СЕКЦІЯ 4
СПЕЦІАЛЬНІ ТА ГАЛУЗЕВІ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ

ARTISTIC GIFTS DIAGNOSIS OF EARLY EDUCATION STUDENTS IN POLAND, SLOVENIA, SLOVAKIA AND UKRAINE

ДІАГНОСТИКА ХУДОЖНІХ ТАЛАНТІВ УЧНІВ МОЛОДШОГО ВІКУ У ПОЛЬЩІ, СЛОВЕНІЇ, СЛОВАЧЧИНІ ТА УКРАЇНІ

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The aim of the article is to present the conclusions of an international comparative study on recognition of artistic gifts of students in early school age. The research was carried out under the project *Science-Art-Education*. *Development and popularization of an innovative model of diagnosis, care and work with an artistically gifted pupil*. The project has been financed from the funds of the *Małopolskie Regional Operational Programme and it realises action 8.2. Building the position of Małopolska in European co-operation networks*. The project was implemented in Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University (AFM KU) in Poland in 2010–2013 by an interdisciplinary team of researchers, educational practitioners and students[1]. At various stages, more than 50 people attended in team activities. The result of their work was *Model of diagnosis, methods, forms of work and care of an artistically gifted pupil*. The report of the project includes a description of the model and the results of evaluation (www.artisticallygifted.eu/). Four educational films were attached, showing support for the development of artistic gifts of early school age students in Slovenia, Slovakia and Ukraine, and the implications for primary education in Poland. The report is the result of theoretical analysis and educational practices, realized by 15 authors. It became the inspiration for actions in the field of teacher training and development in AFM KU and to cooperate with a group of schools and teachers in the area of implementation of a new programme on support for the artistic gifts of students. Referring to Mönks and Pflüger [3] it was assumed that the **support for gifted students** includes the **diagnosis processes** and the use of appropriate **incentives** (methods of upbringing, care and teaching).

The selection of countries: Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine was intentional because they have the different systems of gifted students' identification and education (elite, integrating and mixed). These systems were shaped as the result of national policies for education, established educational practices, as well as the reception of theoretical knowledge and the research results in the field of talents. The choice of contrasting countries allowed to understand the differences and similarities in the approach to education of gifted persons.

Comparative analysis covered the following areas:

– procedures, methods, as well as diagnosis tools for talents and artistic gifts of students in younger school age;

– care of gifted children; areas and ways of extracurricular and after-school support;

– art programs in primary education;

– preparation of teachers to teach arts in early childhood education;

[1] It has been elaborated based on results of the research conducted in our partner countries: Slovakia (Catholic University in Ružomberok), Slovenia (Univerza na Primorskem), Ukraine (High school at the Donetsk National University) and with participation of the national partner: Aleksander Kamiński Polish Informal Education Association based in Krakyw.

– forms and methods of work with children at art classes in order to disclose and develop their predispositions towards art.

The subject of further analysis will be a problem of artistic gifts diagnosis.

The need to develop artistic gifts is justified in the literature mainly by the influence of art activity on intellectual, emotional and social development, as well as imagination and creativity of children [8][2]. The school practice and the research proves that art education is marginalized[3]. Ken Robinson, an international expert in the field of creativity and artistic education; the author of the famous report *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, as a result of penetrating analysis of cultural and economic changes, argues that the role of arts in education will increase. Classical and academic competencies, as well as scientific degrees are taking secondary priority to other human resources associated with creativity, talents and innovation (2010). In recent years it is one of the most important statements in matter of raising the rank of art in education systems.

In recent years, early school education in Poland has undergone the structural and program changes. They are the result of lowering the age of school start (children aged 6), realization of the new core curriculum, as well as specialized educational projects aimed at improving the quality of education.

The changes are also taking place in the area of work with the gifted. They are caused by the new law regulations and the system project „Development and implementation of a comprehensive system of work with a gifted student" realized by the Centre for Education Development, operating at the Ministry of Education. It was assumed the increase the efficiency of developmental support through early identification of talents and needs of a student, and then assistance in his or her immediate environment. For this purpose teachers, educators and specialists in kindergartens, schools and other educational institutions were obliged to carry out a comprehensive multidisciplinary assessment of the level of student's functioning: recognition of interests, gifts and needs, as well as planning the further work. To accomplish these tasks, teams for planning and coordination of psychological and pedagogical assistance were created in schools. Psychological and pedagogical help for gifted students can be organized in the form of additional extracurricular activities to develop talents, for small groups, using active methods of work. Such classes are conducted by teachers and specialists with appropriate qualifications. The weakest link in the created system of support for gifted students is a diagnosis of talents.

