in pupils attitudes which will be helpful in their further individual and social development, viz. honesty, reliability, responsibility, perseverance, self-esteem, regard for other people, cognitive interest, creativity, entrepreneurship, good manners, readiness for participation in culture, taking initiatives and group work. If a young man has acquired the aforesaid attributes, this should promote the development of social capital and democratic attitudes

Be also underlined that platform changes commence the expected change to educational practice, viz. a transformation of the teacher work and a change to the quality of everyday teachers' activities. (J. Bałachowicz, 2009). A departure from instrumental education in favor of subjective, constructivist education based upon the cooperation entails many assiduities and much work from teachers themselves. Only when teachers have overcome 'past time barriers' and have assimilated a new style of educational operations, will it be possible to evaluate the adopted guideline of supporting young people in mastering key competencies.

В и к о р и с т а н а   л і т е р а т у р а :

1. *Bałachowicz J.* Style działań edukacyjnych nauczycieli klas początkowych. Między uprzedmiotowieniem a podmiotowością. Wydawnictwo WSP TWP, Warszawa 2009.
2. *Bruner J.* The Culture of Education. Harvard University Press, Cambridge - Massachusetts – London 1996.
3. *Delors J.* Edukacja : jest w niej ukryty skarb. Stowarzyszenie Oświatowców Polskich, Warszawa 1998.
4. *Elias N.* Społeczeństwo jednostek. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2008.
5. *Giddens A.* Nowoczesność i tożsamość. "Ja" i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności. Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2001.
6. *J-C Kaufmann.* Ego. Socjologia jednostki. Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2004.
7. Kompetencje kluczowe. Realizacja koncepcji na poziomie szkolnictwa obowiązkowego. Eurydice, Bruksela 2002, Wyd. polskie : Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji, Warszawa 2005.
8. *Silcock P.* New Progressivism. Farmer Press, Londyn 1999.
9. *Wragg E. C.* Trzy wymiary programu. WSiP, Warszawa 1999.

Pawlak Bożena
Institute of Pre-School and School Pedagogy
Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im KEN w Krakowie

PARTICIPATION OF PUPILS FROM GRADES 1–3 IN GROUP WORK – REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS BASED UPON OBSERVATIONS

Each of us participates – during his/her life – in a large number of different groups. Carol K. Oyster even claims that we 'are born to live in group, and we exist in various groups until we die".

A specific feature of the present time is the necessity of frequent participation in group actions with concurrent performance of different tasks. According to D. Gołębniak : 'on one's own it is impossible to perform anything which results from working together ". It happens so because while working with other people, we have an opportunity to avail ourselves of synergy, viz. intensified group energy, which favors the accumulation of involvement and invention. R. Fisher underlines that 'no other creature but Man has achieved that much, since he managed to combine flexibility and brilliance of individuals with the productivity of joint efforts".

Acting in group will also favor learning with others, which takes place through discussions, problem solving, performing tasks and producing various works. J. Uszyńska-Jarmoc writes : 'A multitude of opinions teaches one to make both agreements and to find contrasts, tolerance and responsibility for one's own viewpoint, cooperation's and collaboration'.

So that the functioning of each individual within a group may be effective, indispensable is the skill of cooperating whose molding is recommended to be started as early as in the early stages of school education of children. Undoubtedly, such a process will be favored by those teachers who offer many opportunities to play and work in small groups. Recently, the values arising from such educational situations have been exposed in a large number of publications. According to J.A. Reid, P. Forrestal, J. Cook, small groups give pupils a chance of making the best use of the time devoted to class learning; instead, K. Rau and E. Ziętkiewicz can notice in them a possibility of counteracting the isolation of some pupils and overcoming shyness. In turn, D. Klus-Stańska proves that 'abandoning the transmission message in favor of the transaction message (…) is possible only when collective forms of work at lessons are radically limited, and the work in small groups is not organized incidentally or for the sake of attraction, but is actually the style of everyday activities". It is also worth underlining that such situations give pupils some valuable opportunities to observe each other, to make friends and eventually, to learn not only together, but what is important – one from another.

