



Reflection in the Integral Development of a Teacher. A Pedagogical Perspective

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to elicit the role of reflection in the integral development of a teacher seen from personalism perspective. The goal of the integral development is to achieve the complete unity of the teacher on the way of the integral upbringing, where the introception of values plays a great role. The research has the theoretical dimension, although it refers to the necessity of conducting the qualitative research in this field. The author uses the analysis as the core research method that draws the meaning of such methods as action research and the techniques of reflection that on one hand can foster the integral development of the teacher, on the other hand can be useful also in auto-ethnographical, biographical research. Concluding, the reflection can not be neglected in constructing educational curricula oriented towards the human integral development.

Keywords: teacher, reflection, integral development, value, biographical research

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Introduction

Most of the research studies focus on the theoretical and practical aspects of teacher development in the personal and professional domain. However, rarely the research is conducted in the area of teacher integral development seen from pedagogical perspective that takes into account its crucial factor - reflection. Both aspects need to be elaborated, especially in the contemporary challenges that the teacher education is to face up. These aspects converge with each other, so it's difficult to treat them separately. Such a kind of approach to the teacher education seems to be valid, so it requires coping with. Overview of this subject literature does not appear sufficient enough, so it can be worthy to present some samples of theoretical analysis justifying the validity of this thematic field. Although many changes within constructing the new curricula for teacher education and student education appear, they do not, in fact, pay attention to the increase in both educational subjects development. The question that comes to mind is – Why? The answer is not explicit and easy because of many complicated factors which affect the interior and exterior of education. One of them is to regard this question seriously not only from theoretical, but practical point of view which demands from educational policy workers openness even for revolutionary changes. Having analyzed many trends and tendencies in teacher education through ages in different perspectives of sciences that have built the fundamentals for education such as biology, medicine, philosophy, psychology, sociology etc., the author of this article decides to deal with the aspects of integral development of a person indicating the meaning of teacher integral development and the reflection affecting its positive trajectory. The analysis of these aspects can provide some basic suggestions of how to overcome some obstacles blocking the true educational development both of teachers and students. The basic theory that the subject matter is grounded is the theory of the human integral development by Stefan Kunowski, the great Polish pedagogue. The human integral development is achieved on the way of integral upbringing of a person, where the phenomenon of value introception performs a huge role. However, the author of this article is going to focus mainly on the key aspects of the integral development of a person – teacher and the reflection enhancing this development. Of course, they need to be elaborated in the area of theoretical and practical domains. The method used for presenting the core idea of the research is analysis referring partly to the qualitative research (action research) conducted by the author.

The integral development of a person – the gate to the teacher integral development

To depict the matters tied with the teacher integral development, it is a need to refer to the integral development of a person with outlining the reflection aspect. The whole idea of the topic is rooted in the personalism what implies the necessity to show understanding the notion of “person”. Thus, in the perspective of personalism the notion “person” is seen as a unity, whose individual acts of doing reveal the integrity of intellect, emotions, and will. These acts have a lot in common with experiences of

interior and exterior life of a person who is unique, who is featured with subjectivity (Rynio, 2004 p. 33), and ability to come into relationships with others. Through these relationships the person shows own dignity what distinguishes the human from other living creatures. What is more, the person also features with the morality and moral experience (Wierzbicki, 2016) and is able to designate the values according to the system and hierarchy that he/she beliefs and rationally can justify them, in the reference to self and nearby environment (Adamski, 2005). As a consequence the person should behave in a reasonable and wise way respecting the truth, justice, freedom, love, equality, solidarity, tolerance, etc., what indicates the need for deepening the conscience and consciousness fostering the human integral development, in which the integral development has a great contribution.

