

Humanitas University Research Papers. Pedagogy, pp. 27-36

**Review article**

Received: **14.02.2019**

Accepted: **28.04.2019**

Published: **10.06.2019**

Sources of financing the publication: **Pontifical University of John Paul II (subsidy of the Minister of Science and Higher Education for statutory activity)**

DOI: **10.5604/01.3001.0013.2201**

Authors' Contribution:

- (A) **Study Design**
- (B) Data Collection
- (C) Statistical Analysis
- (D) Data Interpretation
- (E) **Manuscript Preparation**
- (F) **Literature Search**

Grzegorz Godawa\*

## **THE POTENTIAL OF AN (UN)INTIMIDATED TEACHER**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In one of his publications, Kazimierz Denek (2015, p. 13) poses an important question: “What are the reasons for the increase in interest in values?” Answering, he explains: “This is primarily due to their pedagogical implications. Values play an important role in education and its sciences. They are a signpost in growing up to humanity. They are the source of the goals for education and upbringing. They set a deep humanistic vision of man.”

The righteousness of this statement seems obvious. The author's reference to the relationship between values and pedagogy allows for seeing several areas in which they develop. One of them is the teacher's work (Ziółkowski, 2016, p. 7). There is abundance of studies on the various dimensions of teaching activity and its axiological significance. The most important are texts that allow determining how much the teacher's work meets the expectations of the society. After all, the teacher, “making a promise to his student's parents or guardians of getting a certain value, guarantees (by his by

---

\* ORCID: 0000-0002-2283-3965. Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków.

social, moral, professional and scientific status) the readiness to sacrifice himself for the idea promoted and values passed to his pupils” (Kutrowska, 2008, p. 52).

In order for these promises to be fulfilled, it is necessary for the teacher to address to values personally. A particular manifestation of this attitude is the admiration of values and intimidation flowing from the awareness of their size. This is confirmed by Józef Tischner (1993, p. 511) when he notes that “for human life and thinking values are – no doubt – an eternal source of fascination.” Enchantment and intimidation seem to be interesting cognitive issues. A teacher intimidated with values has the chance to “stand out with such a set of virtues and values that can radiate to others. Young people and adults shall imitate him regardless of whether there is a crisis of values or whether there are external transformations” (Kabat, 2018, p. 30). To study this issue, it is necessary to present the meaning of values in the lives of teachers and what shyness and intimidation is.

## TEACHER VALUES

Edward Jeziorowski (1997, pp. 51-58), on the basis of research, presented a picture of values functioning in teachers’ minds. Among the most important goals resulting from the adopted values, he lists the family and concern for ensuring its safety, which is related to national security. The author included the teacher’s personal dignity, high professional qualifications, authority, personal independence and freedom of choice (Jeziorowski, 1997, p. 57).

The research conducted by Beata Taradejna (2013, pp. 169-190) has shown that the values most highly respected by teachers include: self-fulfillment, professional success, and performing an interesting job. The least significant values are acquiring new pedagogical knowledge as well as involvement in the political life of the country. Differences in the hierarchy of values, especially in the area of social values, are noticeable taking into account the seniority of teachers. For teachers with over 10 years of professional experience, the social dimension of pedagogical work is of great importance, including the possibility of acting for others. Teachers with 3 years of professional experience described this aspect of pedagogical work as one of the least significant values. They also lowly assessed the fulfillment of professional functions in the socio-educational area. At the same time, the area of cultural, artistic and moral values is the priority for them (Taradejna, 2013, pp. 187-189).

Jan Zowczak (2005, pp. 175-198), examining the orientation on values present among teachers, distinguishes personal and social values. On the basis of research, he indicates the most significant values for teachers, including health, family happiness, personal dignity, and faith in God. Well-being or popularity is much less important. An interesting conclusion of the author is that the expectation from teachers to logically and explicitly define the hierarchy of values would be a simplification (Zowczak, 2005, pp. 194-196).

The research carried out by Paweł F. Nowak and colleagues (2017, p. 72) shows that the most-respected value of the surveyed teachers is health, physical and mental fitness. The values ranked second in the hierarchy are love and friendship. Intelligence was indicated in the third place, followed by knowledge, wisdom, courage and firmness, and in the last place a good presence.

The presented research results allow concluding that values are an important area of teachers' life and professional work. Thanks to this, it is justified to distinguish the values that are particularly important in the life and work of teachers. Good, truth and beauty deserve such distinction. They can enchant and intimidate, and thus strongly affect the space of education.

