Cultural Types of Partnership in Education in the 21st Century

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Abstract. The article analyzes the logic of transformation of social connections in modern society, the impact of new technologies of communication and continuous education on the diminishing reliance on vertical connections, increased demand for mediation and partnership building both in education and social life in general. Partnership is studied as a key paradigm of modernity, the technology of reproduction of system stability in the conditions of globalization.

The authors reviewed the history of the changing attitudes to competition and partnership and the modern correlation of these approaches within the social and cultural process. The diversity of partnership cultures is shown as an attribute of societal sustainable development, the creation of a system of stable reproduction of social and cultural process. At the same time, the expanded reproduction of subjectivity makes it necessary to develop the ability and desire to maintain constant dialogue interaction in educational sphere, joint development of goals and forms of partnership.

The development of mediation practices and partnerships in various areas of modern social life is studied on the basis of examples from Poland.

Keywords: social relations, partnership, competition, sustainable development, mediation practices.

Research area: social sciences.

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Challenge of mutual disagreement

The functioning of the educational system is a complex process, and therefore an unambiguous, full agreement among all participants can never be reached. However, the current level of conflict occurrence in the educational system may probably be called unprecedented one. And this is obviously not accidental. In the 21st century, every member of society is increasingly becoming the permanent learner and is gradually getting accustomed to this position. The emphasis on lifelong learning is becoming the norm. And accordingly, there has been formed an understanding that that there are no people who can learn something in full once and forever, moreover, there are no indisputable authorities. Each person, taking advantage of information obtained through new technologies, more and more feels like a full-fledged subject of the educational process. Each subject has a peculiar vision of the educational process as a whole, its objectives, optimal structure, specific situations turning up in educational activities. These visions are undoubtedly not equally clear. But they do exist in great diversity. And they contradict each other. Hence, the educational process is inevitably filled with dissent, disputes and conflicts are multiplying, and more and more efforts are being made to resolve them. Thus, the need for mediation is growing and intensifying.

In this regard, having analyzed disputes in school which can be resolved with the help of mediator, Anna Duda and Ioanna Lukasik singled out the following conflicts, depending on the participant:

- student *vs* student,
- student *vs* teacher,
- teacher *vs* principal,
- teacher *vs* teacher,
- parent *vs* teacher,
- parents *vs* student,
- class *vs* student,
- class *vs* class,
- class *vs* teacher (Duda, Łukasik, 2011: 26).

Such a broad, almost all-encompassing proneness to conflict is a representation of that there is increased "rightfulness", independence of subjects and participants in educational ac-

tivities, and also realization of the crisis in the vision of the content and goals of education. The rapid development of technology leads to a fundamental change in the perception of goals of development. What required all efforts then, today is easily achievable. As a consequence, society as a whole is experiencing a situation which Alfred Schütz defined as the lack of a common perspective (Schütz, 2012). And this situation is particularly true for the educational system.

The structure of educational activities in modern society is getting more and more complex. The inclusion of all generations in the continuous education may also be a problem, creating conflict situations. The older generation is more and more included in educational practices, they treat this situation of sitting at the desk with enthusiasm. However, it is still almost unclear how, what, how long to teach older people. Only little by little does it become lucid that education for a senior generation is a very special kind of education. Meanwhile, some university lecturers do not want to work with pensioners, considering such activities a profanation of education. General calls for the transition to continuous education and the current prolific activity of the older generation do not comply with the established system of accounting and control of teaching activities and, which is even more important, contradict the principle of competitiveness of educational institutions.

To change the situation, they have introduced multiple reforms in the educational system everywhere. These reforms are an attempt to create new forms of control over educational activities that are appropriate to the new content. Nevertheless, everlasting reforming does not reduce conflict. It is becoming progressively more apparent that overcoming incoherence and conflict in education cannot be accomplished through "top-down" decrees and orders. Under the pressure of a changing reality the formation of an internally consistent system of educational practices is carried out in a permanent and comprehensive manner by society as a whole. Yet, we should take the opposite view. The aspiration to agree, to develop partner relations springs from the objec-

tive to prevent "the end of history" as a result of aggravation of mutual misunderstanding and discontent. It is possible to state that this very situation of advancing totalization of mutual misunderstanding is the radical challenge which the mankind is compelled to face and react, namely by creating the system of protection, system of re-enactment of interaction based on reciprocation of understanding and agreement.

