

PEDEUTOLOGICAL TRADITIONS AND A MODERN IMAGE OF A TEACHER

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Abstrakt: V každej spoločnosti jestvovala a naďalej existuje všeobecná predstava o ideálnom učiteľovi. Rôzne modely plnenia jeho úlohy záviseli a boli uprednostňované od okolností. Dlhá a plná komplikácií cesta viedla od prvotného stavu, keď učiteľ bol vnímaný ako kňaz a majster, a ktorého vedomosti boli individuálne získaným umením, až do dnešnej pozície – učiteľa profesionála. Napriek prebiehajúcim zmenám, môžeme si všimnúť pomerne súvislú líniu rozvoja pedeutologickej myšlienky a nadčasové prvky vytvoreného obrazu učiteľa. Môžeme teda uznať, že pedeutologická myšlienka, ktorej korene siahajú ďaleko do minulosti sa prepája s modernou realitou a inšpiruje budúcnosť.

Abstract: In each society a certain general imagination of the ideal of the form teacher existed and has still been functioning. There was a long way full of transformations from the beginning state when the teacher was seen as a priest and a master whose skills were the arts mastered by him personally to the professional teacher postulated nowadays. In spite of the changes taking place, the relatively continuous developmental line of the pedeutological thought and the timeless elements of the created image of the teacher can be noticed. It can be acknowledged that the pedeutological thought, rooted in the past, is strictly connected with the contemporary reality and inspires the future.

Key words: History of education. Pedeutology. Teacher

Introduction

Teaching the youth has always been the most essential duties of every society. Historical time has been forming a picture and an image of a teacher as well as his/her professional and moral attitude to a considerable degree. A certain ideal image of an educator existed and still functions in each society. The pattern is usually created on the basis of social beliefs concerning a teacher's tasks and obligations. The type of a teacher and an attitude of a society towards him/her has been changing for centuries, it depended, among others, on the existing social-political system, philosophy of life, a level of education, a culture of a given nation, a level of psychological-pedagogical knowledge, needs, etc.

Three fundamental elements have always been appreciated in the development of a teaching profession: knowledge of a subject, pedagogical skills and personality. They were rarely treated equally, in spite of that a certain relatively continuous development line can be marked: from art to profession; from a complete dependence on practising a profession to a personality to a relative professional independence. Similarly, the standpoint of the role of a subject content and knowledge has been changing: from giving content a status necessary and sufficient for the required condition (Dylak, 2004: p. 554). However, the long road full of transformations has led from the initial state when a teacher was seen as a priest and a master, whose range of skills remained art gained personally, to a professional teacher postulated nowadays.

The interest in a teacher assumed a particular dimension and intensity in the 20th century. This century referred to as “a century of a child” i.e. time when a child was discovered, also was time of “a discovery of a teacher.” Jozef Mirski, forming a framework of the knowledge on a teacher, rightly stated that *the second, epoch-making discovery, apart from a child, in the scope of education is a discovery of an educator’s personality* (Mirski, 1932: p. 3).

Polish peedeutological traditions

The origin of the reflection on a teacher, his/her personality, a professional preparation and an attitude towards students dates back to the Renaissance in the Polish pedagogical thought. The work of Szymon Marycjusz and Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski should mainly be mentioned. Next, the works of the Commission of National Education in the Enlightenment give rise to practical actions in the scope of educating teachers. Then, the first teachers’ seminaries are created which were believed to be as specialist institutions preparing a teaching staff. In 1787 the essential work by Grzegorz Piramowicz entitled “On a teacher’s duties” is published. The work includes discussions devoted to, among others, the aims of a teacher’s work, a teacher’s obligations towards himself/herself and towards a student. According to the author, a teacher’s basic duty, which is an aim of pedagogic actions at the same time, is to take such steps which are good for a pupil. It is a point of reference in case of other duties of a teaching profession, among which the author places a teacher’s work on himself/herself and

an acquisition of fluency in his/her profession by improving pedagogical skills.

Next, the development of cultural movements of the Romanticism and the Positivism starts the creation of different teachers' attitudes: from an educator – a philosopher, freeing the humanity in the student's ego, to an educator – a scientist (Podgórska, 1980: p. 155-166), forming an individual acting for his/her own good and the social one.