Today, as an important development mechanism is also acknowledged socio-cognitive conflicts due to which we can also broaden and change our knowledge. In the course of group actions, while being exposed to opinions and/or solutions different from ours – we are confirmed in our own ideas, we may revise them or look for quite new solutions when assisted by other people. As R. Michalak has it : 'The individual is motivated to restructure their knowledge, when they can meet experience contradictory to their own expectations".

That is why I would like to dedicate the considerations to come thereafter to how early scholars work in group, which is the outcome of my explorations consisting, among other things, of theoretical studies, surveying teachers and pupils, direct observations of classes held in grades 1-2 as well as of a three year experimental trial in a selected class team. But I will herein first of all focus my attention upon reflections and remarks from my observations.

In my research I managed to see a large number of pupils from grades 1-3, while performing the entrusted assignments in group, and the first conclusion drawn by might be formulated as follows : children who start school education have various levels of social maturity and communication skills, which will mean a diversification of their stage of readiness to assume group cooperation.

It has been known for a long time that group work entails many skills which must include: task sharing, listening to others, waiting for having one's say or action, giving in to other people, efficient expression of one's thoughts and ideas, supporting one's arguments, asking questions, decision making etc. It is rather obvious that those skills are not so simple (each of us must be able to enumerate some adults deprived of such skills), and it would be illogical to demand them from pupils aged 6-7. Nevertheless, those are also skills developed in a child by its parents and/or grandparents – at its home, by nurse school teachers and minders - in nursery schools, and eventually by school teachers - at schools. The resulting outcomes are different (for being dependent on many factors); hence, in class teams we meet children who make earlier successful attempts of cooperation, kids who do it later, and then there are also such children who may never cooperate with others in a satisfactory way, which, of course, will not exempt their teachers from their duties of creating situations that favor cooperation. The outlined requirements shall be certainly supported by a good knowledge of a children's team and an accurate diagnosis of readiness of each pupil to assume group activities, and then to utilize such knowledge at the animation of successive group activities of our pupils. At this place it would be advisable to make some reference to the ideas of J Piaget who claimed that in the case of children their reciprocal exchange of thoughts or viewpoints plays an important role in reducing their egoism and constitutes a crucial factor of cognitive development. If such a conception should be accepted, we might appeal as follows – we should not underline the absence of social and communicative skills; let us rather focus on potential advantages resulting from that children make further attempts to cooperate with each other.

While observing the children's activities in groups, I noticed as well that the first experience of group task performance is often accompanied by difficult situations. What is interesting, such an

opinion is attributed thereto by both pupils and their teachers.

When a group of children should perform a task together, then it happens that, for example: this girl will not sit by the other; this boy has not taken his own, but some else's chair, and the chair holder demands the chair back; meanwhile, another colleague persists in joining this, not that team today; at the beginning, it is not known who in the group will put jumbled sentences together, and when finally someone has been successful, then the other group members feel disappointed since nothing has been left for him/her to put together; eventually, when the first group reports that the task has been completed, another group is still starting their job etc.

The outlined context makes me convinced that getting pupils to be involved in group work demands time, well thought out and gradually scheduled introductory activities, regularity, patience, vast knowledge of methodology and factual knowledge of the teacher who animates any cooperation. Unfortunately, on several occasions I could become convinced that the said opinion is rather not commonly shared, and surely is not transformed into practical actions; behold, teachers are often rash in offering children group tasks, not only without having previously through over their appropriateness and rational, but also without any phased and hierarchized scheduling of their execution. Instead, any actions aimed at having children effectively involved in cooperation should, in my opinion, constitute a process, and hence, be a well thought out, reasonable whole.

While doing my investigations I also discerned that a large member of first-graders cannot become involved in working in a group of 3 or 4 (for being too complex for them), but can do quite well in a dyad, viz. when coupled.

