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UDC:

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO THE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP IN POLISH SECONDARY EDUCATION

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The work of a teacher at the school stage is a special kind of work, which is inextricably linked to what is so accurately described as "love of human souls". School is one of the first social institutions outside the family with which a child comes into contact in everyday life. The extremely dynamically developing reality, civil and information societies, formulate new expectations, pose new challenges, which in many aspects, and perhaps above all, concern education new generations of people equipped with the ability to cope with such a complicated reality. These challenges in the initial phase should be met by well-prepared teachers. These are primarily challenges for modern pedeutology, for well-prepared educators, for educational leaders.

The article presents the findings from a survey with Polish lyceum students as to what personality traits should an ideal teacher possess; what is the teacher's attitude to the student's opinion; how often teachers have conversations with students about the students' interests. The findings demonstrate some inconsistencies in the society understanding the teacher's role and the place of teachers and students in it. The students see their ideal teacher as a combination of positive traits of character which is hardly possible in real life conditions. When students speak about the existing situation, they



demonstrate that teachers tend to underestimate their point of view and attach little importance to students' interests. That brings about the situation when both students and teachers are not ready to trust each other to the extent that they can become agents of change in transforming education.

Keywords: pedagogy, Pedeutology, teacher, student, communication, education

Школа - один з перших соціальних інститутів поза сім'єю, з яким дитина стикається в повсякденному житті. Реальність, що надзвичайно динамічно розвивається, громадянське та інформаційне суспільство формулюють нові очікування, ставлять нові виклики, які багато в чому, і, можливо, в першу чергу, стосуються виховання нових поколінь людей, озброєних здатністю справлятися з такою складною реальністю. На ці виклики на початковому етапі мають відповідати добре підготовлені вчителі. Це передусім виклики для сучасної педології, для добре підготовлених педагогів, для освітніх лідерів.

У статті представлено результати опитування польських ліцеїстів щодо того, якими рисами особистості повинен володіти ідеальний вчитель; як вчитель ставиться до думки учня; як часто вчителі розмовляють з учнями про їхні інтереси. Отримані результати свідчать про певні розбіжності в розумінні суспільством ролі вчителя та місця вчителя і учня в ньому. Учні бачать свого ідеального вчителя як сукупність позитивних рис характеру, що навряд чи можливо в реальних умовах. Коли учні говорять про існуючу ситуацію, вони демонструють, що вчителі схильні недооцінювати їхню точку зору і не надають великого значення інтересам учнів.

Ключові слова: педагогіка, педевтологія, вчитель, учень, комунікація, освіта

Introduction

The modern world is changing; therefore, Polish school teachers and students are also subject to change. They are expected to be change agents, specialists in educational methods, experts in what they teach, people sensitive to the needs of their pupils and the local environment, and of course creative and available. Positive teacher-student relations require not only professional knowledge of the principles and rules of interpersonal communication, but the ability to use them in teaching practice.

Pedeutology - a science and sub-discipline of pedagogy

The personality of the teacher, his/her predispositions, paths of professional advancement, the need to constantly expand his/her own knowledge is studied by one of the sub-disciplines of pedagogy - pedeutology. This science began to develop at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The first work shedding new light on previous research on education was the dissertation 'On the Soul of Teaching' by Jan Władysław Dawid, written in 1912 (Dawid, 1927). The focus of interest was the personality of both the student and the teacher. This stage places these two subjects in a specific teaching situation and examines the ways in which the teacher interacts and the student reacts. It is the closest to the teaching and didactic interaction process observed today.

Thus, pedeutology as a science covers the following thematic scopes: the teacher as a separate entity; the teacher as a person assigned to a specific school at a specific time; the teacher in a historical perspective; the teacher in contemporary education, subjected to various stimuli, numerous messages coming from the social space. Nowadays, pedeutology invariably analyses the personality of the teacher, making them the subject of the



pedagogical discipline, creating a philosophy of the teacher and the teaching profession, expresses views and thoughts related to them. This science penetrates the scope of knowledge about the teacher much wider than original studies, by determining the scope of research and the method, which is "a function of the problem and the ontic properties of the object of research" (Seredyńska, 2012).