However, the intensive development of the pedagogical thought concerning this issue started as late as the 19th century after the publication of the thesis *On a teacher's soul* by Jan Władysław Dawid. Dawid began a current of reflection on the issue of a teacher's personality in this thesis. In his work J.W. Dawid was trying to answer the question: what makes the nature of a teacher, what makes that somebody is a teacher by birth and by vocation? For Dawid, the essence of a teachers' soul is first of all love of human souls – an individual gift, vocation, a source of enthusiasm, faith in his/her own vocation, power at work, (Dawid, 1959: p. 45). Who feels this spiritual bond with a student, this person is aware of obligations which pedagogical work imposes on him/her. According to Dawid, it is love as a man gives much more, he/she does something disinterestedly for another one; it is love of souls since its subject is the inner spiritual content of a man, his/her moral good, his/her enlightenment and an improvement as a spiritual human being. For a teacher with such a vocation, each student is as if an extension of and an increase in his/her own ego, it is a new task to be fulfilled in the scope of his/her own personal life (Dawid, 1959: p. 36). Other characteristics, which Dawid mentions, mainly a need for a perfection, a sense of responsibility and duty, the inner truth and courage are only a supplement of this love.

Pedagogical talent is even more popular notion in Polish pedeutology. This idea was popularized, first of all, by Zygmunt Mysłakowski and Stefan Szuman. Z. Mysłakowski believes that pedagogical talent *is an innate psycho-physiological predisposition, favouring especially the pursuance of educational tasks* (Mysłakowski, 1959: p. 61). According to Mysłakowski, the elements of pedagogical talent are imagination, an ability to observe the others, a parental instinct, an extroverted temperament.

Stefan Szuman presents a little different characterization of pedagogical talent. Mainly, he thinks that talent is *a group of some abilities which do not have an inner character* but depend on all outer

coincidences and personal factors (Szuman, 1959: p. 99). Furthermore, Szuman mentions pedagogical tact among the essential features of pedagogical talent, which he treats as *an inner form of dealing with people so as not to offend them, to maintain their favour, to influence them as it is intended, however not to trigger excessive resistance, avoiding unnecessary conflicts and confrontations* (Szuman, 1959: p. 95).

The harmonious co-existence of all of these elements conditions a full personality of a teacher.

On the other hand, Stefan Baley considers the so-called educational ability, which is a specific group of features enabling and making education of others easier, the most essential feature of a good teacher. He includes the following in these features: goodwill for students, understanding their psyche, a disposition to take care of them systematically, a need to be with people, a spiritual kinship with children, patience and pedagogical tact, an enthusiastic attitude, a specific artistic ability. Like Szuman, he assigns a special significance to pedagogical tact, regarding it as a main element of educational ability (Baley, 1956: p. 201).

Mieczyslaw Kreutz, another educator, uses a term of a personality of a teacher in his pedeutological discussions. He refers to Dawid's opinions on a personality, but he also makes their modifications. The necessary condition of a teacher's educational influence, according to Kreutz, is a possession of three predispositions: love for people, an inclination to a social influence, a suggestive (agitation) ability (Kreutz, 1956: p. 149-156). According to Kreutz, the first two predispositions, also mentioned by J.W. Dawid, do not guarantee an educational influence. The existence of the third, separated predisposition, which is a suggestive ability, only decides on that. It is expressed in the emotional influence on another man. The man who has this ability easily obtains the influence on other people's opinions, feelings and will. His/her behaviour is characterised by self-confidence, composure and courage of actions, intransigence and straightforwardness in an aspiration for the realization of his/her own aims. Kreutz states that *a suggestive ability decides on the educational influence, and only such a teacher who has it can become a decisive moment about his/her entire future in a student's life* (Kreutz, 1956: p. 150).

Moreover, Maria Grzegorzewska worked on an issue of a teacher's personality, who distinguished two types of a teacher's personality:

- a freeing teacher who is characterised by an influence on a student with love, liking, a will to help, a creation of the good atmosphere, order, kindness;
- a hindering teacher who influences with the use of an order, compulsion, sanctions, a creation of the climate of strangeness between a teacher and a student (Grzegorzewska 1938: p. 193-206). Additionally, she paid attention to the necessity to select candidates for a teaching profession and their professional education.