Working in a dyad or a group of three is in most cases associated with a controversy /in a pair, each person has only one person opposite them; instead, in a group of three, apart from a few mates, we have to regard as well the relations between them – this is the crucial argument in support of differentiating the work in dyads and small groups/ if the dyad is a group or a group is only from a group of three onwards. However, as far as I am concerned, here the most important seems the appreciation of the possibility of using each of the working variants said as need be. I believe that working in a dyad is easier for children , because an agreement is to be reached with one person, only; therefore, I have to win over one person only to my ideas or agree with one colleague; in a dyad , the time of waiting for one's turn to have their say out and to work is shorter than in an group of three; the activities constituting a task are faster shared between the two, etc. In turn, in a small group, e.g., of three, each element mentioned above becomes more complex. For instance, if someone has been won over to my idea, it need not mean its implementation; of importance is, though, that the third group member has to agree, too; if – in case of a controversy between my two group mates – I should agree with one of them, it will automatically mean that I refuse the other one's proposal. Also the respective assignments - while performing a task - will entail the determination of the three constituents, which the teacher should notice as early as while designing a task for the group of three said. The outlined context illustrates how many aspects of group work may be difficult to children, and how many elements are to be monitored by a teacher who involves first – third-graders in group work.

Here, we should also make some references to the concept of B. Badegruber, according to which the first stage of involving pupils in work in small groups is exactly working in pairs, especially if designed in a few stages following each other, viz. : work in pairs under full control, under partial control and open. The author suggests that at the very beginning the activities of children's pairs be managed by the teacher, and that very accurately; later on, those actions be accompanied by fewer and fewer detailed instructions until the children have reached the readiness to perform the assigned task by themselves.

An in-depth analysis of children working in groups has allowed me to notice as well certain behavioral patterns acknowledged typical of various social roles (e.g. leader's, plain Jane's, clown's etc.).

K. Jedliński claims that the roles assumed in a team are the resultant of the personality of the team mates and the group situation. They are assumed on various levels of awareness, but

frequently – quite in unawareness. They are usually better noticeable to other spectators than to the role player themselves. In the case of group work of first - to third-graders, I did not met any situation in which roles were labeled, differentiated or performed intentionally. However, I had many opportunities to observe children – who on their on initiative - started managing the team's work by assigning assignments to their colleagues (boys and girls), taking unruly group mates to task or urging the group mates to act when the time once assigned was running out. I also would see some pupils who – in the entire time assigned for a group task – were in the shadow of other persons, did not speak a word and performed only the assignments if clearly indicated to them. Interesting objects of observation were also those who were unwilling to join any group and withdrew from group activities if only their idea or opinion was not approved by the group. Therefore, I observed 'plain Janes' , subject to the instructions from 'leaders' and 'rebels' looking for a 'scapegoat' to pin the blame on in case of a split-up or failing to perform a task caused by the lack of one's own involvement.

As C. K. Oyster has it : 'Life in the social dimension of group takes place due to roles assumed by the group mates; such roles are not only connected with having performed a task, but are also focused on emotions, feelings and interrelations". Hence, it is also worth noticing that if teachers might recognize preferences of the respective pupils in the field of assuming certain roles quite easily, this would be likely to mean a chance of intentional designing and early initiation of actions aimed at monitoring and at the same time at a modification of roles acknowledged negative.

It also seems that if a teacher can pick up the aforesaid preferences of their pupils, and thus, if they can appropriately arrange small groups, this would also improve a chance of good in-group cooperation. As . C. K. Oyster has it, before the roles and interrelations within a group have been established and ordered, no group of people will work productively and efficiently as they could if the cooperating persons operate in a clear and orderly way. Of course,in the case of children's activities, it is incumbent on teachers to analyze the outlined aspects of cooperation; as far as teachers are concerned, their work in this field should be as clear as the necessity of looking for ideas of how to introduce those issues to pupils . Now, I will try to describe one of such ideas.

For me, an outcome of interest of my research is also the conviction that pupils being accustomed to playing various roles in the group activities (for example, task manager, commentator, time keeper etc) are better in pursuing the targets set before them.