### SHYNESS AND INTIMIDATION

The shyness phenomenon in present times is an important and widespread issue, because it affects constantly growing population (Szaniawska, 2011, p. 157). Most often they are considered in the context of social functioning of children and youth, but it seems reasonable to approximate the importance of shyness in the lives of adults. With age, the tendency to control shyness increases, but it is also often hidden under cover of defensive tactics that increase difficulties in building interactions (Harwas-Napierała, 1995, pp. 20-21). In our deliberations, shyness is understood as "a complex syndrome of symptoms in the emotional, behavioral, cognitive and motor realms" (Rosiak, Grabowska, 2010, p. 93). It occurs in the everyday life of shy people, and especially clearly manifests itself in stressful situations requiring contact with other people or during public speaking. Therefore, it does not bypass the space of professional life, which in terms of pedagogical issues is of considerable importance. The term "shy teacher" seems to contain an internal contradiction: after all, being a teacher means entering into many interactions, frequent speaking in the class forum, the need to make bold decisions. And yet, there are shy teachers and they have to face the everyday challenges of working at school.

A concept that is close to shyness is intimidation. It has a semantic field that shows this type of attitude to values in a slightly more favorable light. "Delight is an expression of admiration – an admiration for something or someone, an expression preceded by a peculiar act of revelation, something or someone, or something that someone has done. Enchantment is a sudden discovery of something that we did not expect, although we were looking for it and waiting" (Krasoń, 2016, p. 134).

Intimidation occurs in situations that surprise and allow discovering the deep meaning of the experienced reality. So it has a cognitive value. In this sense, "shyness, generally understood as a feeling of embarrassment in the presence of other people, is often a temporary state, and even a temporary one, taking the form of intimidation" (Tucholska, Tucholska, 2011, p. 45). The transition from shyness to intimidation also has an adaptive value. Intimidation as a social emotion can facilitate cooperation

because it inhibits individual behaviors that may be socially undesirable. The intimidation is the potential that can be released in favorable circumstances. Including the category of intimidation into the concepts used in pedeutology gives the chance to discover that there are delights and enchantments in teachers' work. Thanks to them, this work takes on a radiance and dynamism. The source of intimidation may be the values that are present in the teacher's life and professional work. The basic values can be experienced by any teacher, also non-shy, because shyness does not significantly differentiate the hierarchy of adult values (Ludzińska, 2011, pp. 193-194).

## INTIMIDATION BY BEAUTY

Grzegorz Mitrowski (1993, p. 72) notes that beauty is born from the meeting of a "free perceiving entity, which is enslaved «by its own will», in the act of perceiving work as something necessary, unique and exclusive. In this way, the world of things that have meaning for a human being is created, a world that has a natural and cultural aspect." What can be this "captivating" work? It is certainly a man. Dante Alighieri (2019) in *Divine Comedy* wrote:

Girt with olive over a white veil  
Clothed under a green mantle  
With a colour of living flame  
And my spirit which now so long  
Had not been overcome with awe  
Trembling in her presence, without having more knowledge by the eyes,  
Through hidden virtue that came from her, felt old love's great power.

The poetic intimidation with the beauty of a woman points to two important realities: the value and the way of perceiving it. A miracle that attracts and intimidates is a man portrayed in all its beauty, not only external. For a teacher, the admiration and intimidation of man's beauty is an important area of their work and development. The enchantment of the inner beauty of a human being that is revealed in the education process opens the teacher to each student: "Authentic pedagogical love should therefore embrace all pupils, preferring children disadvantaged in any way. The teacher must see the beauty in the pupil's soul. All children, good ones and those difficult in terms of education, should feel loved and accepted by their educators" (Mazur, 2015, p. 6).

Science is also a value that is expressed in simplicity, elegance and symmetry (Szydłowski, Tambor, 2013, p. 67). These features are visible, for example, in the cosmological model of the universe, which, thanks to its simplicity, is a clear and deep semantic reflection of the complex reality. On the basis of these considerations, the question arises about the admiration of knowledge that the teacher has and transfers, as well as the prospect of learning more. Usually, the scope of knowledge used in the everyday practice of education is limited to the areas defined in the curriculum,

which promotes routine. Despite these difficulties, it is possible to be intimidated by the knowledge represented by the student, and in a broader perspective by individual sciences. The discrimination by knowledge is based on the conviction of its true value, recognition of its own imperfection and the need for self-education. The teacher intimidated by the beauty of the world and the availability of knowledge about him is a person with a strong educational potential.

