

Lucja Reczek-Zymróż

PAŃSTWOWA WYŻSZA SZKOŁA ZAWODOWA W SANOKU

MODERN ROLES OF THE LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER

WSPÓŁCZESNE ROLE NAUCZYCIELA WCZESNEJ EDUKACJI

Abstract

The article deals with an analysis of a teacher's importance in contemporary early primary school education, which is the base of further education. It elaborates on the competencies, personal features and teachers' roles at 1–3 grades of primary school. The article consists of two parts — theoretical one and research results. The theoretical part describes a tendency connected with teachers' functioning in a changing modern school's situation. The research was done among teachers and early primary students. It was carried out in the years 2012/2013 among 100 teachers and 130 parents from a country and a town — in South Eastern Poland.

Key words: primary school, roles of teacher, teacher of primary school, primary education

Słowa kluczowe: szkoła podstawowa, role nauczyciela, nauczyciel szkoły podstawowej/wczesnej edukacji, edukacja wczesnoszkolna

INTRODUCTION

Modern school has to cope with ever increasing social expectations. The school of the 21st Century is expected to develop in their pupils a personality as open as possible, prone to innovation, ready to take up creative risks while aware of the consequences of one's decisions, driven by an ambition to succeed and yet showing high levels of empathy. A well-prepared teacher with the right didactic and pedagogical competence is crucial in achieving that educational goal (I. Wagner, 1999, s. 62). According to the constructivist learning theory, a teacher who assists in the development of a child should take an interest in what his charge already knows, stimulate and accept pupil autonomy, let the pupils take responsibility for their learning, inspire them to think by asking them open questions, introduce his pupils into the world of contradictions, and encourage each pupil to dialogue with oneself and his or her peers. It is important for the teacher to use raw data and source materials, to be patient when waiting for an answer, to leave the pupils time to think and make connections, foster the pupils' natural curiosity about the world.

Good relations with the children should be based on an affirmation of the child's feelings, unconditional acceptance and credit giving, as well as the teacher's availability whenever he/she is needed. The teacher's awareness of the role he/she plays in the child's life at that stage of its development should guide his didactic, pedagogical and any other activities prompted by a sense of obligation to care for his/her charges (R. Michalak, 2004, s.181).

TEACHER OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Primary education is compulsory — children between the ages of 6/7 and 13 attend primary schools for a period of six years.

General education in the primary school aims to enable pupils to:

- 1) acquire a basic body of knowledge about facts, rules, theories and practice related in particular to topics and phenomena close to their experience;
- 2) acquire the ability to use the knowledge gained to carry out tasks and solve problems;
- 3) develop attitudes which are necessary for efficient and responsible functioning in the modern world.

The most important skills to be acquired by pupils in primary schools include:

- 1) reading: understood as both a simple activity and the ability to understand, use and process texts to an extent enabling acquisition of knowledge, emotional, intellectual and moral development, as well as participation in social life;
- 2) mathematical thinking: the ability to use basic mathematical tools in everyday life and to apply elementary mathematical reasoning;
- 3) scientific thinking: the ability to formulate conclusions based on empirical observation related to nature and society;
- 4) communication skills in the mother tongue and in a foreign language, including both speaking and writing skills;
- 5) the ability to use ICT effectively, including the ability to search for and make use of information;
- 6) learning to learn as a means enabling pupils to satisfy their curiosity about the world, to identify their interests and to prepare for further education;
- 7) teamwork skills (Eurydice, s. 31).

Pursuant to the Teachers' Charter, teachers can obtain the following professional promotion grades:

- A. trainee teacher,
- B. contract teacher,
- C. appointed teacher,
- D. chartered teacher.

Chartered teachers who have outstanding professional achievements may be awarded the honorary title of education professor. In order to be promoted to a higher grade, a teacher should:

- hold the required qualifications;

- complete a “probation period” (the period preceding an application for promotion) and receive a positive assessment of his/her professional achievements during this period (the teacher follows an individual professional development plan during the probation period);
- have his/her application for promotion approved by a so-called qualifying board or, in the case of a contract teacher, pass an examination before an examination board (Eurydice, s. 86, 87).

Teaching at stage I is meant to provide a smooth transition from pre-primary experience to school education. Educational activities are conducted according to a flexible timetable prepared by the teacher, in which the duration of lessons and breaks is influenced by the pupils’ activity. Education in grades 1–3 of the primary school is implemented in the form of integrated teaching provided by a generalist teacher. Music education, art education, physical education (PE), computer classes and modern foreign language classes can be taught by a specialist teacher with relevant qualifications. Early school education aims to support children in their intellectual, emotional, social, ethical, physical and aesthetic development. The new curriculum defines the scope of knowledge and skills to be acquired by pupils completing education in grade 3. The scope of knowledge and skills which pupils should have gained by the end of education in grade 3 is defined in such a way as to enable teachers to work with children of average-level abilities (Eurydice, 34).

In the contemporary school there is a shift from a teacher-centred model to a learner-centred approach to learning and teaching. There is also a shift from product-driven learning to process-driven. These changes encourage teachers to reflect not only on the key principles of learning and teaching but also on their role in the process

Teacher-centred classroom	Learner-centred classroom
Product-centred learning	Process-centred learning
Teacher as a ‘transmitter of knowledge’	Teacher as an organiser of knowledge
Teacher as a ‘doer’ for children	Teachers as an ‘enabler’, facilitating pupils in their learning
Subject-specific focus	Holistic learning focus
These changes in the role of the teacher will inevitably result in transforming the role of pupils in the classroom	
From:	To:
Being passive recipients of knowledge	Active and participatory learners
Focus on answering questions	Asking questions
Being ‘spoon fed’	Taking responsibility for their own learning — reflective learners
Competing with one another	Collaborating in their learning
Wanting to have their own say	Actively listening to opinions of others
Learners of individual subjects	Connecting their learning (CCEA, 2007, s. 7)

For many teachers there is always more to do and they are always striving to find ways of doing it better because our society needs flexible and activity teachers, who work efficiently and effectively.

