STUDIA I ROZPRAWY

Beata Adrjan

Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie
ORCID: 0000-0003-0285-9479

Emancipation Dimensions of Early School Education Practices in Polish Schools

This study analysed how educational practices support the emancipatory experiences of parents and students at a Polish school 27 years after the change of the political system. The subject of examination were educational practices experienced in the classroom by two groups of educational society: early childhood pupils and the parents of children of this age. The data were obtained from the records of lessons and parent-teacher meetings at two schools: a small school and a large school. Four areas were identified in educational practice experiences by the examined participants: places, communication, knowledge and activities. Both pupils and parents experience the lack of the possibility of critical and emancipatory behaviour. Educational practices in the studied areas: places, communication, knowledge and activities are controlled solely by the teacher.

Keywords: emancipation, student, parents, educational practices

Emancypacyjne wymiary praktyk edukacji wczesnoszkolnej w polskich szkołach

W badaniu przeanalizowano, w jaki sposób praktyki edukacyjne wspierają emancypacyjne doświadczenia rodziców i uczniów w polskiej szkole 27 lat po zmianie ustroju. Przedmiotem badania były praktyki wychowawcze, jakich doświadczają w klasie dwie grupy społeczności szkolnej: uczniowie wczesnej edukacji oraz rodzice dzieci w tym wieku. Dane uzyskano z nagrań lekcji i spotkań rodziców z nauczycielami w dwóch szkołach: małej i dużej. W doświadczeniach praktyk edukacyjnych rozpoznano cztery obszary: miejsca, komunikację, wiedzę i działania. Zarówno uczniowie, jak i rodzice odczuwają brak możliwości zachowań krytycznych i emancypacyjnych. Praktyki edukacyjne w badanych obszarach: miejsca, komunikacja, wiedza i działania są kontrolowane wyłącznie przez nauczyciela.

Słowa kluczowe: emancypacja, uczeń, rodzic, praktyki edukacyjne

School and education are a place of concentration of local and global phenomena, crises and conflicts (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 2018, p. 58). Supporters of critical theory redefine the role of teachers, curricula and learning processes by criticizing current educational mechanisms. Ira Shor raises questions about social behaviour and everyday experiences at school, which make us into who we are and which can impact desocialisation (1992, p. 112).

> Critical theorists argue that our society, including the educational system, is brimming with oppression and injustice. Both critical theory and critical pedagogy are concerned with investigating institutional and social practices and tend to resist the imposition of dominant social norms and structures (Nouri, Sajjadi, 2014, p. 77; see also Giroux, 2003; McLaren, 2015, p. 222).

Emancipation in education

Emancipation can be understood as "freeing oneself from all those drives, institutional, and environmental factors that limit one's choices and control over life, and that have been accepted as being naturally beyond one's control" (Habermas, 1971, p. 310), i.e., "freeing oneself". Emancipation is the essence of critical social theory, understood as the criticality of reality, an attempt to change (Evert, 1993, p. 120). Emancipatory practices in education are connected with the liberation of the ability to critically analyse one's limitations and environment and the disposition to free oneself from dependence in every dimension (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 2006, p. 130). An emancipatory school curriculum should, therefore, highlight the experiences of pupils, which will be very strongly linked to the formation of their identity (McLaren, 2015, p. 302). In these experiences, essential and meaningful knowledge for students is created in the interaction with the teacher and other students, their subjectivity, but also the meaning given to their worlds (ibid.). Cognition should highlight the meaning referring to the critical involvement in separating the deep from the cursory and truth from falsehood (Giroux, 2010, p. 183). Shor sees a connection between some of Paulo Freire's ideas and constructivism stemming from John Dewey and Lev Wygotsky, particularly those ideas relating to the teachers' need to have faith in their students' ability to think critically and to be convinced of the need for problem-based learning (Shor, 1992, p. 18). The emancipatory meaning of educational practices is manifested in specific teachers' actions. Among the most important are: creat-

ing student's capacity for critical judgment (Fletcher, 2000), the participation of pupils in control over educational activities (Shor, 1992; 1996) and the acceptance of pupils' knowledge (Freire, 1985).

