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Between Mission and Professionalism: Selected Contexts of Contemporary Teacher's Responsibility

ABSTRACT

The article presents selected contexts of responsibility of the teacher's professional work in contemporary socio-educational reality. The teacher's profile is discussed within the frame of the context of constant changes in the school and social space as well as expectations towards teachers, their competences and development. Based on selected theoretical approaches, author describes the teacher as a social leader, makes analysis of the teacher profession and its development over the years, the ethical dimension of the teacher's work and the connection between his personality and values and the educational impact in the school space. The goal of the text is to show the multiplicity and diversity of social roles that the teacher takes upon in educational and upbringing practice. The article presents a cross-section of various theories showing the multidimensionality of the pedagogue's profile in educational, as well as social and cultural dimensions. The pedagogical activities carried out in the world of fast economic, socio-cultural and technological changes require continuous expansion of the scope of their professional work. Being a teacher is not only a profession, but a lifelong mission, which carries a lot of responsibility for the pupils and educational impact, taken intentionally as well as being a derivative of the personality of the teacher.

Articles and dissertations

Introduction

Thinking about a teacher has always been focused on looking for an ideal or model that would be characterized by both good education and moral perfection. In the contemporary world, teachers experience fierce changeability of events and uncertainty of educational future. A teacher often stands "at the crossroads": he/she is not sure what to choose, and he/she does not have any clear sign posts that would show them the proper way of fulfilling their roles. Thus, doubts concerning the idea how to teach (well) seem natural, and the need for support, advice and dialogue seems understandable. The role of a teacher is not limited to transferring knowledge of particular subjects. The dominant aspects of his/her professional activity are upbringing activities. According to Jolanta Szempruch, "(…) it is no longer the transmission of knowledge, but teaching the ability to function in the world of informative multitude and contradiction, and in the world of conflicting values and interests, that determines the meaningfulness of the existence of modern school" (Szempruch 2000: 127). A teacher's broad scope of professional responsibility includes various elements of the multidimensional social and cultural system. In the face of the multitude of tasks, the issue of a teacher's functioning between mission and professionalism is still open. The below text presents selected theoretical approaches related to changing a teacher's role, his/her responsibility for elements of educational-upbringing reality, and for personal values that influence the fulfilment of the educational process.

A teacher as a leader of social changes

The rapidly changing reality forces the transformation of a teacher's role to shape the process of supporting students' development, creativity, and construction of new ideas and objectives of life in a way that is optimum for the requirements of the contemporary world. Apart from the role of an educator who has knowledge of a particular subject, a modern teacher should be a leader, i.e. a person who, with his/her commitment to social life, arouses students' consciousness, encouraging them to act and face social challenges. Being a social leader is not just a new element of a teacher's school activity,

but also a new social role. Preparing a teacher to perform the function of a social activist is not an easy process, because learning social functions and performing them on a high level depends on various aspects of personality, as well as on socioeconomic factors. A teacher should be aware of the fact that, working for the society and its future, he/she is not just a reflection of the properties of the society in which he/she lives and the "effect" of social experiences, but also, or perhaps mainly, a significant subject that has a real influence on building the future (Łukasik 2008: 320).

School as the place of education is included into a social system, so it should be a place open to the local community; to the problems of the environment in which people can meet and work together. A teacher, as a subject of school's functioning and a participant of its life, creates the atmosphere of a given school and the relationships among people who work and study there. A contemporary school should be a place of "becoming"; a place of dialogue and partnership among students, teachers and parents. The dominant values of school should include openness, respect and compromise. What is more, school should develop a person's social and civil responsibility; it should shape a "person of the border." This is why the process of school upbringing and education is so valuable in the process of building cultural awareness. School should be a space of meeting another person, so the following tasks are specified for it: building bonds with the nearest environment, shaping social attitudes, activation of students and their parents. Helena Radlińska wrote that one of the ways of activation and release of social power is "cultural leadership," i.e. the method of stimulation, dynamization and supporting cultural activity. Thus, a teacher, who is a leader and promoter of culture, is active in the local environment, can recognize its possibilities, needs and aspirations, supports, inspires and takes into account various possibilities of actions, and, at the same time, shapes the skills and shows the direction of the development of the local community (Sass 2011: 251–252).