During the formation of this system there appears a growing need for the work of a mediator, who would help to combine different visions of education presented by different actors, to put an end to reciprocal disagreement and facilitate joint activities and partnership.

Scale and directions of creation
of partnership and trust

Partnership is the key paradigm of modernity. Only on its basis there can arise a sustainable agreement, since neither consent nor reconciliation without a plan of further concerted action, can last for the long term[1].

Partnership acts as a basis for the reproduction of the social and cultural process at all levels and stages of its development. For the individual, it implies fair participation in a common task. However, two questions are almost always open: 1) what the degree of unanimity of purpose is; 2) what participation can be considered fair.

The issue of the scale of the task, in which the individual participates, actually grows into the problem of defining the area of responsibility of the individual and the area of his or her trust. Since it is trust that forms the basis for sustainable partnerships.

In a small group of people united by direct communication trust is based on the experience of preliminary practices.

On the other hand, partnership behaviour is necessary not only in small groups, but also in large groups such as the nation and nowadays – the human community as a whole. The

foundation of partnership behaviour is the development of social capital.

Social capital can be seen as a feeling of "we-community" present in the public consciousness, as a basis for solidarity of actions of the society members, their desire to agree, their disposition for agreement. Rich, highly developed social capital includes common values, symbols and concepts.

Each society either explicitly or implicitly sets the goal of expansion and development of social capital. To achieve this goal, a variety of means are used. Generally speaking, they can be divided into two directions: 1) integration of community on the basis of confrontation with someone or something (forced by external circumstances, either real or unreal, i.e. "involuntary" unification); 2) internal integration of community, without opposition it to "Other" – strangers, by creating conditions under which community lives in heterogeneity. These two ways of strengthening social capital and overcoming dissent within society are alternative and almost mutually exclusive. The first assumes strengthening of homogeneity, and the second – development of internal wealth of society on the basis of parallel development of various behavioural strategies, self-realization, rooted in the diversity of socio-cultural identities.

The first option is simpler and more traditional. Nevertheless, management disposition towards the model of complete homogeneity is an evidence of short-sightedness, and in the conditions of globalization, such a model finally becomes nothing but utopia. The desire to realize such a utopia, to represent one's own values as the only worthy, inevitably leads to the transformation of patriotism into nationalism, and in education this eulogism of utopia glorifies banality, simplifies symbolic systems, leads to isolability and a dead end of "monolithic unity".

In turn, the implementation of a model focused on the openness of heterogeneity and multiculturalism requires enormous effort and can also create problems. Building partnerships between dissimilar and non-equal members, while preserving diversity, is an extremely difficult task.

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[1] It is worth remembering the etymology of partnership – the word comes from the French "partner", from Old French "parçener" (co-heir) (perhaps from "parttenour" (holding part)), then from Latin "partition" (division), from "partire" (divide). For this analysis it is also important that the partner's antonym is a competitor.

Diversity of partnership cultures

Multicultural environment is an indispensable attribute of modern society. The diversity of partnership cultures, as well as the heterogeneity of educational cultures, arises from the diversity of cultures, the prevailing attitude to reality, the notions of humanism as either collectivism or individualism, the focus on activity in the material or spiritual spheres. Different cultures (tentatively speaking, in the West and in the East) reproduce different attitudes towards the goals of activity. In some types of culture the main attention is paid to the arrangement of the nearest sphere of life, in others – to the distant one. The image of partnership, i.e. participation that dominates in culture, depends on this arrangement. Obviously, the original models and scales of actions that have been established and entrenched in different cultures cannot be changed overnight. The broad variety of motivations and forms of modern concerted activity is the wealth of mankind with each of these forms being necessary. It is no coincidence, for example, even in the broadest context, that when analyzing global environmental problems, the Germans call for very specific, local actions. It is in Germany that the principle "Think globally – act locally", which has recently become sought after, is the most persistently and consistently implemented one. But the Russian culture opts for movement towards coherence, so the culture of partnership formation is different. Its reflection can be found in the theory of positive unity and sobornost. Its essence as a technology of activity was comprehensively described by Pavel Florensky: "While living we unite with ourselves in space and time, as an integral organism, we gather together from separate mutually exclusive (by the law of identity) elements, particles, cells, mental states, etc. In the same way, we cooperate in the family, clan, nation, etc., uniting until we form mankind and include the whole world into the unity of humanity" (Florensky, 1990: 343). This is one of the clearest expressions of the key interest in Russian culture in the development of responsibility starting from oneself to the broadest possible sphere – the world, even space. The strength and intensity of this orientation cannot be ignored, as it affects the functioning of Russia's exceptionally diverse multicultural environment.