Teacher-student interactions

In the teaching and education process, teacher and pupil are in a state of interaction, that is, they interact with each other. For example, the teacher asks for quiet behaviour and the pupils stop talking. The interaction between teacher and pupils can be looked at from different points of view, it can be seen as an exchange of rewards and punishments. A reward for a pupil can be praise, a good mark, a punishment – a reprimand, a failing mark. For the teacher, the reward can be the satisfaction of achieving the intended goals in the lesson, the interest of the pupils in the lesson, the punishment – talk and lack of discipline. According to Thibault-Kelly's theory: the greater the rewards and the lesser the punishment achieved by the interaction partners, the more durable and stronger the relationship between them. Researchers in the field of teacher-student interaction find particularly large quantitative differences in its initiation (Zaborowski, 1989).

According to Thibaut and Kelley (1959), human interactions are selective in nature, by which two different things can be meant:

1. in the presence of certain people we always behave in a certain way
2. we choose a certain person as our interaction partner (if we are not dependent on other circumstances, e.g. coercion).

In the school situation this manifests itself as follows, a teacher generally punishes a particular student, or in a certain class a particular teacher gets into trouble with students who, in his/her presence, often misbehave, shout, make malicious comments towards him/her, etc. In the process of interaction, we incur costs. Costs include our effort (physical or mental), different kinds of tensions related to our needs not being met, goals not being achieved (Mika, 1998). In the course of classroom interaction, communication processes occur, with the teacher mostly in the role of sender and the students in the roles of recipients (Zaborowski, 1989).

Determinants of an effective relationship in the teacher-student communication

Communication, although it is an everyday and common activity, remains at the same time a process the effectiveness of which depends on many factors disturbing it (the so-called communication traps), and therefore also on the observance of rules and principles serving its efficient course" (Pilch, 2003). Fundamental to effective education is the nature of the teacher-student relationship. The realisation of effective teacher-student relationships in teaching situations, in the classroom, can be carried out in many different ways – provided the teacher demonstrates competence in psychological communication skills, consisting of effective verbal and non-verbal behaviour in teaching situations.

Interpersonal communication, with the aim of communicating effectively, stems from the roles played and, as a complex process, regardless of the role played by the teacher or student, consists of three essential interactional activities: listening, asking questions and giving feedback. Each of these activities is an indispensable element of effective communication in the process of communicating in the school space, which, to be effective, must be conditioned by the psychological skills of the teacher. The question can therefore be asked: when is the teacher-student relationship effective? Gordon (2007) considers that the teacher-student relationship is effective if it is characterised by the following factors:



- openness and transparency, allowing for directness and honesty in mutual contacts;
- mutual concern, where each knows that he or she is valued and noticed by the other;
- mutual dependence (which is the opposite of unilateral dependence);
- respect for each other's differences, allowing both parties to develop their intentions and individuality;
- mutual consideration of each other's needs, so that nothing happens at the expense of either party. The lack of an effective relationship in the communication process between teacher and student can result in a disorganised two-way communication process in the form of typical and revealing teacher disapproval reactions (Gordon, 2007).

The role of the teacher in changing times – new goals and tasks

Regardless of the great changes that have taken place in the area of the organisation and implementation of the educational system over decades, the role of the teacher has always remained rather unchanged and the expectations of the teacher have not diminished. He or she still plays a key role in the teaching and upbringing process. He or she is the 'guide' of this endeavour. However, the position of the teacher in terms of quality has changed rapidly. It is now accepted that the most important goal of the educational process is to prepare its participants to be independent in the acquisition of knowledge throughout life, as well as to motivate self-improvement, the development of one's own interests and to provide the right foundation that creates the possibility for these processes to occur (Żegnalek, 2005).