Whether the role of a social leader will be effectively and completely fulfilled by a teacher depends on various internal and external factors. Internal factors include a teacher's knowledge and skills gained at various stages of education, his/her professional and life experience, competences, as well as the properties of the intellect and

personality traits. The skills of a teacher-leader should mainly include the ability to think and act in a reflective and flexible manner. External factors include the environment in which a teacher lives and works: a village, town, local community, social, political or economic situation. The role of a teacher-leader goes beyond the typical school activity: it includes actions and initiatives taken outside school, as well as work based on being a mentor. Zbigniew Kwieciński claims that a modern pedagogue should be wise, competent, sensitive, critical and attentive; he/she should be a counselor, a translator and a participant of students' everyday problems, but, at the same time, he/she should show them new meanings and values, listen to them patiently and lead them through life providing them with knowledge and answers based on the teacher's own experiences (Dyrda 2011: 158–159, 162, 167–169). Such "leading" results in the fact that a teacher changes from an unquestionable authority into a true leader who inspires the school community and the local environment (Sass 2011: 251–252). A leader's social responsibility is connected with being responsible for actions that influence other people: students, parents, teachers, and other representatives of the local community. This is why a teacher must be reflective, i.e. he/she must refer his/her actions to ethical and political contexts; and critical, i.e. he/she must be critical of the assumed results of educational influences (Olejniczak 2010: 54–56).

Changes in a teacher's professional role

As the educational reality is changing, new expectations related to teachers are being formulated. Educational objectives are a reference point for designing a teacher's actions, which means that they determine the necessity for a continuous change in a teacher's professional role. The word "teacher" has always been reserved for a person who performed an educational function although, throughout history, this term has been given different meanings.

In ancient times, knowledge of the contents that were to be taught was enough to become a teacher, and the ability to transmit such knowledge was perceived as an art or a gift, and not the result of proper training. As intellectual life started to develop and universities appeared, a teacher's profession became more important,

although didactics as a theory of teaching did not yet exist, so no significant changes in mastering the ability to transmit knowledge occurred. Such changes took place in the 17th century, when John Amos Comenius created the foundations of modern didactics. In Poland, the critical moment was the creation of the Commission of National Education in 1773. It created a separate "teacher's status," and education of future teachers was organized at the General Schools in the Universities of Krakow and Vilnius. Also, teacher seminars taught personnel for parish schools. In the 19th century, apart from the need to educate teachers in their fields of knowledge, educating them in the psycho-pedagogical area was reinforced. Also, the concept of university education of teachers appeared, which was mainly fulfilled due to Johann Friedrich Herbart. He established and conducted a teaching seminar at the University of Königsberg, dedicated to secondary school teachers. The 20th century is called the age of "discovering a child," and, at the same time, "discovering a teacher." The development of psychology facilitated extending knowledge of a teacher's personality, his/her pedagogical talents and skills. The idea of multifaceted education appeared, which takes into account the multitude of various factors that influence the effects of education, and the need for cognitive, emotional and task activities. Also, organisational forms appeared: individual, collective and group work, which started to be used by a teacher in the process of education (Kwiatkowska 2008: 24–27).

Along with the further development of civilization, science and technology, requirements for teachers were also increasing. It is similar today: teachers' qualifications are being extended and new professional tasks are being established. In this situation, teachers' lifelong learning is necessary to educate them not only how to transmit knowledge, but also how to use and apply it on one's own. The new requirements result in the fact that a teacher, apart from teaching and caring for a child, plays an existential function, i.e. shows the child how to create the meaning of life, how to deal with problems, how to live, learn and assess the effects of his/her own work. In order to perform this function effectively, education is needed that prepares students, who will soon be adults, to make choices without applying the dichotomous division into good and evil (Kwiatkowska 2008: 24–27).