Next, Wincenty Okon mentions one more extremely essential element of a teacher's personality, the so-called educational creativity, the expression of which is a teacher's attitude to failures and *making a material similar to a creator, a student to an educator* (Okon, 1956:p. 20). The criteria of a pedagogical mastery, according to him, are the following:

- knowledge of defined regularities and rules and an ability to use appropriate ways to educate and teach in order to avoid didactic failures, and in case they happen, an ability to eliminate them,
- a degree to which students changed from an object of education to a subject of education and they realize a defined programme of self-education and self-teaching spontaneously themselves. Okon states in the discussion of a teacher: *if you want to give others, he/she has to possess a lot himself/herself in order to educated others, he/she has to be educated thoroughly himself/herself in order to make others better, he has to be good himself/herself* (Okon, 1956: p. 14).

All of these discussions in that period were interested in the search of and an indication of positive, most wanted features of an ideal pattern of a teacher. In the 1920s the interest in the real teacher developed. The wide range of issues were taken into account in the research:

- motives of the job choice and an evolution of notions of their own profession during the studies and professional work,
- intellectual, emotional and volitional properties and features of a temperament in order to distinguish psychological types of teachers,
- aptitudes, a mood and professional skills, especially a realization of didactic and educational tasks in the specific workplace,
- relationships existing in the course of the didactic-educational process between a teacher and a student,

- teacher's opinions concerning various fields of life (Jakubiak, 2007: p. 13).

Wanda Dzierzbicka formulated interesting conclusions resulting from the research among teachers. The image of a "real" educator, formed by her, was as follows: *apart from health, a stout character, innate intelligence and thorough education, i.e. properties which are out of question, an educator has impetuous faith in a value of educational work which is an incentive and a leverage at work. He took up a job with the youth not because of his/her calculation, not because of his/her love for scientific work, not because of the social motives or others, as well as not because of the drive of being a leader, but because of an impetuous need based on the innate tendency to take care of children in order to improve them [...] he/she has an ability to emphasize with a child's soul [...] He/she has a vivid temperament, but he/she is internally composed, he/she shows his satisfaction and dissatisfaction, encouragement and reprimand with the expression of his/her face, but if it needed he/she controls outer manifestations of emotions [...] He/she has a wide range and an attention separation, which together with other factors ensure his control over children [...] an educator has faith in the meaning of life, he/she has a wide range of interests, which assures him/her of a connection with the life of his/her nation and humankind and a wealth and a variety of internal life*" (Dzierzbicka, 1926: p. 53-54). The research depicted the authentic predispositions and the features of the professionally active teachers, it proved a possession of characteristics defined as a pedagogical personality by the researchers.

In the 1950s there was a distinct reversal in the pedeutological research. The concepts of a vocation, talent, an inherence of characteristics of a teacher's personality were gradually overridden and simply criticised. They realized that psychological, characterological features of a teacher are sufficient, education, a preparation to realize didactic-educational, caring tasks as well as teachers' work and life conditions are also important. For instance, S. Dobrowolski clearly emphasizes a leading importance of teachers' knowledge and skills in the didactic-educational work in the publication entitled "The structure of teachers' minds" (Warsaw 1959). The outer conditioning of teacher's behaviour was also studied and analysed. The following elements of qualifications of a teaching profession were mentioned:

- social-moral qualifications;

- professional qualifications – as systems of skills, knowledge, motivation, interests, an ability to plan and organize work, as well as ways to of evaluation of educational processes;
- physical and health qualifications (features).

Next, in the 1980s, a teacher started to be considered as a specialist in the peduetological studies, for example a historian, a biologist, a mathematician, etc. Apart from this, the diversity of teachers with regard to psychological and intellectual features, a level of education, a type of performed pedagogical work were noticed. The reason of the development of pedeutology in this direction was a deepening division of labour, development of a lot of scientific disciplines and a specialization of science.

Modern image of a teacher

The modern teacher is a substantially competent professional who has an appropriate pedagogical and psychological preparation. He/she is a guide rather than an informant, a person releasing a student's activity and supporting his/her development. Schools require teachers to be substantially thoroughly prepared (teachers – specialists), and simultaneously to know methodology of teaching well and to be characterized by proper character traits. However, the attention is still paid to, first of all, personal values of a teacher both in the pedagogical studies and parents' or students' opinions i.e. love for the youth, kindness, care, patience, objectivity of evaluation, personal culture, content-related knowledge is mentioned further. The desired character traits include: *inner composure, psychological balance, tact, easiness to establish contacts and friendship with children, an ability to be concerned about children's fate and their life difficulties and an ability to feel some zeal, enthusiasm towards signs of children's lives* (Mach 2007: p. 283). Moreover, a teacher is expected to show: *a friendly relationship with children, a disinterested engagement in their matters, understanding motives of children's behaviour, an easiness to establish contacts with them, treating and evaluating them justly, faith in a child, patience and endurance, diligence and a psychological balance, a professional sensitivity and a feeling of moral responsibility for a child's lot [...]simplicity, tact, delicacy, objectivity, patience and clarity of a judgement supported by pedagogical knowledge, all of*

these created a real authority of a teacher (Klim-Klimaszewska, 2005: p. 121) .