School practices as a field of emancipation observation

School life is not a unified system of rules, but a cultural area in which we have to provide confrontation and resistance, on the one hand, and adaptation on the other (McLaren, 2015, p. 264). All practices experienced by students at school create a school culture that is "a set of practices, ideologies and values" (McLaren, 2015, p. 246) which creates a model of understanding of the world, socializing young people for their future lives. Education in this approach has a double value: on the one hand, it exists within the framework of cultural meanings, and on the other hand, it shapes future meanings (Evert, 1993, p. 130). The analysis of school practices can, in its conclusions, lead to indications of which practices can lead the pupil to contextualization and resistance (empowerment) and which can lead to adaptation.

The typical Polish school has a schematic didactic idea, which to a large extent creates and strongly controls educational practices (Klus-Stańska, 2010, p. 52 et seq.). They are noticeable in areas such as textbook content, tasks proposed by the teacher, messages to pupils and classroom space. They are most often described as transmission didactics in opposition to constructivist didactics, postulated by researchers for several years (Klus-Stańska, 2010). The emancipatory educational approach in Poland was described only after the fall of communism in 1989 and was connected with attempts to adapt the pedagogy focused on a child's subjectivity. Changing educational practices at school is not easy, and the reforms of education, which have been ongoing for over a dozen years, certainly have not helped in this process (Hejnicka-Bezwińska, 2015, p. 409).

A change in a school can be the result of a critical reflection on school practices. An attempt to look at them through the prism of critical theory gives hope for a new quality in observing school life. To do so, I will use selected fragments of the theoretical assumptions of critical theory to capture whether or not school practices allow participants in education to liberate themselves from the norms and social structures that dominate school and are fixed in the structures of power and domination. I will use a certain simplification in the duality of seeing the world from the perspective of emancipation and will look at educational practices; whether they liberate the pupil and parent in their ability to critically analyse their limitations and the willingness to liberate, or whether they are merely a consolidation of the dominance of school institutions and the recreation of culture

(Bernstein, 1990). I will also use fragments of critical theories which, I hope, will make it possible to qualify the analysed educational practices as those allowing for emancipation-versus-practices preventing the emancipation of the pupil and the parent at school. The table below will serve as a tool for observation, which is an attempt to adapt the theoretical framework resulting from the analysis of literature taken from leading concepts of critical pedagogy. I am aware of the simplification and fragmentation of theory. The subjectively selected concepts presented here are landmarks focusing on possible interpretations of school practices in the context of emancipation.

Table 1.

Operationalisation of the theoretical framework – a tool for observing educational practices

	Emancipatory dimension	**Non-emancipatory dimension**
McLaren (2015)	Challenge and resistance	Adaptation
Foucault (2009)	The right to choose	The authority power
Freire (2005)	Acceptance of student knowledge	Banking education
Dewey (1988)	Critical thinking	Imposed meaning
Giroux (2003)	Challenging inequality	Sustaining inequality
Evert (1993)	Challenging institutional factors	Sub-institutionalisation/ subordination
Kwaśnica (2007)	Development as an opportunity to make choices	Development as an improvement in roles

Source: Own elaboration

Methodology

In this work, the researcher undertook to examine the educational practices experienced by the participants of education in the Polish school from an emancipatory perspective. The subject of examination were educational practices experienced in the classroom by two groups of educational society: early childhood pupils and the parents of children of this age. Records were kept in two schools: a small school[1] and a large school[2]. The selection of the schools was dependent on

---

[1] The small school is located in a small town (1500). There are 16 classes in the school and 350 students.

[2] The large school is located in a town (150.000). There are 40 classes in the school and 950 students

the permission to record: in both schools, a recording agreement was obtained. The researcher collected records from 10 lessons and 10 parent-teacher meetings recorded in 2018/2019 school year. The parent-teacher meetings were recorded in both schools. The lessons were recorded in the large school. The groups mentioned above of children and parents were not connected by family ties. Lessons were recorded in the large school:

2   lessons were provided by one teacher in the first class (7-year-old children) – in the research marked as [L1]

3   lessons were provided by one teacher in the second class (8-year-old children) – in the research marked as [L2]

5   lessons were provided by one teacher in the third class (9-year-old children) – in the research marked as [L3]