In this light, the author of the article is going to present the understanding the integral development from pedagogical point of view. S. Kunowski built his theory of the human integral development drawing own results of research from sciences covering anthropology, psychology, biology, sociology, and theology. For him, the human development is a complex, complicated process that lasts the whole life. The trajectory of this process tends to be evolutionary, although there are some cases of sudden revolutionary cases, as well. He underlines the functions of such factors as generous, environmental, and spiritual one in the integral human development. This development responses to the particular development of layers constructing a person. Among them there are: the biological, psychological, sociological, cultural, and spiritual one. These layers have own potentials that need to be actualized. According to the author, they are not only tightly connected with each other, but they converge in a reciprocal relation between themselves (Kunowski, 2000), what will be shown in the analysis of them. Hence, as far as the biological layer development is concerned, it is necessary to expose the role of temperament that *“can be named as a natural character inherited from his/her parents, and first ancestors. Temperament means a specific, stable, complicated, individual quality of the human being unit, who can react without intelligence participation according to own temperamental type to each sense of unpleasantness and pleasure”* (Szymańska, 2017a). Apart from that, one should accent the development of organism, particularly the nerve system, the development of intellect and speech that enables appropriate communication, learning etc. In the context of the article, the communication with self, others, God and the world seems very crucial. The high quality of the communication is tied with the dialogue which has the internal and external dimension shaped by the reflective usage of words. Drawing attention to the words seen as *“he transmitters of messages”* can help to understand and interpret the events, experiences etc. in a divergent perspective enabling the beneficial, personal and social transaction. M. Szymańska claims (2017b): *“The transaction based on words understood both as transmitters of values, or values themselves should motivate the parents, teachers, caregivers for paying stronger attention to texts read by young readers”* (Szymańska, 2017b p.54.). Words touch the intellect, emotions, morality, cultural sensitivity, and the spirituality. They contain the hidden power to change the world, so the exposure of the

ideas that can be enlightened should appear after reflecting on them, particularly that they have an impact on imagination. In this case, it is worth emphasizing the meaning of moral imagination for moral development of a person (Szymańska, 2017a), what can not be neglected by educators and teachers who sometimes ignore the true nature of this fact, what is admitted by the post – graduate students of education training who continue their education also working with the author of this article. The author conducts action research on implementing the idea of the project design within the social aspects of children education. After lecturing on teacher ethics with these students, she has a good start for showing the ethical and axiological perspective for deploying it into praxis which refers to the social values and symbols present in the fairy tales. The students reflect on their experience and share their reflection with each other. They obtain a new view on the analyzed material and understand the meaning of the words seen as transmitters of symbols and values which can transform the approach to life. In this light, the maturity of biological development often associated with the organism growth, shows other important aspects to be valued. This brief analysis of the development of biological sphere implies to deal with the psychological sphere. S. Kunowski stresses that its development starts at the age of seven, when the child usually shows the mature school readiness. This layer development depicts the mental progress that is reflected for example in: dialectics, logics, methodology –scientific thinking where the natural activity of curiosity is observable. It results in elaborating the interests, looking for the truth, ability to discern the good from bad, true information from false one etc. (Kunowski, 2000). Hence, this can help forming the mature conscience that has impact on appropriate development of individuality. Individuality according to the author *“is a complex system of human being’s features, dispositions, and mental tendencies that need to be formed and developed”* (Szymańska, 2017a pp. 35-36.). As an developmental activity form of the psychological layer it is aligned with the specific type of personality (Kunowski, 2000). The formation of individuality and personality has influence on the social layer development, where moral character is formed by ethics, hard work, strong will, self –organization and self-discipline to response to own vocation. It also fosters human integrity with self and environment, responsibility for performing the social roles on micro- and macro scale. It is connected with achieving the moral autonomy which *“is connected with the person’s skills of creating social interactions based on mutual respect between people, equality, and justice”* (Szymańska, 2014), what reveals the person in the acts of true love while serving others. It reveals the moral personality of a person. Darcia Narvarez and Daniel K. Lapsley claim (2009 p. 246.): *“the moral personality is to be understood in terms of the accessibility of moral schemas foe social information processing. A moral person, a person who has a moral character or identity, is one for whom moral constructs are chronically (moral chronicity), where accessibility and availability are dimensions of individual differences”*. These authors indicate its features: understanding moral categories as the key – ones that *“would be online, vigilant, easily primed, easily activated, for discerning the meaning of events, for noticing the moral dimensions of experience and, once activated, to dispose one to interpret events in light of one’s moral commitments.”*; feelings of moral explicit purity,