Today, the modern teacher-educator is not expected to be the only source of knowledge for pupils, nor to impose ready-made schemes of behaviour, too rigid requirements, too much control. Instead, he or she is expected to prepare his or her pupils to choose freely, to be capable, to seek their own path in life rich in important values. In other words, to have the capacity to accept and understand the current education. An analysis of the current educational system shows that the role of the teacher in this process has changed extremely significantly. It is undoubtedly much more difficult than before. He or she cannot force students to fulfil the tasks of modern education (Czarnecki et al., 2023).

Instead, he or she should motivate and inspire them, help them develop their cognitive interests, provide appropriate conditions for this, support his or her pupils in achieving their goals. Nowadays, the teacher should not play the leading role in the didactic and educational process, but, with appropriate distancing, remain in the background as an organiser, coordinator and manager of this process. It can therefore be said that the function of the teacher has changed qualitatively compared to earlier years. It is now expected that the teacher should, in a sense, be the architect of the students' knowledge. This means that he or she is not only a good organiser providing the right conditions for learning, but also a strategist who, through design, defines and plans the path of knowledge acquisition for his or her pupils. These design activities must include all possible contexts that can affect the teaching and learning processes, both positively and negatively (Szott, 2020). Elżbieta Sałata (2005) emphasises that the modern teacher must be prepared reliably and comprehensively for his or her multifaceted role. The subjects of pedagogy and psychology are significant in this aspect. Consequently, there is a need for the teacher to master the knowledge constituting the theoretical basis for the optimisation of practical didactic and educational undertakings, in accordance with the adaptation to changing objective situations and conditions. Not only knowledge and intelligence, but also ingenuity and talent should



dominate in this activity.

Aim of the research

The aim of this paper is to provide information on the teacher-student relationship in pedagogical terms. Making the problem more specific, the following research questions can be posed:

1. what should be the personality traits of an ideal teacher?
2. what is the teacher's attitude to the student's opinion?
3. how often do student have conversations with teachers about the student's interests?

Research method and tools

The research was carried out in February/March 2023, and covered students of grades 1-2 of a lyceum (it corresponds to Years 9 and 10 of school education (ISCED 1+2)) in the Tczew district (Poland). Further in the article we will refer to them as Lyceum Grade 1 (LG1) and Lyceum Grade 2 (LG2) A total of 85 people were surveyed, including 34 girls, 51 boys. The study used the diagnostic survey method, using a survey questionnaire of our own design.

Results and Discussion

The respondents were first asked what qualities a modern teacher should have. Respondents answered that a teacher should possess positive traits only.

Table 1:

Percentage distribution of scores on teacher characteristics

Teacher's traits	LG1	LG2	LG1	LG2	Total 85 <100%>
	Females	Females	Males	Males	
Humorous	86,9	75	89,4	100	89,4
Understanding	86,9	20	63,2	34,8	51,8
Fair	34,8	30	63,2	26,1	37,7
Nice	69,6	60	68,4	43,5	60
Responsible	52,2	40	57,9	43,5	50,6
Communicative	69,6	50	68,4	34,8	48,2
Competent	60,9	10	47,4	34,8	38,8
Able to advise	43,5	10	47,4	17,4	29,4
Patient	17,4	25	52,6	34,8	31,8
Friendly	56,5	20	47,4	26,1	37,7

Source: own survey findings

As can be seen from the data in Table 1, most people (89.4%) state that their teacher should be humorous. This is particularly the opinion of 100% LG2 boys, while the fewest people (75%) are LG2 girls. More than half of the surveyed lyceum students (60%) declared that their teacher should be nice. Among them, LG1 girls are the most numerous (69.9%), while LG boys are the least numerous. Also, more than half of the surveyed lyceum students believe that their teacher should be understanding and responsible. The highest percentage of those who consider that their teacher should be understanding is in the group of LG1



girls, and the lowest in the group of LG2 girls (20%). The highest percentage of those who believe that their teacher should be responsible is found in the group of LG1 boys (57.9%) and the lowest in the group of LG2 girls (40%). Almost half of the young people surveyed (48.2%), believe that their teacher should be communicative.

