foundation of the receiver's right to privacy and confidentiality consists mainly from the rules such as: respecting human rights and dignity, caring for receiver's well-being, fairness, responsibility, and also competency. The receiver's right to a high quality of psychological services is based mainly on the rules of competence and fairness.

An expression of the receiver's autonomy is an act of consenting to psychological interventions. An 'informed consent' is a term used in a medical practice and research with people taking part in it (mainly in a context of medicine) since the 1950' (Beauchamp, Faden, 1986, p. 86). A detailed description of this issue in a historic, philosophical, and pragmatic aspect is presented by Beauchamp & Faden (1986). According to these authors an informed consent relies upon an autonomous authorisation of specialist's intervention towards a receiver. An informed consent refers to the receiver's actions. It means that a receiver acts: a. intentionally, b. with an understanding of what he or she agrees to, c. in a way free of external controlling influences (Beauchamp, Faden, 1986, p. 238). Expressing this informed consent requires fulfilment of all three conditions.

Receiver's right to confidentiality, which implies not sharing information about them, includes rights to privacy and intimacy (Bok, 1989, p. 6). A privacy is understood as an opposite of making something public, so this is a part of life we do not want to share with everyone or with many people. Intimacy concerns particularly personal issues, especially relationships or experiences, which are meaningful for us. A range of perceiving specific areas as intimate can be hugely individual. In the given meaning our personal data is private, although not necessarily intimate. Intimate, although not necessarily private are e.g. our relationships with children. There is also a kind of information which is both private and intimate, e.g. those concerning religion (a privacy in a context of religion would mean not sharing e.g. one's belief, inti-

macy in turn would refer to religious experiences perceived as especially important). Psychologists, fulfilling their professional roles, have an access to a lot of confidential information, both private and intimate. Because of that, in our profession, a lot of emphasis is placed upon professional confidentiality, which protects them from revealing. Also, gathering information should be conducted carefully, regarding intimate issues and dangers following from that.

In the Code's text, a notion emerges of information management, which means gathering, processing, keeping, and passing on of information concerning receivers by a psychologist. The term 'management' used in this context can raise some doubts. However, following a definition from the Polish Language Dictionary, – *management* – is a 'set of actions directed to reach a specific aim, connected with an interest (need) of a given object of management, realised in the following sequence: planning (choice of aims and ways of achieving them and specifying adequate tasks and deadlines for their completion), organising (distributing and ensuring resources necessary for realisation of planned actions, in a way which ensures efficiency and fluency of management), leadership (directing, motivating to cooperation during tasks' realisation), controlling (a constant observation of progress and taking corrective decisions)'. Therefore, this term seems adequate for psychologists' actions related to gathering, processing, keeping, and passing on information.

Minding a confidential character of a vast part of information gathered, psychologists are obliged to a careful processing and sharing. They act within legally defined boundaries, they also are aware of an importance of information they have and its potential influence and meaning for lives of direct receivers and other people. Because of that, information, given to psychologists in relation to their professional role, requires planning, organising, and also directing or controlling (e.g. a range of shared information) in order to ensure caring for the receiver's well-being. Information, because of its particular character should be: gathered, processed, kept, and shared with a particular care. Each time one should consider a meaning and possible consequences concerning gathering, processing, keeping, and sharing information, therefore one should *manage* it, following above all the rules of honesty and being directed by receiver's well-being.

The receiver's right to a high quality of services offered, similarly to the rule of competence, does not refer directly to ethical rules. However, an incompetent intervention is harming, and therefore inconsistent with ethical norms. A receiver has therefore a right to a high quality of service performed by a psychologist, and a psychologist is also obliged to ensure such services.

Psychologist's rights

The proposed text of the Code includes fragments concerning psychologist's rights: rights to professional independence, to keeping professional secrecy, rights to refuse professional service, to a protection and help from a professional environment's side and also to defence in case of ethical-professional charges. Similarly to the receiver's rights, also psychologist's rights are founded in the General Rules: a base of the psychologist's right to professional independence is the rule of responsibility. The psychologist's right to keep professional secrecy is founded mostly on the rules such as: respecting human rights and dignity, caring for receiver's well-being, and responsibility. The psychologist's right to refuse professional service results mainly from the rules regarding competency, responsibility, and fairness. The psychologist's right to protec-

tion from the professional environment's side is grounded in the rule of professional solidarity.

Psychologist's rights in the proposed text of the Code were formulated in a very frugal way, as the Code should serve to protect the receiver's rights in the first place, and the psychologist's rights included in it are – indirectly – a guarantee of a protection of the receiver's rights. A refusal of respecting these rights harms directly a high quality of performed services of psychologists (professional independence, refusal of service in case of real incapacity to perform them reliably), destroys trust, which is a base of professional relationship (confidentiality, professional secrecy), it also potentially harms psychology's and psychologists' good name (help within a community, a right to defence in case of ethical-professional charges).

The proposed version of the Code and development of professional ethics' standards

The presented Code has a hierarchical structure. Despite referring directly to the rules of particular ethics (professional ethics), still these rules are founded in higher, universal values, from which values and aims of a profession can be derived, which will in turn be referred to by the General Rules, and, followingly, detailed rules of professional conduct. A psychologist undertakes actions which, at least, do not go against presented values, and at best – promote them. From the overall rules of ethics follow rights of receivers and psychologists.

The Code's text displayed here is, out of necessity, formulated in a general way, more aspirational than regulatory. It is a well thought-of strategy which remains, in the team's members opining – in accordance with an accepted understanding of the professional ethics, its highest values and aims. It is also in accordance with generally accepted standards of creating this type of documents: a majority of existing psychological Codes has such general character, and most prominent ones of them, as for example the EFPA Code or the Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Psychologists, are very concise documents. The team argues strongly for the existence of a single, general Ethical Code of Polish psychologists, which includes fragments that can be applied to all forms of professional practice. Above this one single ethical Code, it is worthwhile to create ethical guidelines concerning detailed areas of psychologists' work, e.g. concerning psychological diagnosis, consulting, and so on. These guidelines can take form of conduct's standards, ethical standards, they should however be consistent with the general rules and with the receivers' and psychologists' rights following from them. Such position was also supported by delegates of the Polish Psychological Association during the general Meeting in Warsaw in 2018.

Considering a great variability of psychological practice, it can happen, that detailed standards created in one area will not necessarily be consistent with particular standards created in different area, however they can still remain in accordance with the General Rules. Works concerning a preparation of detailed ethical standards, which do not contradict the General Rules proposed in the Code are under way in the Diagnosis Section of the Polish Psychological Association. Also, the Psychotherapy Section has its own ethical code. A question therefore arises, whether detailed ethical standards concerning these areas have to be repeated in the general Code?

The Ethical Code of a Psychologist fulfils various tasks. Above all, it is an element of professional ethics of psychologists, although the psychologists' professional ethics

alone is a broader term and includes a much bigger container of notions than the Code alone will ever be able to describe. The Code is to support shaping and developing of an ethical sensitivity of psychologists. At the same time, the development of ethical awareness of psychologists can be an inspiration for a discussion concerning important problems arising together with the profession's development, which also have an ethical aspect. An exchange of views in the area does not necessarily have to lead to a creation of one accepted solution; it can and it should also influence changes in the Code's fragments. The code therefore, similarly to the whole professional ethics of psychologists, should develop, and, what follows from that – change. It is a task of psychologists' community to create regulations which will enable reasonable and regular updates in the Code's content. It is worthwhile for the Code to be 'alive'.

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Transl. Ewa Butowska

ANNA CZYŻKOWSKA

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Faculty of Family Studies

MARIA KŁYM

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Institute of Psychology

JAN CIECIUCH

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Institute of Psychology

POLISH ADAPTATION OF THE PARENTS AS SOCIAL CONTEXT QUESTIONNAIRE (PASCQ)¹⁾. TOWARDS A SYNTHESIS OF PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP MODELS²⁾

Abstract: The article presents two studies validating the dimensional model of parenting by Skinner, Johnson, and Snyder (2005). This model synthesizes various constructs related to parent-child relations from the recent literature. On the basis of a broad literature review, this model distinguishes three conceptual dimensions: warmth – rejection, structure – chaos, and autonomy support – coercion. Skinner et al. (2005)'s model was intended to integrate a number of theoretical constructs of parent-child relations. Thus, the distinguishability of its constituent parts is key. The following article describes a validation of the model in Poland. The first study was carried out on a sample of 969 adolescents, and the second – on a sample of 269 parents. In the adolescent sample,

the measurement model achieved a good fit to data, but the individual constructs were highly intercorrelated, which weakened the rationale for distinguishing them. In the parent sample, high correlations between the constructs led to a poor fit to data. Thus, only a general measure of parent-child relation quality was obtained. A bi-factor analysis was also ran to determine the role of specific factors generated alongside the general factor. The validation was a partial success in the parent sample, for which a short version of the questionnaire measuring warmth, structure, and autonomy support was developed.

Keywords: parental attitudes, parenting styles, parenting dimensions, PASCQ.

Correspondence address: anna.czyzkowska@uksw.edu.pl, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8695-2381>; Maria Kłym ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6358-0020>; Jan Ciecuch ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2291-8301>.

¹⁾ Retrieved from <https://www.pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu/psy/files/Assessment-10-ParentingAssessment.doc> and adapted; the questionnaire in the study was in Polish, the items are provided in English for purposes of clarity.

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INTRODUCTION

Many conceptualizations of basic dimensions of family life and parent-child relations can be found in the literature. The ontogenetically first parent-child interactions (emerging immediately after the child's birth) are described by attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969). In turn, family interactions in later development are described, among others, by the parenting perspective (Baumrind, 1971). It usually distinguishes two constructs, parental attitudes, also referred to in the Polish literature as *parental attitudes* (*postawy rodzicielskie*), and parenting styles (*style wychowawcze*) which are used to examine their influence on child development.

Many typologies of attitudes and styles have been created in parenting research in recent decades. Skinner, Johnson, and Snyder (2005) have suggested their integration into three bipolar dimensions: warmth versus hostility, structure versus chaos, and autonomy support versus coercion. The current study presents Skinner et al. (2005)'s integrative model and its dimensions, their relations to parental attitudes and parenting styles popular in Polish literature, and a measurement method of the introduced constructs.

PARENTAL ATTITUDES

The nature and determinants of parental attitudes. Parent attitude is commonly defined in the literature as a tendency to act in a specific way towards the child (Ziemska, 1973) or as an integrated set of approaches and behaviors, internalized over the course of an individual's life and displayed by the parent towards the child (Szewczuk, 1998). This is a specific use of the term *attitude*, which is used in many psychological theories and is defined as a "relatively stable tendency of an individual to relate positively or negatively to a given object: a thing, an event, an idea, or a person" (Wojciszke, 2001, p. 78). Three components of attitudes are usually distinguished: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral (Mika, 1982). These also comprise parental attitudes: (1) the cognitive component is the interpretation and evaluation of the child's behavior, a sort of "outlook on the child"; (2) the emotional component includes the feelings towards the child; (3) the behavioral component is the parent's actions towards the child (e.g., punishments and rewards).

Four main sources of parental attitudes are typically highlighted: 1) the family of origin (parental competencies are shaped in childhood through experiences with one's own parents – children become parents themselves); 2) the parents' specific characteristics (personality and temperamental traits, sense of self-worth, emotionality, reactivity, intelligence, flexibility, value system); 3) the child's specific characteristics (sex, age, order of birth, physical appearance, intelligence, temperament, mood, activity level, attention span, emotional reactivity, the degree to which the child meets the parent's expectations, both conscious and not); and 4) the quality of marriage (Plopa, 2008a).

Parent attitude typologies. The first attempt at a typology of parental attitudes was proposed by Leo Kanner (1957), for use by child psychiatrists. He based it on a selection of characteristic verbal and nonverbal behaviors of mothers and the reactions of their children. He distinguished the following main types of parental attitudes: acceptance, overt rejection, perfectionism, and compensatory overprotection.

One of the most developed typologies is that proposed by Roe and Siegelman (1963), based on an analysis of clinical data. It contains eleven types of parental attitudes (see Figure 1). The most basic and broad attitudes are warmth and coldness in the parent's behavior (placed in the center of Figure 1).

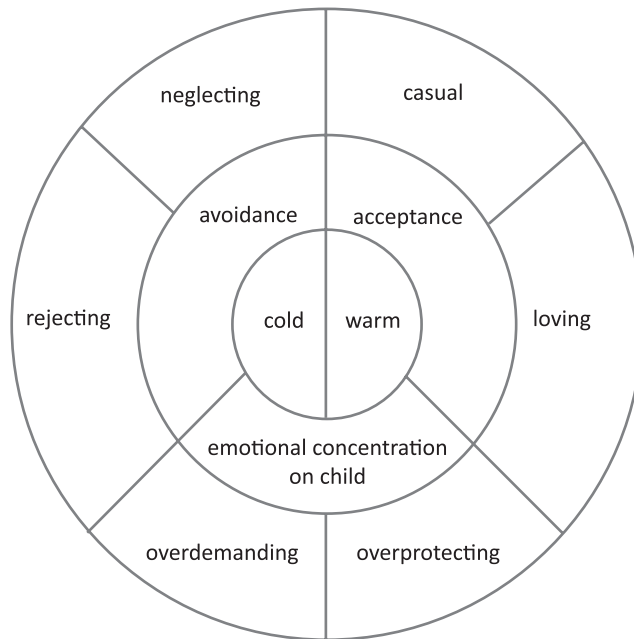


FIGURE 1. Roe and Siegelman's (1963, p. 356) parental attitudes model

The attitude of warmth is linked to the attitude of acceptance, which can take two forms: it can be an expression of love, strong emotional commitment, or acceptance without full emotional involvement. The former is referred to as loving, and the latter as liberal acceptance. In turn, an attitude of coldness can be expressed through avoidance, also in two forms: neglect or rejection. Both warmth and coldness are related to the attitude of emotional concentration on the child. For warmth, the emotional concentration takes the form of overprotection, while for coldness – of excessive demands. As a result, six main parental attitudes are derived, which represent attitudes towards the child. These attitudes are: liberal, loving, overprotective, excessively demanding, rejecting, and neglecting.

Among other models often appearing in the literature, those by Earl S. Schaefer (1961), P.E. Slater (1962), and W.C. Becker (1964) also deserve mention. Schaefer (1961) considered love versus hostility and autonomy vs. control as the basic dimensions. His model was based on empirical data and attempted to organize various concepts suggested by previous authors. Thus, he arranged the types of parental attitudes in a circular structure in such a way that attitudes placed closer together are more conceptually related and attitudes across each other are opposites (see Figure 2).