true, reasonable decisions that the person takes with “conviction, with respect to social judgment”; clear “on the spot” recognition of moral decisions, although “there is no reason to think that automaticity is evident in every domain of decision making except the moral domain”; habits of moral character. These features of moral personality need deep self –understanding, the mature attitude to hierarchy and systems of values, high – quality moral imagination, moral reflective practice of realizing the goals that indicate the moral identity. Moral identity is assumed to possess “a public and private aspect. Privately, moral identity is a cognitive representation of the moral self that reflects the degree to which moral traits are central to one’s self-concept. Publicly, moral identity can be projected symbolically in the form of actions –in –the –world, or alternatively, the degree to which the traits are reflected in one’s public actions. The private aspect of moral identity is labeled Internalization; the public aspect is labeled Symbolization”. Therefore, we can not say about moral person without moral identity. We can not say that the teacher is moral if he or she does not achieve moral personality and moral identity which points at maturity of both the biological and psychological layer development, as well. What is more, we can imply that moral identity of a person builds moral identity of a community. Moral teachers build mature moral ethos for themselves and their students. They do not avoid difficult questions and difficult answers having in mind their students’ goodness. They always try to act morally, regardless of where they are. They deepen and probe the students’ cognitive and critical attitude. They find time for reflection oriented towards own and others’ development. They are honest, responsible, and aware of complicated problems which their students can face up. They try to become their leaders and masters on the educative path leading them to the moral autonomy and independence, what requires the high awareness and axiological consciousness. It is connected with forming the cultural identity on post – conventional level that demands cultivating the “high culture” approach to life. It helps building an educative dialogue fostering the creative personal and social attitudes to others, what is the object of the cultural layer development. This development is rooted also in culture, and cultural environment respecting traditions. In the analyzed aspect, among many definitions of culture it is worth mentioning one which defines the culture as all the human’s outcomes of interior and exterior. According to John Paul II’s words, the culture reflects human in acts of creation, being, at the same time created by it. This definition finds a wide justification in the scientific analysis made by Jeromy Bruner (2010). Culture can also be perceived as the result of spiritual hard work that gives the sense to human’ existence, that enhances the quality of interpersonal communication and collaboration. It awakes reflection upon the goals of building communities that should bring goodness to any member of them (Jan Paweł II, 1979). Furthermore, culture can be defined as a life style enabling people to discover the beauty of their own vocation in the responsible service to others (Suchodolski, 1937)., so it “ought to be strongly stressed in the process of educating new generations” (Szymańska, 2017c p. 148.). One can not discuss the thematic aspects of culture without the axiological reference to the beauty seen as the highest aesthetic value that makes the cultural layer development more dynamic. The process of cultural layer development is strongly

aligned with the process of creativity that opens the human to the “high culture”. This process, as S. Kunowski (2000) writes, starts with the “cultural quake”, when the man discloses something that moves the intellect and heart very deeply. He notices the beauty, truth, or goodness that he has not experienced so far. His impression awakes and deepens his sensitivity. It’s a sort of the special enlightenment that takes place in his mind and heart. It rises the inspiration for taking the different adequate activities. Intellectual and emotional involvement leads him to search the ways how to solve the problems appearing in front of him. The man starts conceptualizing the action plan in order to fulfill dreams hidden so far. The second stage of this process means a wander of his spirit to “the culture motherland”, what needs wisdom and moral personality while choosing appropriate solutions. The educator’s or teacher help and support seem indispensable here, as the students are to go further to get the spiritual motherland, already mentioned. This third stage of creativity process looks a bit fanatic. The man seems to accept only such an area of concepts that suits him without any criticism. Any opposite points of view are rejected. This stage requires a lot patience and reasonability from educators and teachers, who should assist their students in their activities. M. Szymańska says (2017c p. 212.): “Showing a good exemplar of culture activity needs reference to values acknowledged in their structure as universal, objective ones. This forms a way to cultural educational dialogue being on the fourth stage of process covering the mature attitude to any cultural trends, tendencies”. The development of cultural layer inevitably drives the man to the development of spiritual layer. Spirituality according to S. Kunowski (2000), is reasonable, able to make moral judgment, creative, respecting freedom in the scope of choices between good and bad, taking responsibility for self and others; open for metaphysical sense of existence, Absolute and God. The development of the spiritual layer means that the person has achieved the unity of own humanity. The man is open for Transcendence and tries to realize the calling that hears in his heart. The fate bringing unexpected events and situations becomes the positive challenge regardless of the fact that the person can suffer because of them, or feel enjoyment caused by them. Here, the religious faith finds its justification and pushes the person to the sainthood. Nevertheless, the development of this layer awakes the willingness for meditation and contemplation which are tied up with the reflection that will be shown further.

