

**KONTROWERSJE, PYTANIA I NOWE PERSPEKTYWY WE
WCZESNEJ EDUKACJI****CONTROVERSIES, QUESTIONS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES IN
EARLY EDUCATION****Od Redakcji**

Bieżący numer czasopisma ukazuje w szerszej perspektywie kondycję refleksji i praktyki w obszarze wczesnej edukacji. Podejmowane zagadnienia lokują się na różnych polach, choć osie interpretacyjne i używane kategorie pozwalają zauważyć dwa główne kierunki analiz: niejednoznaczność teorii i praktyk wczesnej edukacji oraz wykorzystywany lub nie potencjał zmiany w kształceniu dzieci. Stąd też Czytelnik ma możliwość zapoznania się z licznymi problemami, eksponującymi nieuchronny związek pedagogiki z relacjami władzy i dominacji. Autorzy podejmują takie kwestie, jak m.in. dyskursywność pedagogiki wczesnej edukacji i jej praktycznych realizacji, ideologiczne i polityczne konteksty wychowania najmłodszych, niejednoznaczność konceptualizacji dzieciństwa, pedagogiczne wymiary bycia innym, a nawet genderowe uwikłania, powszechnie postrzeganego jako neutralne ideologicznie, nauczania matematyki. Z drugiej strony wśród artykułów odnajdujemy liczne analizy barier zmiany wraz z propozycjami nowych rozwiązań edukacyjnych na tym poziomie kształcenia. Dotyczą one na przykład alternatywnych działań w zakresie edukacji historycznej i zdrowotnej najmłodszych, przełamywania schematów we wczesnej edukacji geograficznej, modyfikacji uczenia się w małych grupach, czy zmian roli nauczyciela i ucznia we współczesnej szkole. Proponujemy tu także wyraźnie nowatorskie ujęcia sposobów pracy z dziećmi, np. badawcze wystawy dla dzieci w ramach tworzonej dydaktyki interaktywnej, czy budowanie dziecięcej metawiedzy o własnym uczeniu się, oraz w zasadzie nieobecne dotąd w refleksji pedagogiki wczesnej edukacji koncepcje dziecięcego ryzyka i dziecka lansowanego w mediach.

Zróznicowanie tematyczne pozwala jednak zauważyć wspólną cechę wszystkich testów, jaką jest poruszanie się w całkowicie odmiennym od tradycyjnie wiązanego z tą subdyscypliną pedagogiczną języku, polu znaczeń i wytwarzanych w nim interpretacji świata dzieci. Autorzy uczestniczą w ten sposób w rekonstrukcji tożsamości teoretycznej tej zbyt często infantylizowanej dziedziny refleksji społecznej.

From the Editor

The current issue of the magazine shows the condition of reflection and practice in early childhood education in a wider perspective. The issues in question are located in various fields, although the interpretation axes and use categories enable us to see two main directions of analysis: the ambiguity of the theory and practice of early education and the used or not used potential of change in children's education. Therefore, the reader can be acquainted with many problems emphasizing the inevitable connection of pedagogy with relations of power and domination. The authors take up such issues as, among, others, the discursiveness of early childhood education pedagogy and its practical implementation, ideological and political contexts of education of the youngest, the ambiguity of the conceptualization of childhood, the pedagogical dimensions of being different, and even gender involvement in mathematics teaching, which is widely viewed as ideologically neutral. On the other hand, in the articles, we find numerous analyses of barriers to change with proposals for new solutions for education at this level. They concern, for example, alternative measures within historical and health education of the youngest, breaking the patterns in early geographical education, modification of learning in small groups, and changes to the teacher's and pupil's roles in the modern school. We propose an innovative approach to working with children, for example, research exhibitions for children within the framework of the developed interactive didactics, or the building of children's meta-knowledge about their own learning, and, in principle, the concepts of children's risk and of the child, as promoted in the media, absent to date in the reflection of early education.

The topical differentiation allows us, however, to observe a common feature in all the tests, that is moving in a language completely different from the language traditionally bound to this didactic sub-discipline, the field of meanings and interpretations of the children's world produced in it. The authors participate in this way in the reconstruction of theoretical identity of that too often infantilized field of social reflection.