Slater (1962) distinguished eight attitude types, basing on retrospective reports of parental behaviors by their adult children. He proposed four pairs of polar opposite attitudes: permissiveness versus strictness, tolerance versus intolerance, warmth ver-

sus coldness, and involvement versus detachment. On the other hand, basing on own empirical results, Becker (1964) proposed the following three independent attitudes: warmth versus hostility, permissiveness versus restrictiveness, and indulgent versus authoritarian (hostile-neurotic) upbringing. By combining individual dimensions, which Becker (1964) presented as three axes perpendicular to each other in a three-dimensional space, eight combinations of patterns of parental behavior can be created.

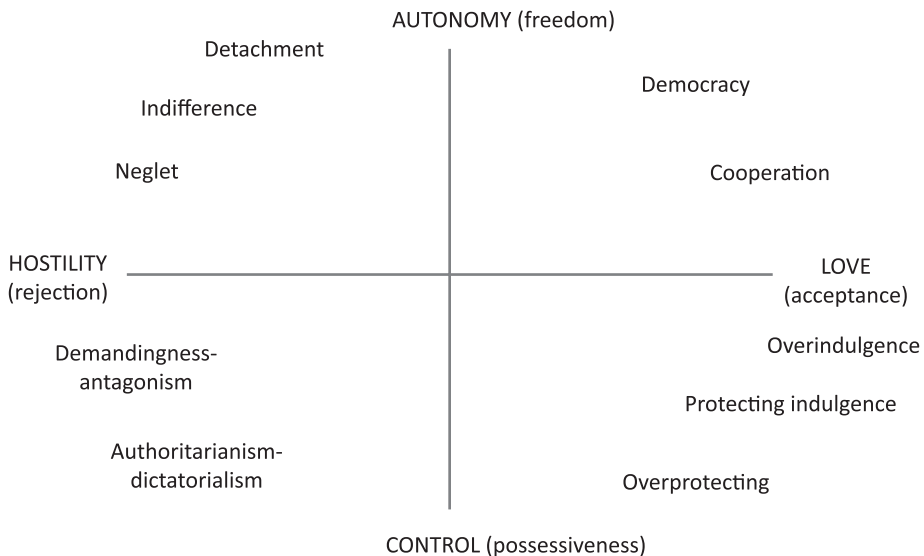


FIGURE 2. Schaefer's (1961) model of parental attitudes

Typologies of parental attitudes in Polish literature. Two chief models of parental attitudes were developed in Poland – the first by Maria Ziemska, the second (later) by Mieczysław Plopa. Both are referred to as typologies of parental attitudes.

Ziemska's model. This model was created by combining the aforementioned models by Kanner (1957), Schaefer (1961), and Roe and Siegelman (1963), as well as incorporating Ziemska's (1973) clinical experience. She distinguished eight parental attitudes potentially influencing the child's personality development: Four beneficial ones (acceptance, cooperation, considerate permissiveness, and respecting the child's rights) and four maladaptive ones (avoidance, rejection, overcorrecting, and overprotecting). *Acceptance* involves the parents accepting the child as it is, liking it and deriving satisfaction from their interactions. However, it does not mean uncritically fawning over the child. Accepting parents not only reward desirable behaviors, but also punish undesirable ones. *Cooperation* between the parents and the child refers to engaging in various activities together. *Considerate permissiveness* is the parents' awareness of the child's developmental changes, granting the child increasing autonomy and progressively reducing control over its activity. *Respecting the child's rights* is independent of its age and does not preclude making age-appropriate demands. If both the parents and the child respect and accept each other, the child grows up in an atmosphere of safety, but also knows that it can attain increased independence. The attitude of *avoidance* generally centers around the lack of concern for the child and its problems. Though the parents meet the child's needs, they show no particular interest in its life. *Rejection* involves antipathy to-

wards the child. In extreme cases, this can take the form of physical and mental abuse. *Overcorrecting* involves focusing on any imperfections in the child's behavior and appearance. Parents exhibiting this attitude are never satisfied with the child's achievements. Finally, *overprotective* parents strive to protect their child from every misfortune, thereby depriving it of opportunities to develop autonomy and independence.

To measure these eight attitudes, Ziemska (1973) created the *Parents' questionnaire*. Subsequent research using this questionnaire revealed that some items only differentiated mothers, while others only differentiated fathers. Though this is an obvious limitation of this measure, Ziemska did not address it in further studies. Thus, the same parental attitudes are measured with different items for mothers and for fathers. Moreover, some items belong to the same subscale for both parents, some belong to a given subscale only for one parent but not the other, while some other still belong to one subscale for one parent, and to another subscale for another. Finally, the subscales contain different numbers of items for mothers and for fathers.

Plopa's model. Mieczysław Plopa (2008a) based his typology of parental attitudes on the models by Roe and Siegelman (1963) and Becker (1964). He distinguishes five attitudes, measured with the *Parental attitude scale* (Plopa, 2008a) and the *Retrospective evaluation of parental attitudes questionnaire* (Plopa, 2008b): acceptance-rejection, excessive demands, autonomy, lack of consistency, and overprotection. The first attitude is bipolar: *Acceptance* denotes the atmosphere of free exchange of thoughts, trust, responding to the child's needs, intimacy, and respect, while *rejection* means emotional coldness, negative reactions to the child's attempts at initiating contact, not responding to the child's needs, and meeting only the physical ones. The attitude of *excessive demands* is a rigid parenting model, with no concern for the child's needs, not accepting differences of opinion, communication in the form of demands, orders, and prohibitions, and an emphasis on achievements, perfectionism, and obedience. *Autonomy* is expressed through the parent's flexibility, treating the child as a partner, accepting its need for privacy, fostering independence, offering support when needed, respecting the child's personal opinions and arguments, and tolerance for its relationships outside of the family. *Lack of consistency* in a parent's attitude means that the changes in a parent's behaviors towards the child are mainly dictated by the changes in their mood. The parent's personal and psychological problems are projected onto the child, resulting in engagement and acceptance alternating with hostility and irritability. Punishments are also dependent on the parent's mood. An attitude of *overprotection* denotes excessive concern and care, lack of awareness of the child's development and increasing coping skills. The child's autonomy is a source of anxiety for parents exhibiting this attitude: They picture the child's future functioning only as closely reliant on their support.

PARENTING STYLES

Parental attitudes and parenting styles. The relationship between *parental attitudes* and *parenting styles* is not clear. However, the concept of parenting styles is broader than that of parental attitudes. Parenting styles comprise the entire set of a parent's characteristic parental strategies, upbringing methods, or means of influencing children in a given family (Ziemska, 1973; Kuczkowski, 1991). Regarding English-language literature, the most frequently cited parenting styles model is the one by Diana Baumrind (1971). In Polish literature, Maria Ryś's model (2001) is the most popular.

Diana Baumrind's model. This was the first model, presenting four parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, neglectful, and permissive (Baumrind, 1971). These were placed in two dimensions: low versus high responsiveness (columns in Table 1) and low versus high demandingness (rows in Table 1).

TABLE 1
Parenting styles in Diana Baumrind's (1971) model

	High responsiveness	Low responsiveness
High demandingness	Authoritative	Authoritarian
Low demandingness	Permissive	Neglecting

The *authoritarian (autocratic)* parenting style is restrictive and punitive. Parents exhibiting this style demand the child to follow their orders, make demands and set rigid boundaries, control the child, and do not permit discussions or differences of opinion between the child and themselves. This parenting style is based on strictness and force. It is related to the adolescent child's lower social competences, fear of social comparisons, lower frequency of initiating activities, lower communicative skills, emotional immaturity, and aggressiveness (Turner, Helms, 1999). Children of such parents often uncritically accept the beliefs, choices, and preferences of their parents as their own. This leads to the development of a foreclosed identity, limiting the adolescent's autonomy development (Kimmel, Weiner, 1995).

The *authoritative (democratic)* style involves respecting the child's rights and cooperation between all members of the family, mutually respecting each other and fulfilling their assumed obligations. Taking the authoritative parenting style almost always means fully accepting the child. Parents include the child in discussions, display warmth and positive emotions, and provide it with physical and psychological care and support. This results in the adolescent's high social competences, self-reliance, and responsible behaviors (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, Dornbusch, 1991). Such parents are supportive, accepting, and responsible, but not overbearing. Their children are allowed to question some of the established family rules or take independent actions, knowing that they can rely on their parents for support and advice. Steinberg (Coleman, Hendry, 2000) distinguishes three elements of the authoritative style: warmth (love, acceptance), structure (rules, clear demands towards the adolescent), and autonomy support (encouraging the adolescent to develop individuality). This parenting style facilitates identity achievement in the adolescent child (Kimmer, Weiner, 1995). Individuals who have completed the identity achievement process are characterized by emotional maturity, a need to decide about their own future, self-trust, positive self-image, and a sense of satisfaction from being able to direct their own life and make decisions.

In the *neglectful* parenting style, the parents are not involved in the child's life and are not interested in nor aware of its activities. It is related to the adolescent's lack of social competences, difficulties with independent functioning, and low self-control (Santrock, 2003).

In the *permissive* parenting style, the parents have a close bond with their child, but make little demands and do not exert control. This style also contributes to lack of social skills and, especially, low self-control in adolescence (Santrock, 2003). The parents are motivated in taking this style by a belief that warm engagement coupled with no boundaries will make their children creative and confident.

Maria Rys' Model. Maria Rys (2001) proposed the following parenting styles, basing on the existing typologies: democratic, autocratic, liberal-loving, and liberal-unloving. The *democratic* style means respecting the child's rights, trust, kindness, shared planning and problem solving, flexible control, and presenting, rather than forcing, the parents' arguments and viewpoints in discussions. The *autocratic* style is the opposite and it involves a lack of emotional expression towards the child, an emphasis on demands, achievement, and punishments, criticizing the child's behavior, and controlling the child's relationships outside of the family. The *liberal* style is granting the child freedom and the ability to make independent decisions in every aspect of life, lack of restrictions on its activity, lack of demands, not taking the position of an authority, and showing interest in the child only at its explicit request. In the *liberal-loving* style, the parents treat the child with tenderness, care, and intimacy, while in the *liberal-unloving* style, they are indifferent, distant, and rejecting.

ATTITUDES AND STYLES: TOWARDS SYNTHESIZING DECADES OF RESEARCH

Earlier literature, both in English (Roe, Siegelman, 1963; Schaefer, 1961) and Polish (Ziemska, 1973), has used the term *parental attitude*. Later, the term *style* became preferred (Baumrind, 1973; Ryś, 2001). Many different models were proposed, each inspiring empirical research. However, attempts at integration were rarely made, both on the theoretical and empirical level. As a result, many problems emerged without clear answers in the literature. In particular, what are the differences between parental attitudes and styles? Can a parent exhibit an attitude simultaneously comprised of two opposing dimension poles, for example, of warmth and hostility? Assuming the three-factor (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral) structure of attitude, it should be relatively constant and should not contain conflicting opposites (e.g., warmth and hostility together). In contrast, parenting styles (Baumrind, 1971) are comprised of several specific elements and constructs. Solving this problem has been hindered by terminological difficulties in educational psychology, where the same psychological constructs are often described in several different ways.

In response to these difficulties, Skinner (Skinner et al., 2005) postulates a move away from the notion of parental attitudes and towards *parenting dimensions*, defined as its features or qualities, or, in other words, *the descriptive schema of parenting*.

Skinner's model

Skinner (Skinner et al., 2005) bases her model of parenting dimensions on the Self-system Model of Motivational Development (Connell, Wellborn, 1991; Deci, Ryan, 1985; Grolnick, Ryan, 1992; Skinner, Wellborn, 1994). This model distinguishes three basic needs of the child: affiliation (belongingness, to be related), effectiveness (competency), and authenticity (autonomy). Appropriate parental attitudes can help the child fulfill these needs. A review of literature from the past decades had led Skinner et al. (2005) to the conclusion that a great number of models and constructs can be reduced to a set of several basic unipolar constructs (factors), laying at the foundation of many complex parenting schemas. Skinner et al. have distinguished six such constructs. Their definitions are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Six unipolar parenting dimensions and their expressions (Skinner, Johnson, Snyder, 2005)

Dimension	Expression
Warmth	Expressing love, positive emotions, care, and joy; emotional availability and validation.
Rejection	Active dislike, aversion, and hostility; a harsh attitude of the parent towards the child, together with irritability, excessive reactivity, and frequent expressions of disapproval.
Structure	Clear and orderly rules; providing information on ways of achieving desired results.
Chaos	Disruptions and lack of clarity; restlessness, lack of consequence and predictability, and ruthlessness of the parent.
Autonomy support	Granting freedom of expression and action; encouraging the child to create their own authentic preferences and opinions, as well as their acceptance and respect.
Coercion	Restrictive, overbearing; autocratic parental behaviors, excessive control, strict demands of obedience.

Skinner et al. (2005) have questioned the bipolarity of parental behaviors. The majority of prior researchers assumed that parental behaviors must be clearly defined, so that, for example, high scores on the warmth dimension automatically entail low hostility scores. Meanwhile, parenthood involves many situations, interactions, reactions, behaviors, and attitudes, often in various changing conditions. Thus, at various times, a parent can exhibit both warm and hostile parenting behaviors.

Assuming that parental behaviors are unidimensional, according to Skinner et al. (2005) it can be inferred that their combinations comprise parenting styles. Thus, Skinner et al.'s model is consistent with models of parenting styles, for example, the one proposed by Baumrind (1971), in which parents could achieve low scores on both dimensions, resulting in a different parenting style than in the case of a parent achieving high scores on both dimensions. Considering Roe and Siegelman's (1963, Figure 1) model from this perspective, it seems that it includes precisely such *dimensions* of parenting (warmth, coldness, concentration on the child), constellations of which form parenting *styles* (referred to by Roe and Siegelman as attitudes – neglecting, rejecting, loving, etc.). Thus, Skinner et al.'s (2005) model is also consistent with the concept of attachment styles – a parent can have high (ambivalent attachment) or low (avoidant attachment) scores on two dimensions. As a result, the notions of parenting styles and parenting dimensions, together with attachment styles, form a consistent picture of parent-child relations.

Additionally, Skinner et al.'s (2005) model more accurately explains the influence of parental attitudes on child development. Its consistency is greater than, for example, Mieczysław Płopa's (2008a, 2008b) model, which contains both bipolar and unipolar factors. Moreover, basing on the six parenting dimensions distinguished most often in the literature, the unipolarity of Skinner et al.'s (2005) model fits both attachment theory and the model of parenting styles. Only after assuming that parental attitudes are unipolar dimensions forming dyads does this concept fit with the concept of parenting styles as constellations of these attitudes.