While analysing the changes in the professional role, it is worth looking at the approaches to the figure of a teacher. Henryka Kwiatkowska lists the following approaches: psychological (related to personality), technological, humanist, sociological, and the approach of critical pedagogy (Kwiatkowska 2008: 24–27). The psychological approach assumes that a teacher is a structure of perfect personality traits. The criterion of being a good teacher is based on his/her personality. A teacher should be a "paragon of virtues," and thinking about him/her as about perfection has survived until now. The most popular words which, in this context, are used with reference to a teacher, include: a model, ideal, calling, mission, talent, instinct, serving a child.

Jan Władysław Dawid was one of the representatives of the "personal" approach to a teacher. He believed that education is a natural process, and a teacher is its directing force, but the force is determined by who the teacher is and what does he want to be like. Also, Dawid emphasized the meaning of emotional closeness and "spiritual life," which should be accompanied by the ability to communicate one's own spiritual states and to understand those of others. Moreover, a teacher should have the following personality traits: moral courage, inner truthfulness, a sense of responsibility, aiming at perfection, reliability, readiness to fight with difficulties and to make sacrifices, and respecting other people's right to individual activity. Dawid described this image with the category of the "love of souls," which is the essence of being a teacher (Kwiatkowska 2008: 30).

Zygmunt Mysłakowski and Stefan Szuman—other representatives of the personal approach to a teacher—used the category of a "talent." According to Mysłakowski, a talent "(…) is an inborn psychophysical disposition due to which a person may be more efficient in certain types of activity" (Kwiatkowska 2008: 30). This definition includes a reservation that a talent is confirmed by the fulfilment of one's dispositions and not by the very fact of having them. According to the author, the essence of being a teacher is the ability to make contact, i.e. to effectively communicate with another person, taking into account their psychological bond and the community of meanings, feelings and reactions. For Szuman, a talent is a set of certain skills, and a skill is having a psychological feature which makes it easier to perform particular activities on a high level. The author perceived

a pedagogical talent not as an inborn trait, but as a teacher's personality which does not have to be similar to other teachers, because each of them is an author of his/her own talent. Szuman distinguished two categories that constitute the essence of being a teacher: the richness of personality and the ability to use this richness. What he also found important was harmony and integrity of an adult personality, ethical values, broad knowledge and "a beautiful soul" (Kwiatkowska 2008: 31).

According to Stefan Baley, the essence of being a teacher is an "upbringing talent" which he defined as a set of features necessary for the fulfilment of an upbringing activity. This specific collection of features includes: spiritual relationship with the student, kindness, patience, enthusiasm, understanding the child's psyche, willingness to care for the child, and artistic skills. The one who had these traits on a more than average level was considered to be an "integral teacher." What, in the personal approach to a teacher, is still important today, is the assumption that a description of a teacher always includes a collection of perfect features he/she should have (Kwiatkowska 2008: 33).

In the technological approach, the dominant elements in the figure of a teacher are his/her professional qualifications, and the main category of description includes competences or specific professional activities. A competence is "(…) the subject's ability and readiness to perform tasks on the expected level" (Kwiatkowska 2008: 35), which results from the integration of knowledge, many skills, and the ability to make an assessment. In the technological approach, it is worth listing nine types of behaviours which take place in the interaction: teacher-student. These behaviours were distinguished by Ned A. Flanders. The ones which refer to a teacher include: accepting students' emotional states, rewarding, using students' ideas, asking questions, teaching, giving guidelines, and expressing critical remarks. The types of behaviours that refer to students include: responding to questions, expressing one's own initiative, the way of reacting to silence or noise in the classroom. Raymond Adams, in turn, formulated the basic activities of a teacher as verbs: he/she asks, recommends, informs, rewards, assesses, and explains (Kwiatkowska 2008: 35).