At the same time it is difficult to find a definition of a good or bad teacher. It is believed that a good teacher is:

- an expert who develops and improves his/her own knowledge in the scope of his/her subject, manages the construction and development of his/her skills, has his/her professional actions studied and evaluated critically (a reflective practical person), is a leader for a student in his/her process of development of knowledge and skills, transmits and deepens a spiritual culture,
- a mature personality giving a possibility of empathy, supporting, appreciating and accepting a variety of possibilities, knowing his/her potential and limitations, controlling his/her emotions,
- a responsible adult who actively works for common aims of his/her educational institution, initiates cooperation, has high social skills and good manners, promotes development of an educational institution so that it could become a teaching organization,
- a person supporting a creation of the system of values who helps students in their development and choice of values, support in the construction of their own look at the world, a leader of making ethical choices, an active citizen realizing his/her social influence which he/she exerts by his/her work,
- a promoter of educational actions taking responsibility for the safety and atmosphere favouring learning, creating an educational environment encouraging students to undertake initiatives, supporting different styles of learning,
- a guide in the process of teaching and development who supports students' creative thinking, implements them for learning, supports and evaluates a process of learning, takes a responsibility for encouraging all students to learn (Bledowska, 2010: p. 309-310).

The cooperation of teachers with students is a significantly essential issue.

The proper relations are a factor favouring work and an educational atmosphere. Simultaneously, the cooperation is an important reason of an increase in the students' engagement level in the school matters. Individuals who cooperate with one another additionally try to meet specific tasks, and in connection with this fact they take loyalty, trust and responsibility into consideration while performing them (Sniegulska, 2006: p. 1-8). In modern times a teacher should also be

able to free himself/herself from and become independent of some rigid provisions regulating his/her actions, which force and oblige him/her to specified behavior as well as cram him/her into the rigid schemes of actions.

Summary

The pedeutological thought, rooted in the past, should currently be connected with the reality multilaterally as well as inspire the future. The knowledge of the history of pedeutology can help understand its present problems. Nowadays a question about a teacher includes an extremely wide area of problems, programmatically exceeding the marked traditional borders of scientific disciplines. Formulating a question concerning a teacher, we refer to various matters, first of all, we ask about:

- -a context of a teacher's action which means about the cultural-social space in which it happens, which a teacher does and what he/she undertakes as a citizen and as a man by virtue of his/her profession;
- -a standard of educational equipment of each individual, about any educational model of a bigger chance in order to struggle with the pressure of competitive powers, stresses and obstacles of development;
- -future and a perspective of a teaching job – events and facts from the past which formed a way to perceive and feel the world. It should be emphasized that previous experiences are more and more less important in the awareness of present generations.

Looking for the answer to these questions, it is worth referring to the reflection about a teacher in the history of the pedagogical thought. In all the historical periods the ideal structure of personality features decided on a good teacher from a psychological perspective, competences determining the activity of a teacher were important from a technological one, whereas individuality and uniqueness were of a significance from a humanistic one. The professional role was stressed from the sociological perspective as a structure of expectations in the form of standards and rules of a teacher's actions. A teacher's engagement for the changes in the public zone were emphasized from the perspective of critical pedagogics.

In the face of the cultural and educational changes in recent years, it has been observed that the social interest in the condition of awareness and the feeling of a teacher's public mission have been decreasing. The discussions referring the economic situation of this social group and a bureaucracy of the conduct of this job have been brought to the foreground (programmes of teachers' professional development). The personal appreciation of the teacher's ethos as an individual has been weakened. Let us hope that the message that *first of all a good teacher should be himself/herself, that is a man who sees another man on the top of the hierarchy of values* will still be up-to-date (Grzeszkiewicz, 2002: p. 283).

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