



STAROPOLSKA SZKOŁA  
WYŻSZA W KIELCACH  
WYDZIAŁ PEDAGOGICZNY

ISSN 2299-9299

# PEDAGOGIKA

BADANIA, DYSKUSJE, OTWARCIA

Zeszyt 5

Między wolnością  
a standaryzacją  
– pytania o wczesną  
edukację dziecka



ISSN 2299-9299  
ZESZYT 5/2015

Oficyna Wydawnicza StSW  
Kielce 2015

# **PEDAGOGIKA**

BADANIA, DYSKUSJE, OTWARCIA

Zeszyt 5

Między wolnością a standaryzacją  
– pytania o wczesną edukację dziecka

Kielce 2015



#### Rada Naukowa

prof. Lothar Bildat, EBC-Hochschul Campus Berlin  
doc. PhDr. Alica Harajova, Vysoka Skola v Sladkovicovie  
dr hab. Galena Iwanowa, Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"  
prof. zw. dr hab. Bronislava Kasacova, Matej Bel University Banská Bystrica  
prof. zw. dr hab. Józef Liba, University of Presov in Presov  
prof. zw. dr hab. Jan Ożdżyński, Staropolska Szkoła Wyższa w Kielcach  
doc. PhD. Alica Petrasova, University of Presov in Presov  
prof. dr hab. Volodymyr Shakhov, Vinnytsya State Pedagogical University  
dr hab. Józef Sowa, Staropolska Szkoła Wyższa w Kielcach  
dr hab. Grzegorz Szumski, Akademia Pedagogiki Specjalnej w Warszawie  
dr hab. Adolf Szołtysek, Staropolska Szkoła Wyższa w Kielcach  
prof. zw. dr hab. Zbigniew Tarkowski, Staropolska Szkoła Wyższa w Kielcach  
dr hab. Mariola Wojciechowska, Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach  
prof. zw. dr hab. Adam Zych, Dolnośląska Szkoła Wyższa we Wrocławiu

#### Recenzenci

dr hab. Jolanta Bonar, prof. Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego w Łodzi  
dr hab. Zdzisław Ratajek, prof. Uniwersytetu Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach

#### Redaktor naczelny

dr Jolanta Góral-Pótrala

#### Redaktor statystyczny

dr Barbara Walasek-Jarosz

#### Redaktor naukowy zeszytu 5

dr Irena Stańczak

#### Redakcja językowa

dr Janusz Wróblewski

#### Skład i opracowanie graficzne

mgr inż. Krzysztof Kaputa



Oficyna Wydawnicza  
STAROPOLSKIEJ SZKOŁY WYŻSZEJ  
w KIELCACH  
25-666 Kielce, ul. Ponurego Piwnika 49

[www.stsw.edu.pl](http://www.stsw.edu.pl)

Copyright by Staropolska Szkoła Wyższa w Kielcach  
Kielce 2015

Wersją pierwotną jest wersja drukowana.

#### Druk i oprawa

Drukarnia Cyfrowa COMPUS, Kielce, ul. Sandomierska 89  
[www.compus.net.pl](http://www.compus.net.pl)

## Zeszyt 5/2015

### Między wolnością a standaryzacją – pytania o wczesną edukację dziecka

## SPIS TREŚCI

IDEA ZESZYTU .....	7
<b>Alica Petrasová</b> Kriticky mysliaci učiteľ – spolutvorca inkluzívneho edukačného prostredia. ....	9
<b>Bronislava Kasáčová, Dana Hanesová</b> Ways of qualitative research on children moral world and young children. ....	17
<b>Anna Winiarczyk, Jadwiga Jagiełło</b> Eurosieroctwo a konsekwencje wychowawcze u dzieci w wieku wczesnoszkolnym. ....	31
<b>Barbara Sordyl-Lipnicka</b> Emocjonalno-społeczne funkcjonowanie dzieci z rodzin doświadczających emigracji zarobkowej .....	41
<b>Alena Doušková, Zuzana Lynch</b> Foreign language teaching in pre-primary and primary curriculum. ....	49
<b>Anna Hajdukiewicz</b> Wiek rodziców jako czynnik korelujący z rozwojem społecznym dziecka w wieku 3-5 lat. ....	59
<b>Simoneta Babiaková</b> Research methodology of linguistic and literary literacy in children's preconcepts. ....	71
<b>Irena Stańczak</b> Wybrane uwarunkowania poziomu umiejętności językowych dzieci sześciolletnich. ....	79
<b>Mariana Cabanová</b> Pre-literate competencies of children from socially handicapped background on the threshold of their education. ....	91

<b>Ľubica Gerová</b> Polyominoes in teaching mathematics. ....	99
<b>Małgorzata Molenda</b> Ewolucja założeń programowo - organizacyjnych edukacji wczesnoszkolnej w Polsce w latach 1978-1999 oraz późniejsze zmiany. ....	107
<b>Maria Kotomska</b> Rodzinne determinanty rozwoju dziecka w wieku przedszkolnym – wybrane aspekty. ....	119
<b>Jan Boratyński</b> Recenzja książki. Irena Stańczak: Teoria rozwiązywania innowacyjnych zadań w pracy z uczniem klas I-III szkoły podstawowej (w świetle badań eksperymentalnych), Impuls, Kraków 2013. ....	137