CURRENT STUDY

The presented studies focused on the Polish version of the questionnaire for the six parenting dimensions identified by Skinner et al. (2005). The authors named it the Parents as Social Context Questionnaire (PASCQ) and for comparability with international research, the English abbreviation was used (Addo, Aslund, Nilsson, 2017; Chew, Wang, 2013).

Particular attention was paid to the structure of the distinguished constructs in the model, which serves as a summary of many constructs describing relations, attitudes, and parenting styles. The constructs, however, are independent of one another.

Two versions of the questionnaire were adapted – one for adolescents describing their relations with their parents, and one for parents, describing their relations with their children. Regarding both versions, two hypotheses were formulated: the first one concerned the acceptable internal reliability measured by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the second one – the acceptable fit to data of the six-factor data measurement model.

METHOD

Procedure and participants

Two studies were conducted. The first study involved 969 adolescents (45% males, 55% females) aged from 10 to 19 ($M = 13.82$; $SD = 2.07$), evaluating their parents. Study 2 involved 269 parents (82.5% mothers) aged from 21 to 55 ($M = 39.73$; $SD = 6.00$) describing their attitudes towards their children. The study was conducted in Poland in 2014, anonymously, with the help of trained research assistants, recruited from among students. Mplus 7 software was used as a data analysis tool.

Materials

Two versions of the PASCQ were used in the studies. The version for adolescents consists of 24 items, 4 for each scale listed in Table 2; the version for parents consists of 32 items, of which 4 to 6 items form each scale in Table 2. The task of the respondents in both versions is to describe their attitude towards each statement on a 4-level scale (1 – definitely untrue, 2 – rather untrue, 3 – rather true, 4 – definitely true). All of the items from both versions are presented in the Results section, in Tables 3 and 5, together with the factor loadings.

RESULTS

Study 1

The following Cronbach's alpha indexes were obtained: Warmth = 0.80; Structure = 0.68; Autonomy Support = 0.76; Rejection = 0.67; Chaos = 0.62; Coercion = 0.65. All six scales thus display satisfactory reliability, given that each scale consists of only

4 items, and that the Cronbach's alpha also depends on the number of items. Consequently, factor structure was tested. The following indices of fit to data were obtained: $\chi^2 = 1308.76$ ($df = 237$, $p = 0.000$), RMSEA = 0.068 [0.065 – 0.072], CFI = 0.934. Table 3 contains the items and their factor loadings, while Table 4 contains the correlations between the latent variables measured using the PASCQ.

The obtained data can be interpreted as follows:

1. The measurement model has very good fit to data (satisfactory CFI and RMSEA) and has significant and high loadings (except for item 6) on the predicted factors (see Table 3).
2. The variables, although discernible, are highly correlated, which undermines the validity of their differentiation.

TABLE 3

Factor loadings in the confirmatory factor analysis (PASCQ for adolescents, N = 969)

	Warmth	Structure	Autonomy Support	Rejection	Chaos	Coercion
1. My parents let me know they love me	0.78					
7. My parents enjoy being with me	0.81					
13. My parents are always glad to see me	0.82					
19. My parents think I am special	0.76					
3. When I want to do something, my parents show me how		0.56				
9. When I want to understand how something works, my parents explain it to me		0.72				
15. If I ever have a problem, my parents help me to figure out the solution		0.85				
21. My parents explain the reasons for our family rules		0.44				
5. My parents trust me			0.74			
11. My parents accept me for myself			0.81			
17. My parents let me do the things I think are important			0.60			

	Warmth	Structure	Autonomy Support	Rejection	Chaos	Coercion
23. My parents try to understand my point of view			0.76			
2. Sometimes I wonder if my parents like me				0.49		
8. My parents think I am always in the way				0.74		
14. My parents make me feel like I am not wanted				0.88		
20. Nothing I do is good enough for my parents				0.62		
4. When my parents make a promise, I do not know if they will keep it					0.50	
10. When my parents say they will do something, sometimes they do not really do it					0.63	
16. My parents keep changing the rules on me					0.50	
22. My parents get mad at me with no warning					0.73	
6. My parents are always telling me what to do						0.18
12. My parents boss me						0.68
18. My parents think there is only one right way to do things – their way						0.75
24 My parents say “no” to everything						0.76

TABLE 4
Correlations between latent variables measured by the PASCQ

	Warmth	Structure	Autonomy Support	Rejection	Chaos
Structure	0.88				
Autonomy	0.92	0.85			
Rejection	-0.79	-0.63	-0.81		
Chaos	-0.62	-0.60	-0.71	0.91	
Coercion	-0.62	-0.48	-0.80	0.89	0.86

Thus, we conducted a bi-factor analysis, which produces one general factor and specific factors. Several analyses were conducted, in two-, three- and four-factor solutions. In all solutions, the vast majority of items created a general factor with a significantly higher load than the specific factors. In very rare instances (e.g., for the two- or three-factor solutions, there were two or three items) specific factor loadings were greater than the general factor loading for some items, but overall, the loadings did not form any theoretically valid pattern.

Therefore, it can be assumed that the perception of parental attitudes by adolescents is quite general. Adolescents mainly perceive the relationship as generally positive or negative.

Study 2

The following Cronbach's alpha indexes were obtained for the parent version of the questionnaire: Warmth = 0.80; Structure = 0.72; Autonomy Support = 0.73; Rejection = 0.66; Chaos = 0.63; Coercion = 0.70. All six scales are therefore characterized by a satisfactory internal consistency. Consequently, the factor structure was tested. However, it appeared that the matrix was not positively defined, which means that at least some of the scales in the measurement model are indistinguishable. In this situation, a bi-factor analysis was conducted, which produces one general factor and specific factors. Several analyses were conducted, in two-, three- and four-factor solutions. It was found that specific factors are most clearly generated in a three- factor solution. The following indices of fit to data were obtained: $\chi^2 = 659.9$ ($df = 403$, $p = 0.000$); RMSEA = 0.049 [0.042 – 0.055]; CFI = 950. This solution is shown in Table 5.

Based on the criterion of a specific factor loading being higher than the general factor loading or relatively high specific factor loading, the significance of specific factors was determined and the highest loading items forming a coherent content were selected for the short version of the tool. Thus, the first factor was the general quality of the parental relationship, the second factor was structure, and the third factor was autonomy support.

TABLE 5
Factor loadings in bi-factor analysis (PASCQ for parents, $N = 269$)

	General factor/ Warmth	Structure	Autonomy Support
1. I know a lot about what is going on with my child	0.64	0.19	0.10
2. I do not understand my child very well	-0.59	-0.06	-0.03
3. I make it clear what will happen if my child does not follow our rules	0.40	0.64	-0.05
4. I let my child get away with things I really should not allow	-0.31	-0.45	0.25
5. I encourage my child to express their feelings even when they're difficult for me to accept	0.58	-0.05	0.51
6. My child fights me at every turn	-0.67	0.10	0.10
7. I really know how my child feels about things	0.65	0.09	0.06
8. Sometimes my child is hard to like	-0.67	0.21	0.01

	General factor/ Warmth	Structure	Autonomy Support
9. I make my requirements towards my child clear	0.39	0.70	0.02
10. When my child gets in trouble, my reaction is not very predictable	-0.52	-0.11	0.07
11. I encourage my child to express their opinions even when I do not agree with them	0.55	-0.05	0.57
12. To get my child to do something, I have to yell at them	-0.59	0.17	0.06
13. I do varied, unusual things together with my child	0.57	0.11	0.06
14. At times, the demands of my child feel like a burden	-0.62	-0.01	0.20
15. When I punish my child, I always explain why	0.57	0.32	0.27
16. My child does not seem to know what I expect from them	-0.67	-0.01	0.10
17. I trust my child	0.72	-0.17	0.23
18. I do not allow my child to decide on too many things for themselves	-0.30	0.41	-0.02
19. I set aside time to talk to my child about things they find important	0.71	0.17	0.03
20. I need to devote more time to my child than I can afford	-0.40	0.02	0.44
21. I expect my child to follow our family rules	0.32	0.52	0.20
22. I change house rules often	-0.50	-0.30	0.17
23. I encourage my child to be faithful to themselves	0.45	0.03	0.37
24. I sometimes feel that I have to push my child to do things	-0.55	0.25	0.36
25. I can always find time for my child	0.69	0.15	-0.15
26. Sometimes I feel like I cannot be there for my child when they need me	-0.59	0.00	0.23
27. I keep the promises I make to my child	0.44	0.07	0.05
28. I can get mad at my child without a warning	-0.60	0.17	0.29
29. I expect my child to say what they really think	0.47	0.06	0.30
30. I compete with my child for authority	-0.68	0.12	0.06
31. I am satisfied with the relationship with my child	0.81	0.02	-0.2
32. If my child has a problem, I help them find a solution	0.73	0.10	0.38

Note. Original response key: Warmth = mean of 1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31; Rejection = mean of 2, 8, 14, 20, 26; Structure = mean of 3, 9, 15, 21, 27, 32; Chaos = mean of 4, 10, 16, 22, 28; Autonomy support = mean of 5, 11, 17, 23, 29; Coercion = mean of 6, 12, 18, 24, 30;

In bold – items selected for the short version due to a higher loading on the specific factor than the general; In bold and italic – items selected for the short version due to high loadings on the specific factor and theoretical considerations; In bold and underlined – items selected for the first factor in the short version due to high loadings and theoretical justification.

Due to the item selection criterion in the bi-factor solution, in which the general factor collects the common variance and the specific factors collect the detailed variance, it can be expected that the measurement model of the short version will have good fit to data, simultaneously eliminating the problems of the long version, namely, the excessively high correlations between the measured variables. Results revealed that such a model indeed had very good fit to data since the following indices were obtained: $\chi^2 = 44.27$ ($df = 24$, $p = 0.01$); RMSEA = 0.056 [0.029 – 0.082]; CFI = 981. Table 6 presents factor loadings and correlations between three dimensions: overall quality (warmth), structure, and autonomy support.

TABLE 6

Results of confirmatory factor analysis of the short version of the PASCQ for parents based on a bi-factor analysis (see Table 5)

	Warmth	Structure	Autonomy
7. I really know how my feels and thinks	0.66		
19. I set aside time to talk to my child about things they find important	0.75		
31 I am satisfied with the relationship with my child	0.72		
3. I make it clear what will happen if my child does not follow our rules		0.77	
9. I make my requirements towards my child clear		0.82	
21. I expect my child to follow our family rules		0.63	
5. I encourage my child to express their feelings even when they are difficult for me to accept			0.83
11. I encourage my child to express their opinions even when I do not agree with them			0.80
23. I encourage my child to be faithful to themselves			0.61

The variables were correlated to a much lesser extent: Warmth–Autonomy Support = 0.71; Warmth–Structure = 0.60; Autonomy Support–Structure = 0.41; It can therefore be concluded that the expected improvement of the model for the short version has been achieved

DISCUSSION

There are many constructs describing the relationship between parents and children in the literature (for an overview, see Skinner et al., 2005). Researchers (Barber, 2005; Soenens, Vansteenkiste, 2010) are paying attention increasingly often to the issue of measurement and conceptualization of the basic dimensions describing the detailed aspects of parent-child relationships. In this situation, attempts to synthesize and reconceptualize existing dimensions are worthwhile. One such an attempt was undertaken by Skinner et al. (2005), who, basing on an extensive literature review, proposed six constructs which would synthesize many earlier models. At a theoretical level, this proposition is not only useful and ambitious, but also, it seems, justified. The three

dimensions – warmth versus rejection, structure versus chaos and autonomy support versus coercion indeed seem to describe the diversity of relations well and enable the identification of many other earlier models and constructs within such a network. Constructing a model which would synthesize the existing knowledge on parental and upbringing relations would provide an opportunity to accumulate scientifically and practically useful information, and could facilitate future research. Measurement tools constructed on the basis of this model could be useful for both scientific research and diagnostic purposes.

The attempt made by Skinner et al. (2005) should be evaluated as halfway successful. At the theoretical level, it indeed seems valid, but at the operational level, it has not been as successful as could have been expected. The problem lies in the insufficient differentiation of constructs measured with the constructed measure – the PASCQ.

There is some doubt whether this applies only to the Polish version of the measure or to the original as well. This question cannot be answered with certainty, but some of the obtained results suggest that the problem extends beyond the Polish version. The constructs were highly correlated in the original research by Skinner et al. (2005), who used statistical analyses demonstrating a closer fit of partial models that differentiated between two factors (e.g., warmth-rejection) than of models which unified such opposing constructs. Our research applied a different procedure – the whole model was tested by analyzing both fit indices, factor loadings, and variable correlations. It was found that even if the fit indices are acceptable, the variables are correlated so highly that it is difficult to differentiate between them.

The question therefore arises as to why this is the case. We believe that the reasons are twofold: theoretical and operational. The first, theoretical, reason is that rejection, chaos and coercion have been defined too negatively already at the theoretical level. The consequence was their mutual high positive correlation and, resulting from this opposition – high negative correlation with their positive polarities (warmth, structure, autonomy support). In future research, it is advisable to reconceptualize both polarities in such a way as to capture not only the negative, but also the positive characteristics of the given relationship. The second reason for the difficulty in differentiating between the constructs was the wording of the items, which did not alleviate the constructs' negative descriptions, but rather amplified them, exacerbating their tendency to become indistinguishable.

Finally, it is worth noting that the short version of the questionnaire fulfils the criteria for construct differentiation to a greater degree and can therefore be used, at least in a transitional period, if no improved model is proposed which would circumvent the problems inherent in the model adopted in the current paper.

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- Transl. Jarosław Woś, Piotr Kałowski*

ELŻBIETA ZDANKIEWICZ-ŚCIGAŁA

SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities

JOANNA SIKORA, DAWID KONRAD ŚCIGAŁA

The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Institute of Psychology

PARENTAL ATTITUDES AND SUSCEPTIBILITY TO IMPULSIVE AGGRESSION. THE MEDIATION ROLE OF ALEXITHYMIA

Abstract: Aim: The study aimed at analyzing the relationship between parental attitudes and impulsive aggression, including the mediation role of alexithymia.

Method: The following tools were used in the study: Parental Bonding Instrument; Toronto Alexithymia Scale; Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ). The study sample was randomly selected from the general population, 197 people aged 22 to 43 ($M = 34.42$; $SD = 5.47$) in total. The study sample included slightly more women (53.8%) than men. Considering the level of education, the largest number of people had higher education (74.1%); the others had secondary education (14.2%) or a bachelor's degree (11.7%).

