THEORETICAL RESEARCH APPROACHES TO FINDING THE INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN SOCIALIZATION AND SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Zhivko Zhechev

Senior Assistant PhD in Social pedagogy; Theory of education and didactic, Shumen University "Konstantin Bishop of Preslav"

BULGARIA

ZHIVKOZ@ABV.BG

ABSTRACT: *The term "social activeness" together* with the *"social activity"* is one of the fundamental subjects for a great part of the sociological paradigm in modern sociology. *The socialization is not an act where the society puts norms, behavior, ways, etc. in front of its members. It is a long process where every society member enters this society through its own social activity. i.e. the social activity is a fundamental process for the socialization of each human being.*

KEY WORDS: *socialization, social activeness, social activity, individual factors, micro environment factors, macro environment factors*

THE term **socialization** has been introduced by the American sociologist Franklin Giddons who in 1887 uses it in his book "Theory of socialization". Under this term he understands "the development of the social nature or character of the individual", "a preparation of the human material for social life" [3].

THE systematic sociological research of socialization started in the 20/30 years of the 20th century in the American sociology and cultural anthropology. From this initial period up until today different theoretical concepts of socialization have been formed from the point of view of different sciences:

⇨ In the *cultural anthropology* under socialization one understands the process of adaptation and integration of the individual to a certain culture by assimilating the typical for this culture norms, values, behavior models, traditions, etc.;

⇨ In the *social psychology* under socialization one usually understands the process of the individual's seizure of meaningful for the social group values and roles and its adaptation to the group;

⇨ In sociology the understanding of socialization usually includes the processes of the individual's assimilation of knowledge, skills, values and social norms and roles accepted by society and needed for its effective functioning [2].

FIVE approaches towards children's socialization are known in the pedagogy [3]:

1. *A sociological approach* (J.-J. Russo, K. Marks, E. Fromm, B.G. Ananiev, I.S. Kon, G.M. Andreeva) where the *process of transferring social experience from generation to generation* is perfected. The representatives of this stream recognize the influence of both the spontaneously active factors and the organized ones: school, educational system, educational process;

2. **An inter-individual approach** (R. Burns, Dj. Meed, E. Ericson, A.V. Mudrick, A. I. Kochetov) which directs the researcher's attention to the process of *personal and creative self-realization of the individual;*

3. **An interiorational approach** (P.T. de Chardin, L.S. Vigotski, A.N. Leontiev) according to which *the socialization is a process of the individual's assimilation of values, norms and behavior stereotypes which were created and probated in society but must also be individually refracted and adapted with the help of the individual inside regulators;*

4. **An interactional approach** (Z. Freud, St. Hall) where the socialization is realized through interpersonal interaction and communication;

5. **A factor institutional approach** (E. Ilenkov, V.V. Davidov, L. Bueva) – within the boundaries of this approach the socialization is understood as a "*combination of the effect of many factors, institutes and means*".

THE socialization is not an act where the society puts norms, behavior, ways, etc. in front of its members. It is a long process where every society member enters this society through its own social activity. I.e. the social activity is a fundamental process for the socialization of each human being.

THE term "social activeness" together with the "social activity" is one of the fundamental subjects for a great part of the sociological paradigm in modern sociology.

LOOKING back in the sociology history the objective and subjective tendencies of understanding the individual's social activeness can be set apart.

ÉMILE Durkheim is considered to be the forefather of the objective tendency where the holism is in the center, i.e. the casual archetypal whole opposite to the parts or in other words there is an outside determination of social activity. This is also visible in Durkheim's idea of social activity which is social only to a degree which corresponds to the forms of collective consciousness [6].

THE forefather of the subjective tendency is Max Weber. The determination of the social action is not in any case external, i.e. it is not possible to talk about a primary whole in relation to the parts, on the contrary – here the individual is a principle and aim of the sociological theory and concrete research. The whole action is defined by the meaning put into the action, by the consciousness and motivation of the individual itself, by the purposefulness towards the behavior of another individual and the one pointed at them. On the grounds of the social activity Weber puts a line between the social and the rest of the reality aspects and tries to distinguish the sociologic matter from the other objective matters [3], [5].

UNDER social activity Max Weber understands every human behavior which is loaded with a certain subjective meaning (regardless of whether it is coming from the inside or the outside and regardless of whether it is a performing, a stopping or enduring an action). The

social action has to be directed at the behavior of other individuals according to the meaning put into the acting individual. In spite of this the social activity can be directed at the past, the present and the future (the social action can be a reaction to an attack from the past; a defense in the present or an embankment of measures to protect oneself in the future). Simply put according to Weber in order to be able to call an action a social activity there should be a minimum sense, consciousness, meaning, motivation and timely orientation invested in it [5].

EXCEPT for the objective and subjective tendencies in sociology, the understanding for *social activeness* is connected with the *theories for social action* which in its modern sounding are represented mostly by the structural functionalism of the American theorist Talcott Parsons. In this context the social activity might be described as an attempt of supporting the scientific strictness of the positivism by acknowledging the necessity of subjective dimension of human actions included in a hermeneutic appearance of the human actions. T. Parsons sees the motives as a part of the human actions. This is why he thinks that the social science has to consider the aims and the ideals when the human actions are being based on [9], [10].