## CONTENTS

IDEA .....	7
<b>Alica Petrasová</b> Critical thinking teacher – co-creator of inclusive learning environment. ....	9
<b>Bronislava Kasáčová, Dana Hanesová</b> Ways of qualitative research on children moral world and young children. ....	17
<b>Anna Winiarczyk, Jadwiga Jagiełło</b> The euro-orphanhood and educational consequences in early – school children. ....	31
<b>Barbara Sordyl-Lipnicka</b> Emotional and social functioning of children families experiencing emigration. ....	41
<b>Alena Doušková, Zuzana Lynch</b> Foreign language teaching in pre-primary and primary curriculum. ....	49
<b>Anna Hajdukiewicz</b> Parents' age as a factor correlating with social development of a child aged 3-5 years. ....	59
<b>Simoneta Babiaková</b> Research methodology of linguistic and literary literacy in children's preconcepts. ....	71
<b>Irena Stańczak</b> Selected factors influencing the level of language skills of six years old children. ....	79
<b>Mariana Cabanová</b> Pre-literate competencies of children from socially handicapped background on the threshold of their education. ....	91

<b>LubicaGerová</b> Polyominoes in teaching mathematics. ....	99
<b>Małgorzata Molenda</b> Evolution of assumptions of program and organization of early childhood education in Poland in the years 1978-1999 and subsequent changes. ....	107
<b>Maria Kotomska</b> Family determinate of child development in preschool education – selected aspects. ....	119
<b>Jan Boratyński</b> Recenzja książki. Irena Stańczak: Teoria rozwiązywania innowacyjnych zadań w pracy z uczniem klas I-III szkoły podstawowej (w świetle badań eksperymentalnych), Impuls, Kraków 2013. ....	137

## IDEA ZESZYTU

Jednym z istotnych zadań nauk pedagogicznych jest projektowanie nowych rozwiązań wzbogacających zarówno teorię jak i praktykę edukacyjną. Dotyczy to w szczególności pierwszego, najważniejszego etapu edukacyjnego, czyli wczesnej edukacji dziecka na poziomie przedszkola i nauczania początkowego.

W obliczu rozszerzających się funkcji edukacji (zwłaszcza innowacyjnej) oraz implementacji coraz szerszych zasobów zewnętrznych i wewnętrznych potrzebnych do jej realizacji, zmierza się w kierunku ich skoordynowania a w dalszej perspektywie ich integracji. W nowej perspektywie edukacja stanowiłaby, jak pisze Ken Wilber, kolektywną integrację systemów, intencji, zachowań, wartości i działań człowieka, które ogarniają wszelakie układy, zasoby i możliwości wyzwalające rozwój człowieka. Z ideą kształcenia integralnego, całościowego, holistycznego Heinrich Dauber wiąże nadzieje na ratowanie istoty procesu socjalizacji i uczenia się, które są niezbędne do przeżycia człowieka w cywilizacji postindustrialnej.

W naukach o wychowaniu ale i w praktyce edukacyjnej chcemy poszukiwać odpowiedzi na rodzące się pytania dotyczące etapu wczesnej edukacji dziecka: jak może i powinna być rozumiana integralność w edukacji, jakie mogą być modele integralnej edukacji, jakie są i mogą być zastosowania w praktyce edukacji formalnej i pozaformalnej tzw. „integralnego podejścia”?

Celem powstania kolejnego zeszytu naukowego jest skupienie pracowników nauki i praktyków, którzy w całościowy i w sposób zrównoważony próbują opisywać rzeczywistość edukacyjną i aplikować integralne podejście do praktyki na etapie wczesnej edukacji dziecka.

Głównym zamierzeniem jest stworzenie sposobności do dyskusji nad różnymi formami i przejawami innowacji, ich skalą, a także wskazanie nowych obszarów badawczych. Ważnym elementem stanie się wyeksponowanie edukacji przedszkolnej i wczesnoszkolnej, jako przestrzeni dla innowacji i kreatywności, ale i w pewien sposób zobligowanej do reakcji na jej realizację. Szczególne znaczenie przypisujemy poszukiwaniu efektywnych sposobów realizacji funkcji innowacyjnej a także promowanie już istniejących, które zasługują na miano tzw. dobrych praktyk. Będzie to także doskonała

Bronislava Kasáčová  
Dana Hanesová

## WAYS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON CHILDREN MORAL WORLD AND YOUNG CHILDREN

### Introduction

This paper on a child's moral life is a component of the research project "*Children At The Threshold Of Education And Their World*" (VEGA 1/0598/15), carried out by a team of university researchers in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. The overall aim of this project is to contribute to and deepen knowledge about the world of today's children, namely about their cognitive, psychomotor, socio-emotional and moral features at their age of starting compulsory education (6 years old in Slovakia).

The development of children's moral competence and relevant scientific study has long history, which has resulted in the defining of theoretical concepts and several theories of moral development of children (e.g. by Kohlberg, Piaget, Gilligan, etc.). They reflect an effort to give answers to foundational questions: *What is the content of moral images of children? How does the child perceive the world of conventional morals? Who are the moral authorities for the current child? Which mechanism of moral control do the children accept? What moral hierarchies does the child's mind deal with? How does the moral thinking of children develop?* It is necessary include this area of research into the overall concept of research into the children's world. This is the reason why the moral world of the child at the age of entering school (5½-8 years old) has become an independent aim formulated for the first phase of the research project.



## 1. Research aims, problems and methods of researching child's world

The presented project titled "*Children At The Threshold Of Education And Their World*" (VEGA 1/0598/15<sup>1</sup>) is aimed at studying children before and at their entry to the world of education. It will investigate several primary areas, namely: cognitive, socioemotional aspects, partially psychomotor aspects focusing on graphomotor skills, linguistic and communication competences and their development potentialities.

The primary objective of the project is to update and innovate the knowledge about present-day children just before and at the beginning of younger school age. The research will be based on quantitative and qualitative methods. For that purpose, our intention is to create a battery of research instruments and methods for the research areas in question. We plan to provide practicing teachers and teachers-in-training with such validated instruments in order to create a "fresco" picture about children. The research product shall inspire and provide model methodology for teachers conducting such research<sup>2</sup> in real school practice.