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Autorzy artykułów

- **Eduardo Encabo Fernández** – Prof., Universidad de Murcia, Spain
- **Joanna Garbula** – dr, Katedra Wczesnej Edukacji, Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie, Polska
- **Katarzyna Gawlicz** – dr, Instytut Pedagogiki, Dolnośląska Szkoła Wyższa we Wrocławiu, Polska

- **Boris Iljuk** – Doc. CSc., University of Hradec Králové, Silesian University in Opava, Czech Republic
- **Małgorzata Karczarzyk** – dr, Instytut Pedagogiki, Uniwersytet Gdański, Polska
- **Bronislava Kasáčová** – prof. PhD. CSc, Pedagogical Faculty, Matej Bel University, Slovakia
- **Alicja Komorowska-Zielony** – dr, Instytut Pedagogiki, Uniwersytet Gdański, Polska
- **Lucyna Kopciwicz** – dr hab., prof. UG, Instytut Pedagogiki, Uniwersytet Gdański, Polska
- **Małgorzata Kowalik-Olubińska** – dr, Katedra Wczesnej Edukacji, Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie, Polska
- **Jolanta Kruk** – dr hab., Elbląska Uczelnia Humanistyczno-Ekonomiczna, Polska
- **Grażyna Kwaśniewska** – dr, Zakład Psychopedagogiki Specjalnej, Uniwersytet Marii Curie Skłodowskiej w Lublinie, Polska
- **Isabel Jerez Martínez** – Prof., Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Spain
- **Astrid Męczkowska-Christiansen** – dr hab. prof. EUH-E, Elbląska Uczelnia Humanistyczno-Ekonomiczna, Polska
- **Teresa Neckar-Ilnicka** – dr, Uniwersytet Wrocławski; Dolnośląska Szkoła Wyższa we Wrocławiu, Polska
- **Agnieszka Nowak-Łojewska** – dr, Zakład Pedagogiki Wczesnoszkolnej i Historii Wychowania, Uniwersytet Zielonogórski, Polska
- **Natalia Pater-Ejgierd** – dr, Uniwersytet Artystyczny w Poznaniu, Polska
- **Štefan Porubský** – PaedDr. PhD., Pedagogical Faculty, Matej Bel University, Slovakia
- **Teresa Sadoń-Osowiecka** – dr, Pracownia Dydaktyki Geografii, Uniwersytet Gdański, Polska
- **Agnieszka Szplit** – dr, Instytut Edukacji Szkolnej, Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach, Polska
- **Bogusław Śliwerski** – prof. zw. dr hab., Akademia Pedagogiki Specjalnej im. M. Grzegorzewskiej w Warszawie, Polska
- **Fengling Tang** – PhD, Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies, School of Education, Roehampton University, Great Britain
- **Juan José Varela Tembra** – Prof., Instituto Teológico Compostelano, Spain
- **Janina Uszyńska-Jarmoc** – dr hab. prof. UwB, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, Polska
- **Anna Wasilewska** – dr, Instytut Pedagogiki, Uniwersytet Gdański, Polska
- **Zuzanna Zbróg** – dr, Instytut Edukacji Szkolnej, Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach, Polska

Abstracts

Bogusław Śliwerski

Pre-school and early-years pedagogy compared with the heterogeneity of educational sciences

The author believes that pedagogy has a constant problem with its own identity. In addition, it pays more attention to the demands of educational practice and policy, methods of teaching and upbringing, and much less to scientific justifications for adoption of specific models of teaching and upbringing. The author presents the state of meta theoretical analyses of and research into early-

years pedagogy as well as a number of reasons for the belief that the world of educational sciences is a kind of chaos and clutter of ideas, theories, and trends. He ends his considerations with a remark that theoretical and paradigmatic maps of pre-school and early-years education are worth developing.