Parent-teacher meetings were conducted by the school for parents from one class (each parent was invited). They were traditional bi-monthly meetings with parents in each school in Poland, organised by the school. During the meetings, the teacher informs all parents about class achievements, progress in learning and lessons learned. I recorded:

- Three parent-teacher meetings were provided by one teacher in the first class (small school) – in the research marked as [M1s]
- One parent-teacher meeting was provided by one teacher in the second class (large school) – in the research marked as [M2l]
- One parent-teacher meeting was provided by one teacher in the second class (small school) – in the research marked as [M2s]
- Three parent-teacher meetings were provided by one teacher in the third class (large school) – in the research marked as [M3l]
- One parent-teacher meeting was provided by one teacher in the third class (small school) – in the research marked as [M3s]

The researcher has obtained agreement from eight teachers; five teachers leading parents' meetings and three teachers leading lessons. The lesson leaders and the meeting leaders were not the same teachers. It was not our goal to gather material with the aim of comparing the social or professional profiles of the teachers or parents. The material was collected with the purpose of obtaining the largest possible number of recordings demonstrating educational practices.

Transcriptions were prepared after recording lesson and teacher-parent meetings. The transcriptions were then analysed as documents (Rapley, 2013, p. 193). The meetings and lessons were based on the text (Perakyla, 2009, p. 328). An analysis of the documentation was undertaken to produce knowledge of the experience of educational practices (Rapley, 2013, p. 219) of the two groups under investigation in the school studied.

The analysis of educational practices was carried out concerning two groups of educational society:

- students (S.) in the primary school three classes 1-3 (L1, L2, L3)
- parents (P.) of children in the primary school five classes (1-3) participating in class meetings with the five teachers (T.) [M1s][M2s][M2l][M3s] [M3l].

The researcher checked whether the practices experienced by students and parents were similar and this was a key idea in comparing the two groups of subjects.

There were four areas recognised for analysis: experience of place in school relations, experience of initiating communication, experience of the correctness of knowledge and experience of initiating activity. All of these four areas were recognised during lessons and at parent-teacher meetings.

The research problem was formulated as follows:

What emancipatory practices do participants of early school education (parents and pupils) experience in the classroom? This analysis of educational practices was carried out in four selected areas, and the emancipation dimension of each of them was described, using the axes:

Area 1: Experience of place   Axis: Private versus public

Area 2: Experience of initiating communication   Axis: Initiator(s) (active) versus addressee (reactive)

Area 3: Experience of the correctness of knowledge Axis: Subject generating correct knowledge versus subject receiving correct knowledge

Area 4: Experience of initiating actions   Axis: Active subject versus reactive subject.

On this basis, the symptoms of emancipation/ restriction practices studied were identified.

Given the practices, an emancipatory or non-emancipatory characteristic was assigned to the search for the following characteristics:

1. who the space belongs to,
2. who may initiate communication
3. who determines the correctness of knowledge
4. who is responsible for initiating school activities

In this way, categories of emancipation/lack of emancipation are imposed on practices. If the tested practices showed the possibility of the democratic participation of the teacher, parents and children, they were considered emancipatory. Meanwhile, if the tested practices showed the dominance of the teacher, they were considered non-emancipatory.

The emancipatory dimension of pupils' and parents' experience of educational practices – findings of the research

Educational practice: experience of place

The place in the classroom in the three observed classrooms is controlled by the teacher. The teacher's authority over who is seated where is part of discipline and manipulation. If the pupil does not meet the requirements of the teacher, the pupil will be sited next to a child disliked by the pupil – it is a punishment for both of them (collective responsibility). It can also be a reward for expected behaviour by being allowed to return to the previous "more attractive" location. Thus, building peer relations may be perceived in a command and prohibition system which limits the sense of meaningful relationships with others.

When sited[3] at a double desk, a pupil can occupy half of the desktop. However, each of the objects there can be taken at any time by the teacher (the pupil drew attention for a moment to his mascot; S: *And I will give the teddy bear milk.* T: *You know, I'll take him from you now and give him back after the lesson* [L1]). Even a temporary mental transition to a private area triggers an immediate reaction from a concerned teacher.