Table 2.

Percentage distribution of results regarding students' own opinion – whether it counts for the teacher

Frequency range	LG1 Females	LG2 Females	LG1 Males	LG2 Males	Total 85 <100%>
Always	8,7	-	21	8,7	9,4
Often	30,4	20	47,4	17,4	28,3
Sometimes	52,2	35	10,5	17,4	29,4
Rarely	8,7	40	15,8	17,4	20
Never	-	5	5,3	39,1	12,9

Source: own survey findings

Also, respondents were asked to answer the question what is the teacher's attitude to the student's opinion? This question tells the story of whether the teacher takes into account the statements of his/her pupils. Unfortunately, this is not the case, teachers often do not take the students' statements, their opinions seriously. The ideal teacher should respect the students' opinion, listen and listen again to what the students have to say.

As can be seen from Table 2, the largest number of people (29.4%) answered 'sometimes'. Among them, the highest number is (52.2%) LG1 girls and the lowest (17.4%) LG2 boys. 28.3% of the respondents declared that the teacher, often counts with the opinion of the student. The largest group in this respect (47.4%) are LG1 boys and the smallest (17.4%) are also boys, but LG2. 20% of girls and boys indicated the answer 'rarely'. Within this group, the largest number of LG2 girls (40%) gave such an answer, while the smallest number (8.7%) were also girls, but LG1. 12.9% said that the teacher 'almost never' takes into account the opinion of a student. Among them, the highest number of boys is from LG1 (39.1%).

The next question of the survey is about the teacher talking to the student about the student's interests. By talking to the student about his/her interests, the teacher learns many interesting things about his/her pupil. Teacher-student interactions improve.

As can be seen from the data in Table 3, the largest number of respondents (35.3%) answered 'almost never'. Among them, the largest number of respondents are LG 2 boys (60.9%), and the smallest number are also boys, but LG1 (15.8%). Almost a quarter of the respondents (24.7%) are of the opinion that the teacher rarely talks to the student about his/her interests. The highest number in this group is LG1 girls (43.5%), while the lowest number is among LG2 girls (10%). 16.5% declared that the teacher often talks to the student about their interests. The largest group in this respect is made up of LG1 boys (31.6%), while the smallest group is made up of LG1 girls (8.7%). 14.1% of respondents indicated the answer 'sometimes'.



Table 3.

Percentage distribution of results regarding teacher-student conversation about students' interests

Frequency range	LG1 Females	LG2 Females	LG1 Males	LG2 Males	Total 85 <100%>
Always	13,1	5	10,5	8,7	9,4
Often	8,7	15	31,6	13,1	16,5
Sometimes	17,4	25	15,8	-	14,1
Rarely	43,5	10	26,3	17,4	24,7
Never	17,4	45	15,8	60,9	35,3

Source: own survey findings

Conclusions

The survey shows some points of concern that are based on changing the focus of interpersonal communication between the teacher and the student. The students see their ideal teacher as a combination of positive traits of character which is hardly possible in real life conditions. When students speak about the existing situation, they demonstrate that the teachers tend to underestimate their point of view and attach little importance to students' interests. That brings about the situation when both students and teachers are not ready to trust each other to the extent that they can become agents of change in transforming education.

The role of the teacher in the modern school is above all to help shape the students' own autonomous educational and life plans. The teacher should be a signpost, a counsellor, a partner in the search for values and the development of the student's skills. The teacher's task is as much to teach as to educate. However, it is necessary to bear in mind those aspects of the pupil-teacher relationship that are aimed at shaping the personality, educating and teaching the child how to use the knowledge acquired in practice. The basis of the teacher's actions towards the pupil, is always a certain system of beliefs about the nature of the pupil and his/her development.

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