Results: The analyses – correlation, regression, and mediation – showed a moderate relationship between maternal control and difficulties in identifying emotions as well as between fatherly control and overall alexithymia scores and also separately with one of its components – externally-oriented thinking. Maternal control is associated with the development of hostility. On the

other hand, fatherly control increases the tendency to physical aggression, hostility, and anger. Alexithymia is strongly related to physical aggression, hostility, and anger and it is an important mediator between maternal and fatherly control and various aspects of aggression, increasing its intensity. Age correlates positively with the intensity of alexithymia.

Conclusions: The study shows strong relationships between parental attitudes, mainly control, and the tendency to develop alexithymia and to various manifestations of aggression. Alexithymia blocks the processes of identification and verbalization of emotions. As a result, the language is no longer used to regulate and control excitement and thus, it increases the risk of aggressive behavior. The results show that future research on the relationship between parental attitudes, alexithymia and aggression shall also include other dimensions of the emotional regulation.

Keywords: parental attitudes, alexithymia, aggression.

ATTACHMENT STYLES – ALEXITHYMIA AND THE SUSCEPTIBILITY TO AGGRESSION

In the attachment theory proposed by John Bowlby (1973, 1988), a child seeks a close relationship with a chosen person. The relationships determine affective growth, including the development of emotions and their regulation (Mikulincer, and Shaver, 2007; Mikulincer, Shaver, Pereg, 2003). According to attachment theories, early relations with important attachment figures are crucial for the evolution of internal working models for communication, emotional regulation and social behavior (Bowlby, 1988; Cooper, Shaver, Collins, 1998; Laible, 2007; Sroufe, and Fleeson, 1986). Attachment is a state of an individual feeling a strong tendency to seek intimacy with another person, the so-called attachment figure, especially when facing difficulties, danger, or stress. This person is most often the mother (Bowlby, 1988). Since infancy, real-life experiences affect the development of intrapsychic, internal, working, affective-cognitive models (internal working models of self, others, and self versus others), which becomes the basis for the use and development of complex strategies of regulating emotions in many emotional situations as well as for mentalization (Allen, Fonagy, Bateman, 2014).

According to the concept of mental representation of emotions (Maruszewski, Ścigała, 1998), the ability to create verbal and symbolic representations stimulates the mechanisms responsible for the development and regulation of emotions, and thus for the control of impulses. In a secure attachment, i.e. when a child experiences optimal care and control from parents, the cognitive representation created in the child's mind allows for a hidden expectation that any homeostatic imbalances will be corrected. This allows for the child's self-regulation, i.e. the ability to flexibly regulate emotional states in interpersonal relationships as well as in autonomous contexts (Schoore, 2009). The reinforcement of such beliefs fosters the experience, interpretation and accurate regulation of emotions. Thus, to allow the growth, one needs to acquire language and communication competences, both in intrapsychic regulation as well as in interpersonal relations, since this enables effective communication.

According to Jon G. Allen, Peter Fonagy and Anthony Bateman (2014), the ability to create mental representations of affective states is essential for mentalization and reflective functioning in emotion-inducing situations. Considering the neural correlates related to the regulation of emotions, it can be assumed that the orbitofrontal part of the brain is specialized in the mobilization of effective behavior strategies when in new or ambiguous situations. It operates below consciousness and gets activated in response to insufficient information – when facing uncertainty and unpredictability.

Sense of security is a vital resource in secure attachment relationships, which, thanks to well-functioning brain structures, can protect against psychopathology caused by sudden stress or trauma experienced during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood. As suggested by Allan N. Schoore (2009), it is the predominance of positive emotions in secure attachment that is responsible for the rapid development of brain structures and the complex network of connections between its parts. Repeated many times, the cycles of adjusting, disruption, and re-adjusting of higher levels of neural and mental organization teach the child, and then the adult, to activate adequate strategies of coping with arousal, depending on the stimulation. This also translates into effective processes of regulating emotions in social relations.

In the case of insecure attachment, internal working models strengthen the child's belief that the attachment figure will remain inaccessible or will react negatively to a request for help. This means that the experience of emotions also includes an element of suppression because the emotions are considered too dangerous to be fully experienced or named (Allen, Fonagy, Bateman, 2014). Apart from the belief that there would be no comfort from the caregiver, the internal working model in disorganized attachment also causes numerous dissociative contradictory expectations (Liotti, 2004). Such a relationship is also associated with "ever-growing fear – a child does not consider the caretaker as a "safe base" in a situation of danger or stress because he or she cannot predict the caretaker's reaction (Liotti, 2004). The more the bond is based on fear, feeling of abandonment or being misunderstood, the greater the chaos and the stronger the stress stimulation, both in childhood and in adulthood.

An insecure attachment – either high or low control as well as too much or too little care – inhibits a child's proper development, e.g. by evoking and maintaining long-lasting negative emotions, which are difficult to be named. When a caregiver, as an attachment figure, participates in the processes of regulating the child's arousal in a way that cannot be predicted, the child is unable to modulate these processes, and instead, this results in extreme levels of arousal – very high and/or very low. This can be observed in people who felt emotionally abandoned or neglected in their childhood (Dozier, Stovall, Albus, 1999; Main, 1996). The lack of synchrony in the child-parent relationship inhibits corrective functions in child's capacity for stimulation regulation and control. This promotes the development of a tendency to experience various negative emotions, including aggression, on the one hand, and alexithymia, on the other. Alexithymia decreases the ability to correctly identify and understand emotions, including those expressed with facial expression. Hence, the emotions – being important processes informing about mental states and relationships with other people – are used incorrectly, which increases the number of stressful situations experienced. Alexithymia is also associated with a dysfunction in the recognition of facial expressions, which results in deficits in the ability to create a semantic representation of emotional concepts (Grynberg et al., 2012).

According to developmental psychopathology, bonding-related disorders of relationships decrease the ability to create trust-based bonding relations and conduce to a wide spectrum of emotional disorders associated with psychopathology in adult life (Enns, Cox, Clara, 2002). Attachment-related traumas become a source of the fear of rejection and of emotional closeness to other people in adulthood, thus, increasing stress and uncertainty in relationships (Gillath, Shaver, 2007; Greenberg, 1999). This is associated with a limited ability to form bonds, which means that "Attachment trauma in childhood is especially pernicious in hampering development, including the development of resilience that would promote the capacity to cope with later impersonal and interpersonal traumas" (Allen, Fonagy, Bateman, 2014, pp. 213).

Disorders associated with the lack of sense of security result in problems with accurate communication of one's intentions, needs, and emotions in the context of social relationships in general and particularly, in close relationships. Many years of experiencing a parent as inaccessible and insensitive to signals from the child results in chronic negative emotions such as fear, anger or sadness. It can be also conducive to the development of impulsive behavior, including aggression. Impulsive aggression is associated with high excitability, sudden, uncontrolled outbursts, frequently disproportionate to the stimulus. The aggression is usually not aimed at achieving any par-

ticular goals and may also be directed against oneself. Its appearance is not necessarily associated with the perpetrator's antisocial tendencies – usually, it is the result of high emotional tension or failure to cope with the situation in the external world (Pisula, Kołakowski, 2011).

In their study on attachment, satisfaction with the performance of developmental tasks in close relationships and aggressive behavior between partners, Alicja Malina and Dorota Suwalska (2012, p. 80) showed that “attachment style is associated with aggressive behavior. Higher levels of aggression, both physical and verbal, as well as the one manifested with anger and hostility, are typical of partners with insecure attachment styles, whereas lower levels of aggression occur in individuals with a secure attachment style.” Similar results were provided by the research of Marzanna Farnicka, Hanna Liberska and Dorota Niewiedział (2016). They showed that increased aggression in children is associated with an insecure attachment style. Individuals with high anxiety and avoidance were more likely to act aggressively.

Giovanni Liotti (2004) also underlines the mediation role of attachment styles in the process of coping with stress and trauma in adulthood. When an adult faces a traumatic situation, the childhood attachment is activated. This, in turn, triggers the so-called internal working models: of self, of others and of the nature of relationships with others. These models include generalized beliefs and assumptions about the availability of others and its principles: the likelihood of receiving support at difficult times and the character of possible interactions. If the emotional memory of such experiences is difficult and results in a threat and unavailability of others, it intensifies the currently experienced trauma and leads to more severe cognitive-emotional disorders, and as a consequence – more intense post-traumatic disorders, which may take the form of externalization or / and internalization of problems (Cierpiałkowska, 2009).

Gordon Parker, Hillary Tupling and L.B. Brown (1979) attempted to operationalize the attachment concerning the dimensions of attachment styles described by Mary Ainsworth et al. (1969). They also indicated that Ainsworth's work lacked descriptions of the father's relationship with the child. They presumed that relationships with both parents are important for children's mental development, and referring to this idea, they created a tool to study the retrospective perception of relationships with both parents. They considered two dimensions as crucial: care and overprotection.

Considering the level of manifested care and overprotection, the authors distinguished four attachment styles: separately for the mother and the father. The care dimension ranges from emotional warmth and responsiveness of parents towards their child to coldness, emotional inaccessibility, and emotional rejection. The overprotection dimension ranges from psychological autonomy to parents' excessive influence and control. Optimal attachment style (secure) refers to high care and optimal control from the parent. The over-protective-forcing style (anxious-ambivalent) is characterized by high care and high control. The controlling style (avoidant) is characterized by low care and a high degree of control. The last of the distinguished styles – neglecting (disorganized attachment) – refers to low parental care and a low level of control. This attachment style poses the risk of the greatest psychopathology, in childhood, adolescence and in adulthood (Schore, 2009).

According to the authors of the concept, the most optimal style that would foster mental health is the one related to high care and relatively low parental control. The Parker and colleagues' concept, as well as the tool aimed at identifying the attachment styles they created, have been verified in many studies. One of these, conducted

in the USA by Murray W. Enns et al. (2002) including a very large sample of patients ($n = 5877$) suffering from a wide spectrum of disorders – depression, various types of anxiety disorders, traumatic stress disorders, or personality disorders and addictions – revealed that the development of psychopathology is mostly related to the maternal care dimension. The lower the care, the higher the risk of emotional disorders. Only concerning externalization disorders, a different pattern of relationship was observed. Among the studied men, high maternal control correlated with the severity of antisocial disorders. High control from fathers, in turn, correlated with lower severity of externalizing disorder among the men who suffered from this disorder.

Many studies also evidence a strong relationship between alexithymia and problems with understanding and regulating emotions in people raised in insecure relationships (Bekker, Bachrach, Croon, 2007) and also between secure attachment and higher level of competence, empathy, ability to establish intimate relationships, emotional awareness and self-awareness (Laible, 2007). Graeme J. Taylor et al. (1991) claim that alexithymia refers to a difficulty in gaining access to one's emotional processes in three areas: (1) mental representation of emotions; (2) behavioral indicators; (3) physiological indicators. The term "alexithymia" is currently used not only to indicate deficits in the verbalization of emotions, but mainly to describe problems related to cognitive processing of affective stimulation, and thus deficits in the regulation of emotions and understanding of physiological emotion correlates. These deficits are associated with difficulties in identifying and verbalizing emotions and relate to focusing only on external reasons for emotional arousal, i.e. externally-oriented thinking (Taylor, Bagdy, Parker, 1997; Maruszewski, Ścigala, 1998; Zdankiewicz-Ścigala, 2017).

Currently, alexithymia is commonly considered as a nonhomogeneous construct, consisting of two dimensions: cognitive and affective (Vorst, and Bermond, 2001). The cognitive dimension includes difficulties in identifying, verbalizing and analyzing one's emotions. The problem with identifying emotions refers to the difficulty in assessing physiological arousal in terms of experienced affective states and their differentiation. Emotional verbalization, in turn, concerns ways of describing one's emotional reactions and communicating one's affective states to others. When experiencing non-specific emotional arousal, people having problems with accurate identification of emotions find it hard to diagnose their emotional states correctly and to describe them verbally, and, at the same time, communicate it to others verbally and non-verbally. The externally-oriented thinking – related to attributing causes of emotional states to situational factors – blocks the processes of mentalization (the creation of mental representations that explain one's mental states and the mental states of others in emotogenic situations) as well as the understanding of cause-and-effect relationships. This impoverishes the development of imaginary processes, also considered as a cognitive deficit in alexithymia.

Disorders resulting from cognitive distortions result in the use of non-adaptive coping strategies in stressful situations – mainly, the suppression of emotions or uncontrolled outbursts (impulsive aggression) in the least suitable stimulus situations. As a consequence, people with high levels of alexithymia experience stronger psychophysiological arousal in emotional situations. Being unable to use adaptive self-regulation strategies to reduce the tension, they do not experience changes in the negative affect they feel. Such retention of negative affect, in turn, leads to difficulties in experiencing positive emotions (Swart Kortekaas, Aleman, 2009). The affective dimension of alexithymia includes low emotional excitability and limited imagination capacity. Low

emotional excitability is defined as a decrease in the amplitude of the excitation level occurring in response to emotional stimuli.

Therefore, the higher the alexithymia level, the more difficult it is for an individual to consciously differentiate physiological arousal. As numerous recent studies indicate, this is associated with interoception deficits, i.e. the ability to record and process body signals (Brewer, Cook, Bird, 2016; Murphy, Catmur, Bird, 2018). Significant deficits were observed in people with high levels of alexithymia as regards their ability to read body work indicators, both concerning strictly physical indicators as well as those related to affective arousal (Brewer, Cook, Bird, 2016). Deficits related to cognitive and affective dimensions as well as non-optimal emotional regulation strategies typical of people with high alexithymia levels may play an important role in the development of various mental disorders and become a risk factor for their occurrence (Kret, Ploeger, 2015).

Fred A. Thorberg et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis aimed at determining the relationship between maternal and fatherly care and overprotection and alexithymia. The authors showed that there was a moderate to high relationship between the mother's attention for the child and the tendency to develop alexithymia as a whole, as well as concerning two out of three dimensions of alexithymia: difficulties in verbalizing emotions and identifying emotions. There was no relationship with the third dimension, i.e. the externally-oriented thinking. Hence, the greater the emotional coldness and the lack of responsiveness from the mother, the higher the probability of the child's alexithymia. A moderate relationship was found in terms of the second dimension of parental attitudes towards children, i.e. overprotection. A moderate relationship was found between both maternal and fatherly control and the difficulty in verbalizing emotions subscale. This meta-analysis shows that high control from both parents and low care will promote the development of alexithymia in children.