Classroom mobility must almost always be reported to the teacher and often refused (S: *Ms … Can I go to the toilet?* T: *Do you have to go now? In a moment there will be a break, you will go then.* [L2]) The possibility of using a carpet to sit down is justified not so much by the activity at hand, but by the teacher's attitude (T: *Children you can sit on a rug, I do not mind this* [L3]).

Children do not have any private or lockers in the classroom. Sometimes they have their shelves, but only textbooks, notebooks, binders, etc. can be kept there. The teacher decides when and how to use them. School supplies, although privately owned, can be taken up by the teacher, commented on and evaluated publicly and without the student's consent (T: *Look, children, how Sophia wrote it down* [L3]). Illustrations hanging on the wall are placed by the teacher without consultation with the pupils, there is no place for things that could be attached by the pupils according to their interests and needs.

However, students experience the privacy rights of a teacher who has a desk, lockable drawers and private items on his desk and in drawers, such as a mobile phone, sandwich, coffee, notebook and others [L1][L2][L3].

The only element of a student's limited privacy is his or her backpack, which she or he has on her or his chair [L1][L2][L3]. It is also under some control of the teacher, who may order the child to hide any item in the backpack. They may

---

[3] Each of the three classrooms studied had the same layout of benches (three rows of double benches for students). Under the board, the teacher's desk. Pupils' benches facing the board.

also ask students looking for any items to take everything out of their schoolbags, publicly commenting on its condition (e.g., being damaged or stained) or overall content.

Parents sit down in their child's classroom on children's chairs during meetings [M1s][M2l][M1s][M3l][M3s]. The place does not belong to the parent, it is not even a bit "private", because the teacher does not show the parent the place where his child sits. Parents experience an anonymous public space, which is intended for a small child, not a parent (Kwatera, 2015, p. 72). Derived from Gombrowicz's literary works (paraphrased bottoming), it means that a person sitting on a chair would subjugate himself to the rules of the school. The necessity of sitting on the child's chair conveys a meaning related to the place and role of the parent at the school. In this way, the parent is re-integrated into childhood (ibid., p. 73) and forced to submit to the rules of school on an equal footing with the students. Only the teacher experiences a private place (dedicated only to him and no one else). This is usually the desk the teacher occupies during the meeting where things needed for the conference are kept: children's work, statements, forms and other school documents that he uses during the meeting with parents.

The practice of experiencing a place by students and parents in the private-versus-public-place axis leads to the conclusion that both groups experience a public place created for school use. Experiencing only a public space does not lead students and parents to empowerment, but to a sense of inactivity (McLaren, 2015, p. 236). The place is not theirs, so it becomes nobody's, if it is nobody's, it cannot be a space of its own, to be tamed or managed. Such practices testify to the school's restriction of the experience of freedom. By organizing the educational space in this way, the school restricts the experience of the sense of causality and the possibility of interpreting one's place at school as one's own. Such school practices are an image/presentation of hegemony (ibid., p. 249) of the school, revealing the maintenance of public domination of space over absent private spaces. They can also be interpreted as maintaining inequality (Giroux, 2003), where private space belongs only to the teacher, while the student is deprived of it.

Educational practice: experience of initiating communication

The second area in which educational practices were observed was the interaction in the classroom. The greeting is initiated by the teacher, who forces all children to chant loudly and evenly (T: *Good morning to the children*. SSS: [quiet] *good morning*. N: *But loudly, please*. SSS: [very loud] *Good mor-ning* [L2])

Children's communication activity is sporadic and mostly related to attempts at personal contact with the teacher [L1][L2][L3]. The student approaches the teacher and tries to tell a story about an event outside the school [L2]. The

teacher listens with little attention and makes only a few casual comments [L2]. Students incidentally initiate cognitive communication. They rarely ask questions of substance and, if they do, they are most often questions of facts (S: *Ms… Does the mole falls asleep in winter?* [L3]) There are no questions about interpretations or personal suggestions.

The student does not present his/her ideas spontaneously, does not ask any problematic questions (*what would happen if? Why it happens?*). When not asked, the student should not join the teacher's conversation with another student. (T: *Alex, how many toothpicks you were supposed to take?* S1: *Aaa 3.* S2: *Triangle.* T: *Do not interrupt!* [L3]).