The experience of forming a multicultural environment in modern Poland is also original and unique in many ways. Owing to this multicultural environment the Polish socio-cultural process creates specific opportunities and limitations in building partnerships. In the Middle Ages, Poland was one of the key subjects of European politics. However, in the 18th century the territory of Poland was first divided between border states and since then the Polish people have been fighting for independence for many decades. The meaning of life for many generations of Poles has been embodied by the slogan "Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła" (Poland is Not Yet Lost). In this struggle, in the absence of political and economic independence, culture becomes very meaningful. Its blooming, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, actually signifies for Poles the advance of their country. After World War II, Poland developed as a mono-ethnic society. Currently, in the country there is unique migration situation:

On the one hand, the country is not as rich economically as its western neighbours and therefore is not so attractive for migrants heading to Europe from all over the world;

on the other hand, Poland, a country with a population of 38 million, has its own special inflow of population thanks to migrants (almost 20 million of ethnic Poles who do not live in Poland). The country has accumulated vast experience in the repatriation of ethnic immigrant Poles up to their full acculturation. The adaptation of repatriates in Poland does not lead to the multicultural environment creation. Instead, ethnic Poles, mainly from Kazakhstan and Russia, seek their full integration in the society.

In today's situation, however, this experience can be used only in part. As the migration situation in Poland has changed dramatically in recent years, it has led to an emotionally charged public debate. At the moment, Poland is still a country with a high level of emigration. However, against this background, the number of immigrants is increasing considerably. According to Brigida Solga, immigration to Poland is still limited, but it is already capa-

ble of creating tension in public consciousness (Solga, 2016: 52), consequently, it is often reproduced and perceived as a threat to the development of society, its atmosphere and integrity. Since 2014, Poland has seen the dramatic rise in the number of citizens from Ukraine. Today the share of the Ukrainians among foreigners who have been issued work permits is 83% (*Urząd do Spraw*), i.e. the Ukrainians constitute the absolute majority of foreigners on the Polish labour market. Concurrently, the group of immigrant students from Ukraine shows a rapid growth in the inflow of migrants. About 40% of them say they see their future associated with Poland and more than 30% want to be at least partially connected with Poland (*Serwis internetowy NBP*). Analysis of the attitudes of the Ukrainians coming to Poland demonstrates that 11% of them intend to stay in Poland forever (*Personnel Service*). They plan to become a part of Polish society but at the same time they do not (and cannot) pursue changing their ethnicity and socio-cultural identity.

The document "Poland's migration policy – current status and postulated actions", which has been regulating the policy towards migrants since 2012, follows the previous documents in focusing on the integration of ethnic Poles returning from abroad. It lacks thorough analysis of the new situation, elaboration of measures to regulate the development of the social environment which is becoming multi-ethnic. Meanwhile, Sigmund Baumann's description of "the ways of being together" (Strath, Witoszek, 1999: 138), in which the largest Polish-English sociologist explains the logic of a person's transition in the postmodern era from an indifferent state of "being around" to a state of "being for". According to Baumann, transition to "being for" is the only way for modern man to make one's own life meaningful and to save oneself. We think it is a designation of another very peculiar way of building partnerships, overcoming real or potential social dissent. The path is specific, maybe it is necessary as a shift away from extreme individualism.

However, in order to understand how heterogeneous modern partnership cultures can be combined, it is crucial to touch upon history of partnership in education at least briefly.