THE structure of his social action consists of four elements. One of them is the actor himself guided by his will and putting sense into things which are in some way put in his field of vision. Another element is the set and chased aim where in order to reach it the actor has a number of alternatives and the choice of those together with the conditions (these cannot be controlled by the actor) build up a situation. Setting the aim and choosing the methods of reaching it are determined and implemented under the influence of norms and values.

IN the context of the described directions, *the activeness,* in a broad sense is an important characteristic of each living creature, characterizing its ability to adapt to the changing conditions of the outside environment and in this sense the generic term of the personal social activity appears. The personal social activeness itself is the display of community servicing activity in every social life realm: economical, political, cultural and spiritual. It is determined by the essence of the human itself - its inseparability from the other people.

The social activeness is a combination of the human activity forms which are intentionally orientated towards solving task the society is facing such as the classes, the social groups, and the personality in different historical periods. As a subject of the social activeness the society, the classes, the social groups and the personality can be indicated.

IN Bulgaria the question of examining the person's social activeness including the children's earned a special meaning after the society enters from one political system into other in the year 1989. At this time people are faced with the subject of improving the economical and political ways and with raising the citizen's interest in the change. In this sense the raise of the social activeness of all citizens – adults and minors- corresponds to the constructive ideas and tasks the society is facing.

THE research of the social activeness of the institutional children is connected with the examination of the person as a subject of the social relations. It represents the combination of the factors that constitute it and are specifically interconnected and expressed in different figures and forms.

The basic factors forming the institutional children's social activity can be divided in the following three interconnected groups:

1. *Individual personal factors* - gender and age characteristics; psycho-physiological features; systems of needs and value orientations of the children; motives; adjustments; interest and educational level.

2. *Microenvironment factors* - common, objective social conditions- the children's belonging to a certain social group; objective accessibility to means of activeness; legislative infrastructure of implementing different types of activity.

3. *Macroenvironment factors* - common, objective social conditions- historical traditions; socio-cultural specialties; economic, political and ideological conditions.

OF a special interest are the indicators and criteria for social activeness of children. These criteria can be based on their art approach while accomplishing the activity, the time put into it, the responsibility or the intensity of the implementation. The micro- and macro-environment factors are recorded as well as the subjective characteristics of the child's personality and the indicators connected with intensity-extensity of the action. In this way the social activeness characterizes the child's attitude towards work, towards the material and the spiritual goods of society as a whole and the extent to which it is included in the social relationships.

ACCORDING to the author of this article the most important characteristic of the institutional children's social activeness is that it can be characterized in two ways:

1. *Constructive social activity* - realizing active actions towards society's requirements- for instance: systematic education and self-education, inclusion in the activities widening the personal abilities, forming positive moral qualities, etc.

2. *Destructive social activity* - realizing active actions to generate conflicts, aggressive expression, actions connected with the substitution of fundamental values in society, etc.

DEPENDING on the predominance of either the constructive or destructive social activity the institutional children can be characterized as constructive or destructive. But in both cases the matter at hand is about the purpose of the socialization mechanisms towards the process of socialization.

THE process of socialization through which adults draw children into the normative society order which children interpret and self organize so that they can become a part of the adult world is a central in sociology. On one hand, *because it is connected with the reproduction of a certain kind of sociability, on the other, as a self-notion of society* (through the children's attitude towards the implicated care and education strategies). Usually this process applies to a certain period of forming and development of the individual- both in historical and individual plan- a period of tearing the natural integration of the individual apart and its inclusion in the social world. In a historical aspect the process runs parallel to the separation of human from natural; to extorting the social whole from the direct dependency of the natural environment; with the movement of the human individual in the social space and the connected comparison process [1], [4], [3].

IN modern world socialization is connected with the *formation of the individual's self-conscious relation to the world, to himself and to the others;* of the responsibility for himself, of constructing his own Ego as a unique and valuable human whole. This process is very intense in childhood. Of a great importance here are the people closest to the child –

significant others: parents, relatives and in a broader sense- friends, classmates and teachers. The children experience respectively cannot be thought of as an isolated category and almost every aspect of the child's development and gathering experience is connected with the inclusion of a lot more people. From its surroundings the child adopts the legitimate norms and values of the societies, communities, the groups he is born at as well as the place of his family in these surroundings. The child develops his Ego while growing up thanks to its interaction with others. It creates itself by looking at the way it is reflected by others. And even if it is unique in the concreteness of its presence it has the uniqueness for "others in their relationships with others" [1, p.136].