The student should also not join the adult conversation (S: *Ms..?* T: [interrupt] *Can you not see that I am talking to the lady?* [L2]) The student experiences the initiation of communication in the classroom mainly initiated by the teacher. The student is obligated to react and to answer the teacher's questions. However, the child cannot comment on what the teacher has said or done. Rare attempts of students to the contrary are mostly ignored. The teacher, on the other hand, can shame the student (T: [with little false care]: *You see Martin, you didn't listen when I was talking, and now you don't know* [L3]). The teacher can silence the children inappropriately (T: *But a little quieter, please, because I can't say anything* [L3]). He or she also jokes sometimes in an indiscriminate way (Teacher to a child who is not focused on task T: *Oh, Sophia. You are always scatter-brained!* [L3]).

Educational **parents experience** the teacher's practice communication initiative from the beginning of the conference T: *Welcome to* […] P: [silence and smiles] T: *I will give you a message*, P: [listen] [M3l]. During the meeting, parents are not expected to respond to the information provided by the teacher (T*: I will present to you the educational plan for the whole year* [reading about 10 minutes 7 pages of the text] P: [only listen] [M1s]). The only task of the participants in the parents' meeting is to listen to what the teacher is saying to the parents.

At school meetings (in initiating communication), parents were reduced to the role of listeners, and it is rare for them to have moments when they interrupt the teacher during a meeting. When the teacher tells parents about the need to check how heavy the children's backpacks are – it is about the newly introduced regulation limiting the weight of backpacks to ten per cent of child's own body's weight, one of the parents comments (P: *I am indignant at those mothers who wear school bags for their children, what is that?* [M2s]).

Below is an example of how parents participate in communication with the teacher in a haphazard, emotional and unproductive manner. The following is a comment made by another parent also reacting to the teacher's statement about the weight of the school bag (P: *Half a kilo was just water when I had to carry it, it was so heavy, and the milk also...* [M2s]). One more comment made during the

meeting when parents interfere while children's works are being given out by the teacher (T: *I will show you these works*. P: [interrupting with sarcasm]: *Should I be afraid?* [M3l]) or when being informed about the trip (T: *The tour is booked for a day ...* P: [interrupting] *Do you have a trip agenda?* [M3s]).

Paradoxically, when a teacher offers the opportunity to initiate communication, parents do not use this opportunity (T: *You want to say something*, PP: [keep silent][M3s]). This may be because parents submit to the teacher and take a social attitude in the interest of their child's well-being at school. Perhaps this is an effect of their helplessness towards institutions (being educated under socialism?).

Educational practices of initiating communication in the classroom and during meetings on the active-reactive axis allow for the generalisation that both groups are only reactive to the activity of the teacher. Educational practices in this area are an illustration of situations that limit both groups in their ability to be active in this area. In this area, we can note the emphasis of school practices on an improvement in roles (Kwaśnica, 2007), when the teacher in the school is in the role of the leader of all activities (including communication), and the pupil and the parent are in the role of the recipients of the teaching activity. This can also be seen as a symptom of subordination to the school institution (Evert, 1993), in which a good parent and a good pupil meet the school's expectations by being only a recipient of the school's instruction, and not a full member of the school community. Educational communication practices belong to limiting, non-emancipative practices.

Educational practice: experience of the correctness of knowledge

Another area of research is related to the question of who creates knowledge in the classroom and who confirms its correctness. Students work with issues below their cognitive abilities (T: *What are the two Cuisenaire blocks which will make a 5-piece?* S: *ee one and ee two and another two*. T: [interrupts] *But only from two, I asked for two blocks*. S: [Slightly bored] *eh, two, well, it's two and three* [L1]). The student does not have the opportunity to check the correctness of his/her knowledge on his/her own. Only the teacher can provide the answer (S1: *Ms..., What is one hundred in Roman numerals?* T: *Why are you asking? Is there such a problem?* [After a while of reflection] *Do you know what? One does not remember when one doesn't use these numbers, one forgets how to use them*. S2: *Ten exes*. S3: *Letter L stands for fifty*. S1: *Two letters L.* T: *Then I'll look it up* [L3]). Students are not encouraged to look it up in books or on the Internet themselves.