The relationship between insecure attachment styles and alexithymia has been confirmed in many studies including adults (De Rick, Vanheule, 2006, 2007; Hexel, 2003; Montebanacci et al., 2004; Picardi, Toni, Caroppo, 2005; Zdankiewicz-Ścigała, 2017). Most of the research focused on the analysis of the relationship between attachment styles and alexithymia, considering the latter as a whole, not including its particular dimensions. Some results indicate the relationship between the anxiety dimension in attachment and difficulties in recognizing emotions, whereas the avoidance dimension relates to the invalidation and suppression of emotions, and it is strongly correlated with externally-oriented thinking. Such conclusions were offered in the study conducted by Elizabeth Meins et al. (2008). Picardi et al. (2005), in turn, argue that both dimensions, anxiety and avoidance considered as features of adult attachment, correlate significantly with all dimensions of alexithymia.

A study conducted by Mohammad Ali Besharat et al. (2014) verified the impact of the emotional self-regulatory capacity on the relationship between attachment styles and alexithymia. The results showed a negative relationship between secure attachment style, self-regulatory capacity, and alexithymia. Moreover, a positive relationship between insecure attachment styles and alexithymia was found. Secure attachment is the main predictor of the development of the ability to regulate and identify emotions as well as to express and exchange them effectively in social and emotional interactions. In contrast, insecure attachment styles hinder the development of emotional self-regulation, thus becoming a developmental basis for alexithymia (Besharat et al., 2014).

There is an imbalance in the tendency to experience positive and negative emotions (Dubey, Pandey, 2013) depending on the alexithymia level. This imbalance affects cognitive and emotional-motivational development considerably, and thus, it also impacts the social shaping of self-regulation processes (Maruszewski, Ścigała, 1998). A study by Zbigniew Wajda provides some interesting data on that (2018). His study aimed at verifying whether the perception of relationships with parents changes during short-term psychodynamic-interpersonal group psychotherapy and whether this changes the severity of neurotic symptoms. At the beginning of the therapy, the highest severity of neurotic (anxiety) symptoms were identified among the participants reporting the lowest level of maternal care and the highest level of her control, as well as high levels of fatherly care and control. This study, as one of the few, verified the relationship between psychopathology and parental attitudes presented by both parents.

The abovementioned results refer to the clinical group of people with neurotic, personality and nutritional disorders. Many studies (see Kret, Ploeger, 2015) indicate that these patients are diagnosed with high levels of alexithymia.

ALEXITHYMIA AND AGGRESSIVE TENDENCIES

Mental control of affective arousal requires the recognition of its causes. Difficulties in the adequate naming of the experienced emotions results in the experience of emotional arousal or non-specific tension. Because of the stimulation being non-specific, it is difficult for an individual to use a relevant strategy of emotional regulation. Attachment styles are conducive to shaping or blocking the intrapsychic basis for the development of emotional skills. The barrier resulting from the use of invasive defense techniques against experiencing strong negative emotions leads to the development of alexithymia and thus, to self-regulation deficits (Wearden et al., 2005).

This was indicated in a study on the relationship between attachment styles, alexithymia and a tendency to impulsive aggression, conducted by Andrea Fossati et al. (2009). The strongest was the mediation effect of the alexithymia dimension – difficulties in identifying emotions – on the tendency for impulsive behavior. The authors suggest that difficulties in creating mental representations of affective states in people with high levels of alexithymia may be associated with experiencing intense and overwhelming emotions, not only with their inability to identify them cognitively and perceive consciously. Yet, people with high alexithymia level have great difficulties in feeling the emotions and then verbalizing them, which increases the intensity of these emotions and as a result, also the burden of the hardly bearable non-specific affect.

Research on the association between the dimensions of attachment styles and alexithymia showed the strongest relationship between the tendency to aggressive impulsive behavior and the high level of relationship avoidance (fear of closeness), and fear of rejection. In intrapsychic representations of attachment styles, aggression can be perceived as a way to maintain security, regain intimacy, and manage conflict. People with alexithymia are unable to assess their emotional state correctly and are deprived of flexibility in using emotion control and regulation techniques, which becomes an additional source of negative emotions (Maruszewski, Ścigała, 1998). This leads to mental discomfort, pain in the form of somatic sensations, general arousal, all leading to frustration. When combined with difficulty in identifying their source, this can result in aggressive behavior.

Yet, frustration does not necessarily lead to aggression, and aggressive behavior does not always result from the experienced frustration. The occurrence of aggression depends on the person's previous experience, among others. Impulsive aggression, also called reactive aggression, is a form of aggression being a response to a specific situation, for example, a negative affective state or high tension. Unlike instrumental aggression, impulsive aggression is not planned by a perpetrator and its goal is not to cause suffering to the victim, even though the interaction with such a person ends up in severe stress and anxiety anyway. In this case, aggressive behavior is considered an effect of relief of aggression drive associated with the experienced frustration, which becomes a kind of trigger for an aggressive reaction. The need to relieve the growing unpleasant sensation can lead to aggressive behavior – either to relieve the tension or to resist the source of frustration. The reaction to aversive stimulation depends on its interpretation, and the strength of anger is a derivative of the intensity of the physiological stimulation caused by unpleasant events or feelings (Farnicka, Liberska, Niewiedział, 2016). The abovementioned studies show that the stronger the anxiety, the greater the tendency for impulsive aggression.

Theoretically, the relation between alexithymia and aggression seems evident because the ability to consider and talk about emotions is perceived as a protective factor against the development of aggressiveness (Fonagy, 2003). Disorders related to this sphere of functioning shall be considered as the element of mentalization (Fonagy, 2003). Deficits in this ability increase the risk of nonadaptive coping, including aggression, in reaction to frustration (Fossati et al., 2009). Richard S. Pond et al. (2012) indicated that the lower the differentiation of the experienced emotions (participants kept diaries on their emotions, in which they differentiated and described particular emotions experienced each day), the higher the anger and the more frequent the aggressive behaviors. A lot of research documented strong relationships between alexithymia and aggression in various populations: the general population (Fossati et al., 2009); among psychiatric patients (Velotti et al., 2016b); perpetrators of violent crimes (Velotti et al., 2016a). These results confirm the relationship between alexithymia and aggression, especially when it comes to the dimension of difficulties in identifying emotions. Yet, the previous studies did not consider the role of particular aspects of aggression, for instance, hostility.

This study mainly aimed at verifying whether there is a relationship between parental attitudes and the tendency to various aspects of aggression and whether alexithymia plays a mediating role between the attachment dimensions: care and overprotection, and the tendency to various aspects of aggression. According to theoretical background, we assumed the following research hypothesis: 1) the lower the care and the higher the control of both parents, the higher the alexithymia level; 2) the higher the level of control from both parents, the higher the tendency to physical and verbal aggression, anger and hostility; 3) the higher the alexithymia level, the higher the level of physical and verbal aggression, anger and hostility; 4) alexithymia mediates the relationship between control from both parents and physical and verbal aggression, anger and hostility.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) (Parker et al., 1993), translated to Polish and validated psychometrically by Elżbieta Zdankiewicz-Ścigała, Andrzej Kokoszka and Dawid K. Ścigała (in press) was used to assess the alexithymia level. Apart from the

general level of alexithymia, the questionnaire also identifies separate indices of alexithymia dimensions: “difficulties describing feelings”, “difficulties identifying feelings”; “externally-oriented thinking”. The questionnaire consists of 20 items. Each item includes a 5 – point Likert response scale (1 – I strongly disagree; 2 – I partly disagree; 3 – I have no opinion; 4 – I partly agree; 5 – I strongly agree). The scale scores range from 20 to 100 points. The tool is reliable and valid. For the Polish version, Cronbach’s alpha equals 0.73 for the general score; 0.55 for the scale of “difficulties describing feelings”; 0.71 for the scale of “difficulties identifying feelings”; 0.51 for the scale of “externally-oriented thinking”.

The Aggression Questionnaire (Buss, Perry, 1992) adapted to Polish by Elżbieta Aranowska, Jolanta Rytel and Agnieszka Szymańska (2015) was used to assess the level of aggression. The questionnaire includes 29 items aimed at measuring the aggressive tendencies (both physical and verbal aggression), anger and hostility. A participant is asked to respond by choosing one number on the 5-point scale indicating the extent to which he or she agrees with the statement. Scores for items 9 and 16 are reversed. The questionnaire assesses the level of physical and verbal aggression, anger and hostility as well as the general level of aggression. For the Polish version, the Cronbach’s alpha equaled: 0.85 for physical aggression; 0.72 for verbal aggression; 0.83 for anger; 0.77 for hostility and 0.89 for the general score (Aranowska, Rytel, 2011).

Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) – authored by Parker, Tupling, and Brown (1979) and adapted to Polish by Agnieszka Popiel and Monika Sitarz. The questionnaire is a self-report tool addressed to people aged 16 and more. A participant is asked to refer to 50 statements on the attitudes and behaviors of each parent, indicating how they remembered their parents during the first 16 years of their lives. Twenty-five of the statements refer to maternal attitudes and behaviors, whereas the other 25 refer to fatherly attitudes and behaviors. A participant is asked to assess the statements on a 4-point scale: very like, moderately like, moderately unlike, very unlike. The questionnaire comprises two dimensions: 1) care, attention and warmth versus rejection and coldness and 2) autonomy versus control/overprotection. Cronbach’s alpha for the scale of care equals 0.93, and for the scale of control – 0.89. The questionnaire allows for qualitative analysis of the achieved scores and for distinguishing four bonding styles: optimal (high care and low control); affectionate constraint (high care and high control); affectionless control (low care and high control) and neglectful (low care and low control). The authors assumed that the parent-child relationship characterized by high emotional care and low psychological control is the most optimal for the mental development.

PARTICIPANTS

The study was conducted following the recommendations of the Research Ethics Committee of the SWPS University. Social media announcements informing about the purpose of the study were published to invite people to participate. The invitation also informed that the study was addressed to people who had not had traumatic events, such as a traffic accident or the death of a loved one in the three years preceding the study. Then each participant was invited for an individual meeting at the SWPS University in Warsaw or the Academy of Special Education in Warsaw. The study was

conducted in 2017 and 2018. In the beginning, all participants received the necessary information about the study. Before completing the questionnaires, they were asked to sign an informed consent form containing all necessary information about the study and the rights of the participants. Also, having been informed of the confidentiality of their data, they were asked to read and fill in a form including information on any previous treatment in a mental health clinic, addiction to psychoactive substances or any trauma experienced in the previous three years. People who indicated that they had not had such an experience were qualified for the actual study. There were 197 people aged 27 to 43 included in the study ($M = 34.42$; $SD = 5.47$). There were slightly more women in the study sample (53.8%). Considering education, people with higher education were the largest group (74.1%); the others had secondary education (14.2%) or bachelor's degree (11.7%).

RESULTS

The statistical analyses aimed at verifying the hypothesis posed in the study were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics, version 24. Using this software, descriptive statistics were calculated, which allowed for the analysis of the distribution of the variables. The hypotheses were tested using several correlation analyses, ANOVA and mediation analysis using macro PROCESS by Andrew F. Hayes (2013). As commonly accepted, $\alpha = 0.05$ was considered the level of significance. Table 1 presents basic descriptive statistics for the analyzed indicators. Also, the distribution of all variables was determined using two measures: skewness and kurtosis. The obtained results showed that only the distribution of externally-oriented thinking variable slightly deviated from a normal distribution (indicating the leptokurtic distribution). In other cases, the variables were normally distributed.

TABLE 1
Basic descriptive statistics for the analyzed indicators

	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Difficulties verbalising emotions	5	23	11.10	3.89	0.44	-0.28
Difficulties identifying emotions	7	31	14.52	5.74	0.82	0.18
Externally-oriented thinking	8	33	15.60	4.42	0.94	1.04
Overall alexithymia score	20	82	41.22	11.60	0.79	0.77
Care – mother	0	36	24.13	9.29	-0.80	-0.27
Overprotection – mother	0	38	13.57	8.55	0.49	-0.48
Care – father	0	36	18.60	10.16	-0.19	-0.97
Overprotection – father	0	34	11.10	7.57	0.84	0.14
Physical aggression	9	37	18.42	5.69	0.89	0.76
Verbal aggression	7	23	14.27	3.39	0.14	-0.37
Anger	7	32	17.75	5.22	0.30	-0.32
Hostility	7	30	17.59	5.33	0.11	-0.55

To verify the first hypothesis on the relationship between the level of parental care and control and the level of alexithymia, Pearson's *r* correlation analysis was performed. The results (Table 2) show a moderate correlation between fatherly care and a tendency towards alexithymia as regards the dimension of difficulties in verbalizing emotions. The lower the care, the higher the deficits in the verbalization of emotions. There was no correlation between maternal care and the intensity of alexithymia in the study group. The higher the maternal control, in turn, the greater the difficulties in identifying feelings. The relationship between fatherly control and externally-oriented thinking and overall alexithymia score is also moderately significant.

TABLE 2

Relationship between parental attitudes and alexithymia – Pearson's *r* coefficient

	Care – mother	Overprotection – mother	Care – father	Overprotection – father
Difficulties verbalising emotions	-0.048	0.116	-0.147*	0.12
Difficulties identifying emotions	-0.129	0.155*	-0.092	0.106
Externally-oriented thinking	0.113	0.003	0.022	0.170*
Overall alexithymia score	-0.037	0.117	-0.086	0.157*

* Correlation significant at the level of 0.05 (two-tailed)

To verify the second hypothesis we also performed a Pearson's correlation analysis (Table 3). The results showed that the aggression scores were correlated with overprotection manifested by both the father and the mother. We observed that the increase in aggressive behavior was mainly associated with fatherly control – the higher the control, the greater the tendency to physical aggression, anger, and hostility. The greater the control from mothers, the higher the hostility felt by the participants. Other aspects of aggression did not correlate with the degree of maternal control.

TABLE 3

Relationship between parental attitudes and aggression – Pearson's *r* coefficient

	Physical aggression	Verbal aggression	Anger	Hostility
Care – mother	-0.04	-0.053	-0.087	0.021
Overprotection – mother	0.084	0.087	0.075	.237**
Care – father	-0.124	-0.109	-0.082	-0.07
Overprotection – father	.180*	0.096	.152*	.272**

* Correlation significant at the level of 0.05 (two-tailed)

** Correlation significant at the level of 0.01 (two-tailed)

To verify the hypothesis on the relationship between alexithymia and various aspects of aggression, Pearson's correlation analysis was performed again. The aggression scores were related to the alexithymia scale. Notably, we observed moderately strong relationships between alexithymia dimensions and overall alexithymia score and hostility. The higher the level of alexithymia, the higher the tendency to experience hostility.