## ADMIRATION OF TRUTH

Truth is a value that has specific pedagogical implications. "Truth is not «one of many» values to be realized [...]. It is not one of the many fruits that the educator may encourage to pick, but rather the soil in which the tree bearing such fruits is rooted, so it is the factor that underpins the education and makes it sensible" (Star-nawski, 2008, p. 196). This approach to truth places it among the most-anticipated values that should be praised by the teacher and the educator. Meanwhile, it is not always appreciated. Similarly to the previously discussed beauty, truth often gives way to other values, especially subjective ones. K. Denek (2015, p. 32) comments on this fact as follows: "It is also puzzling that beauty, talent and truth are more valued by school and university students than teachers. Lower sensitivity of teachers to these values is all the stranger that it is them who should instill in their students the pursuit of feeling beauty, seeking the truth and striving for the development of their personality." The departure of teachers from the recognition of the value of truth is disturbing, because "a man rejecting the «authority of values» ceases to be a man of great format, and above all negates his value as a person" (Denek, 2015, p. 98).

Sometimes truth is excluded from the value category and dwells over them, as is the case in Robert Spaemann's concept. Understanding the truth, which is above the values, shows that it is not relativistic and that it has the stigma of the absolute. In this sense, the truth about human dignity means that it is the reference point of all values (Kozuchowski, 2008, p. 193). Understanding this, John Paul II entitled one of his key encyclicals *Veritatis splendor (The Glory of Truth)* (1993). He emphasized the strength of the inner simplicity of the truth and the range of its influence.

Fascination with another human being and his dignity leads to its respect. This attitude is extremely important in today's education. The respect shown to participants in the education process is a basic requirement, expected and valued by students, which found confirmation in the studies (Jankowska, 2013, p. 242). Showing respect by the teachers to other school employees, and especially to students, builds a warm school atmosphere and strengthens the sense of dignity in each of them.

Janusz Korczak (2012, p. 43) years ago wrote about respect for the child and the role of educators: "A new generation is growing, a new wave is rising. They go with virtues and flaws, give them conditions to make them grow better. We will not win with the coffin of sick heredity, we will not tell the cornflower to be corn. We are not

a miracle worker – we do not want to be charlatans. We renounce the hypocritical longing for perfect children.” That is why he demanded “respect, if not humility, for white, bright, immaculate, holy childhood.” Understanding and treating the tension that is created between the educational goals and the actual state of the student allows cooperation that benefits both parties

Accepting a child as he or she is, is a condition of establishing a proper interaction. For this, however, as suggested by J. Korczak, humility is essential. Thanks to it, one can respectfully look at other people and respect their dignity.

## INTIMIDATION BY THE GOODNESS OF EDUCATION

The relationship between goodness and education is undeniable. After all, education is good in itself (Czupryk, 2010, p. 103). It also has a social meaning, which Bogusław Śliwerski (2014, p. 373) presents as follows: “Education is one of the many goods of common societies, that is, it is the good of all people and of every human being individually. It is thanks to education that everyone can live and develop as a human being, as a subject living in a given community, updating his or her human status. Education is a common good of every person and society as a whole, if the achievement of this good, its utilization is the reason not only of individuals, but also of the whole society, and thus of the laws that apply to it.”

Paying attention to the community dimension of education allows seeing the importance it has for the development of the individual and society. The use of education is not a privilege, but a right of every citizen. Everyone can also participate in changes in education, according to their competence. Changes are necessary because it is impossible not to notice many problems in achieving these goals, which causes depression and discouragement (Denek, 2014, p. 27). However, it is also worth noticing such areas of education that are experiencing prosperity and arouse admiration. They are visible, *inter alia*, in virtual space which, through social media gathers people with similar interests and needs.

One of the educational initiatives worth paying attention to in terms of the social welfare of education is the “Superbelfrzy RP” (Polish Superteachers) initiative, which runs a social blog dedicated to independent educational journalism. This is just one of the many forms of highly developed activities of people involved in education – teaching enthusiasts. Superbelfrzy RP write about themselves: “We believe that the most important, irreplaceable link in the teaching process of a young man is – the teacher learning with them. A teacher understood as a guide to the world, not as an infallible source of knowledge. So we learn constantly from each other, sharing our knowledge and experiences” (Superbelfrzy RP, 2019). By emphasizing the role and meaning of the teacher, they see in them good that needs to be strengthened, brought out and properly used. Bottom-up changes that are initiated by “educhangers” are directed at making teachers and the society aware of the great potential hidden in ed-

education, despite the innumerable difficulties in its implementation. The changes are bottom-up, evolutionary, but at the same time dynamic and precisely targeted. Superbelrzy RP use a lot of situations occurring at school to give them a deeper meaning, to activate the teacher, and the student to become interested in knowledge. An example is the article by Dariusz Martynowicz (2018), in which the author replies to the letter of a mother of a four-grader. For him, the first day of the new school year was a series of lessons during which he received a whole set of requirements and rules to obey in the new school year. The response of the “educhanger” is aimed at offering teachers unconventional and non-schematic forms of fulfilling a formal duty towards the student. Thanks to them, formal education takes on a new glow.