On the history of the transformation of partnership in education

The entire history of society can be seen as a history of partnership development. Awareness of necessity to get partners has emerged along the formalization and expansion of social inequalities. Having appeared in ancient civilizations, hierarchy systems promote the intensification of society development and, at the same time, individualization and growth of mutual dissent. That is why the ancients were already aware of the need to build partner relations, since first of all, these relations were essential for the development of culture, and it was these ancient nations that created a form of dialogue. Dialogue is possible on the basis of the principle of "equality of the unequal", formulated by Socrates. But despite the importance of this form, it was venerated only at the Athens Agora, at the Academy of Plato, where, as the inscription on the gate reads, "Let None But Geometers Enter Here". In society there is a need for spiritual development, awareness, creation, protection of the intelligent, good, eternal. To meet this need, "internal cultural spaces" are being created, namely museums, gymnasiums, libraries, academies, universities. Still, political and economic development is based on widening inequality and using the "principle of realism". This principle was formulated in the 5th century BC by Thucydides in his "History of the Peloponnesian War": "The strong do as they want, and the weak suffer as they should" (Thucydides, 2017). Culture develops values, norms of humanism, principles of establishing and developing agreement and partnership, though in real political and economic practices, these norms and values are trampled down.

The history of mankind is rather often treated as the history of competition between peoples, first and foremost, political and economic rivalry, a certain contest with the aim to accumulate "power" on the basis of which one can do anything. Yet, the very essence of the force of a social subject cannot be so easily defined. The accumulation and capitalization of physical and material power leads to the aggravation of inequality and mutual misunderstanding in society. But at the same time, the

compound material wealth of a society creates conditions for expanding the opportunities for cultural development. The zone of influence of spiritual power in the social and cultural process is also decisive. In society, the need to overcome alienation, to develop a three-dimensional vision of the full diversity of the world and one's own place in it is becoming more and more evident. Satisfying this need definitely does not bring the "suffering of the weak", but rather supports overcoming weakness in all its forms and the optimal (in the interests of all stakeholders) use of all reserves, forces, capital of society, in the end fostering the development of partnership.

The development of the society's aggregate forces can be presented as a wave process. From this perspective, the Middle Ages period (the era of a rigid hierarchy) is seen, however, as a time of creating a specific model of partnership and restraining competition.

Modern era is a new phase in the development of social forces. Here the role of the principle of realism is swiftly growing, and the law is being revised so as not to restrain the will for competition. Individualism, the concentration on one's own interests is boosting and gaining public legitimacy. In the Modern era the limited partnership is created. At the same time, civil consciousness spreads out and gives birth to principle of citizenship as the responsibility of every citizen for the fate of the fatherland.

In the 20th century, hugely expanded capital and the forces of mankind provoked making social experiments of unprecedented scale. In each of them, though, ideology turned into dogma and did not form sustainable partnership. And starting from the middle of the 20th century the community has begun to cherish a new attitude to the future, to cultivate responsibility in face of impending future. This responsibility is formalized through a program of transition to sustainable development. This program reflects the aspiration to reach a new level of partnership in all socio-cultural practices, to educate new generations in terms of seeking and getting ready for partnership. Education is the principal, definitive form of these practices. Nonetheless, this is not at all easy, since the historical experience of mankind has accu-

mulated both partnership and anti-partnership (competition) practices. Education itself sets goals to develop the ability to be competitive, to win, to overtake, and to make a constructive search for solutions to problems considered as common ones.

The very notion of competition is an antonym for the notion of "partnership". The purpose of competition, rivalry is to take a higher position than of others. That is why competition actually excludes the common benefit. The means used in competitive struggle may be more or less rigid. But the higher the position in the political or economic hierarchy which the individual tries to occupy, the tougher the means of competition the individual uses, otherwise he/she would lose. And for the socio-cultural process at the current stage of its development, destruction is no longer acceptable. In the public consciousness, the idea of the need to exclude destruction, to seek and find ways of conflict resolution without resorting to force, without violence, in the interests of all parties to the conflict is becoming more and more relevant.