TABLE 4
Relationship between alexithymia and aggression – Pearson’s r coefficient

	Physical aggression	Verbal aggression	Anger	Hostility
Difficulties verbalising emotions	0.223**	0.066	0.184**	0.399**
Difficulties identifying emotions	0.254**	0.13	0.299**	0.443**
Externally-oriented thinking	0.297**	0.095	0.158*	0.298**
Overall alexithymia score	0.314**	0.123	0.270**	0.467**

* Correlation significant at the level of 0.05 (two-tailed)

** Correlation significant at the level of 0.01 (two-tailed)

As expected, the performed analysis indicated that the parental attitudes, especially the control exerted by parents, results in the tendency to alexithymia in the studied group. It also relates to various aspects of aggression. To verify the last research hypothesis, we performed a more advanced statistical analysis. First, using the Process macro model 4 (Hayes, 2013), we verified whether difficulties in identifying emotions significantly mediate the relationship between parental attitudes and aggression. Additionally, each model was tested controlling for age and gender, including their potential effect on the mediator as well as the dependent variable. First, we tested the direct effects of parental attitudes on various aspects of aggression as well as the indirect effects of the alexithymia components. The first model verified whether difficulties in identifying emotions mediate the relationship between maternal control and hostility. The model fit the data well ($F(4,192) = 17.49; p < 0.001$) and explained about 27% of variation of the hostility variable. Using the Sobel’s test, the mediation effect was confirmed for the subscale of difficulties in identifying emotions ($Z = 1.99; p < 0.05$). Both, the direct effect (effect = 0.2189; $<0.0845; 0.3534>$) as well as the indirect effect (effect = 0.1581; $<0.0344; 0.2818>$) were significant after entering the mediator between the maternal control and the tendency to hostility, which leads to the conclusion on the partial mediation. Moreover, entering control variables indicated the significant effect of age on the independent variable ($coeff = -0.19; <-0.3173; -0.0713>$), which means that younger participants reported lower hostility, regardless of their gender.

Figure 1 shows the graphic interpretation of the achieved result.

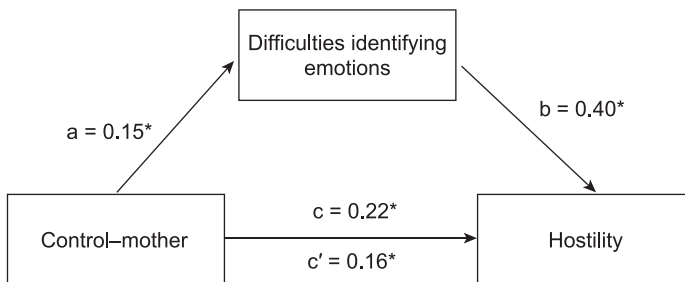


FIGURE 1. The tested model explaining the mediation role of difficulties in identifying emotions in the relationship between maternal control and the experienced hostility: a – relationship between the predictor and the mediator, b – the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable; c – direct relationship, c’ – indirect relationship *p < 0.05

Similar analyses were performed to assess the mediation role of alexithymia in the relationship between fatherly control and physical aggression (Fig. 2). To verify that, we conducted the mediation analysis, and confirmed it with the use of the Sobel's test. The results indicated a mediation at the level of statistical tendency $z = 1.7866$; $p = 0.074$. After entering the mediator, the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable decreased to insignificant, and the relationship strength between the mediator and the dependent variable equaled to $b = 0.24$; $p < 0.05$. The tested model explained 25.3% of the variation. Moreover, we observed a strong impact of the control variable – gender – on the level of physical aggression ($coeff = 0.37 < 0.2438; 0.4935 >$), regardless of the participants' age. This means that the deficits in cognitive processing of affect developed as a result of insecure attachment bonds among adults are a very important predictor of the tendency to use physical aggression. The higher the level of alexithymia, the greater the tendency to such behaviors, being even greater among males.

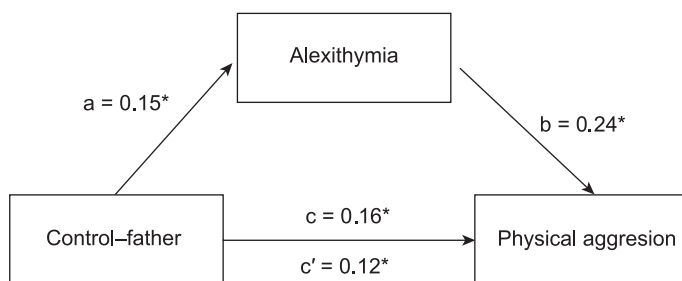


FIGURE 2. The tested model explaining the mediation role of overall alexithymia scores in the relationship between fatherly control and physical aggression: a – relationship between the predictor and the mediator, b – the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable; c – indirect relationship, c' – indirect relationship * $p < 0.05$

The next analysis aimed at verifying the mediation role of alexithymia in the relationship between fathers' control and hostility (Fig. 3). To check whether alexithymia mediates the relationship between the control manifested by the father and the tendency to be hostile, a mediation analysis was performed and then validated using the Sobel's test. The analysis showed a partial mediation – 1.9849 ; $p < 0.05$. After introducing the mediator between fatherly control and hostility, both the direct effect ($effect = 0.2387$; $< 0.1035; 0.3738 >$) and indirect ($effect = 0.1747$; $< 0.0520; 0.2973 >$) occurred statistically significant. Such a result suggests partial mediation – after the introduction of the mediator, the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable decreased ($c' = 0.17$; $p < 0.05$), and the strength of the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable equaled $b = 0.43$; $p < 0.05$. The tested model explained 29.2% of the variability. Moreover, the analysis indicated a significant impact of the controlled variable – age – on hostility ($coeff = -0.19$; $< -0.3312; -0.0597 >$), which means that younger people showed a lower level of hostility, regardless of their gender. Such a result is consistent with the model showing the role of maternal control for hostility in children, discussed earlier (Fig. 1). The obtained results suggest the equally important role of fatherly control for the tendency to hostility and the development of alexithymia, as well as the role of alexithymia in the development of the tendency to experience hostility.

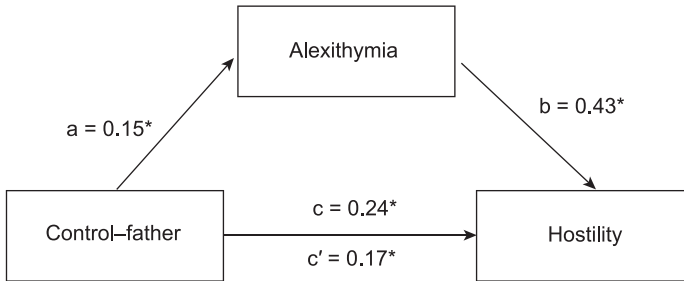


FIGURE 3. The tested model explaining the mediation role of overall alexithymia scores in the relationship between fatherly control and hostility: a – relationship between the predictor and the mediator, b – the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable; c – indirect relationship, c' – indirect relationship * $p < 0.05$

In the last analysis, we verified the mediation role of alexithymia for the relationship between fatherly control and anger experienced by their children in their adult lives. To confirm whether alexithymia mediates the relationship between fatherly control and the tendency to anger we performed the mediation analysis (Fig. 4), validated with the use of the Sobel’s test. The result was at the level of statistical tendency, yet, considering the confidence intervals, the result can be considered significant $z = 1.78$; $p = 0.0739$. After entering the mediator to the tested model, the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables decreased to insignificant ($c' = 0.11$; n.s.) and the strength of the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable equaled $b = 0.27$; $p < 0.05$. The tested model explained 9.6% of the variation and it showed no effect of the controlled variables either on the mediator or the dependent variable. The results showed partial mediation in the case of anger. The relationship is weaker than in the case of hostility.

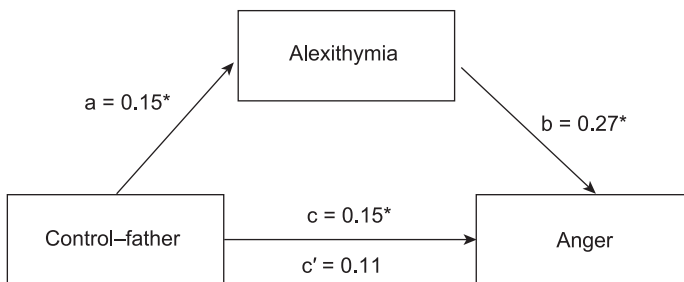


FIGURE 4. The tested model explaining the mediation role of overall alexithymia scores in the relationship between fatherly control and anger: a – relationship between the predictor and the mediator, b – the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variable; c – indirect relationship, c' – indirect relationship * $p < 0.05$

DISCUSSION

The basic assumption underlying this study linked the tendency for impulsive aggression with a lack of a basic sense of security in the parent-child relationship. Hence, the study aimed at verifying the hypothesis on a direct relationship between parental atti-

tudes, understood as the result of two dimensions of care and overprotection/control, and the tendency to experience various aspects of impulsive aggression. Based on the theoretical background discussed earlier, it was assumed that alexithymia is an important factor conducive to emotional disorders. The study was conducted on the general population. Among the participants, there were no psychiatric patients addicted to psychoactive substances or people who had suffered injuries in the three years preceding the study.

Based on the results of numerous statistical analyses, it was shown that control exercised by both father and mother is a significant factor for the development of a tendency to impulsive aggression. However, this impact depends on the type of aggression considered. It can be stated that in this study group, control exercised by parents, both mother, and father, is also associated with the tendency to alexithymia. The obtained results partly correspond to the previous results of other researchers cited in the introduction. It is worth noting that the relationship between father's care and difficulties in verbalizing emotions occurred significant: the lower the care, the fewer problems with recognizing emotions. This result combined with the observed moderate correlation between fatherly control and the externally-oriented thinking indicate that both parents play an important role in the emotional development of children. Additionally, on the one hand, this facilitates the development of affective regulation mechanisms, but on the other, this can predict the suppression of emotions as well their expression in the form of impulsive aggression. The conducted mediation analysis revealed the direct effects of the father's control on physical aggression, hostility, and anger.

Moreover, alexithymia occurred a significant factor increasing the level of the experienced aggression. In particular, alexithymia occurred to be the main predictor explaining the tendency for physical aggression. Additional analyses including controlled variable – age and gender – revealed a stronger tendency to physical aggression among men. Age was not significant. The analysis of the impact of controlled variables on the manifestation of hostility, in turn, showed a significant impact of age regardless of the respondents' gender. The older the person, the stronger the hostility. Strong correlations between particular dimensions of alexithymia and the manifestations of aggression are shown in Table 4. Only verbal aggression did not correlate with alexithymia significantly.

As demonstrated in the theoretical part, alexithymia is associated with considerable disorders resulting from cognitive distortions as regards emotional experience, interpretation, and reactions. Also, poor verbalization of emotional experiences hinders effective communication in interpersonal relationships. As shown in the cited studies, this might result in the use of non-adaptive coping strategies in stressful situations, for example, the suppression of emotions or uncontrolled bursts (impulsive physical aggression and hostility) in the least suitable stimulus situations. The results obtained fully confirm such an assumption. Growing up in a system requiring compliance with the demands and expectations of parents, facing the constant need to suppress the needs, desires, and emotions, can result in a tendency to develop deficits in the ability to record and process signals from the body.

Lack of awareness of one's physiological arousal and the resultant accumulation of mental tension are conducive to the experience of negative affect and the tendency to be overcome with it and/or suppress it. Excessive requirements resulting in the emotional and physical separation of both parents from the child as well as of the child

from the parents conduce to antagonisms instead of cooperation. Both parties infect each other with strong negative emotions. Parents who experience frustration due to their children's "disobedience", suffer from fear, anger or behave aggressively, activate the same states in their children, without even understanding the underlying mechanisms or causes. Unable to see the reasons for the child's fear, sadness, and anger, parents perceive the child as non-cooperative, negativistic, malicious.

As shown in previous studies, alexithymia is frequently symptomatic of parents who demonstrate avoidant attachment style (see: Zdankiewicz-Ścigała, 2017), which exacerbates the problems with communication in interpersonal relationships and thus, escalates the nonspecific arousal that might be relieved by impulsive aggression displayed either by parents or children (Iniewicz et al., 2011). The obtained results correspond to the previous findings of Susan Forward (1994), which confirms the important role of fathers in conditioning aggressive behaviors among children. Literature provides numerous studies on the role of fathers in shaping negative behaviors among children who show the same behavior pattern in their adulthood (Lipowska-Teusch, 1992). Interestingly, the participants' age and partially also their gender occurred significant factors modifying the observed effects. In this study group, age correlated with a higher level of alexithymia and hostility. Gender, in turn, was a significant predictor of physical aggression in a model including fatherly control as an independent variable and alexithymia as a mediator.

CONCLUSIONS

A significant deficit in the case of alexithymia is the inability to modulate affective processes by cognitive processes, which is expressed in disorders of experience, interpretation, and regulation of emotions. People displaying high levels of alexithymia are more prone to use non-adaptive affect regulation strategies when facing stressful situations, e.g. suppressing emotions, than those of low level of this feature. As a consequence, they experience stronger psychophysiological arousal and do not register changes in the experience of negative affect. Furthermore, they rarely use adaptive emotion regulation strategies, such as cognitive reappraisal (Swart, Kortekaas, Aleman, 2009). According to the study, alexithymia, as an invasive defensive strategy against high-stimulus situations, leads to the development of deficits as regards cognitive and affective aspects of emotional regulation. This blocks the processes of identification and verbalization of emotions, and thus, the language is no longer used to change oneself or the others, because communication is disturbed or distorted. It is difficult to communicate effectively when there is no common meaning or accurate mutual understanding. Such processes may play an important role in the development of various types of mental disorders, including the tendency to various forms of aggression, as demonstrated in this study.