One of its aims is the theoretical analysis of the current level of knowledge and comparison with traditional concepts about children at younger school age. We expect the research results to give rise to inspiring discussion concerning the theoretical, but mainly pragmatic areas of education science.

The aim of this analysis is to prepare the theoretical background for producing a valid research tool, compatible with the current stage of development of this research area. From a pedagogical point of view, it is especially important to investigate the current child's moral thinking, including its content, in order to better understand how to respond to the emerging morality of children during their institutional moral education at school.

We start by describing selected research methods that have been used in investigating younger children and which are potential methods of our research. Then some data of contemporary research are presented to contribute to understanding the main features of the current generation of children (GenZ) and especially their moral characteristics.

As research on the world of children is a very complex issue, a certain set of specific preconditions must be guaranteed in order to choose and use an appropriate set of methods for researching young children.

### 1.1. Problems and principles of research on children

Researchers of the moral world of children need to be aware of the specific **ethics** of this research. The European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR) – one of the

<sup>1</sup> Project is supported by VEGA the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic.

<sup>2</sup> Bravená, N., Pädagogische Anregungen: "Glück, was ist Glück ... bloß eine kleine goldene Fliege?" – Wie tschechische Kinder über das Glück sprechen. In Bucher A.A., Büttner G., Freudenberger-Lötz, P., Schreiner M., *Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie: "Gott gehört so ein bisschen zur Familie": Mit Kindern über Glück und Heil nachdenken.* Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag Stuttgart, 2011, pp. 171-183.

key organisations focused on research worldwide – requires researchers to abide by the following principles on research of children as presented on their website: "*Interviews with children should not disturb their tranquility. The person accompanying the child must be assured and confident that children's rights and interests are protected. Researchers must be protected against any misunderstanding or allegations of misconduct in relation to children. Ensure ethical standards of research must be ensured. Interview should not be done without the permit to research or without an accompaniment by an adult. Researchers ... should be trained and thus prepared to take responsibility for interview to parents and the public.*"<sup>3</sup>.

Almy and Genishi in their book published back in 1979<sup>4</sup>, warned about nuances **and risks** of research on young children which are still in existence:

- Shortage of evidence, e.g. existence of only one situation/one child indicating something requires further confirmation.
- The fact of being studied should not involve any intimidation, confusion or any other kind of pressure on the children, influencing their utterances.
- The most important stage opening the door to research is creating rapport by the researcher.
- Forcing children to answer should be avoided. Otherwise the opposite might be achieved.
- Some techniques suit some children but others not.
- The best is to study what they do as well as what they say.

#### 1.1.1. General principles

Before describing the spectrum of alternatives how to research the moral world of children, let us mention the necessity of fulfilling the conditions that are a matter of course for all kinds of research. All research has to be **reliable**. There should be a guarantee of a certain degree of compliance in case of different researchers, e.g. that they would classify the data achieved by the method into the same category. The research should be also **valid** – which means to make sure that the findings will be actually based on a critical examination of all data and not rely on "anecdotalism" (a few well-chosen cases)<sup>5</sup>. Silverman and others strongly suggest to apply methodological **triangulation** – an attempt to obtain "a real understanding of the situation based on a combination of varied ways of viewing things" or on various sets of findings. The suggestion would mean for example interacting not only with the children, but to supplement those data by interviewing their parents, grandparents or even wider family.

<sup>3</sup> *Interviewing Children and Young People: ESOMAR World Research Codes and Guidelines.* Esomar 2009. [https://www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ESOMAR\\_Codes-and-Guidelines\\_Interviewing-Children-and-Young-People.pdf](https://www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ESOMAR_Codes-and-Guidelines_Interviewing-Children-and-Young-People.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Almy, M., Genishi, C., *Ways of studying the children : An Observation Manual for Early Childhood Teachers.* Revised version. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1979. pp. 52-54.

<sup>5</sup> Silverman, D., *Ako robiť kvalitatívny výskum.* Bratislava: Ikar - Pegas, 2005. p. 190.



## 1.2. Alternative ways of researching the moral world of children

As, logically, the current generation of children is researched by people belonging to an older generation, there is a need to find a valid tool to research the youngest generation without resulting in misconception and non-effective moral education. So far there have been several **research methods** used to investigate the moral views and competences of children.

The most natural way to obtain a complex picture of who current children are is by **observing** their behaviour and treatment of things, animals, and especially of other people. Similarly to good parents, good teachers observe their pupils as a natural component of their profession. The competence to carry out this kind of classroom action research is one of a teacher's key competences. They observe the ways how children express themselves: their learning, talking, doing music and art, or even playing (e.g. children playing with marbles observed by J. Piaget<sup>6</sup>. "Teachers are alert to the verbal façade that may conceal uncertain or erroneous knowledge."<sup>7</sup>. An outstanding teacher – researcher that influenced the whole direction of research on children by her thorough observations of children was M. Montessori.<sup>8</sup>

As the aim of our research is to investigate specifically the way how children think about various moral issues, we are going to further describe several methods that might be suitable for that.

### 1.2.1. Interviewing young children

Based on studies, mentioned in the references<sup>9</sup>, interviews are probably the most often used to find out about children's concepts. The interview provides access to what is "*inside a person's head*", it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and believes)<sup>10</sup>. That is why an interview is probably also the most suitable for investigating the moral thoughts of children.

According to Cohen & Manion<sup>11</sup>, the interview as a research tool serves as "a potential means of pure information transfer"; as a transaction which inevitably has some bias, but which is to be recognized and controlled (because of non-rational factors connected such as emotions, unconscious action etc.); or as "an encounter necessarily sharing many of the features of everyday life". Thus not only verbal, but also non-verbal responses (such as silence, avoidance, distortions) should be an object of recording during interviews.