The idea of 'group function' is not commonly used. In this context Jerzy Szmagalski utilizes the concept of the role by differentiating formal from informal roles. Formal roles are those which are determined by the group or imposed from outside, have got their own games and executory instructions. Instead, informal roles are molded, as the author has it, in the interrelations between group mates and are used to meet such expectations which cannot be offered by formal roles.

I use the idea of group function when I mean accurately determined sets of tasks and activities which are important in the optimization of group activities, and which can be separated from each other and attributed to the respective members of a small group. I believe that the following functions may be acknowledged as useful to first- to third-graders working collectively :

Task manager : he/she makes group members assemble in a given place, reads out the task instruction, manages the task sharing and performance, tries to solve problems if any;

Secretary – he/she writes down the ideas proposed within the group aimed at solving a problem, will drawn up the final report and supervise records made by all member mates

Reporter : in the name of the group, he/she reports on the course and outcome of work, answers questions addressed to the group, if any

Warehouseman – provides materials indispensable for the task execution – he/she collects them from the teacher or appropriate lockers, then orders them when the task has been completed, puts them right during the activities scheduled; when the task has been completed, he/she puts back any unused materials , and supervises the cleaning .

Time-keeper – he/she knows how much time has been assigned to a task, supervises a

reasonable time-management aimed at the respective activities, monitors the flow of time and keeps the group informed of it;

Information provider – he/she takes an instruction from the teacher; communicates with the teacher in the name of the group in case of any doubts or questions; if needed, he/she looks up information demanded by the group in appropriate dictionaries\ and books

The utilization of the functions in group work with participation of first-to-third-graders will entail a reasonable supervision from the teacher. He/she, who knows their pupils, should initially assign them tasks in conformity with individual predispositions of children (the task manager's post will be held first by one who has a leader's personality; afterwards, when the other pupils have already become acquainted with such predispositions and gained the necessary experience to hold such a function, they shall be assigned them even against their will (a plain Jane will also once become a task manager).

It is easy to notice that my hitherto observations have been chiefly focused upon the social dimension of the group's functioning; but it is commonly known that the first dimension is also accompanied by the second one, viz. task dimension. The submitted set of remarks and conclusions is not accidental, but it results from the fact that the social aspect of group activities (viz. interactions and relations) is most conspicuous at the initial stage of children's group functioning. Personality differences, problems in communication and conflicts – those are to attract the attention of adults and to absorb children. Nevertheless, we must not yield to an illusion that group work in grades 1-3 favors the educational work, only.

I believe that the task dimension of functioning of first- to third-graders shall need a separate study; anyway, in the end I wish to notice that a specific character of collective works is such that a large number of activities take place without participation and out of control of those who arrange them, and the resulting effects – learning – happen to be out of awareness of the learners, either. Wygotski and J. Bruner prove that effective learning occurs in the social context while exchanging views, negotiating meanings or holding group discussions. Thus, it takes place everywhere provided that pupils have a chance of holding unhampered dialogues, making joint agreements on the strategy of action and of independent functioning, too".

В и к о р и с т а н а   л і т е р а т у р а :

1. Carol K. Oyster, Grupy. Psychologia społeczna, Poznań 2000, s. 22.
2. D. Gołebniak, Nauczanie i uczenie się w klasie, [w :] Pedagogika, cz.2, red, Z. Kwieciński, B. Śliwerski, Warszawa 2003, s. 183
3. R. Fisher, Uczymy, jak się uczyć, Warszawa 1999, s. 102
4. J. Uszyńska-Jarmoc, Rozwój dziecka a edukacja, [w :] Edukacja elementarna. Podstawy teoretyczne – wybrane zagadnienia, red. K. Lubomirska, Warszawa 2005, s. 64
5. J. A. Reid, P. Forrestal, J. Cook, Uczenie się w małych grupach w klasie, Warszawa 1996
6. K. Ray, E. Ziętkiewicz, Jak aktywizować uczniów? "Burza mózgów" i inne techniki w edukacji, Poznań 2000, s.25
7. D. Klus-Stańska, Edukacja elementarna a rozwój kompetencji poznawczych dzieci, [w :] Edukacja elementarna. Podstawy teoretyczne – wybrane zagadnienia, op. cit.. s. 28
8. R, Michalak, Konstruktywistyczna perspektywa założonego modelu edukacji elementarnej, [w :] Edukacja elementarna. Podstawy teoretyczne – wybrane zagadnienia, op.cit, s. 102.
9. More information on this matter - see : B. Pawlak, Praca grupowa w edukacji wczesnoszkolnej. Problemy – badania – rozwiązania praktyczne, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, Kraków 2009.
10. Cf. J. Piaget, Równoważenie struktur poznawczych : centralny problem rozwoju, Warszawa 1981
11. In a pair, each person has only one person opposite them; instead, in a group of three, apart from a few mates, we have to regard as well the relations between them – this is the crucial argument in support of differentiating the work in dyads and small groups.
12. B. Badegruber, Nauczanie otwarte w 28 krokach. Warszawa 1997
13. Trening interpersonalny, red. K. Jedliński, Warszawa 1997, s. 19