Until recently teachers in Poland hale had no access to standardized diagnostic tools. Common recognition of students' predispositions in the school is evaluated as not very accurate. The main areas of diagnostic competencies of teachers relate to didactics (assimilating the content of education), social dysfunctions and behavioral disorders [2]. This is also due to some deficits in training teachers to work with gifted students. The problem of teaching diagnosis is associated with the lack of tools and theoretical knowledge necessary to interpret the results.

Searching the tools to identify talents, one should start with a clear and realistic definition of diagnosis and a definition of gifts and then indicate what are the purposes of the identification and what actions can or will be taken towards a selected group of children. It is worth to take into consideration the phaseness of the diagnosis, which means that the first stage of the talents selection should cover as the largest group of students (Revolving Doors Method developed by Joseph Renzulli in SEM model).

The category of diagnosis, which has been the subject of conducted comparative and design analysis, is an ordering and typological diagnosis [9]. It allows to assign it to a general type on the basis of recognition of individual characteristics of person (subject, object, etc.). It enables to specify the occurrence of a certain characteristic and the degree of its severity. It has particular application in education: it allows to go beyond the dichotomous classification of humans (eg. gifted – ungifted). In light of the above, recognizing of artistic gifts means calling a student as *artistically gifted*.

Referring to Franz J. Mönks it was considered that "gifts are the potential of the

[2] The creations of contemporary art show that traditionally recognized the unity of cultural and cognitive practices is not obvious. Wolfgang Welsch and Jean-Fransois Lyotard argue that creative imagination and cognitive activity are independent.

[3] The paradox is that in times when popular culture was dominated by a visual message, and a knowledge of art is required from its participants and recipients, simultaneously art classes were significantly limited in education programs.

individual to obtain high or outstanding achievements in one or more areas" [3, p. 21]. Relying on Sidney Marland it was accepted the psychopedagogic definition of gifted students: they are "children who demonstrate capabilities of advanced achievements in the intellectual, creative and artistic field, in terms of leadership competence and in individual school subjects and which, in order to fully develop these opportunities, require services or activities not provided by a standard school" (Eby, Smutny; 1998, p. 15).

Researchers agree that there is no single criterion for selecting gifted children. Both in scientific theories as in experiences of practitioners it has been pointed the collections of some characteristics, none of which does not prejudge any gifts and talents, and interactions become significant. Each of these characteristics requires a different type of talented student's diagnosis. In the models of talents identification, authors usually take into account the **intellectual, creative and special gifts**, as well as **motivation** (np. Mönks, Renzulli, Popek). In the models of artistic talents structure (which are a kind of special abilities), generally three areas of features have been indicated: sensorimotor, artistic intelligence, intellectual creative abilities and personality variables [6]. These groups of variables may be subject to diagnosis. The source of data is the observation of children, the analysis of products, interviews and standardized tests.

Many observable symptoms of students' talents in younger school classes are sometimes the result of parental involvement in their children's homework and learning. School successes are therefore the result of hard work of a child and the support of his or her parents. Only penetrating reflection will let to distinguish "a gifted student" from "a model student". There are smaller problems with the identification of sporting and musical talents, bigger problems are in such cases when a student operates symbols. With student's age, criteria of assessment his or her behavior, confirming talents and gifts, have been changing. In younger classes, good grades and diligence are "sufficient". In upper classes, competitions gradually appear – artistic, subjects, the Olympics and after-school achievements.

Support for Polish pedagogues and teachers is to provide them psychological tests to assess intellectual and creative gifts. Commission for Psychological Tests of Polish Psychological Association prepared, for different groups of users, new rules of access to standardized psychological tools that are valid from 1 January 2013[4]. Among the available tools, essential for the recognition of gifts and talents of younger school age children are:

– The test *Diagnosis of Intellectual Capabilities* (in Polish: *Diagnoza Mozliwosci Intelektualnych-2M; DMI-2M*) by Anna Matczak. The questionnaire is designed to evaluate the overall mental level of children aged 6–10 and to the diagnosis of the level of development of concrete operations, as an essential premise of predicting school achievements or detecting the causes of learning difficulties.

– *The Test for Creative Thinking – Drawing Production* (*TCT-DP*) by Klaus K. Urban and Hans G. Jellen. The tool can be used including the individual diagnosis as an enrichment of the intellect diagnosis and prognosis of successes in activities requiring creative functioning. It is designed for children (from 5 years old), youth and adults (standards were developed only to the older age groups).

Using the above two tests by teachers is conditioned on the completion of the psychometrics course and trainings in a specific test (or a group of similar tests).

For the need of talents diagnosis of younger school age children, one more tool is also recommended. It is a new standardized tool developed in the AFM KU – *The Scale of Creative Attitudes versus Generic* (In Polish: *Skala Postaw Tworczych versus Odtworczych – SPTO*) – version for classes I-III in elementary school by Katarzyna Krason (MEN, Krakow 2011). The scale is used for the diagnosis of student creative attitude by a teacher. With the repetition of the measurement it can be used to assess the dynamics of a creative attitude shaping. This tool has an open license of use.