<sup>6</sup> Piaget J., Inhelderová B., *Psychológia dieťaťa*. Bratislava: SOFA, 1993.

<sup>7</sup> Almy M., Genishi C., *ibidem*.

<sup>8</sup> Montessori M., *The Discovery of the Child*. New York: Random House, 1967.

<sup>9</sup> Cohen L., Manion L., *Research Methods in Education*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Routledge, 1994; Freeman M., Mathison S. (2009). *Researching Children's Experiences*. New York: Guilford Press, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Cohen L., Manion L., *ibidem* p. 273.

<sup>11</sup> Cohen L., Manion L., *ibidem* p. 274.

Interviews help to get to the stories by which people describe their world<sup>12</sup>. Only if the researchers use their best effort to listen carefully to the children's responses and accept them with professional tact and human respect, then they can come closer to understanding and revealing the child's picture of the world. "It is a methodology of listening, ie. focusing on looking at the world from the perspective of our subjects"<sup>13</sup>.

That is why there exist two types of interview: a) an interview according to a pre-constructed questionnaire on a wide range of topics; and b) a thorough interview focused on studying the depth of specific phenomena.

From another point of view, interviews can be either non-directive or focused. The focused interview gives the researcher a chance to be more active, to introduce more explicit verbal cues to stimulate the responses or even represent them. Several well-known researchers have used interviews focused on a specific issue, question<sup>14</sup>, or dilemma<sup>15</sup>.

Children can be investigated either via individual interviews (one researcher with one child) or via group interviews, interviewing more children together. In case of research on children, several researchers (e.g. Cohen & Manion<sup>16</sup>) prefer group interviews, viewing them as an opportunity with greater potential as children have no inhibitions to complement one another's replies.

Researching young learners (around the age of six) demands a high level of flexibility and capability to ask thoughtful open questions/investigating statements. Only then can misunderstandings be clarified and the limits of the moral knowledge of children tested. Open questions help to build rapport, to respond, to evaluate and to give feedback.

But, of course, they may lead to divergent, unexpected responses. A special type of questioning is the "funnel" method<sup>17</sup>, which starts with a wider question or statement that increasingly narrows down to a more specific one. That is why questions can be asked both directly - asking for certain information, or indirectly - trying to reach the point when the opinion of the child comes to the surface.

Children seldom provide definite answers. Often their responses serve as clues to be further supported and developed. There should be enough time for the child to respond to the question, and "during interviews with children it is also important to read between the lines"<sup>18</sup>. Space for reflection on the responses should be allocated for. The researcher has to have time to repeat/confirm what the child has said, especially if a child's utterance was not clear or understandable. Sometimes a counter-suggestion may be used, such as "Some

<sup>12</sup> Silverman D., *ibidem* p. 135.

<sup>13</sup> Silverman D., *ibidem* p. 137.

<sup>14</sup> Coles R., *The Spiritual Life of Children*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990.

<sup>15</sup> Kohlberg L., (1981). *Essays on Moral Development, Vol. I: The Philosophy of Moral Development*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.

<sup>16</sup> Cohen L., Manion L. Op. Cit.

<sup>17</sup> Silverman D., *ibidem* p. 154.; Cohen, L., Manion, L. *ibidem*, p. 154.

<sup>18</sup> Almy M., Genishi C. (1979). *Ways of studying the children : An Observation Manual for Early Childhood Teachers*. Revised version. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1979. p. 72.



people/your schoolmate that I spoke with said that..."<sup>19</sup> mentions four kinds of open questions, building on the responses of children:

- Questions asking for clarification: Do I understand correctly that you meant...? How did you mean this? Can you explain it a bit more? Do you have any other explanation?
- Questions detecting assumptions: Do you think it is always like that? Why do you think so? Where are you coming from?
- Questions detecting argumentation: Can you give an example? What are the reasons for what you are saying?
- Various opinions: Why do you think of this? Do you know about any other similar situation?

Cohen & Manion<sup>20</sup> suggest two main ways of ensuring *the validity of the measurements* in an open interview: a) by comparing its results with other research (so called 'convergent validity'); and b) by eliminating or minimizing the amount of bias as much as possible e.g. by pre-training the researchers.

Of course, as with each method – interviews also have their weaknesses. There is a risk that increasing the level of its reliability by more logical and rational procedures might reduce the degree of its validity. Getting to know children's moral world demands to know not only crystal clear facts about their knowledge, but also their emotions, inclinations, emerging thoughts, etc. Instead of being too rational and detached, the researcher has to be able to consider and value even a hint on the child's part, finding it between the lines', to respond to it promptly, sensitively and in all 'aspects professionally, and to bring it into further and deeper disclosure or maybe even discussion. Another danger lies in the tendency of some children to show themselves in a better light, e.g. because they want to please the adult or to protect their true feelings or ideas. Of course, there is a whole group of other practical problems connected with suitable space and time for research, and technical issues (e.g. how to get permissions to do recordings) connected with this research technique.

Interviews with young children can be very well prompted *using pictures or symbols* that help to open the dialogue. In her research of the attitudes of children towards the value of happiness, N. Bravená applied semi-structured group interviews using symbols<sup>21</sup>.

They consisted of two parts. In the first part, the Czech children were asked how and why people associated them with happiness (horseshoe, ladybug, chimney sweep, piggy bank, money, goldfish, elephant, four-leaf clover; as well as some newer symbols, such as the sun, diamond, discount, computer). In the second part of the interview, the children were challenged to go deeper and respond to the questions: "*What does happiness mean*

<sup>19</sup> Bucher A.A. (2006). Theologisieren und Philosophieren mit Kindern. In Bucher A.A. Büttner G. (ed.). "*Vielleicht hat Gott uns Kindern den Verstand gegeben*", Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 2006, pp. 147-170.