IN many theoretical and empirical attempts to examine the process of socialization the children are more an object of the process than "actors"; they are active subjects, separate individuals opposite to the social whole and namely because of this some specific relations of inequality exist- defined as *little humans, not-still-humans,* savages and cave-men, as incapable of controlling themselves, careless, unbalanced, etc. In this process some paradigms in the child sociology attempt to resubjectivise the position of the children in their childhood and support the opinion that "children must be examined as active participants in constructing their own social life; life with their relatives in a society they live in" [7, p. 8]. In other words "they have to be examined as subjects and agents of their own construction, even as *co-constructing childhood and society* .Putting them in any other category objectivize them, i.e. not recognizing their own practices and protecting them from visibility" [8, p. 72].

MANY of the big sociological theories *'use" the child in order to illustrate a "pur individual",* i.e. fulfill a meaningful position which otherwise would stay untouched- the position of the "ordinary individual" in contrast to society. This is the hypothesis of the Swiss sociologist D.B. - Niederberg; she calls such perspective within children and childhood "separative" [5, p. 56] as it estranges the children from the parents proportionally to the growing concreteness of the research. What's more the notion of children being "savages" is not very sociological but rather borrowed from other sciences that study children- pediatrics, pedagogy, psychology. Based on this concept Niederberg outlines *four logically interconnected stages of differentiating children.* They can be examined as different perspectives of childhood which originate from concrete social conditions. The first two stages are connected with the emphasis on the fundamental difference between adults and children followed by the exclusion of the child from the social world, the human world even. The child is almost useless – a high value can be attributed to them but this will solely an educational merit (such is the psychologists and pedagogues message) or a society merit (such is the sociologists message). The next two stages can be mainly found in the psychological research and are connected with the differentiation and measurement of the development directions. These very directions define some children as normal and others as deviant within the boundaries of already grounded spate groups. This is the necessary fundament for a fourth step – anthologizing the group.

SOME extra characteristics exist as well, for instance, the *popularity of the viewpoints.* Within the most often encountered images the idea originates that some children are angels and others devils; some are a genuine pleasure and some a strenuous burden, some heavenly creatures and some useless and irrational [5, p. 61].

The child's nature is also being used as an argument. The child is presented as a naturally innocent creature in contrast to the human culture.

ANOTHER characteristic is connected with the *instrumental zing of the child* and using it as a rhetoric figure supporting the theories aiming at achieving other purposes.

THE infant socialization can be scrutinized through few **sociological interpretations:**
⇨ The problem of integration into the social whole based on the functional sociological tradition of Émile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons;
⇨ The reflexivity of the self-notion based on the socio-interactional concept of George Herbert Mead;
⇨ The subjective point of view as socio-constructive and socio-constructed based on the phenomenological interpretation of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann.
⇨ In order to investigate the *symbolic combats in the field of institutional child care* in the interconnection between practice and imagination, between the objective structures and subjective experience invested in sociological strategies, Pierre Bourdieu's terms *life chances and social success* are introduced.

THE so far proposed hypothesis presupposed the following conclusions:

THE social activeness and the socialization are interconnected processes. Depending on the direction of the social activeness – constructive or destructive- the children can be constructive or destructive.

THE social activeness is a process that is fundamental for the children's socialization. The correct flow of the socialization mechanisms is impossible without directing the energy of the social activeness towards the social values which is done through motivation.

MOTIVATION is the power on which all children activities and their social activeness are based. The art therapy activities with the children set a purpose for their behavior by creating a direct and timely connection between result-orientated actions and achievements.

REFERENCES

1. ALLAN, D., 1997: THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CHILD'S SOUL, SPB - MINSK
2. MARKOV, TS., 1996: SOCIALIZATION IN: ENCYCLOPEDIC DICTIONARY OF SOCIOLOGY, BAS, SOFIA
3. MUDRIK, A.V., 1999: SOCIALIZATION AS A SOCIO-PEDAGOGICAL PHENOMENON, SOCIAL PEDAGOGY, MOSCOW, ACADEMY, SOFIA, 8-16
4. PARSONS, T., 1990: THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE CHILD AND INTERNALIRATION OF SOCIAL VALUE ORIENTATIONS. STRUCTURE OF THE "BASE" PERSONALITY. IN: NIKOLOV, L. AND DEYANOVA, L. (ED). SOCIOLOGY OF THE INDIVIDUAL, READER, SOFIA
5. BUEHLER-NIEDERBERGER, D, 1998: SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH, B.
6. DURKHEIM, E., 1982: RULES OF SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD, P. 146-147, PUBLISHER: FREE PRESS
7. JAMES, A., A. PROUT, A., 1997: CONSTRUCTING AND RECONSTRUCTING CHILDHOOD. LONDON: FALMER PRESS, P.8
8. LANDGARTEN, H.B., 1989: KLINISCHE KUNSTTHERAPIE – EIN UMFASSENDER LEITFADEN. KARLSRUHE, GERMANY: GERADI VERLAG FÜR KUNSTTHERAPIE
9. LIEBMANN, M., 1994: ART THERAPY WITH OFFENDERS, JESSICA KINGSLEY PUBLISHERS
10. LIEBMANN, M., 1989: ED., ART THERAPY IN PRACTICE, JESSICA KINGSLEY PUBLISHERS