The humanist approach emphasizes the primacy of a teacher's individuality on the basis of the main three assumptions of the humanist trend of pedagogy: (1) a person is an autonomic, unique whole and he/she feels fulfilled in a contact with another person; (2) knowledge is rooted in an individual's personal experience, its nature is subjective and individual, and it exerts the strongest influence on a teacher's actions; (3) education is a form of interpersonal communication and it is based on mutual understanding of educational entities. In the humanist approach, a "good teacher" means a kind person with a unique personality, who cultivates those elements which make him/her meaningful, important and non-standard for a student. The sociological approach uses the concept of a professional/social role to describe a teacher. A social role "(…) assumes the existence of some norms and values connected with a specific social position. They are ascribed to that position and required from anyone who holds this position (Kwiatkowska 2008: 37). Thus, a teacher identified with a social role acts according to a canon of social expectations which regulate his/her behaviours in a precise manner. He/she adopts the normative rule of the role, and adapting those norms and respecting them results in the fact that an individual has the opportunity to be accepted in the society and may function safely. The approach of critical pedagogy assumes that a teacher is a transformative intellectual. In this approach, being transformative means that "(…) a teacher aims at making changes in education and in the social environment through rejecting the existing limitations and taking the path of fulfilling the policy of resistance" (Kwiatkowska 2008: 39). As a transformative intellectual, a teacher is an active participant of the educational process, acts to the benefit of democracy, and his/her main objective is teaching critical thinking, shaping one's own independent views, and reinforcing the student's awareness that the student is the most important element in the process of education (Kwiatkowska 2008: 28–40).

Similar to a teacher's personal images in theoretical approaches, his/her professional functions have also been changing. Kwiatkowska enumerates tendencies noticeable in the evolution of a teacher's professional functions which are significant for modern education that aims at teaching students how to live in the society of knowledge characterized by dynamic changes and increasing risk

(Kwiatkowska 2008: 40–45). Evolution of a teacher's professional functions is connected with the following changes in the socio-cultural reality: from a sense of safety to a sense of threat; from group (institutional) responsibility to personal (individual) responsibility; from adjustment to the reality to changing it; from working with the dominance of repeatable activities to working with the dominance of creative activities; from the dominance of technology to the increase in intellect; from shaping life according to the tradition to creating its own concept. The first tendency related to changes in a teacher's professional functions is the change in the approach to knowledge transmission: from transmitting it to teaching how to get it on one's own. The previous educational systems were focused on transmitting the knowledge of facts rather than on the ways of discovering them. In modern times, the relationship between knowledge and the ways of gaining it should be reversed due to the fact that we live in a world characterized by the constant increase in information. If an individual is to make use of knowledge and transform his/her behaviour under the influence of it, he/she must have a personal attitude towards such knowledge. Thus, from the perspective of performing a teacher's functions, what seems more important than transmitting knowledge or values is the organisation of the educational process, as well as teaching how to evaluate things and find meanings in the world of opposing values. The second tendency is moving from steering development to inspiring development. If a teacher is to inspire development, he/she must think about his/her actions, carry out a dialogue and look for compromise, reflect on his/her decisions, reject the attitude of dictate, and aim at cooperation and reinforcement of the student's individuality. The third tendency is the change from a simple transmission of knowledge to the invitation to enter its universe. In this case, educational action does not consist in a simple transmission of knowledge, but in an advanced thinking activity that includes looking for individual meanings of knowledge for a particular person. The fulfilment of this tendency means equipping the student with the ability to analyse and solve problems and then—to master the procedure of scientific cognition. The fourth tendency includes the change from the function of knowledge transmission to introducing order into the informative chaos. Nowadays, schools should prepare students for coping with the excessive amount of