Features of mediation
and partnership development in Poland

The problem of developing mediation practices and partnerships is considered in detail in Polish science. Mediation is used for conflict resolution in civil and economic lawsuits. According to analysts, it is not used widely enough. However, this situation is typical for Europe as a whole. The analysis carried out in 28 countries of the European Union showed that in terms of the absolute number of mediation cases Poland, together with Hungary, ranks fifth after countries where mediation has a long-established tradition such as Germany, the Netherlands, England and Italy. It is worth mentioning that if we compare the number of mediation cases with the total number of cases brought to courts, it turns out that Poland is in the second top ten out of 28 countries (*Diagnosis of the use…*, 19).

Nevertheless, mediation practices are strongly supported. The Social Council for Alternative Conflict and Dispute Resolution under the Ministry of Justice developed and

adopted in May 2008 the Code of Mediators' Ethics in Poland (*Kodeks etyczny mediatora…*, 2008), standards for mediation in schools and other educational institutions, the Code of Ethics of Peer Mediators, the Code of Ethics of School Mediators.

There is a soaring emphasis on scientific analysis of mediation development. In order to systematize the accumulated knowledge and improve practices, Anna Cybulko's dissertation research offers a classification of mediation models, which are as follows:

Facilitative (classical) mediation;

Evaluation mediation;

Transformational mediation;

Therapeutic mediation;

Narrative mediation;

Humanist mediation;

Structural mediation;

Systemic mediation;

Strategic meditation (Cybulko, 2018).

Cybulko's study of the goal of mediation seems fairly significant in view of the fact that "the purpose of mediation is not always fully understood and defined, sometimes it remains in the implied form. In extreme cases it may not be understood even by the parties or by the mediator him-/herself" (Cybulko, 2018: 100). The researcher focused on analyzing two main options for determining the purpose of mediation: 1) agreement and conflict resolution or 2) development and change. As a result, 56% of mediators surveyed admitted that the primary goal of mediation is "development and change", while 37% found that "agreement and conflict resolution" is the primary goal of their mediation (Cybulko, 2018: 216). This study is of importance for the development of mediation practices in the educational system. It goes without saying that the immediate goal of mediation is overcoming dissent and resolving the conflicts. However, achieving this goal as an ultimate one is hardly possible. When the mediator pursues the goal of development, change of the situation, in which disagreement has arisen, in moving towards this goal the task of reconciliation is also solved as an intermediate one.

The modern Polish school undergoes intensive changes, as a result of escalation of immigration primarily from Ukraine, so the multicultural environment is formed step by step. Conflicts related to the diversity of cultures are not uncommon in modern Polish schools. These conflicts cannot be resolved by the mediators unless they see a way to change the situation, develop partnerships between representatives of different cultures. In this situation, the practices of school mediators are directly related to the activities of a wide network of non-governmental organizations, whose aim is helping immigrants to conform to new cultural conditions in Poland.

Overcoming misunderstandings and conflicts in the multicultural educational environment requires the mediator to apply not only psychological knowledge and skills, but also their own vision of the potential opportunities that arise from the mutual enrichment of cultures, in this case the Polish and Ukrainian ones. The mediator should show students the perspective of culturally enriched partnership. Naturally, the work of the mediator implies overcoming the barriers of social trust development that arise in a multicultural environment. These barriers can be provisionally divided into economic, social and political, and psychological.

In fact, the first group of barriers is inherent and has a consistently profound impact on the other two. But it is here that culture and education play a tremendous role. There are no simple solutions in the field of combining the interests and values of representatives of different ethnicities and peoples. But progress in the development of openness becomes possible via "reflexive modernization" (Beck, Giddens, Lash, 1994). A prerequisite for such progress is a change of priorities in the minds of students, turning the process of development of *cultural capital of the community* really into a major component of the development of society as a whole and of each of its members. Dialogues and partnerships are fundamental for the development of social trust and involve communication from an equality perspective. Let this equality be not absolute, but relative.