<sup>20</sup> *Op.cit.* p. 281.

<sup>21</sup> Bravená N. (2013). Symboly štěstí otevírající svět dětí. In Hejlová H., Opravilová E., Uhlířová J., Bravená N. *Nahlížení do světa dětí*. Praha: PF UK, 2013, pp. 41-54.

*for me?"* and "*When am I happy?"* After the interview the children were asked to paint or write what was their greatest happiness. In Bravená's conclusion, "symbols help children to understand and express the idea of happiness and unhappiness... The symbols help the children during discussions about values, they assist them to express their wishes and ideas, they lead the children from visible to invisible, and thus they help them to develop their deeper insight into reality and their own transcendence. From this reason, the symbols have an influence upon development of moral orientation and should be used more in education."<sup>22</sup> Another important point according to Bravená is that children's utterances about their moral and religious world should not be evaluated in terms of knowledge, but in terms of their creativity and ability to ponder on deeper, even unknown concepts and phenomena.

### 1.2.2. Children's focus groups

Focus groups method is a qualitative research method. It is a more or less informal discussion among members of a selected group of children with a facilitator who guides the group through a set of questions/topics. It is sometimes called a focused group interview. The aim is "to gain understanding of a specific issue from the perspective of the participants ... The aim is not to reach a convergent opinion or even a consensus but, on the contrary, to encourage the sharing of divergent ideas, solutions, etc. The non-threatening environment supports the success of the application of this method."<sup>23</sup> Teachers and researchers could result in a database of more in-depth information on opinions, attitudes, perceptions, insights, attitudes, experiences, or beliefs of children in a group. "Focus groups do not have the ambition to get valid information at the individual level."<sup>24</sup> This method can help to examine and explain the research bottlenecks in early stages of research.

On the one side, the peer pressure existing in the investigated group can become a *hindrance* for revealing one's attitude in front of the others. On the other side, their *advantages* are in the group dynamic that helps to reveal some data that are not provided by individual interaction with one child. Also there is a risk of several dominating debaters, or discussions being sidetracked. This method is less sensitive for detection of child originality.

### 1.2.3. Taxonomy of moral virtues as a research tool

As a response to the raising critique of negative features of human character, over several years dozens of researchers were striving to develop a manual on human character

<sup>22</sup> Bravená, N. *ibidem*, pp. 53 & 76.

<sup>23</sup> Liangputtong, P. (2009). Focus Group Methodology. [15.09.2015] Retrieved from the website: [http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360\\_978\\_1\\_84787\\_909\\_7.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360_978_1_84787_909_7.pdf), p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> *Focus Group Methodology: Introduction and History*. [19.09.2015] Retrieved from the website: [http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360\\_978\\_1\\_84787\\_909\\_7.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360_978_1_84787_909_7.pdf).



strengths<sup>25</sup>. Their studies, followed by a specific higher level of abstraction culminated in preparing a taxonomy of moral virtues which distinguishes three conceptual levels:

- Virtues – key characteristics of humans that are appreciated by moral philosophers and religious thinkers;
- Strengths of one's character (psychological components – pathways that direct the virtues and by which virtues manifest themselves);
- Situational habits (situational themes) – specific habits that lead a person to manifest his/her strengths in certain situations.

This taxonomy was used to develop diagnostic tools that measure the strengths of human character. A special Youth-VIA version was prepared aimed at children and adolescents (over 10 years old), covering a complex 5-level range of typical moral behavior in typical situations. The plan was to use it with a large sample, so that "it could have an impact on more different concepts of training and educational activities"<sup>26</sup>. Though the taxonomy of moral virtues as described by Mareš<sup>27</sup> has been used so far by children 10+, if adapted, its idea might be used potentially with younger students, too.

#### 1.2.4. Projective method

The projective (or 'projection') method offers yet another way how to identify children's thoughts. It consists of reconstruction of children's experiences, emotions, opinions, attitudes, motives and needs, based on indirect data obtained via analysis of various products made by children<sup>28</sup>. There are several groups of products that might be used during this kind of research: verbal, artistic or motional.

By the *technique of free verbal association* is understood the procedure when the child is encouraged to talk about whatever comes to mind after a certain topic was mentioned to him/her. The use of this technique in educational research has been adapted from psychology. It is suitable for researching knowledge, cognitive pre-concepts, moral and religious concepts of children. This method was used with young children as early as in 1964 by a French psychologist of religion J.P. Deconchy who investigated children's ideas of God in connection with parental images<sup>29</sup>. Slovak researchers Halama, Adamová, Hatoková & Stríženec<sup>30</sup> describe the use of this technique with 7-10 year old children in investigating child's development of the concept of God. The data they presented showed its consistency with developmental changes in cognition.

<sup>25</sup> Peterson C., Seligman M.E. (Eds.) (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues*. Oxford: OUP, 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Mareš J. (2008). Nová taxonomie kladných stránek člověka – Inspirace pro pedagogiku a pedagogickou psychologii. In *Pedagogika*, 2008, 58(1), pp. 4-20.

<sup>27</sup> *Op.cit.* p.7

<sup>28</sup> Gavora P. (1993). *Výskumné metody v pedagogike*. Bratislava: UK, 1993.

<sup>29</sup> DeConchy, J.P. (1967). God and the Parental Images. In Godin, A. (ed.) *From Cry to Word*. Brussels: Lumen, Vitae Press, 1967, pp. 85-94.

<sup>30</sup> Halama P., Adamová L., Hatoková M., Stríženec M. (2006). *Religiozita, spiritualita a osobnosť*. Bratislava: Ústav experimentálnej psychológie SAV, 2006.