The human integral development as a process lasting the whole life, according to S. Kunowski (2000) is affected by the human integral upbringing. The development of each layer depends to some extent on the functioning of the dynamisms of upbringing that match with each of them. They are parallel to each other: Thus, the biological layer is affected by the upbringing dynamism – bios; the psychological layer – by logos; the social layer – by ethos; the cultural layer – by agos, and the spiritual layer – by Fate. These dynamisms requires to be brought up. If they do not function appropriately, the process of human integral development can go into regression or depression. The phenomenon that influences the processes of the integral development and integral upbringing means introception of values that accompany them from the beginning to

end. In brief, S. Kunowski (2003) states that so called rough values becomes actual thanks to „transformer” which induces a concrete action that results in shaping the person’s activity. The entire of this relation, action, causes and effects is named by him as introception of values. Krystyna Chałas (2016) understands it as the process of acquisition of foreign aims, in which the values exist as own; are directed towards interior. According to M. Szymańska (2017d), it can be described as a complex, transformative-transactional process, in which the affirmation of values takes place within the structures of personality and is revealed in acts of doing that show off the grade of maturity of this personality. The process of introception of values can run in positive and negative direction, so the moral responsibility of educators for designing the curricula and conducting honest research upon their implementation appears very crucial. The trajectory of the educational processes should cover the process of introception of values, what implies the need to provide the teachers, first of all, with the high quality of diagnostic competences including the skills of conducting suitable research, particularly the action research. The diagnosis imposes also the development of teachers’ meta-diagnosis skills rooted in the meta-knowledge, auto –reflection upon analyzed matters, and the implementation of meta-strategies enhancing the quality of practical skills necessary in this area. It should induce the need of auto – formation that is followed by the process of formation oriented towards building a new quality of own identity. Another crucial aspect that should be considered is the holistic, dynamic perspective of the perception of the person as integrated unity.

Summing up, the integral development of a man that takes place through personalization and socialization grounded in the cultural and spiritual space can become the valid object for reflection for teachers, educators, and students, as well. In the light of the analysis made so far, the statement that the integral development of a person can be understood as a gate to the integral development of a teacher seems justified.

The role of reflection in the teacher integral development

The teacher integral development analysis shown above is tied up with the necessity to focus on one of the key factors having a strong impact on trajectory of the processes of integral development and integral upbringing. This factor is called reflection. It can be understood as an inner process that enables the educators, teachers, and students to make progress in any areas of life. One can claim that the more mature reflection is “manufactured” the more mature integral development has the opportunity to run smoothly. Thus, the reflection needs to be analyzed on the purpose of this analysis. Among many definitions it is necessary to refer to some of them. John Dewey (1933 p.9.) describes reflection as *“the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends”*. David Boud, Rosemary Koegh, and David Walker (1985 p. 19.) define reflection as *“a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in*

which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciation". Joy Amulya (2011) writes: "Reflection is an active process of witnessing one's own experience in order to take a closer look at it, sometimes to direct attention to it briefly, but often to explore it in greater depth. This can be done in the midst of an activity or as an activity in itself. The key to reflection is learning how to take perspective on one's own actions and experience—in other words, to examine that experience rather than just living it". Reflection is aligned with time and experience that provides the informal and formal knowledge. The experience gives a new different perspective to the perception of problems, etc. It embraces the whole person: her/ his emotions, feelings, beliefs, intellect, will, motives, interests, etc. in a very individual way. Its benefits come from the individual ability of learning that has an impact of the quality of outcomes coming from the reflection on concrete issue/ piece of the knowledge obtained through it (Schon, 1991). Considering this fact and the integral development issue seen mainly from pedagogical perspective, M. Szymańska suggests such definition:

"Reflection is the inner, active, dynamic process covering the whole integrated (biologically, psychologically, socially, culturally, and spiritually) person revealing its quality in a particular act of doing that arises from concrete experience taking place in a concrete period of time, and the knowledge obtained either consciously or unconsciously that needs to be formed in order to achieve the personal and social growth. It is determined anthropologically, morally, axiologically, and psychologically" (Szymańska, 2017a p. 130.).

In this context the reflective practice appears as a must. Joseph A. Raelin (2002) claims that reflective practice is "the practice of periodically stepping back to ponder the meaning of what recently transpired to ourselves and to others in our immediate environment. It illuminates what the self and others have experienced, providing a basis for future action". The quality of the reflective practice that embraces all the developmental layers seems to have an impact on human personal and professional life, so in consequence on both teacher's and students' varied domains of life, especially when it "tends to probe to a deeper level than trial – and – error experience. It typically is concerned with forms of learning that seek to inquire about the most fundamental assumptions and premises behind our practices. It is thinking about our thinking" (Szymańska, 2017a). Practical implementation of the solutions that have been improved thanks to reflection results in forming the higher quality reflective skills. That is why, it is a necessity to work on them in terms of reflection – by action, reflection – in action, and reflection on action (Szymańska, 2017a) what can provide a qualitative reflective training. Such training should pay attention to the high moral standards in private and institutional dimensions. It demands constructing the reflective training programme that enhances the high interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary qualities of educators. According to Christopher Day (2001 p.2.), reflective training "involves the participant in a critique for practice, the values which are implicit in that practice, the personal, social, institutional and broad policy contexts in which practice take place, and the implications of these for improvement of that practice". He emphasizes that "Without routinely engaging in reflective practice, it is