They also do not have much time to think about the question, because the teacher tries to explain quickly when not receiving an immediate answer. The teacher asks and answers (themselves) (T: *How to check which block is 5?* S:

[counts] *one, two, three, four, five*. T: [doesn't pay attention] *well, what can we do? We can lay white blocks next to each other and how many white pieces will it take for this path to be of the same length as our block? That's how you need five white cubes* [L1]). The pupil does not experience the sense of initiating of personal knowledge (S: *2/4* T: *Bartek! What have you come up with? Where did you get it from if it wasn't covered in our lessons yet?* [L3]). There is also a lack of children's reflection on their products during school work. There is no discussion about the products of children. The primary criterion is the teacher's acceptance. Students rarely have the opportunity to experiment. Only once during our observation did children conduct a biological experiment [L2], but it was done strictly following the teacher's detailed instructions. Individual students are seldom offered more demanding tasks, appropriate to their level of knowledge, but only after completing tasks assigned to the rest of the class faster than their peers [L1][L2][L3]. The possibility of troubleshooting is rare in the classroom. Students more often solve assignments following the method offered by the teacher of textbooks. The task is usually not announced in advance, nor is the assessment criterion explained.

During parent-teacher meetings, the teacher emphasizes the arbitrary understanding of the correctness of knowledge: the parent does not participate in it. Occasionally, the parent succeeds in interfering with the teacher's statement questioning the "truth" conveyed by the teacher (the teacher informs the parents about the results of the test written by the children. P: *And why is this test at all? This is not a mandatory test?* T. [agrees with P.] *No* [speaks stressing it] *is not mandatory* [M3s]. When the parent questions the validity of testing at school, the teacher admits to an arbitrary understanding of what constitutes knowledge at school. The teacher often makes his personal views known and validates them by his professional position in the institution (Teacher talking about the first day of spring): T: *It isn't very eco-friendly to burn and drown Marzanna!* (a folk symbol of spring made from straw and fabrics) *Yes, I know the tradition, but I am responsible for children and their safety* [M2s]. Parents also experience the imposing of the correctness of knowledge in the context of the teaching methodology that the teacher tries to transfer into private homes, suggesting a way of working with the children (About the multiplication table): T: *You need to practise every day!* [M3l]. The correctness of the knowledge the teacher also conveys in the common phrases he gives at the meeting, as it were ex-cathedra (About the attendance at the meeting): T: *Yes, only those parents come to whom there are no comments* [M3l].

In this correctness of knowledge practice area it is also up to the teacher who has power over knowledge, produces knowledge and qualifies it as appropriate. Both parents and students are recipients of the teacher's version of knowledge. This is testimony to the treatment of knowledge in terms of banking education

(Freire, 2005), without accepting the knowledge of the student or the knowledge of the parent. Such practices also show the imposition of meaning (Dewey, 1988) on the student and parent by the school. The parent and pupil are expected to adapt (McLaren) to school rules. Again, both groups experience a restriction, not acquisition, of fields of freedom.

Educational practice: experience of initiating actions

The last area concerns the initiation of classroom activities. The student occasionally suggests minor and minor adjustments to the timetable (S: *Please, can we go to the playground earlier?* [M1s] The teacher's answer is usually conditional or negative). Nor does it initiate its cognitive activities, but instead follows the model given by the teacher or the textbook. Students generally highlight their proposals at the teacher's request, and the student is not encouraged to develop personal action strategies nor their verification. A student cannot initiate a personally selected activity once he/she has completed a task assigned by the teacher. In this case, the student has to wait for the other students to finish the work or obtain the teacher's consent to change their activity, which is usually not very attractive for the student (for example, they may have to colour the drawing in the exercise book [L1]).

During the meetings, parents experience only reactivity to the teacher's initiating activities (T: *I will introduce you to the educational plan* [the parents are listening] [M2l]). The dominant teacher in initiating actions is the teacher, who authoritatively initiates activities and in most cases does not ask parents about anything in this respect. When starting the parents' council elections, he justifies it for the "good of the children" (T: *Please report to the Parents' Council so it would work well and provide support* [jokingly] *for our children* [M3l]). The Parents' Council at the school is intended to provide legitimacy for the institution. Initiating activities in this area by the teacher also unmasks the fictitious role of this body and simulates the involvement of parents in the school, "dictated" by the needs of the institution.