Astrid Męzkowska-Christiansen

Discourses of childhood and politics. Between exclusion and engaged citizenship

The following article presents the results of my attempt to identify a relationship between various discourses of childhood, that are discernible in the field of contemporary culture, and politics, especially in its relation to a concept of *the political*. The concept, with its sources in political philosophy (Hannah Arendt, Chantal Mouffe) as well as in the philosophy of education (Joanna Rutkowiak), is related to plausible forms of public - political and civic - engagement that are based upon competences and orientations of individuals, being expressed in the acts of human speech and actions. It also refers to social conditions underlying every possibility of performing speech and actions that are understood in terms of civic participation.

The methodological approach involved in my research is based on Critical Discourse Analysis and leads to identifying the following concepts of childhood taken into consideration as related to politics: *childhood as political and ethical potentiality, childhood as inhumane, children as graceful creatures*.

Lucyna Kopciewicz

Mathematics and the gender problem

The article analyses the research into changing perceptions of the so-called gender and mathematics problem. In the research literature it is often taken for granted that women and girls perform significantly worse than men and boys do on mathematical tasks, activities, and examinations. This "truth" is viewed in the broader context of gender identity construction including such phenomena as sexism and stereotyped gender-role. A poststructuralist approach is proposed as a new deconstructive way of perceiving the main categories, such as girls, women and femininity, and of producing their identities through educational and mathematical discourses.

Stefan Porubský

The primary education teacher and pupil within the context of the ideological disputes over the character of the school reform

The article looks at the current status of education in a globalized, knowledge-based society, taking into account scenarios of school development and their fulfillment. It deals with the transformation of the traditional character of education under pressure from the economic model which is now dominant within society, and especially the specific role of the primary school and its possibilities for development in relation to a re-schooling

trajectory. The disputes between educational ideological doctrines (economizing, philosophizing, sociologizing and psychologizing) over the character of the systemic transformation of education shall also be looked at, suggesting syncretic approaches as a way of reconciling these disputes.

Bronislava Kasáčová

Early childhood education and teacher's roles – anticipations, demands and challenges

The study deals with the process of innovation in early childhood education, changing teacher positions, targets and their roles. These changes are dependent on the context of the synergic processes of systemic transformation: changes in the education system, the contents of education, school functions, teachers' roles, and school reality. In this context it is necessary to innovate not only within the school itself, but also teacher preparation and possibilities for teacher life-long learning. From the perspective of pre-primary and primary teacher education, there is a need to realize that the process of transformation also brings with it new visions for the development of pedagogy as a science, which is to be achieved by scientific access to school "territory" which is traditionally seen as natural and intuitive. New forms of pre-graduate teacher preparation at university level, also bring with them the necessity to research into objective reality, facts about subjects and processes, predicative phenomena (the giving of evidence), and veracity in the context of pre-school and primary education. With a theoretical background based in pedeutology and using interdisciplinary research on teachers, this study brings together information from comparative research to achieve its aim. One example of such an international comparative study (Slovak – Polish - Czech) is the project of professiography research on teachers of early childhood education in pre-schools and primary school via daily scans, autoobservation and Participatory Action Research (PAR).

Jolanta Kruk

In search of the sources of interactive didactics

The article is an attempt to introduce interactive didactics as an element of the debate on learning conditions and teaching. The sources of interactive didactics are diverse, and apart from playing a role in the New Upbringing movement, progressivism and constructivism, it has also been introduced into environmental aesthetics and symbolic interactionism. There are also examples of the practical application of the rules of interactive didactics; rules which are given a general formulation in the final part of the article.

Janina Uszyńska-Jarmoc

Narrative as a method of transition from novice to expert in learning how to learn

The relevance of narratives for the understanding of the child's concept of learning how to learn and the development of child competence in learning is becoming widely

acknowledged in literature but not in Polish early education. In this article, I distinguish three types of narratives of childhood: narratives *about* children, narratives *of* children, narratives *for* children. I offer some theoretical and practical advice for researchers and educators on how to use narrative inquiry with children as a method of research (narratives *about* children) and narrative as a method of learning how to learn (narratives *of* children). I show that children's narratives create opportunities for the development of how to learn and for practising the meaning making mechanisms that are so essential for their participation in their learning communities. Children make narratives, often with the help of others, in order to express their life experiences or to retell stories that have been read to them.