A look at education as a social good leads to the belief that the initiatives of individuals and communities surprise with their originality and panache. Among the common, often justified complaints, these initiatives show the positive side of education. And because of that they cause surprise and intimidation. They inspire to take similar initiatives that change the way teachers perceive their work and enrich their workshop.

## CONCLUSIONS

The search for a relationship between universal values and teaching work brings an interesting observation: the axiological foundation of this work still has a lot of potential. Liberating it allows teachers to refresh and diversify the education process. One of those planes on which social changes take place is intimidation of the teacher's values. For experiencing intimidation of values, it is necessary to create appropriate conditions in which the teacher will be able to experience these values, and so it is necessary to time for an authentic meeting with the student, deepening scientific knowledge, entering the creative teaching community. An obstacle in this respect is the increasingly important formal dimension of education, expressed in the need to generate volumes of documents, reports and project descriptions. They are necessary, but sometimes they obscure the true good of education.

The shy teacher is a very fragile figure and seemingly not suited to modern school. However, in reality it largely determines its potential. It is necessary for the teacher not to remain intimidated, but to be able to involve the students in discovered values. Then they give a taste to the education process and inspire students to build a similar attitude.

The title of this article suggests certain twofoldness in the perception of the axiological potential of the teacher. It is necessary to ensure that he is emboldened to undertake difficult work. There is a lot of reason in this postulate. But it is no less important that the teacher encourage such a deep experience of values that they intimidate him and inspire to awaken what is valuable among his students.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alighieri, D. (2019). *Boska Komedia. Czyściec. Pieśń jedenasta*. Access: <http://www.verbasacra.pl/archiwum/boskompoz-2.htm>
- Czupryk, R. (2010). Jaka wartość edukacji?. *Pedagogika Katolicka*, 7.
- Denek, K. (2014). Uczyć w duchu mądrości i wiedzy. In K. Denek, A. Kamińska, P. Oleśniewicz (eds.), *Edukacja jutra. Od tradycji do nowoczesności*. Sosnowiec.
- Denek, K. (2015). Sens wartości w systemie edukacji narodowej. *Kultura – Przemiany – Edukacja*, 3.
- Harwas-Napierała, B. (1995). *Nieśmiałość dorosłych. Geneza – Diagnostyka – Terapia*. Poznań.
- Jan Paweł II. (1993). *Encyclical „Veritatis splendor”*. Vatican.
- Jankowska, A. (2013). Nauczyciel (nie)godny zaufania. *Edukacja Humanistyczna*, 2.
- Jeziorowski, E. (1997). Preferowane i funkcjonujące wartości w zawodzie nauczyciela. *Studia Pedagogiczne*, 30.
- Kabat, M. (2018). Umiejętności i wartości w zawodzie nauczyciela. *Prima Educatione*.
- Korczak, J. (2012). *Prawo dziecka do szacunku*. Warszawa.
- Kozuchowski, J. (2008). Wartość czy godność człowieka? Roberta Spaemanna wizja godności ludzkiej. *Studia Elbląskie*, 9.
- Krasoń, K. (2016). O zachwycie sztuką doświadczaną. Pomiędzy „sztucznym fiołkiem”, zdumieniem a przeżyciem, nie tylko w edukacji. In A. Rzymelka-Fraćkiewicz, T. Wilk (eds.), *Edukacja, kultura, sztuka – spoistość a integracja*. Katowice.
- Kutrowska, B. (2008). Spojrzenie na rolę nauczyciela z perspektywy różnych oczekiwań społecznych. In P. Rudnicki, B. Kutrowska, M. Nowak-Dziemianowicz (eds.), *Nauczyciel: misja czy zawód? Społeczne i profesjonalne aspekty roli*. Wrocław.
- Ludzińska, K. (2011). System wartości u osób nieśmiałych – doniesienie z badań. In G.E. Kwiatkowska, A. Łukasik (eds.), *Jednostka w ponowoczesnym świecie*. Lublin.
- Martynowicz, D. (2018). *Nauczycielu, wyluzuj! Czyli o pierwszej lekcji...*. Access: <http://www.superbelfrzy.edu.pl/rodzicom/nauczycielu-wyluzuj-czyli-o-pierwszej-lekcji/>
- Mazur, P. (2015). *Zawód nauczyciela w ciągu dziejów. Skrypt dla studentów z historii wychowania*. Chełm.
- Mitrowski, G. (1993). Transcendentalne kategorie filozofii: prawda, dobro, piękno. *Folia Philosophica*, 11.
- Nowak, P.F., Charaśna-Blachucik, J., Olejniczak, D. (2017). Dobre zdrowie w indywidualnej hierarchii wartości nauczycieli w kontekście satysfakcji życiowej i jej związków z innymi wartościami. *Terazniejszość – Człowiek – Edukacja*, 2.