information. The modern pluralist world, in which different systems of values meet, requires the ability to integrate knowledge. However, in order to cope with this challenge, we need intellectual rather than pragmatic skills. The fifth tendency noticeable among the changes in a teacher's professional functions is connected with the reduction of the dominance of intellect and the balance between the world of thoughts and feelings. Thus, there is a need to reinforce a teacher's emotional skills and his/her ethical-moral qualifications, so that—apart from the cognitive support (knowledge, understanding)—he/she can offer the students existential support, i.e. reinforcement and help. The sixth tendency is moving from an alternative to a dialogue. An alternative limits the freedom of choice; it is an opposing, contradictory value which orders or prohibits something. A dialogue, in turn, is dynamic, unspecified, and it is very good to use in non-standard situations. Therefore, a teacher's work should follow the logic of a dialogue, contact and agreement with the students. The ability to dialogue and compromise with others are necessary skills of a teacher. Also, he/she should equip his/her students with these skills (Kwiatkowska 2008: 40–45).

In order to meet the requirements of the modern world, a teacher has to perceive his/her professional role in a new manner. This change has to take place within several aspects, mainly in a teacher's way of thinking and acting. A teacher has to move from perceiving himself/herself as a person who plays a specific professional role to perceiving himself/herself as an independent entity in which teaching is an integral part of the whole. In other words, a teacher has to move from being in a role and fulfilling external requirements, to being himself/herself and a teacher as a whole. This integral kind of being results in the fact that a teacher is able to combine professional tasks and moral obligations resulting from the sense of one's professional identity and expectations of other people (Kowal 2004: 80).

Ethical dimension of a teacher's work

Responsibility as a moral category and value is particularly important in a teacher's profession. Responsibility is "a (…) specific obligation towards oneself and others which specifies a teacher's behaviour and results from the fact that he/she directs his/her own actions"

(Szempruch 2013: 263). This may include responsibility for oneself (directing one's own development) or for someone else, i.e. students. Such responsibility results from moral maturity, kindness, the willingness to achieve success and the requirements of the environment. In a teacher's work, responsibility is expressed within four dimensions: responsibility for students; for oneself and for the job; for another teacher; for parents and the society. The essence and conditions of a teacher's responsibility include: freedom of thinking and acting, the system of values, consciousness, activity and actions, along with their consequences, and rationality (Szempruch 2013: 263, 270).

Within the context of evaluating educational actions, Janusz Homplewicz distinguishes three kinds of a teacher's responsibility: legal, pedagogical and ethical. From the legal point of view, responsibility includes the observance of existing regulations while fulfilling professional obligations. In this context, pedagogical work is formulated as a set of obligations and legal measures, including sanctions. Legal responsibility for improper fulfilment of obligations may occur if the following three conditions are met: establishment of obligations, which will be the legal basis for responsibility; specifying consequences for the improper fulfilment of obligations; determining that an obligation was not fulfilled properly and issuing an opinion, decision or sentence. However, a teacher is more likely to experience pedagogical responsibility than legal responsibility. Pedagogical responsibility is connected with pedagogical supervision which aims at controlling whether a teacher's actions are compliant with the valid regulations, effective and purposeful. Those controls, in the form of visits at school or lessons watched by supervisors, aim at the improvement of teachers' and schools' pedagogical work. Such controls may result in consequences, opinions, recommendations or advice. In the context of upbringing, ethical responsibility is very important, if not the most important. It is expressed in the attitude of a teacher who fulfils the child's needs, and cares for his/her good and development. Also, moral attitude, responsibility for one's actions, motivation for work, maturity, as well as values of a teacher, are very important. The problem of ethical responsibility is not just the issue of teachers' conscience, but it is also a matter of professionalism in the job they do (Homplewicz 1996: 186–188).