Often, during the meetings, the teacher determines the organizational details, creating the illusion of parents' partial control (T: *We have arranged a trip through Mr. X. for free, we have only to decide when – 7 or 17?* [M3s]). Setting the date and details of such events, not only is it in a superficial sense the parents' initiative, but it also consumes the majority of the duration of the meeting. In consequence, the teacher during the parent-teacher conference often claims not to have enough time to discuss matters directly related to pedagogy.

In exceptional cases, the teacher asks the parents for permission to initiate actions, (requests for permission to intervene with another teacher: T: *I am*

supposed to tell the other teacher that the children feel that they are afraid of her? [M2s]). Even while being on the children's side, the teacher tones down parents' emotions, emphasizing that those are children's feelings and not simply that they are afraid of her. The teacher often reacts impatiently and with irritation to parents' repeated questions about most of the organizational issues (When a parent asks the teacher to repeat when the children are leaving, he answers T: *Mrs! You make my life difficult!* [M2s]).

Allowing parents to initiate their influence into the working of the school, the teacher shows his helplessness (T: *Do you have any questions?* P: *As far as* [foreign] *language is concerned, I would prefer...*T: *I cannot change it here* [M1s]. It is a subject taught by another teacher and the teacher admits that there is no possibility to act on it).

In the last research area, the subjects do not experience emancipation either, actions are initiated and conducted by the teacher, they do not belong to the students or parents. Parents and students do not have the right to choose (Foucault, 2009) to take up activities, but are subject to the forced power of the teacher who manages the activities. Again, there is a need to subordinate the institution (Evert, 1993), as well as to maintain inequality (Giroux, 2003). Experienced practices in this area illustrate once again the limitation of pupils and teachers by preventing them from being active in initiating practical action.

Summary

The experience of educational practices for both entities (parents of early school children and pupils from the early years) is to a large extent convergent. The organization of meetings with the teacher, the lessons and his actions towards both groups have a dimension of being subject to the pre-established rules of the school. They are undisputed and are not considered from the perspective of parents or students. The absolute majority of school situations concerning each of the groups depends only on the decision of the teacher, who imposes solutions, often convenient primarily for him. Both groups experience the imposition of meanings, ways of interpreting reality and the lack of the possibility of a critical approach to their own or teacher's or proposals. Referring to Paolo Freire (2005, p. 72) and mentioned by him as oppressive school practices, it can be concluded from our research that they constitute a significant presence in the Polish school.
1. Places in the classroom are controlled by the teacher, students/parents are subject to this control although in different aspects.
2. The teacher initiates communication in the classroom, and sometimes the student/parent attempts are downgraded.

3.   The teacher decides about the correctness of knowledge, and the pupil/parent is the recipient of it, there is no opportunity to reflect on it.

4.   The teacher initiates the activities, and the pupil/parents can only act according to the conditions imposed by the teacher.

All areas under study maintain the practices of the dominance of school institutions, both in the area of spatial management, activity management and management of knowledge understanding. The school practices presented here show non-emancifying dimensions, fitting into all dimensions properly presented in the operational framework of observation. School practices show the adaptation of pupil and parent instead of the possibility of contesting and resistance (McLaren, 2015). They illustrate the compulsion of power instead of the right to choose (Foucault, 2009). They show banking education instead of acceptance of student's own knowledge (Freire, 2005). They testify to the imposition of meaning instead of allowing critical thinking (Dewey, 1988). They maintain inequity instead of letting it be questioned (Giroux, 2003). They subjugate parents and students of institutions instead of liberating them from institutional factors (Evert, 1993). They keep them in their imposed roles instead of allowing them to develop by making choices (Kwaśnica, 2007).

Despite the fact that more than twenty years have passed since the fall of communism and the introduction of democratic social principles, practices in the Polish school are for the most part oppressive. Emancipatory experiences of the surveyed are limited or absent.

The school practices presented in the paper are a picture of domination and hegemony (McLaren, 2015, p. 249) of the school both towards the pupil and towards the parent.

References

Angrosino M. (2010). *Badania etnograficzne i obserwacyjne*. Transl. M. Brzozowska-Brywczyńska. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Bernstein B. (1990). *Odtwarzanie kultury.* Transl. Z. Bokszański, A. Piotrowski. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy.