Juan José Varela Tembra

Isabel Jerez Martínez

Eduardo Encabo Fernández

A paradigm of diversity in children's literature: Christopher Boone, a character with intelligence, braveness and love

The aim of this contribution is to link the topic of gifted people with Young Adult Literature. The main point is to discuss whether the character of the book – *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Christopher Boone, can be considered as gifted or not. This is the story of a fifteen year old with “special needs”; a spaz or mong as the unkind normal kids call him. But, although Christopher is autistic, sometimes this disorder presents the savant syndrome – the ability to be a genius of mathematics or the ability to memorize vast quantities of data such as timetables, skylines or phone books, and this is the case of our main character.

Person-against-society conflict is much more easily understood by adults than by children. The 1960s saw a rise in what were then called “problem novels”; often the plots focused more on social problems than on their effects on individuals. Such problems have not gone away, but today other varieties of social bullying, recent acts of violence among young people are often traced to feelings of being an “outsider”.

In this paper we want to analyze the plot of the aforementioned book giving arguments about the status of Christopher Boone as gifted. Besides this, we will use this book in an educative way to motivate people to understand diversity and to advance towards inclusive education.

Joanna Maria Garbula

Małgorzata Kowalik-Olubińska

Conceptualising childhood – a plurality of approaches and perspectives

The paper contains an analysis of the different approaches to the process of conceptualising childhood. In the first part of the article the authors present a universal vision of childhood based upon the universal model of human development dominant in mainstream psychology. In the subsequent part of the paper they discuss, referring to the sociocultural perspective on human development, the of a multitude of childhoods. They also consider the area of the policy of childhood emphasizing discourses of concern for the child (the discourse of "need", the discourse of "rights", course of "life quality") that have been created within it. In the final part of the article the authors focus their attention on the pedagogy of childhood, which is discussed from the angle of critical ht existing in the area of the humanities and social studies.

The pedagogy of childhood is, therefore, considered a domain which shows an entanglement of the processes which construct childhood in political, economic and sociocultural contexts, and reveals the real mechanisms of the formation of discourses of childhood.

Agnieszka Nowak-Łojewska

Postmodern conditions of the interpretation of change in the reflection on knowledge and education

The aim of the text is to present a new approach to knowledge and education in the context of postmodern cultural change. The latter is treated as an inspiring contribution to a search for alternatives to those caused by the monologue type of education. Considering the problem posed, several parts were isolated in the structure of the text. The first one comprises a synthetic perspective of J-F. Lyotard's, M. Foucault's, and J. Derrida's views treated as a new interpretation of knowledge. The second part illustrates the mechanism of cultural transmission realized in the course of school education. The last part of the text is an attempt at a confrontation of the monistic image of the Polish school with a polyphonic version of contemporary culture and the manifestation of the resultant consequences for educational practice.

Katarzyna Gawlicz

“Everything is dangerous.” Preschool teachers’ discursive practices and children’s positions

Drawing on data from ethnographic research in two Polish preschools and taking a poststructuralist perspective as its interpretational framework, this paper examines the ways in which teachers’ discursive practices centered around notions of the well-behaved child and the self-reflecting child, worked to position children. These discursive practices appeared to constitute the children as obedient and quiet, as knowing the rules and regulations, of doing only what they were told to do, of being capable of controlling their bodies and behavior, and accepting hierarchies and authority, rather than developing their own “unique personalities” as stated in the official preschool documents. However, one of the preschools, with children enrolled from the middle-class, also positioned them as moral subjects capable of taking into consideration the needs and feelings of others as well as being responsible for their peers’ well-being. Furthermore, the dominant positioning was gendered, as the submissive, passive and powerless child corresponded closely to common understandings of femininity.

Discursive practices that teachers engage in may position children in ways that are very different from the teachers’ intentions, often becoming problematic. The paper therefore emphasizes the importance for teachers to reflect upon their discursive practices and to become aware of what they may bring about because of them.