- Rosiak, K., Grabowska, M. (2010). Wybrane aspekty nieśmiałości w okresie młodzięcym i w późnej dorosłości. *Rocznik Naukowy Kujawsko-Pomorskiej Szkoły Wyższej w Bydgoszczy. Transdyscyplinarne Studia o Kulturze (i) Edukacji*, 5.
- Starnawski, W. (2008). *Prawda jako zasada wychowania*. Warszawa.
- Superbelfrzy RP. (2019). *Blog grupy Superbelfrzy RP – eduzmieniacy*. Access: <http://www.superbelfrzy.edu.pl/o-blogu/>
- Szaniawska, A. (2011). Samoocena osób nieśmiałych – doniesienie z badań. In G.E. Kwiatkowska, A. Łukasik (eds.), *Jednostka w ponowoczesnym świecie*. Lublin.
- Szydłowski, M., Tambor, P. (2013). Piękno w teorii nauki. Estetyczne kryteria w ocenie i wyborze teorii naukowych. *Humanistyka i Przyrodoznawstwo*, 19.
- Śliwerski, B. (2014). Edukacja jako wspólne dobro niespełnionym przesłaniem KEN dla potomnych. In K. Dormus, B. Popiołek, A. Chłosta-Sikorska, R. Ślęczka (eds.), *Komisja Edukacji Narodowej. Kontekst historyczno-pedagogiczny*. Kraków.
- Taradejna, B. (2013). Wartości cenione przez nauczycieli a ich znaczenie w pracy pedagogicznej. *Studia z Teorii Wychowania*, 4.
- Tischner, J. (1993). *Myślenie według wartości*. Kraków.
- Tucholska, S., Tucholska, K. (2011). Nieśmiałość a kompetencje temporalne młodzieży. *Acta Universitatis Lodzianensis Folia Psychologica*, 15.
- Ziółkowski, P. (2016). *Pedeutologia zarys problematyki*. Bydgoszcz.
- Zowczak, J. (2005). Wartości osobowe i społeczne nauczycieli. *Saeculum Christianum: Pismo Historyczno-Społeczne*, 12.

## THE POTENTIAL OF AN (UN)INTIMIDATED TEACHER

**Keywords:** teacher, values, intimidation, education

**Abstract:** The axiological dimension of a teacher's work has potential which is not always adequately recognized. The experience of values may cause delight and make the teacher intimidated by their up-to-date nature and power. A teacher who is open to good, truth, and beauty becomes influenced by these values. In this way, he becomes more and more convinced of the need to respect every student's dignity and to recognize their inner beauty. He also sees the need for self-development. In order to achieve these goals, the teacher cannot remain at the level of intimidation. He needs to implement these values in his life and to involve students in them. Therefore, the teacher needs intimidation to become fascinated by the values which are present in his work and to implement them in day-to-day school education.

## POTENCJAŁ O(NIE)ŚMIELONEGO NAUCZYCIELA

**Słowa kluczowe:** nauczyciel, wartości, onieśmienie, edukacja

**Streszczenie:** Aksjologiczny wymiar pracy nauczyciela stanowi potencjał, który nie zawsze jest należycie doceniany. Doświadczenie wartości może wyzwolić zachwyt i wywołać onieśmienie ich aktualnością i siłą. Nauczyciel, który otwiera się na dobro, prawdę i piękno, poddaje się ich wpływowi, przez co wzmacnia w sobie przekonanie o potrzebie poszanowania godności każdego ucznia, dostrzeżenia jego wewnętrznego piękna, a także konieczności własnego rozwoju. Aby zrealizować te cele, niezbędne jest to, by nauczyciel nie pozostał na poziomie onieśmienia, ale by odkryte wartości umiał wcielić w życie oraz angażował w nie swoich uczniów. Dlatego nauczyciel potrzebuje ośmielenia do zafascynowania się wartościami obecnymi w jego pracy, a także do przełożenia ich na realia codziennej edukacji szkolnej.