Both the sense of mission and the willingness to be a professional at work result in the fact that the ethics of a teacher's job plays a very important role. Complying with the principles of ethics is particularly important for building the prestige of the profession. Its main determinants include flawless moral attitude, very good manners, responsibility, sensitivity, self-criticism, and honesty. A good teacher-educator should have a strong "moral backbone," and he/she should observe ethical principles despite all the difficulties and stressful situations that occur while fulfilling his/her obligations towards students, parents and colleagues (Janus 2012: 37). However, not only a teacher's attitude, but also many other elements, which can be described as moral and ethical/immoral and unethical, are significant. It is worth mentioning that, in fact, we cannot speak about unethical or immoral upbringing, because then we cannot speak about an educational attitude at all. Moral and ethical characteristics of educational activity is its condition and essence at the same time. Therefore, ethics is important not only in a teacher's attitude towards students, but also in the curriculum, i.e. in what skills and values are taught and reinforced by the teacher (Homplewicz 1996: 21–23). While creating school curricula, one should remember about intellectual and professional development, but also about those values that influence moral development and shape certain attitudes and ideals in a person's life. Apart from the curriculum, another important element includes a teacher's skills. Professional skills required to fulfil and teach values are important in terms of ethics, because they are necessary for the proper fulfilment of the job and for being a good teacher. Also, respecting the student's dignity is a very important ethical requirement. This is the basic condition and value of upbringing. Thus, in pedagogical work there is no place for aggression, pressure, force, abusing power and strength, or imposing something on students. In educational processes, a teacher has to meet the student's needs, understand him/her and support his/her development. This leads to shaping an independent and mature individual (Homplewicz 1996: 21–23).

In a teacher's work, the most important objective is educating a wise person who has ethical knowledge and skills that help him/her make proper choices and decisions for which he/she will take moral responsibility. However, if a teacher is to help someone become wise, the teacher must be wise himself/herself. A teacher's

ethical competences include such elements as: having the basic ethical knowledge, skills that make it easier to solve moral conflicts, as well as recognising and understanding the most important ethical dilemmas of the contemporary world (Szewczyk 2013: 9–10). The very decision to be a teacher is a moral choice, so it should be free, conscious, rational, responsible and focused on the fulfilment of ethical values. What is more, this choice is the selection of an autotelic value the fulfilment of which is, at the same time, an ethical obligation and a moral duty of a teacher (Szewczyk 2013: 39).

Janusz Homplewicz specifies a few general principles of pedagogical ethics that should be followed by each teacher: truth; the child's good; pattern; pedagogical projection; emotional bond; respecting personality; professionalism (Homplewicz 1996: 73–74). The principle of truth assumes that a teacher's attitude and what he/she says and does must aim at recognizing and expressing the truth. A teacher's ethical approach is reflected in his/her acting on behalf of the truth, so his/her behaviour and personality should emphasize that truth to the maximum extent. The principle of the child's good assumes that the child, his/her good, safety and development are the main motif and instruction for actions. In this principle, the requirement of the sense of being responsible for the child is revealed. Such sense of responsibility includes securing, understanding and fulfilling the student's good. The principle of the pattern expresses the belief that a teacher is a model for students who treat him/her as the source of values, ideals, contents, attitudes and skills. What a teacher has or presents becomes a part of the message that shapes the child's personality and worldview. The principle of pedagogical projection assumes that a teacher knows how to speak to be understood by the student, and how to behave to get the child's trust and openness. Educational influence may only occur if a teacher understands what and how the student sees and feels. The principle of emotional bond is the ability to make and maintain personal contact with the student. The level of such contact also determines the effectiveness of upbringing processes. The principle of respecting personality assumes that a teacher sees and appreciates the uniqueness of the student's personality. Janusz Korczak spoke about "the child's authority," meaning that each child is a being who deserves respect and protection of his/her personal dignity. Finally, the principle of professionalism assumes

that a teacher is competent and mature; that he/she has some professional qualifications and skills that help him/her carry out efficient pedagogical actions (Homplewicz 1996: 73–74).