## 2. Results of research on the moral world of children

### 2.1. Morality of young children based on 20<sup>th</sup> century theories of moral development

Moral awareness and moral reasoning as inner life of children, have been for decades an object of research by several world-famous psychologists, culturologists, anthropologists, educators or theologians. We can mention research done by e.g. Piaget, Kohlberg, but also Erikson, Coles, Montessori, Fowler, DeVries, Zan.

Ontological psychology and pedagogy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century works with the results of their research, including their ideas on the moral characteristics of the child at the time of starting school attendance. Generally, 6-8-years old children are described as being in the stage of 'heteronomous' morality. They are becoming less and less egocentric, more open to building interpersonal relations and cooperation. They are more and more capable of logical, though concrete thinking operations, and thus less rigid than children in the previous preoperational stage<sup>31</sup>.

According to Erikson<sup>32</sup>, after entering school, the child, already being able to take initiative and make his/her own choices – or not make them and feel guilty (characteristics of preschool years) develops into a school-competent child in the life of who a significant emphasis is put on comparing oneself with others. The danger of feelings of inferiority arises. The preconventional morality stage with its typical individualism, focus on reward, and its naïve instrumental hedonism culminates and around the age of 7 develops into the stage of conventional morality. Twenty-first century education, including school Ethics and Religious Education, reflects these theoretical models.

The above-described characteristic of an 'average' child has been confirmed by research also in Slovakia, e.g., Čižmáriková<sup>33</sup> who investigated the possibilities of moral development of current children in the school context. In her research, Maďarová<sup>34</sup> experimented with a programme of moral development using the Czecho-Slovak adapted version of Kohlberg' dilemmas. She confirmed the three main childhood moral stages regardless of the religious background of the school.

### 2.2. The moral world of the currently youngest generation

The strongest extrinsic societal impetus causing a vast generational gap between the youngest and the previous generations stems from the revolutionary changes in the technological

<sup>31</sup> Piaget J., Inhelderová B. *ibidem*.

<sup>32</sup> Erikson E.H. (1997). *The Life Cycle Completed*. Extended version with New Chapters on the Ninth Stage of Development by Joan H. Erikson. New York: W. W. Norton, 1997.

<sup>33</sup> Čižmáriková K. Teórie socio-morálneho vývinu detí. In Kaliská L. (ed.) *Vybrané aspekty psychológie morálky*. Banská Bystrica: PF UMB, 2013, pp. 29-50.

<sup>34</sup> Bravená Maďarová A. (2011). *Náboženská výchova a morálny rozvoj detí mladšieho školského veku*: PhD. dissertation. Banská Bystrica: KETM PF UMB, 2011.



environment and unprecedented abilities to live in virtual reality. Thus the currently youngest generation (GenZ born between 2000-2010) is often called The Internet Generation, iGen, The Content Gen, The Digital Native, The Multi-task Generation, The Kaleidoscopers, The Generation Comic Book Movies, The New Silent Gen, The Gamers Gen, The Gen Now<sup>35</sup>.

According to Kasáčová<sup>36</sup>, the rapid changes and dynamic development of contemporary society happening during the last few years is influencing the cultural practices and macrosocial habits of the current generation of children (e.g. their games, means of communication, use of leisure time, the relationship to adults). They results can be observed also in the area of physical problems of children and in their vision of the good life, of a prestige vocation/profession, of a successful student, also in changing expectations of parents from children, schools and teachers. This is a global change which means that children living in different countries experience a similar childhood. "The model of modern childhood has become somewhat transnational and universal."<sup>37</sup>

These and other dramatic moral changes in the present world have a direct influence upon the morality of the current children. The current moral educators strive to describe the 'emerging' morality of the youngest children, expressed in new ways of children's thinking, feeling and acting. A lot of research investigating both the positive and negative impact of the technological boom upon GenZ has been carried out.

Based on Hanesová's long-term observations<sup>38</sup>, it is a positive fact that GenZ prefers an interactive environment to a passive one (Internet vs. textbook) and that they are less hesitant in sharing their opinions on moral and religious matters. They can do it even though they might sound totally contrary to the content transmitted by the teacher. They like to ask questions, to philosophize and theologize about ultimate issues. They seem to be more altruistic, ecological, pro-social, showing more empathy towards disadvantaged groups of people. "They are more consistent about their likes and dislikes, more likely to purchase with their hearts rather than their egos and they are able to discuss about this topics. They favour platforms and a medium that they can mold. They do not have set patterns for viewing or listening. In advertising they prefer humour above other characteristics. They have a desire to be entertained and to follow good content.

They appear to care less about fame and fortune, but more about happiness. In their pictures describing happy/unhappy people as well as rich/poor people, more than three fourth of the children preferred drawing pictures of their family, good relationships as opposed to drawing pictures connected with material wealth, money, and etc."<sup>39</sup>.

On the other hand, this generation of children relies less and less on their own critical and heuristic skills, but more on the search possibilities of the internet. Massive growth of

<sup>35</sup> Brádnanská Ondrášek N. Od generácie Y ku generácii Z: Zamerané na generáciu Z. In *Od generácie Y ku generácii Z*. Banská Bystrica : PF UMB, 2012, pp. 114-141.

<sup>36</sup> Kasáčová B., Luptáková K. *Sociálne aspekty detstva a výchovy*. Banská Bystrica : PF UMB, pp. 25-26.

<sup>37</sup> Kolláriková Z., Pupala, B. (eds.). (2010). *Předškolní a primární pedagogika*. Praha: Portál, 2010. pp. 33-36.

<sup>38</sup> Hanesová D. (2015). New challenges in the religious education of generation Z (the youngest children). In *Christian family and contemporary society*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015, pp. 225-240.