LIMITATIONS

The presented study was correlational, including the theoretical model that entailed assumptions on particular relationships between the studied variables. The obtained results suggested a moderate significance of the study variables. Very promising results

were obtained in the case of hostility. The percentage of the explained variation was moderately high, and both, the fatherly control and alexithymia occurred significant predictors of the experience of hostility. This result encourages more in-depth, quasi or even experimental future studies. It is also worth looking for other factors that may be associated with a tendency to manifest hostility, e.g. impulsiveness as a personality trait and its relationship with alexithymia. Also, the study group involved slightly more women. Even though no significant gender differences were found in individual tests, many studies show that women display significantly lower levels of alexithymia than men (Gavi et al., 2016). In future studies, it is worth controlling the selection of people for the study to fully balance the proportions as regards the participants' gender and age. The analysis of the relationship between age and alexithymia shows that older people demonstrate higher levels of alexithymia (Soni, Bhargava, Rajput, 2018), which was also confirmed in this study. These limitations, however, do not affect the main trend observed in the results: the higher control, excessiveness of stimulation and intrusiveness in the child-parent relationship, the higher the likelihood of disorders in the sphere of emotional development, which results in the experience of strong negative emotions, such as anger or hostility, and "no words for feelings", because words that assign meaning to the experienced emotions make them too painful and threatening to mental integrity or identity

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Transl. Aleksandra Jacukowicz

EWA ŁODYGOWSKA, MAGDALENA CHEĆ

University of Szczecin, Institute of Psychology

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND RETROSPECTIVE RATINGS OF PARENTING ATTITUDES

Abstract: Introduction: Emotional intelligence can be determined by various factors related to the functioning of the family and the parents, including the parenting attitudes they display. Prior research confirms the relationship between some parenting attitudes and children's emotional intelligence, though it has chiefly focused on adolescents. The aim of the presented research was to determine whether a relationship between emotional intelligence and parenting attitudes retrospectively evaluated by young adults exists, while taking into consideration the parent's and the child's gender, as well as the family characteristics.

Method: Two hundred and fifty seven young adults, aged 20–25, students of various universities, were tested with the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (INTE) by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, and Dornheim, adapted into Polish and standardized by Jaworowska and Matczak, as well as with the Retrospective Evaluation of Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (KPR-Roc)

by Plopa. The study also controlled for demographic factors.

Results: A positive relationship exists between the mothers' attitudes of acceptance/rejection and autonomy and their daughters' emotional intelligence and ability to utilize emotions in thinking and behavior. No relationship between the mothers' parenting attitudes and the young women's ability to recognize emotions was found. A weak relationship between the mothers' attitude of acceptance and their sons' emotional intelligence exists. Participants from conjugal families rated their mothers' attitudes of acceptance/rejection, demands, and lack of consistency, as well as their fathers' attitudes of acceptance/rejection, autonomy, and lack of consistency more favorably than did participants from non-conjugal families. The relationship between parenting attitudes and children's emotional intelligence can be determined by the type of the family of origin.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, parenting attitudes.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is a significant factor determining individual psychosocial functioning, not only by shaping emotional experiences and reactions, but also by influencing the social, cognitive, and motivational-volitional spheres (Bar-On, 1997; Matczak, Knopp, 2013; Salami, 2010). The literature points to the role of emotional

intelligence in shaping one's sense of self-worth and agency, locus of control, and the ability to cope with difficult life events (Mućko, 2009; Skrzelińska, 2009; Wiczorek 2008, qtd. in: Matczak, Knopp, 2013).

Although the concept of emotional intelligence has gained popularity during the first half of the 1990s, a unified definition of this construct has not been proposed yet. Authors describe this construct in various ways. Moreover, they define it differently in their works (Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008). Thus, the definitions of emotional intelligence present in the literature have a varied character: narrow, limited to emotional processing abilities, or broader, emphasizing the role of emotional intelligence (understood both as a set of abilities and as a process) for adaptive socio-emotional functioning. In general, two types of emotional intelligence models are outlined in the literature: 1) the so-called mixed model, being a compilation of specific skills of emotion identification, expression, and control with personality traits and other skills, e.g., ones related to motivation; 2) the so-called mental ability model (also called the scientific model), in which emotional intelligence is treated as a separate set of mental abilities (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, 2000; Sadowska, Brachowicz, 2008).

The most well-known mixed models are those by Reuven Bar-On (1997, 2000, 2001) and Daniel Goleman (1997) – both authors describe emotional intelligence as a set of competences and personality traits that allow for understanding and expression of the self, understanding of others, and coping with the demands and pressures of the environment.

It is worth noting that in contrast to mixed models, which combine emotion “processing” skills with other abilities and traits, the mental ability model, exemplified by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer's (1990) concept, treats emotional intelligence as a separate set of mental abilities. Salovey and Mayer (Mayer, DiPaolo, Salovey, 1990; Salovey, Mayer, 1990) consider emotional intelligence as an element of a wider category of social intelligence. They define emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize and identify feelings and emotions (both in self and others), differentiate between them, and use the information obtained this way in directing thinking and behavior. Though the authors initially outlined three main groups of emotional intelligence components (Mayer et al., 1990; Salovey, Mayer, 1990), they finally decided to distinguish four groups of factors, related to various types of emotion recognition, utilization in other processes (e.g., thinking), understanding and use, as well as control and regulation abilities (Mayer, Salovey, 1997; Mayer et al., 2000). It is worth adding here that factor analyses of research data have not always unequivocally confirmed the existence of these four emotional intelligence components (Ciarrochi, Chan, Caputi, 2000; Mayer, Caruso, Salovey, 1999; Palmer, Gignac, Manocha, Stough, 2005; Rossen, Kranzler, Algina, 2008), though they have proven the existence of the general factor of emotional intelligence (Ciarrochi et al., 2000; Mayer et al., 1999; Palmer et al., 2005).

Regardless of the assumed definition of emotional intelligence, its developmentally varied character is underscored, as emotional intelligence changes dynamically with age, developing most intensively in childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood (Mayer et al., 1999; Matczak, Knopp, 2013). Thus, in studying the determinants of emotional intelligence, various researchers are looking towards the family (Ciarrochi, Chan, Bajgar, Lopes, Salovey, Straus, 2003; Mayer et al., 1999).

Examining the relationships between emotional intelligence and parental behaviors also leads to the question of the role of parenting attitudes in the develop-

ment of this ability. A detailed presentation of the definitions and classifications of parenting attitudes, already well described in the literature (see, e.g., Ziemska, 1973; Kanner, qtd. in: Przetacznik-Gierowska, Włodarski, 1994; Plopa, 1987, 2008b, 2011) does not seem warranted, though it is worth mentioning that parenting attitudes play a crucial role in the child's appropriate functioning and in shaping its beliefs about self and the world (Braun-Gałkowska, 1986; Chęć, Łodygowska, 2010; Plopa, 2011).

Parents displaying given attitudes are, consciously or otherwise, modeling the child's behavior, as well as shaping its way of perceiving and interpreting reality. By showing acceptance (or not) and simultaneously delineating areas of autonomy, they can facilitate its openness to experience and spontaneity or, on the contrary – limit the expression thereof and, in extreme cases – negate its emotions, promoting rigidity in their experience and display. Thus, the way the parents react, determined by their parenting attitude, not only influences the child's behavior, but also the development of its ability to recognize and control its emotions and utilize them in everyday life (Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008; Plopa, 2011).

The relationship between parenting attitudes and emotional intelligence was the subject of Polish studies (mainly on adolescents) which confirmed some of the relations between parenting attitudes of the mothers and fathers and emotional intelligence of their sons and daughters (Godyk, 2002; Gromek, 2006; Klepa, 2005; Koziół, 2002, qtd. in: Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008; Knopp, 2007; Martowska, 2012). It is also worth noting that the results of these studies are not fully conclusive: They sometimes pointed to the role of the fathers' attitudes in shaping the sons' emotional intelligence (Koziół, 2002, qtd. in: Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008), the role of both parents' attitudes in case of men's emotional intelligence (Klepa, 2005, qtd. in: Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008), or to the significant role of the mothers' attitudes (Gromek, 2006, qtd. in: Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008). It must be highlighted that these studies were often carried out on relatively small samples and using different methods of assessing parenting attitudes.

There are relatively few results concerning the relationship between young adults' ratings of parenting attitudes and their emotional intelligence. Nevertheless, it is a significant period in which young people begin creating their own independence, making independent decisions and choices based on their own values, traits, and needs – the parents' behaviors seem to lessen in importance in this context. On the other hand, however, during this time young adults assume a range of new social roles (including parental roles) in which they can still rely on the models and examples from their family of origin. Thus, the function of parenting attitudes seems twofold – first, they influence the developmentally shaped emotional intelligence of the children (see Plopa, 2008b, 2011; Strzelczyk-Muszyńska, 2010), and second – subjectively evaluated by the adult children, they can determine their emotional and social functioning in new life roles, increasing the need to identify with the environment of origin (Rostowska, 1995) or the need to distance themselves from it.

The presented research focused on a sample of young adults, seeking a relationship between their emotional intelligence and their retrospective ratings of their parents' attitudes.

METHOD

Research questions and hypotheses

The aim of the presented research was to verify whether a relationship exists between emotional intelligence and young adults' retrospective ratings of parental attitudes. The following hypotheses were put forward:

H1: There is a relationship between retrospective ratings of parenting attitudes made by young adults and their emotional intelligence.

H2: The relationship between parenting attitudes and emotional intelligence is moderated by the gender of the parent and the child¹⁾.

Additionally, the following research question was formulated: Is the relationship between emotional intelligence and parenting attitudes different in conjugal as opposed to non-conjugal (single-parent, separated and reconstructed) families.

Participants

The sample consisted of 257 students of various majors, aged 20–25 ($M = 22.5$), 49.4% men ($N = 127$) and 50.6% women ($N = 130$). The participants were all citizens of northern and northwestern Poland – 56% ($N = 144$) lived in large cities (over 100 thousand citizens), 17% ($N = 43$) lived in towns between 10 and 100 thousand citizens, 10% ($N = 26$) lived in small towns up to 10 thousand citizens, and 17% ($N = 44$) lived in rural villages.

75.5% ($N = 194$) of the sample were brought up in a conjugal family, 3.5% ($N = 9$) in a non-conjugal family (single-parent from birth), 9.3% ($N = 24$) in a separated family, and 11.7% ($N = 30$) in a reconstructed family. Among the 257 participants, four were unable to complete the questionnaire about their mothers, and 11 – about their fathers, claiming they do not know that parent at all or have no contact with them.

Among the mothers of the participants, the majority had a higher (43.6%) and secondary (31.9%) education, while among fathers, those with a vocational (41.6%), secondary (28%), and higher (27%) education were the most numerous.

Materials

The following tools were used in the study:

1. A demographic data questionnaire.
2. The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (INTE) by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, and Dornheim, adapted into Polish and standardized by Jaworowska and Matczak. The questionnaire consists of 33 statements, most of which can be classified as concerning skills or abilities. The character of the INTE items is largely consistent with Salovey and Mayer's concept and the assumption that emotional intelligence is comprised of various abilities. Aside from the general emotional intelligence (EI) score, the INTE measures two separate factors: I (CZ-1) – reflecting the ability to utilize emotions to support thinking and behav-

¹⁾ The term “child” is used here in the context of a social role rather than developmental age.

- ior; II (CZ-2) – referring to the ability to recognize emotions. The questionnaire is characterized by good reliability – satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach’s α : 0.82–0.91), unconditional stability (test-retest method: 0.71–0.75), and sufficient validity (Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008).
3. The Retrospective Evaluation of Parenting Attitudes Questionnaire (KPR-Roc) by Plopa. At least two methodological approaches to the study of parenting attitudes exist in the psychological literature. The first is centered around analyzing the information gained directly from the parents, e.g., through interviews and questionnaires, and the second is based on the children’s reports (Goldin, 1969; Plopa, 2011). The present research has taken the second approach, examining the reports and feelings of young adults. The questionnaire consists of 100 items (50 relating to the mother and 50 relating to the father) describing the parenting attitudes distinguished by Plopa (2008a): 1) acceptance/rejection (M-AKC – mother; O-AKC – father); 2) demanding (M-WYM – mother; O-WYM – father); 3) autonomy (M-AUT – mother, O-AUT – father); 4) lack of consistency (M-NIEK – mother, O-NIEK – father); 5) overprotection (M-OCHR – mother, O-OCHR – father); The questionnaire is characterized by good reliability (the results for individual subscales are in the range of 0.86 to 0.90) and theoretical validity (Plopa, 2008a).

Procedure

Participant selection was random (the “snowball” method). All participants gave their consent and the research was carried out in accordance with ethical guidelines.

The statistical analysis used the pairwise correlation analysis, Mann-Whitney’s U test for independent samples, and the Fisher transformation (r -to- z), allowing for determining the significance of difference between two correlation coefficients (Ferguson, Takane, 2003; Ścibor-Rylski, 2007).

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

In order to verify the H1 which assumes the existence of a relationship between young adults’ emotional intelligence and their retrospective ratings of parenting attitudes, a pairwise correlation analysis was carried out and Spearman’s ρ coefficient was calculated (see Table 2).

The analysis confirmed the relationship between some parenting attitudes (accepting and autonomous attitudes of the mother and father, and inconsistent attitude of the mother) and the general level of EI, as well as the relationship between some parenting attitudes and factors of emotional intelligence (see Table 2), therefore H1 can be partially confirmed.

The statistical analysis was expanded to include the child and the parent’s gender (see Table 3) which allowed to clarify the found relations.

An in-depth analysis revealed that none of the fathers’ attitudes were significantly related to the sons’ and daughters’ EI nor to its components. The previously outlined relationships (see Table 2) were of weak strength ($\rho \leq 0.20$), and their statistical significance could stem from the sample size (Kośny, Peternek, 2011).

TABLE 1
Descriptive statistics of the analyzed variables

		All N = 257		Men N = 127		Women N = 130	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
IE	IE	123.56	20.27	120.91	22.28	126.15	17.80
	CZ-1	62.14	10.52	60.91	11.60	63.35	9.24
	CZ-2	42.97	8.24	41.98	9.01	43.93	7.31
		All N = 253		Men N = 125		Women N = 128	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Maternal attitudes	M-AKC	39.73	8.66	38.98	8.36	40.46	8.93
	M-WYM	26.28	9.49	26.29	8.34	26.28	10.53
	M-AUT	37.67	8.58	37.45	8.63	37.89	8.56
	M-NIEK	23.22	9.91	23.10	9.18	23.34	10.61
	M-OCH	34.89	7.71	34.22	7.76	35.55	7.65
		All N = 246		Men N = 121		Women N = 125	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Paternal attitudes	O-AKC	35.58	10.66	34.86	9.67	36.28	11.54
	O-WYM	27.59	10.39	27.87	9.33	27.32	11.36
	O-AUT	35.74	9.62	35.77	9.27	35.71	9.98
	O-NIEK	26.02	10.22	25.42	9.04	26.59	11.26
	O-OCH	27.04	8.61	26.55	8.41	27.52	8.81

Source: The authors' own elaboration.