Internalization of values and school upbringing

Upbringing as the fulfilment of certain values includes many aspects of a person's development. Those values may be assigned to two basic groups. The first one is the ethical area of inner values: they refer to a person, his/her properties, features and development. They are divided into three categories: values connected with an individual's personality, with his/her multidimensional development, and with his/her attitudes and actions. The second area of ethical values is the social area that refers to living with other people. Three categories of social values include: values connected with family life and different forms of self-fulfilment, cooperation with other people in different environments and communities, and the ability to perform one's work and profession (Homplewicz 1996: 146–147, 149). For example, inner values of upbringing may include: love, kindness, friendliness, emotionality, gratitude, trustfulness, openness, trust, faithfulness, righteousness, courage, braveness, persistence, wisdom, prudence, sense of responsibility, reliability, generousness, magnanimity, patience, selflessness, discretion, humility, and honesty. Social values of upbringing include: teaching and educating, professionalism, pedagogical talent and tact, being a pattern, communicativeness, friendship, fraternity, tolerance, help, service, care, diligence, and much more. Upbringing starts with the selection of established values which, in turn, specify the objectives and tasks for education. However, there can be much more tasks and values to be fulfilled in the educational process (Homplewicz 1996: 146–147, 149).

Along with the change of the political system, educational priorities changed in Poland, which resulted in the necessity to transform the objectives based on the values of the ideology imposed by the politics into the objectives referring to humanist values. A set of universal values is the basis for specifying educational objectives. Exposition of a given system of values is connected with shaping proper attitudes, which involves shaping an individual's personality. Such a perspective makes it possible to restore the high rank of general humanist

values, so it reverses the system: information—skills—attitudes into: attitudes—skills—information. Within the new system of educational objectives, they are no longer hierarchized as, according to the concept of multisided education, no objectives are more important than others. Such an assumption means emphasizing the subjective (instead of objective) side of personality. Following the path of the re-orientation of educational objectives, we come across the following new approach: development of personality—shaping attitudes, values and worldview—preparation for self-development—becoming equipped with skills and information. This approach is based on humanist values focused on educating an emancipated person who thinks and acts on his/her own, is free, void of prejudice and prepared for democracy, i.e. has the opportunity to consciously function in the world of constant changes (Kunicka 2005: 18–20).

There are many activities that should be taken on by a teacher in order to effectively transmit ethical values. Homplewicz presents 13 of such activities (Homplewicz 1996: 158–166). Introduction into the world of values means that a teacher should not only inform students about values and skills, and allow them to grasp these values intellectually, but he/she should also help students enter the world of such values through accepting and adopting them. However, before a person adopts the values that will shape him/her, their personality, and become a part of their attitude, the person has to understand the values, i.e. their contents and meanings. It includes understanding them both on the intellectual and on the emotional level. A teacher's role is to prepare the student for desirable, conscious and free adoption of such values, but—before it happens—also for noticing the moment of readiness and openness to such adoption. The acceptance of values should be accompanied by understanding. The point is that values must be understandable enough for the student to accept and adopt them. It is because the very understanding and knowledge do not mean the same as acceptance and adoption. Not only should a teacher be able to speak about values, but he/she should also know how and when he/she should do this. A teacher has to adjust the word to the situation or wait for a given situation to occur. Then the word exerts the desired influence and we can speak about an upbringing situation, i.e. the adequacy of words to the situation. Ethical values reveal their contents in the situations that occur in everyday

life. When words acquire pedagogical efficiency, they become a living word. Apart from the adequacy of words to the situation, a condition of an efficient word is faithfulness to the words that are spoken, which also includes faithfulness to one's views and proclaimed values. Speaking an efficient word may only become an educational transmission of values when a teacher's life, attitude and values are compliant with what he/she says.