Natalia Pater-Ejgierd, Małgorzata Karczmarzyk

The child in the virtual gallery. An analysis of selected websites of great museums

The majority of great museums offer their young visitors special websites, which are supposed to stimulate the child's creativity, aesthetic sensitivity as well as new forms of literacy. What is more, these websites reflect the changes which have occurred in contemporary culture and social practices, especially those related to the museum and its functions as well as formal and informal art education. Bearing in mind the characteristics of a website, the authors would like to examine appropriate methods and tools of verbal-visual analysis suitable for the examination of hypertext and point out the discourses related to this field of study.

Teresa Sadoń- Osowiecka

The possibilities of early teaching of geography from the Polish National Curriculum perspective

The article gives an hermeneutical interpretation of the new Polish National Curriculum, considering the field of environmental issues for classes I – III in primary education. Placing the curriculum in the context of Dorota Klus-Stańska's concept of educational discourses: functionalistic – behavioral, humanistic – adaptive, constructivist – developmental, critical - emancipatory, the author points to its inconsistencies. Viewing the curriculum in this light, there is also the realization that some postulates of the Curriculum might result in the stereotyping and infantilization of environmental knowledge among students.

Fengling Tang

Adult perspectives on risks and young children's learning in Chinese and English contexts

Risk is a double estimate of probability, conveying both positive and negative consequences. Children nowadays are not only influenced by various factors of risk but threatened by the performance of behaviors of risk. Adult anxiety about the impact of a society of risk on children's lives prevails in contemporary society. Taken from my PhD research project, this paper aims to explore adult perceptions of the relationship between risks and young children's learning in Chinese and English contexts. The study reveals both similarities and differences

Teresa Neckar-Ilnicka

The early primary school pupil as a successful(?) person. Facts and myths

In my article I revise the issue of media career, which some children at an early primary school age experience. The child's participation in any media event such as playing in a film or a commercial and instantly and suddenly becoming a person who is not

anonymous but public, being recognized in other ways than those connected with family or neighbourhood circles, may provoke or encourage behaviour which goes beyond traditional involvement in social life. I discuss the consequences as well as the opportunities and limitations in using such situations from an educational perspective and in a worthwhile way. In doing this I take into consideration the statements of children who have experienced a public career, as well as those of parents and teachers.

Małgorzata Kaczmarzyk

The 'Own Method' of analyzing drawings of children according to Charles Sanders Peirce triad

A six-year child's drawing, interesting both in artistic and educational terms, with a description of the leanings adults assign to it, has become important owing to viewing it differently. It is analyzed in a different way from in the past, i.e. from the semiotic perspective. The own method of analyzing the meaning of drawings has been developed on the basis of CS Peirce's triadic concept of sign, >d is also a basis for research analysis and implementation of research in the field.

Agnieszka Szplīt, Zuzanna Zbróg

Chances and barriers of group work in primary schools and kindergartens on the basis of the Molteno Project in South Africa

The advantages of group work in primary education are not widely discussed, owing to teachers' sceptical attitude towards it. However, the authors claim that group work is neglected only because of teachers' beliefs and their lack of classroom management abilities. The paper includes some teachers' opinions concerning disadvantages and pitfalls of group teaching and, as well, present, different strategies for overcoming difficulties. The authors refer to the Molteno Project developed by primary teachers in South Africa as an example of good practice.

Boris Iljuk

Educational support for the development of national identity of compatriots Volhynia, Ukraine

The article addresses the issue of national identity of Czechs living in Ukraine. 55 respondents (20 men and 35 women) aged 15 to 65 took part in surveys conducted in Ukraine's five administrative regions. Questions focused on: the cultivation of Czech traditions in families, a sense of pride in Czech origin, the language used for communication in families (a choice between Czech, Russian, and Ukrainian), Czech language proficiency, reading books and magazines in Czech, and visiting the Czech Republic. The rest of the article discusses forms of support given to Czech emigrants.

Grażyna Kwaśniewska

Early intervention as a space for action in the system of supporting the families of disabled children

Considerations taken in this article show the importance of the system of early intervention in the process of supporting the development of disabled children and their families. Early intervention, as a basic pre-school space, should be made by professionals who will bring together medical early intervention and early educational support for child development into a multidisciplinary program. This space requires coordinated, comprehensive and interdisciplinary activities. It is essential therefore, that the process of system activities be started as early as possible, and then be coherently and consistently implemented.