unlikely that we will be able to understand the effects of our motivations, prejudices, and aspirations upon the ways in which we create, manage, receive, sift, and evaluate knowledge; and as importantly, the ways in which we are influencing the lives, directions, and achievements of those whom we nurture and teach” (Day, 1999 p.229.). Here, the educators and teachers face up challenges in the aspect of their and their students’ human integral development. Reflective practice cannot be torn away from reality. It can not neglect biological development in the area of bringing up temperament, mastering speech, developing communicative learning skills as the outcomes of it. Paying attention to words treating them as transmitters of values hidden in the contents requires professional approach to teaching which can be defined as art. Moreover, reflection on mental development, curiosity in any aspect of educational space, regardless of the scientific, humanistic, or artistic field forces the teacher to develop their divergent, reflective, critical, and creative thinking (Szymańska, 2017a) in order to provide the students with the high quality of teaching and upbringing. Next, reflection on moral character that is fundamental for building good relationships with self, others, world, and God becomes an object of responsibility for creating the personal and social environment fulfilled with love, justice, peace, tolerance, freedom, and first of all – the sense of dignity. Furthermore, the cultural development induces the necessity to take care about the process of creativity aimed at forming the creative personality, able to make good choices, decisions, able to interact with outcomes of high culture and participate in a fruitful, beneficial transaction that indicates the spiritual needs. Spirituality brings freedom from something to something what is valuable, precious to achieve. Therefore, the development of spiritual layer should find its place in mastering reflective practice without and fears, and the attitude of withdrawal, or avoidance. Paul Avallone (1989 p. 53) claims: *“Education must deal with the entire man. The harmonious development of all man’s faculties is the purpose of the educative process. Education, therefore, must deal not only with the physical, emotional, intellectual and moral aspects of man’s life. The spiritual must also be taken into account, for man is a being endowed with spiritual qualities”.* These words should be the object for reflection and reflective practice that is oriented towards building the mature moral approach to the integral development and upbringing revealing the moral reflective practitioner.

All in all, the reflection performs a crucial role in the teacher integral development what cannot be marginalized while designing the courses for educating the future teachers. The reflection:

- fosters the development of biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual layer or structure of personality;
- fosters the processes of the human integral upbringing and development seen in the educative perspective;
- supports the formation and the auto-formation processes;
- influences the trajectory of the introception processes;
- has an impact on developing the reflective practitioner’s abilities and skills

- makes the teacher more sensitive to self, others, the world, and God;
- deepens axiological consciousness that results in building more mature and responsible approach to life, etc.

As far as the role of reflection in the teacher integral development is concerned, it is worth mentioning some techniques useful for its conducting. M. Szymańska proposes particularly the following ones: journal of reflection, reflective journal, metaphorical-reflective story building, reflective story boarding, reflective poem constructing, reflective – digressive essay. These techniques outlined briefly in the book *Transformative creativity in teacher formation. A pedagogical approach* (Szymańska, 2017a) are aimed at freeing the narration, experiencing the value of it, enabling the existence of true, valuable, transactional-transformative relationship between people and environment. The key point is to understand self in a deeper and more complex way that can help building the better life, the Civilization of love and peace. The implementation of these techniques demands time and changing the priorities of education which mainly is effective standards oriented.

Conclusions

The analysis of the concept of teacher integral development covering the development of the biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual layers in the relation with integral upbringing that underlines the meaning of the value introception, and with the reflection seen as the inner, deep process indicates the necessity to have the closer look at the teacher education. The techniques of reflection used particularly in the qualitative research foster enhancing the quality of education which struggle with many dilemmas concerning the standardized effects and the creative development of a person who needs time to fulfill the vocation , to realize own potential individuality that is to serve also the others. The thematic aspects shown in the way presented above still demands solutions, and perception from diverse points of view. The teacher education “calls” for teacher formation that runs parallelly to integral upbringing trajectory with one difference that it starts deeply inside the person, in the spiritual layer. The art of education can be reflected in the processes of formation. The techniques of reflection can stimulate them, provide enjoyment to those who are willing to deploy them into own reflective practice. What is more, they can be a good source of reflective scientific research of the ways deepening the human development in the educational domain.

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