Now we should mention another condition of an effective upbringing transmission: the unity of attitudes and words. The unity of attitudes, behaviours and acts of a teacher is required for an effective transmission of values. It is because the ethical values he/she proclaims become truthful and meaningful only if they are actually identical with his/her values. Also, personal contact is important in transmitting values. Thus, what is needed is the direct, interpersonal contact between a teacher and a student based on dialogue and talk. Openness to another person's truth, trust, kindness and friendliness, which are experienced during such contact, are personal, just like the transmission and adoption of values. A characteristic feature of contact is partnership in the transmission of values. As we have already mentioned, it is not only important what we transmit and how we do it, but also who is the one who transmits and what his/her attitude to the addressee is. In an upbringing relationship there is a need to create partnership based on empathy, trust, honesty and kindness, which will be an opening to someone else's experience, world and truth. Only the values that are presented as the teacher's truth expressed in his/her attitude and opinions become credible for the student. Only such values are worth being adopted as the student's own values. The individual's autonomy towards the transmission of values means, in turn, that the student is an independent subject, and not just an object who adopts transmitted values. Thus, transmitted values are to be true for the student; they are to be a part of his/her own beliefs and attitude, and not just a transmission of information. In the process of upbringing, the transmission of values is always two-sided. In this system, a teacher and a student are both the ones who receive and the ones who give. A teacher is enriched by the contact with the student, because the educational relationship influences his/her life and personality, too. The transmission of values is the process of reaching, discovering, understanding and maturing to values. It is not

an act or one-time event. It is worth mentioning that the transmission of values is actually unlimited. Values, as well as their contents, understanding, transmission process, scope and degree of adoption, have no limits, so it is advisable to constantly increase the level of perfecting humanity. Limiting values constitutes the limitation of a person's possibilities; it is degradation and reduction of chances. Teachers should lead their students towards inner maturation, improvement and construction of ethical values. Therefore, a teacher's task is to form students' sense of responsibility for the shape of their interiorized ethical values (Homplewicz 1996: 158–166).

Conclusion

A teacher's profession is a job, calling and social service in which goodness and truth are the signpost on the path of career (Janus 2012: 34–35). A teacher without passion is just a worker who follows certain fixed rules; an employee who creates a product or service invented by someone else. Such a person will not become an idol or a model to be imitated by his/her students. They will be able, on the basis of his/her attitudes, behaviours, gestures and words, to sense his/her bitterness, frustration, regret, and the lack of willingness or interest. Moreover, if a teacher finds it more important to maintain his/her good image among other teachers or supervisors than to care for his/her students, he/she creates a negative image of the profession, destroying its foundations for the future (Śliwerski 2015: 81–83).

If a teacher is aware of the fact that his/her work is a mission, he/she is convinced of the importance and responsibility related to his/her tasks. This importance and responsibility refer to the processes of educating the young generation connected with shaping proper moral and civil attitudes, developing psychophysical features, reliable fulfilment of obligations, and caring for children's safety. Another element important in a teacher's mission is the educational dimension, i.e. transmitting knowledge on a particular subject (Kawka 1998: 97–101).

The modern world wants teachers to be free, authentic, tolerant and respectful for other people. This is related to inevitable challenges such as the lack of the sense of safety, increased risk, uncertainty, doubts, and the sense of constant responsibility. A teacher should

gain and reinforce his/her freedom to choose and achieve goals, and, at the same time, he/she should strengthen his/her autonomic position that should be strong enough to resist the external pressure. He/she should be able to reject the "imposed" professional role and adopt the "outlined" role that allows for creative discoveries, self-specification and self-determination (Śliwerski 2015: 81–83).

A teacher's professionalism is expressed in fulfilling educational and upbringing tasks on the basis of his/her knowledge and skills. And the sense of mission is the sign that one acts to the good and development of the student with full commitment. A teacher's functioning between mission and professionalism is constant specification of his/her professional identity in the face of responsibility for the two areas. Thus, the fulfilment of professional tasks boils down to the skilful oscillation between these two complementary aspects of a teacher's work.

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