Bourdieu P., Passeron J.-C. (2006). *Reprodukcja*. Transl. E. Neyman. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Bruner E.M. (2011). Przeżycie i jego ekspresje. In: V.W. Turner, E.M. Bruner (red.), *Antropologia doświadczenia*. Transl. E. Klekot, A. Szurek. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Czerepaniak-Walczak M. (2006). *Pedagogika emancypacyjna. Rozwój świadomości krytycznej człowieka*. Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne.

Czerepaniak-Walczak M. (2018). *Proces emancypacji kultury szkoły*. Warszawa: Wolters Kluwer.

Dewey J. (1988). *Jak myślimy?*. Transl. Z. Bastgenówna. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.

Evert G. (1993). Habermas edukacja. (Wpływ Habermasa na anglosaską literaturę pedagogiczną). In: Z. Kwieciński (red.), *Nieobecne dyskursy*, cz. III. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika.

Fletcher S. (2000). *Education and Emancipation: Theory and Practice in a New Constellation*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Freire P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Transl. M. Bergman Ramos. New York: London CONTINUUM.

Freire P. (1985). *Rethinking critical pedagogy: The politics of education, culture, power, and liberation*. Granby: Bergin and Garvey.

Foucault M. (2009). *Nadzorowac i karać*. Transl. T. Komendant. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Aletheia.

Geertz C. (2011). Zdobywając doświadczenia, autoryzując siebie. In: V.W. Turner, E.M. Bruner (red.), *Antropologia doświadczenia*. Transl. E. Klekot, A. Szurek. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Giroux H.A. (2010). Teoria krytyczna i racjonalność w edukacji obywatelskiej. In: H.A. Giroux, L. Witkowski (red.), *Edukacja i sfera publiczna. Idee i doświadczenia pedagogiki radykalnej*. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza IMPULS.

Giroux H.A. (2003). Critical Theory and educational practice. In: A. Darder, M. Boltodano, R.D. Torres, *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. New York–London: Routlege Falmer.

Habermas J. (1971). *Knowledge and Human Interests*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Hejnicka-Bezwińska T. (2015). *Praktyka edukacyjna w warunkach zmiany kulturowej*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Klus-Stańska D. (2010). *Dydaktyka wobec chaosu pojęć i zdarzeń*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie „Żak”.

Kwaśnica R. (2007). *Dwie racjonalności. Od filozofii sensu ku pedagogice ogólnej*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej Edukacji TWP we Wrocławiu.

Kwaśnica R. (2014). *Dyskurs edukacyjny po inwazji rozumu instrumentalnego. O potrzebie refleksyjności*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo DSW.

Kwatera A. (2015). O ukrzesłowieniu rodziców w szkole. In: I. Ocetkiewicz, J. Wnęk-Gozdek, I. Wierzbicka (red.), *Szkoła, współczesne konteksty interpretacyjne*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego.

Leogrande C., Shor I. (2014). *Chapter 6*. In: S. Totten, J. Pedersen (red.), *Educating About Social Issues in the 20th and 21st Centuries*. Vol 4: *Critical Peda-*

gogues and *Their Pedagogical Theories. Charlotte,* NC 2014, Information Age Publishing Inc.

McLaren P. (2015). *Życie w szkołach: Wprowadzenie do pedagogiki krytycznej.* Transl. J. Dzierzgowski, A. Dziemianowicz-Bąk. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej.

Nouri A., Sajjadi S.M. (2014). Emancipatory Pedagogy in Practice: Aims, Principles and Curriculum orientation. *International Journal of critical pedagogy* 5, 2, 76–87.

Perakyla A. (2008). Analiza rozmów i tekstów. In: N.K. Denzin, Y.S. Lincoln, *Metody badań jakościowych*, t. 2. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Rapley T. (2013). *Analiza konwersacji, dyskursu i dokumentów.* Transl. A. Gąsior-Niemiec. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Shor I. (1992). *Empowering Education. Critical Teaching For Social Change*. Chicago–London: The University of Chicago Press.

Shor I. (1996). *When students have power. Negotiating authority in a critical pedagogy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.