TABLE 2
Analysis of Spearman's correlations between EI and parenting attitudes

Parenting attitudes		Emotional intelligence		
		EI	CZ-1	CZ-2
Maternal attitudes	M-AKC (N = 253)	.22**	.21**	.14*
	M-WYM (N = 253)	-.11	-.12	-.05
	M-AUT (N = 253)	.19**	.21**	.09
	M-NIEK (N = 253)	-.14*	-.10	-.09
	M-OCH (N = 253)	.01	-.00	.04
Paternal attitudes	O-AKC (N = 246)	.18**	.17**	.11
	O-WYM (N = 246)	-.04	-.03	-.01
	O-AUT (N = 246)	.15*	.15*	.09
	O-NIEK (N = 246)	-.04	-.04	.00
	O-OCH (N = 246)	.10	.09	.03

*p < .05; **p < .01

Source: The authors' own elaboration.

TABLE 3

Analysis of Spearman's correlations between EI and parenting attitudes by broken down by gender

Parenting attitudes		EI		CZ-1		CZ-2	
		Men N = 125	Women N = 128	Men N = 125	Women N = 128	Men N = 125	Women N = 128
Maternal attitudes	M-AKC	.18*	.23**	.14	.26**	.16	.09
	M-WYM	-.03	-.17	-.01	-.21*	.01	-.10
	M-AUT	.11	.27**	.11	.30**	.05	.12
	M-NIEK	-.10	-.18*	-.04	-.16	-.05	-.13
	M-OCH	.09	-.09	.07	-.10	.11	-.03
		Men N = 121	Women N = 125	Men N = 121	Women N = 125	Men N = 121	Women N = 125
Paternal attitudes	O-AKC	.17	.15	.15	.17	.17	.03
	O-WYM	.07	-.11	.06	-.10	.03	-.01
	O-AUT	.14	.15	.15	.15	.14	.03
	O-NIEK	-.00	-.07	.01	-.08	-.02	.02
	O-OCH	.14	.05	.12	.04	.07	-.04

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Source: The authors' own elaboration.

The analysis confirmed the relationship between some attitudes of mothers and the emotional intelligence of daughters – daughters demonstrating higher levels of EI and a higher ability to use emotions in thinking and behavior rated their mothers higher in terms of acceptance and granting rights to autonomy and self-determination. In addition, a significant, although small, relationship emerged between the mothers' lack of consistency and the daughters' lower emotional intelligence. However, there was no relation between the attitudes of mothers and the ability of young women to recognize emotions (CZ-2).

In the case of men, the accepting attitude of mothers was significantly associated with their sons' general emotional intelligence (see Table 3), though it is worth mentioning that the correlation coefficient value remained low ($r_{ho} \leq 0.20$).

Therefore, there are grounds for partial confirmation of H2 which assumes that the relationship between parenting attitudes and emotional intelligence is moderated by the gender of the parent and the child, though maternal attitudes are important in this relationship.

The next analysis compared participants from conjugal and non-conjugal families (Table 4). Due to the random selection of participants, unequal groups were obtained ($Chi^2(N = 257.1) = 66.77$; $p < 0.001$) – 194 participants from conjugal and 63 from non-conjugal families (single-parent, separated and reconstructed). The analysis with the non-parametric Mann-Whitney's U test revealed that the compared groups differed in the assessment of their mothers' (acceptance/rejection, demanding, lack of consistency) and fathers' attitudes (acceptance/rejection, autonomy, lack of consistency), with parents in conjugal families assessed more favorably than in non-conjugal ones (see Table 4).

TABLE 4

Comparison of the analyzed variables between participants from conjugal and non-conjugal families

		Conjugal family N = 194		Non-conjugal family N = 63		Mann-Whitney's U	
		M	SD	M	SD	z	p
Emotional intelligence	EI	123.33	19.78	124.27	21.89	-.67	.501
	CZ-1	62.16	10.15	62.10	11.69	-.27	.789
	CZ-2	42.64	8.22	43.97	8.30	-1.43	.152
		Conjugal family N = 194		Non-conjugal family N = 59			
		M	SD	M	SD		
Maternal attitudes	M-AKC	40.48	8.38	37.32	9.21	-2.50*	.013
	M-WYM	25.69	9.50	28.18	9.31	-1.97*	.049
	M-AUT	37.67	8.54	37.67	8.79	-.11	.909
	M-NIEK	22.44	9.72	25.72	10.19	-2.22*	.026
	M-OCH	35.37	7.40	33.37	8.56	-1.63	.104
		Conjugal family N = 194		Non-conjugal family N = 52			
		M	SD	M	SD		
Paternal attitudes	O-AKC	37.13	9.65	29.94	12.29	-3.78***	<.001
	O-WYM	27.13	10.15	29.25	11.19	-1.10	.272
	O-AUT	36.90	8.68	31.53	11.62	-2.95**	.003
	O-NIEK	24.75	9.63	30.64	11.05	-3.43**	.001
	O-OCH	27.52	8.25	25.32	9.72	-1.56	.118

^Ap < 0,10 (statistical tendency); * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Source: The authors' own elaboration.

In order to verify the nature of the relationship between EI and its components and attitudes of parents of participants from conjugal and non-conjugal families, a pairwise correlation analysis was conducted again (Table 5).

Due to the unequal sample sizes, it was not justified to base the further analysis only on the significance of the correlation coefficients, hence, the *post-hoc* pairwise comparison using the Fisher transformation (Ferguson, Takane, 2003) was conducted to estimate the differences between the strength of the correlation coefficients (see Table 5).

The analysis revealed that the relationship between parenting attitudes and EI, as well as its factors, is generally similar in conjugal and non-conjugal families, although isolated differences emerged. The nature of the relationships between inconsistent maternal attitudes and EI of children from two separate family types was different (see Table 5) – for children from conjugal families, inconsistent attitudes of mothers in-

TABLE 5
Analysis and comparison of Spearman's correlation coefficients between EI and parenting attitudes between family types.

Parenting attitudes	EI		CZ-1		CZ-2		<i>p</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	
	Conjugal N = 194	Non-conjugal N = 59	Conjugal N = 194	Non-conjugal N = 59	Conjugal N = 194	Non-conjugal N = 59						
M-AKC	.23**	.25	.11	.889	.21**	.26*	.37	.728	.17*	.11	.38	.687
M-WYM	-.17*	.07	1.56	.112	-.17*	.02	1.23	.207	-.10	.11	1.42	.165
M-AUT	.22**	.12	.70	.498	.22**	.20	.11	.890	.14	-.05	1.24	.209
M-NIEK	-.22**	.09	2.05*	.039	-.17*	.11	1.85 ^A	.063	-.14	.04	1.18	.234
M-OCH	-.04	.17	1.40	.164	-.05	.16	1.39	.164	.03	.15	.81	.425
	Conjugal N = 194	Non-conjugal N = 52	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	Conjugal N = 194	Non-conjugal N = 52	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	Conjugal N = 194	Non-conjugal N = 52	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
O-AKC	.23**	.11	.77	.415	.21**	.10	.71	.458	.17*	.06	.66	.463
O-WYM	-.09	.11	1.21	.187	-.12	.25	2.33*	.013	.00	-.06	.38	.693
O-AUT	.24**	-.02	1.65 ^A	.081	.25**	-.08	2.06*	.027	.15*	.00	.91	.320
O-NIEK	-.11	.18	1.85 ^A	.054	-.12	.22	2.15*	.023	-.05	.11	.98	.291
O-OCH	.09	.19	.65	.502	.04	.24	1.24	.178	.04	.06	.13	.895

^A*p* < 0.10 (statistical tendency); **p* < .05; ***p* < .01

Source: The authors' own elaboration.

creased the risk of lower emotional intelligence, while for children from non-conjugal families such a relationship did not occur.

Interesting observations were revealed in the relationship between paternal attitudes and children's ability to use emotions in thinking and behavior (CZ-1) – in non-conjugal families, the fathers' overly demanding and inconsistent attitudes did not limit this ability. In addition, the differences in the relationship between the ability to use emotions in thinking and behavior (CZ-1) and giving autonomy by fathers were significant across family types – for adult children from conjugal families, this relationship was significant and positive, while from children from non-conjugal families, it remained negative and insignificant (see Table 5). At the same time, it is worth noting that the results should be interpreted with caution, as the internal heterogeneity of the group defined as “non-conjugal family” may be a limitation – it included participants raised by single parents, as well as participants from separated families (without specifying the child's age at the time of the family's separation) and reconstructed families; the gender of the child and the parent were not considered. Therefore, it is worthwhile to expand research in this area with greater control of the above variables.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the study confirmed the relationship between some parenting attitudes (regardless of the gender of children and parents) and emotional intelligence and its factors, which is in line with global reports indicating the relationship between warmth and support provided by parents and emotional intelligence of children (Ciarrochi et al., 2001; Lopes et al., 2003; Mayer et al., 1999). The study confirmed the relationship between the mothers' attitude of acceptance and higher emotional intelligence in children. Additionally, it showed that the mothers' attitude of acceptance is related to the general emotional intelligence of their sons and daughters and their daughters' ability to use emotions in practice. The obtained results are consistent with other reports (although they mainly concerned adolescents) (Gromek, 2006; Klepa, 2005; Kozioł, 2002, qtd. in: Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008; Knopp, 2007). It should be noted that in the case of sons, the aforementioned relationships were small, which may suggest that maternal attitudes do not directly affect their emotional intelligence, but strengthen other factors determining its development (Ciarrochi et al., 2001) or – it is not so much parenting attitudes as other maternal characteristics that determine the development of the sons' emotional intelligence (cf. Rostowska, 2003; Sukiennik, 2016).

The relationships between the attitudes of the fathers (acceptance/rejection and autonomy), although statistically significant, were quite weak and ceased to be significant when the children's gender was included. Does this mean that paternal attitudes are not important for the development of emotional intelligence? This issue certainly requires deeper exploration, as the results of other studies do not provide unequivocal results (Gromek, 2006; Klepa, 2005; Kozioł, 2002, qtd. in: Jaworowska, Matczak, 2008; Knopp, 2007).

The obtained results are thought-provoking, as there is no doubt that some maternal attitudes are connected with the emotional intelligence of children (mainly daughters), but the fact that these relationships are not stronger and do not apply to all parenting attitudes is intriguing. An attempt to explain these results can be made

by referring to the multi-level model of emotional intelligence development proposed by Zeidner (Zeidner, 2008; Zeidner, Matthews, Reoberts, MacCann, 2003). Zeidner assumed that biologically determined temperamental features constitute the basis for emotional intelligence development as well as its “environment”. By determining the attentional processes and intensity of emotional experience, temperament influences the strategies of emotional regulation. The second level consists of the processes of acquiring emotional competences (assimilating the rules of emotion recognition and expression), which are the result of temperament and socialization attained from significant others. The third level is related to the processes of developing self-aware and strategic behavior regulation – the acquisition of skills in this area occurs through direct training and learning from significant others.

Therefore, in the context of the model proposed by Zeidner, parenting attitudes only partially influence the emotional intelligence development of children, since this process is also conditioned by biological factors (temperament). At the same time, the importance of persons from whom the individual acquires models in the course of developing emotional competences is also highlighted – these are significant objects for the child and they constitute subjects of identification. Therefore, considering this context, the obtained results may inspire further research which would include the child’s relationship with the parent and the degree of closeness.

The conclusion that the relationship between parenting attitudes and emotional intelligence can also be moderated by other variables is also suggested by the presented results on the differences between people from conjugal and non-conjugal families. First, the study confirmed that people from non-conjugal families assessed the attitudes of mothers and fathers less favorably (e.g., in terms of acceptance and lack of consistency), and secondly, that there are differences in the nature of the relationship between children’s emotional intelligence and the inconsistent attitude of mothers and fathers and between the lack of autonomy and excessive demands on the part of fathers. Such varied results can be explained by the influence of other variables related to family functioning and of moderating factors not included in the current study – e.g., the parents’ self-esteem, their emotional balance or the level of development of reflexive thinking (see Rostowska, 2003; Sukiennik, 2016).

The limitations of the presented research should also be indicated. The self-report tools used require that the results be treated with a degree of caution. Moreover, parenting attitudes were evaluated only through the subjective, retrospective perspective of adult children, without also testing the parents themselves. Although the perception of parenting behaviors may determine individual development (Plopa, 2008a; Strzelczyk-Muszyńska, 2010; Ziemska, 1973), it is worth extending the study of such relationships to parents, especially when the assessment of parental attitudes changes with age (Plopa, 2011). Lack of parents’ participation in the study is also connected with the impossibility of considering the factors mentioned above, which may moderate the relationship between parenting attitudes and children’s emotional intelligence (see Rostowska, 2003; Sukiennik, 2016). Therefore, further research should be extended to include moderators and mediators of this relationship.

In summary, the relationship between parenting attitudes and children’s emotional intelligence is complex and not immediately obvious. On the one hand, there is no doubt that parenting attitudes, i.e., the way parents behave towards their child, have a significant impact on the development of the child’s personality and competences, including emotional intelligence. On the other hand, the nature of these factors may

be conditioned by the presence of other variables, such as the child's and the parent's gender or family type. Continuing and expanding research in this field is also important in terms of practical implications: as the impact of parenting attitudes towards their children is long-term and extends beyond childhood (Grochocińska, 1992; Rys, 2004), broadening the knowledge on this subject is important for cultivating and directing psychoeducation processes and supporting the educational function of the family.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The study has shown that daughters who display higher levels of emotional intelligence and a greater ability to use emotions in thinking and behavior rate their mothers higher in terms of attitudes of acceptance/rejection and autonomy.
2. There was no relation between the attitudes of mothers and young women's ability to recognize emotions, which is a specific dimension of emotional intelligence.
3. There was a small but statistically significant correlation between the attitude acceptance/rejection in mothers and the general emotional intelligence of sons.
4. Persons from conjugal families rated maternal attitudes of acceptance/rejection, demands, and lack of consistency, and paternal attitudes towards acceptance/rejection, autonomy and lack of consistency more favorably than persons from single-parent, separated, and reconstructed families.
5. For children from conjugal families, the inconsistent attitude of mothers facilitated lower emotional intelligence, whereas in children from non-conjugal families, such relationship did not occur.
6. The relationship between the children's ability to use emotions in thinking and behavior and the excessively demanding and inconsistent paternal attitudes varies in strength – in non-conjugal families, the aforementioned paternal attitudes do not limit this ability in children.

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