14. C. K. Oyster. , Grupy. Psychologia społeczna, op. cit. s.36

15. Por. C. K. Oyster, Grupy ... op. cit s. 35-36

16. J. Szmagalski, Przewodzenie małym grupom. Działanie grupowe. Warszawa 1998, s. 21

17. More about the funtions I wrote in the book entitled Praca grupowa w edukacji wczesnoszkolnej. Problemy – badania – rozwiązania praktyczne, op. cit

18. Podaję za : R, Michalak, Konstruktywistyczna perspektywa założonego modelu edukacji elementarnej, [w :] Edukacja elementarna. Podstawy teoretyczne – wybrane zagadnienia, op.cit, s.102

Jakubaszek Wanda
Institute of Educational Sciences
Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im KEN w Krakowie

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS IN POSTMODERN CULTURE

Through the centuries and in his civilization 'existence', Man has gone through a considerable metamorphosis whose today's picture seems to be most progressive and that in all aspects of Man's cultural existence. Each transformation has been conditioned by strong educational efforts made by societies for their own development. In European countries, the realization of the assumed educational policy was distinguished by the aspiration towards a higher importance of knowledge and education of the individual. Egalitarianism and universality of education commenced not only to constitute one of main civil rights in the 20th century, but at the same time they also started becoming a message for the present time. Those rights have been reflected in the postulates listed in the most significant educational documents worldwide, viz. reports on the state of education. Those documents determine the criteria for the education of young people in conjunction with the tasks of educational establishments in relation to personal development. They entail harmonious actions from a large number of formal and non-formal educational circles responsible for the formation of genuine humanity. In the leading Report for the 21st century education-Learning : the treasure within, compiled by an international panel of experts presided over by J. Delors [1], there are outlined the four pillars of personal development framework : to learn in order to know; to learn in order to act; to learn in order to live together and to learn in order to 'be', and they seem to constitute the credo of the whole of educational actions in Europe. Those actions are assumed to enable a multidimensional development of an individual–from cognitive development aimed at creating a thinking person, development of activities which determined one's becoming a homo creator, through social development which is significant for today's globalization trends in European countries, and eventually-to the spiritual and transcendent development in order to complement the hominization process. The postulates from the Report seem to advocate the need of abandoning the education of reconstructive, reactive, adaptive individuals who live only within the dimensions of their homelands. The primacy of technologies is noticeable, which means the necessity of building open societies, with a large measure of community nature and the entirety of cultural transformations, incl. flows of information on what is going on worldwide, with a simultaneous attempt to make references to that information and with a possibility of multiaspect reactions. A ubiquitous culture of postmodernism, typical of the 21st century, the so-called prefigurative culture as M. Mead labeled it, is aimed at transferring information, which is reflected in the construction of the information society that–according to J. Morbitzer-is 'a society permeated with technology as never before, and most dependent on it' [2]. This society begins to be predominated by young people who become authors not only of technical thoughts, but also of new forms of social life that have come to exist basing upon those thoughts and their wide implementation. At the same time noticeable is also the phenomenon of departing from human