<sup>39</sup> Hanesová, D. *Ibidem* pp. 225-240.

time children spend on the internet/computer games might give rise to increasing memory and concentration disorders, functional illiteracy, aggression, demoralization, emotional and overall dullness (identified in South Korea as "digital dementia syndrome")<sup>40</sup>. Children's recently acquired controversial ability of multi-tasking (doing more activities at one time) can - in the long term - lead to severe fragmentation of attention and negative effects on the ways of learning, thinking, socialization, quality of work, one's ability to analyse complex data; further to the loss of the ability of the brain to relax and reflect, decreased empathy, further to impatience, irritability, as well as other medical, sociological or mental disorders.

### 3. Conclusion

Researchers investigating the current youngest generation of children are, logically, people belonging to older generations which naturally implies the mentioned generation gap and risks of misunderstanding or side-tracking the reality as experienced by the children themselves. As described above, it is a huge challenge to do this research in a scientifically exact and valid, humanly sensitive and professional way.

That is why in the first part of this study we have focused on so many details in order to find a really valid tool to research the youngest generation without resulting in misconceptions and non-effective moral education. Which of the research methods would suit most the intentions of the project aiming at updating and innovating the knowledge about the moral world of today's children on the threshold of education?

To answer this question an overview of research studies that have been undertaken in the area of moral life of children so far was presented. Besides observations, we described several verbal methods that might open the door into the child's moral thought. Obviously the most frequently used method was an interview either with a child individually or with a group of children.

In the second part of the study, data generally describing the morality of young children that were acquired via decades long research in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were presented. Several moral characteristics of 6-7 years old children were explicitly listed. Moving forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought another challenge of how to proceed in researching children in this highly technological age, when the presence of new technologies and possibilities to 'live in virtual reality' becomes 'the air that the youngest generation of children breathe'.

After analysing and considering all the pros and cons of the above-mentioned methods and their achievements, it seems that for the purpose of our project and taking into consideration its circumstances and our possibilities, the most suitable methodology will be a set of structured micro-interviews with analytical objective, and analyses of

<sup>40</sup> Spitzer, M. (2012). *Digitale Demenz: Wie wir uns und unsere Kinder um den Verstand bringen*. München: Droemer Knaur, 2012.



children's drawings (stature, family, free topic). As additional tools, we will use explorative surveys of parents', grandparents' and teachers' opinions on today's children and their specifics.

The expected results of the project research will become beneficial for the formulation, respectively reformulating of educational goals on a national scale, in particular for updating the themes and objectives of socio-moral development.

Moreover, new opportunities for international comparison in a dynamically changing world and especially Europe's new political ideological contexts will be provided. General and superior moral goals and values have to be specified in the context of clarifying the domain of moral development of the child and school education. Thus it will be possible to specify tasks for further research, which will be able to further explore the hypotheses that emerge from our exploration.

### Acknowledgement

This study is an integral part of the project 'Children At The Threshold Of Education And Their World' (VEGA 1/0598/15) supported by the Scientific Grant Agency of the Ministry of Education, science, research and sport of the Slovak Republic.

### References

- Almy, M., Genishi, C. (1979). *Ways of studying the children : An Observation Manual for Early Childhood Teachers*. Revised version. New Yourk: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1979.
- Brádňanská Ondrášek, N. (2012). Od generácie Y ku generácii Z: Zameranie na generáciu Z. In *Od generácie Y ku generácii Z*. Banská Bystrica : PF UMB, 2012, pp. 114-141.
- Bravená Maďarová, A. (2011). *Náboženská výchova a morálny rozvoj detí mladšieho školského veku*: PhD. dissertation. Banská Bystrica: KETM PF UMB, 2011.
- Bravená, N. (2011). Pädagogische Anregungen : "Glück, was ist Glück ... bloß eine kleine goldene Fliege?" - Wie tschechische Kinder über das Glück sprechen. In Bucher, A. A.; Büttner, G.; Freudenberg-Lötz, P.; Schreiner, M. *Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie: "Gott gehört so ein bisschen zur Familie" : Mit Kindern über Glück und Heil nachdenken*. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag Stuttgart, 2011, pp. 171-183.
- Bravená, N. (2013). Symboly šťastia otvárajúci svet detí. In Hejlová, H., Opravilová, E., Uhlířová, J., Bravená, N. *Nahlížení do světa dětí*. Praha: PF UK, 2013, pp. 41-54.
- Bucher, A. A. (2006). Theologisierung und Philosophieren mit Kindern. In Bucher, A. A. Büttner, G. (ed.). *"Villich hat Gott uns Kindern den Verstand gegeben"*, Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie. Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 2006, pp. 147-170.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Coles, R. (1990). *The Spiritual Life of Children*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990.
- Čižmáriková, K. (2013). Teórie socio-morálneho vývinu detí. In Kaliská, L. (ed.) *Vybrané aspekty psychológie morálky*. Banská Bystrica: PF UMB, 2013, pp. 29-50.
- DeConchy, J.P. (1967). God and the Parental Images. In Godin, A. (ed.) *From Cry to Word*. Brussels: Lumen, Vitae Press, 1967, pp. 85-94.
- Erikson, E. H. (1997). *The Life Cycle Completed*. Extended version with New Chapters on the Ninth Stage of Development by Joan H. Erikson. New York: W. W. Norton, 1997.
- Focus Group Methodology: Introduction and History. [19.09.2015] Retrieved from the website: [http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360\\_978\\_1\\_84787\\_909\\_7.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360_978_1_84787_909_7.pdf)
- Freeman, M., Mathison, S. (2009). *Researching Children's Experiences*. New York: Guilford Press, 2009.
- Gavora, P. (1993). *Výskumné metódy v pedagogike*. Bratislava: UK, 1993.
- Halama, P., Adamová, L., Hatoková, M., Stríženec, M. (2006). *Religiozita, spiritualita a osobnosť*. (Vybrané kapitoly z psychológie náboženstva). Bratislava: Ústav experimentálnej psychológie SAV, 2006.
- Hanesová, D. (2015). New challenges in the religious education of generation Z (the youngest children). In *Christian family and contemporary society*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015, pp. 225-240.