Taking into consideration the definition of artistic gifts and few Polish tools for recognizing artistic talents of students, which are still available in a limited scope, there have been analyzed experiences of partner countries: Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine in this field (Science-Arts-Education, 2013).

[4] http://www.practest.com.pl/kategoryzacja-testow (access 14/12/2012).

In Slovenia and Ukraine, the recognition of artistic gifts of students takes place primarily in schools and is the responsibility of teachers. In Slovenia, teachers have a standardized scale OLNAD07. Diagnosis and work with the gifted is a task of the mainstream school. Special enriching programmes are offered for gifted students. In Ukraine, teachers use a variety of popular non-standardized and standardized tools. Support for gifted students is carried out in the general education system (assisted by a wide range of extracurricular and after-school activities) or in a system of special schools designed for the talented. In the Slovak school system, model of external diagnosis has been adopted – the recognition of gifts takes place mainly in the psychological and pedagogical counseling centers. There are psychological studies concerning intelligence, creativity and social skills. Intellectually gifted children may be directed to the school for gifted students. The tasks in support of artistic gifts in Slovakia are implemented by extracurricular education establishments. In mainstream schools teachers use external measurements of students' predispositions.

The starting point for *Science-Arts-Education* was to draw attention to the lack of support in the educational process of artistic gifts, including deficits in recognizing of talents, as well as developing innovations. Analysis of the experience of the partner countries allowed to recommend the following diagnostic tools, used by teachers in Slovenia and Ukraine, to Polish early education teachers:

– **Scales of Pupils Talent OLNAD07** used in the school diagnosis by teachers in Slovenia in relation to students from grade 4 of primary school. The tool has been designed to recognize ten (in one version even 11) different areas of giftedness, including the artistic ones. In total, the questionnaire includes 80 categories of behavior, eight for each type of talent. The basis of assessment is a 7-stage scale. A student is identified as gifted, if he or she obtains 90% of the possible points in an area of the test OLNAD07. There is no one single model of working with artistic talents. It is assumed the individualized educational processes (motivating) and didactic (methodologies of teaching), depending on the area of talent recognized in the case of a student and his or her personal characteristics.

– **Talent Map** was developed by Aleksander I. Savenkov based on the concept by R. DeHaan and J. Kough. This technique is dedicated for parents and teachers. The tool can be used to estimate the potential of children aged 5 to 10 years. It allows to assess the following predispositions: intellectual, creative, academic (scientific), musical, literary, artistic, technical, leadership and sporting. It allows to prepare a graphic profile of the student's talents.

– Non-verbal test of creative thinking **Unconventional** Use developed by Elena N. Scheblanova and Irina S. Avierina was designed to test students from 10–11 years to 17–18 years. The test contains two tasks concerning the search for various and unusual ways of using items: a newspaper and a wooden ruler. The categorization of responses is based on the very detailed key. The overall assessment of the level of development of the individual's creative gifts is prepared on the basis of the analysis of four detailed indicators: fluency, flexibility, originality and productivity of thinking. A particular advantage of this tool is associated with the fact that – thanks to the standards and indicators – a teacher can objectively assess the student's creative potential. In the case of most of this type of teachers' tests, the reference point for the child's results are only the results of his or her peers in the class.

In none of the visited countries, teachers do not have the tools to analyze the artworks of children. Therefore there was a need to write **a guide for analysis of children's drawings** that would allow teachers to objectify their ratings of products. For this purpose, the conceptions of Polish psychologists of artistic talents were used – Stefan Szuman and Stanisław Popek. Szuman writes as follows: "It is customary to evaluate child's works of drawing or painting of the first passing glance, without further comments and justifications". The opposite of such a subjective evaluation is factual assessment (objective), regarding the data that can be determined and controlled, such as a theme of the work, graphic shape of items and composition of the work [8, p. 312–357]. On the other hand, according to Popek, the paradigm of overall analysis of the art products includes their performing content, formal content and creative value. The author included the detailed categories of artwork analysis in the original model of layered structure of the artwork

[6, p. 34–35]. These categories were considered useful for teachers to identify children's artistic talents, made on the basis of analysis of the art products [5].

Pedagogy students during their studies in AFM KU are acquainted with these tools and learn their practical application. However, a problem is the lack of Polish standardization for these tools. Therefore at this stage, the diagnosis remains informal teacher diagnosis. Whereas, it is of great importance for the organization of own teacher's work with gifted children.

Changes in the area of work with gifted students have brought Poland closer to Slovenian model: good law regulations, early identification, inclusivity, teachers' collaboration with specialists and individual programs supporting the talented.

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