Thus, there is an assiduous accumulation of experience of multicultural communication in Poland. Taking advantage of this experience

is the basis of the mediator's work, which involves focusing on mutual understanding (Belaia, 2016: 35) and the development of partnerships. Here, on the basis of the initial intention of building partnerships, they can identify and eliminate cultural differences and ways to deal with failures in communication, as well as the causes of failures in intercultural communication, such as negative psychological attitudes, stereotypes, and often differences in etiquette. The key to the success of such intercultural communication is the recognition that basic humanist values and social life itself in the first instance, its stable reproduction, its protection from violence and destruction are common to all cultures. Each culture has its own forms of movement towards the realization of these values. In today's world, the diversity of these forms is a condition for the stable development of the socio-cultural process in general and social capital in each country, in each region, in each organization in particular.

On overcoming the "limited partnership"

V.P. Sheinov, the author of the book "Conflict Management", singles out intra-personal, interpersonal, and intergroup conflicts (Sheinov, 2019: 22). Today, it is necessary to analyse the intra-personal conflict, i.e. the lack of one's understanding of oneself and the individual inability to reconstruct their own activities in accordance with new tasks. And the problem here is not cultural heterogeneity, but the ill-preparedness to abandon "calculating, instrumental rationality separated from ethical and social values and broad philosophical views" (Dallmayr, Demenchonok, 2019: 218). Whereas at the beginning of the Modern era "limited partnership" was an effective tool to enhance competition and to accumulate strength for the strong to do what they want, nowadays, under the transition to sustainable development, diversity of mindsets is a condition for developing partnerships in the common cause of life preservation.

Today, gradually, with difficulty and retreats, humanity is surmounting the level of "calculating rationality". This implies a cardinal change of attitudes in the education system, search for ways of overcoming conflicts arising

in it, and the creation of perspectives. Education shall keep on preparing people to be successful. However, the very notion of achievement, life success, is intensively changing its content. The culture of partnership is based on its ability to combine the satisfaction of one's own individual interest, the interests of one's own group and humanity as a whole, and the ability to refrain from activity if it leads to the growth of contradictions between these interests. Only on this basis is the transition to sustainable development possible.

The core of the mediator's work at school is comprised by the realization that in the transition to sustainable development, diversity of mindsets is a precondition for the development of partnerships in the common deed of saving lives. And the way of solving this problem cannot be dictated "from above". In the 21st century, in a world with "common blood circulation," as Lyudmila Ulitskaya said, it becomes clear that the purpose and forms of partnership should be the subjected to constant discussion, so that no one shall be the owner of the only truth. Besides, no one is going to give up his/her subjectivity. As Noam Chomsky highlights, "the world is in a state of transition" (Chomsky, 2019: 7). And the future acts as an object of complex partnership, for which education prepares man. Participating in a common deed does not presuppose renouncing one's uniqueness or the integrity of specific social subjects. As Yuri Lotman has shown, "The ideal model is the triunity, in which every part of the whole is a part of the whole of a higher order, and every part is a whole at a lower level. The expansion of the structure is achieved not by means of accumulation of new links, but by including it, starting from above, in the unity of the higher levels as an intrinsic part of them" (Lotman, 1992: 30).

We are probably embarking on using this model: the development of the socio-cultural process as a whole and its educational activities is realised not through absorbing different societies and their cultures, not by mixing them and transforming them into a homogeneous mass, but by collecting them in a single complex space in which "unity of the highest level" is organized on the basis of partnership.

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Культуры партнерства в образовании в XXI веке

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Аннотация. В статье проанализирована логика трансформации социальных связей в современном обществе, влияние новых технологий коммуникации и непрерывного образования на сокращение роли вертикальных связей, роста востребованности медиации и конструирования партнерства в образовании и социальной жизни в целом. Партнерство исследуется как ключевая парадигма современности, технология воспроизводства системной стабильности в условиях глобализации.

Описана история развития в социокультурном процессе установок на конкуренцию и на партнерство, а также современное соотношение данных установок. Разнородность культур партнерства показана как атрибут устойчивого развития общества, создание системы стабильного воспроизводства социокультурного процесса. Одновременно расширенное воспроизводство субъектности делает необходимым развитие в образовании умения и стремления постоянного поддержания диалоговых отношений, совместной выработки целей и форм партнерства.

На примере Польши рассмотрено развитие медиативных практик и партнерских отношений в различных сферах современной общественной жизни.

Ключевые слова: социальные связи, партнерство, конкуренция, устойчивое развитие, медиативные практики.

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