- Heidbrink, H. (1997). *Psychologie morálního vývoje*. Praha: Portál, 1997.
- Interviewing Children and Young People : ESOMAR World Research Codes and Guidelines. Esomar 2009. [https://www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ESOMAR\\_Codes-and-Guidelines\\_Interviewing-Children-and-Young-People.pdf](https://www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ESOMAR_Codes-and-Guidelines_Interviewing-Children-and-Young-People.pdf)
- Kasáčová, B., Luptáková, K. (2009). *Sociálne aspekty detstva a výchovy*. Banská Bystrica : PF UMB.
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *Essays on Moral Development, Vol. I: The Philosophy of Moral Development*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981.
- Kolláriková, Z., Pupala, B. (eds.). (2010). *Předškolní a primární pedagogika*. Praha: Portál, 2010.
- Liamputtong, P. (2009). *Focus Group Methodology*. [15.09.2015] Retrieved from the website: [http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360\\_978\\_1\\_84787\\_909\\_7.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/39360_978_1_84787_909_7.pdf), p. 3.
- Mareš, J. (2008). Nová taxonomie kladných stránek člověka – Inspirace pro pedagogiku a pedagogickou psychologii. In *Pedagogika*, 2008, 58(1), pp. 4-20.
- Montessori, M. (1967). *The Discovery of the Child*. New York: Random House, 1967.
- Peek, L., Fothergill, A. (2009). Qualitative Research: Using Focus Groups: lessons from studying daycare centres, 9/11, and Hurricane Katrina. [19.09.2015] Retrieved from the website: [http://wsnet.colostate.edu/~CWIS584/Lori\\_Peek/Data/Sites/1/1-research/publicationpdfs/peek\\_fothergill2009.pdf](http://wsnet.colostate.edu/~CWIS584/Lori_Peek/Data/Sites/1/1-research/publicationpdfs/peek_fothergill2009.pdf)
- Peterson, C., Seligman, M.E. (Eds.) (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues*. Oxford: OUP, 2004.
- Piaget, J., Inhelderová, B. (1993). *Psychológia dieťaťa*. Bratislava: SOFA, 1993.
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Ako robiť kvalitatívny výskum*. Bratislava: Ikar - Pegas, 2005.
- Spitzer, M. (2012). *Digitale Demenz: Wie wir uns und unsere Kinder um den Verstand bringen*. München: Droemer Knaur, 2012.
- Vacek, P. (2013). *Psychologie morálky a výchova charakteru žáků*. Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus, 2013.



Bronislava Kasáčová  
Dana Hanesová

Faculty of Education, Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

### Ways of qualitative research on children moral world and young children

#### Abstract

The study deals the outcomes from the first stage of the Slovak project 'Children At The Threshold Of Education And Their World' (VEGA 1/0598/15). This study presents an overview of the relevant research studies. It focuses on the young children, specifically on children at the age of starting their education. The study is describing the group of research methods that have been used in investigating younger children and that can be considered to be potential tools in this research. There are a number of examples of contemporary research presented to contribute to understanding the main features of the current generation of children (GenZ) and especially some of their moral features.

**Keywords:** moral, children development, qualitative research

Anna Winiarczyk  
Jadwiga Jagiełło

## EUROSIEROCTWO A KONSEKWENCJE WYCHOWAWCZE U DZIECI W WIEKU WCZESNOSZKOLNYM

### Wstęp

Eurosieroctwo jeszcze kilkanaście lat temu było rzadkim zjawiskiem. Dziś, jest to coraz częstszy problem polskich rodzin. Po wstąpieniu Polski do Unii Europejskiej i otworzeniu granic państw członkowskich, coraz więcej osób decyduje się na poszukiwanie pracy na zachodzie Europy. Koniunktura gospodarcza Polski powoduje, że bardzo wielu rodaków opuszcza swoje rodziny i podejmuje zatrudnienie poza granicami kraju, w celu zapewnienia godnego życia członkom rodziny. Sytuacja ta sprawia, że w Polsce liczba rodzin czasowo niepełnych wzrasta na skutek migracji jednego bądź obojga rodziców, którzy wyjechali z kraju pragnąc godnego życia dla swoich dzieci, zyskujących miano eurosierot, w chwili przekroczenia przez ich rodziców granic ojczyzny.

Poakcesyjne migracje rodziców nakreśliły problem eurosieroctwa, który w krótkim czasie zaczęto określać problemem społecznym. Czym zatem jest eurosieroctwo? Rzecznik Praw Dziecka termin ten definiuje jako „zjawisko pozostawiania w kraju dzieci przez rodziców wyjeżdżających za granicę (...), dzieci pozbawione stałego kontaktu nawet z jednym z rodziców, czują się jak sieroty”<sup>1</sup>. Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej z kolei przyjmuje, że eurosieroctwo to „sytuacja, w której emigracja zarobkowa rodziców/rodzica powoduje burzenie podstawowych funkcji rodziny, takich jak zapewnienie ciągłości procesu socjalizacji, wsparcia emocjonalnego dziecka i transmisji kulturowej”<sup>2</sup>. Natomiast

<sup>1</sup> Biuletyn Informacyjny Rzecznika Praw Dziecka, *Informacje dla rodziców podejmujących pracę poza granicami kraju*, 2008, nr 1-2, s. 2-4.

<sup>2</sup> B. Walczak, *Migracje poakcesyjne z perspektywy ucznia. Wstępna diagnoza społecznych i pedagogicznych skutków „euro-emigracji” rodziców i opiekunów*. Warszawa 2008, s. 5.