AN OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH

The main question raised in this study is the following: What is the importance of early primary teachers and what roles do they play at 1–3 grades of primary school?

To investigate the functioning of lower primary school teachers I recruited 100 teachers (50 from an urban environment and 50 from a rural one) from selected schools in three counties in South Eastern Poland and a complementary group of 130 parents from the same locations. In the teacher group there were 88 women and 12 men. An overwhelming majority of them (94) had the magister degree, the rest (6) had a vocational BA degree. As far as work experience is concerned, 34 of them had been employed for over 20 years, the second largest group (29) — for a period between 7 and 14 years, the third largest group (27) — between 15 and 20 years, the smallest group (10) had been on the job for a period between one and six years. 57 respondents were chartered teachers, 18 held an appointment, two were contract teachers and the remaining three were trainees. Of the 130 parents, 60 came from an urban environment and 70 from the countryside. The parent group consisted of 93 women and 37 men. The majority (54) had secondary education; 42 held a higher education degree; 42 respondents were graduates of vocational schools and just one completed his/her education at the primary level.

This study is part of research project focused on roles of the lower primary school teacher. To get answers to my questions I conducted a series of diagnostic surveys in South Eastern Poland in 2012/2013.

ROLES OF THE LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER: SURVEY RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

First problem was concerned on importance of early primary teachers. The research results (Table No. 1) indicate that the role of the teacher at the lower primary level is believed to be of supreme importance. Out of 50 teachers from the urban areas and 50 from the rural environment the great majority chose the supreme importance option, 43 (86%) and 42 (84%) respectively. Only a small number of teachers think that their role is just important, ie. 7 (14%) teachers from the urban setting and 8 (16%) from the country areas. The figures show that the opinions of the teachers are remarkably uniform on this point. The parents' answers are more differentiated. Whereas the majority of urban parents (35, or 58%) rank the teacher's role very highly, a relatively large group (22, or 37%) is prepared to allow it no more than the mark 'important'. With parents from the rural areas the gap widens. A great majority (58, or 83%) think that the role of the teacher at that stage is of supreme importance, and only 11 (16%) believe it is merely important.

Only three (5%) respondents from the urban setting and one (1%) from the country think that the role of the teacher is moderate.

Table No. 1

Teachers' and parents' assessment of the importance of the lower primary school teacher

Assessment of the importance of the lower primary teacher		teachers N=100				parents N=130			
		town N=50		country N=50		town N=60		country N=70	
1	supreme importance	43	86%	42	84%	35	58,3%	58	82,8%
2	important	7	17%	8	16%	22	36,6%	11	15,7%
3	moderate	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%	1	1,4%
4	low	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

In conclusion it can be said that the role of the teacher at the early stage of schooling is perceived as very important. However, parents from urban areas tend to rank it lower (which may be connected with the general lowering of the status of the teaching profession) than parents from the rural areas, where teachers are still highly respected.

A good lower primary school teacher must be a keen observer and able organizer of his/her pupils. He/she should inspire, mobilize, stimulate and prepare his/her charges for life in a rapidly changing world. To meet all those requirements the teacher needs to possess the right professional competence. The term competence comes from Latin word 'competentia' which, according to Janusz Gnitecki, means responsibility, adequacy and an attested qualification to act well in a job or a situation. In fact, the lower primary school teacher should possess a number of competences; moreover, he/she should be at all times aware of the profundity of the change that going to school brings into the life of a child. School becomes the second most important educational environment. It greatly affects the development of child's personality, with the teacher acting as an unquestioned authority. Consequently, the teacher's responsibilities are hard to overestimate and his/her personality and competences are of extraordinary significance in the life of the child (J. Gnitecki, 2005, s. 119).

Irena Adamek's survey of the standards of new professional qualifications of the lower primary school teacher distinguishes four types of competences. They are as follows: first, the praxeological competence, ie. the ability to plan, organize and carry through the educative process, to prioritize innovative methods of working with pupils, to diagnose the levels of children's social and emotional development, and to work with children with deviant patterns of growth; second, the communicative competence, ie. collaboration, effective linguistic behaviour, the use of interpersonal skills in communication with children, empathy, and the ability to inspire children's linguistic activity; third, the creative competence, ie. the ability to diagnose the creative potential of children and to help it unfold through artistic expression, as well as the ability to stimulate the pupils' critical thinking; and fourth, the co-operative competence, ie. the effective knowledge of rules, forms and methods of co-operation with parents (I. Adamek, 2001, s. 17–18).

The results of my survey indicate (Table No.2) that what counts most for teachers from the urban areas are communication skills in their work with children and parents (32 respondents, or 64%). It is followed by professional knowledge, or critical self-management (29 respondents, or 58%) and methodological competence, ie. familiarity with methods and organization of teaching (26 respondents, or 52%). Teachers from the rural environment find methodological competence, ie. the ability to organize the didactic-educational process most important (40 respondents, or 80%). Both communication skills in working with children and professional knowledge are less important (25 respondents, or 50% and 21 respondents, or 42%, respectively) — a valuation that does not match the high rank of these competences in the guidelines for lower primary school teachers. Even more disparities can be noted in the field of the teachers' diagnostic competences. While for the urban teachers they are hardly significant (only two respondents, or 6%), teachers from rural areas find them fairly important (22 respondents, or 44%). This striking difference could be explained by the fact that the urban teachers have better access to specialized advice centres and therefore do not have to have to manage diagnostics themselves. Conversely, the fact that teachers from rural areas set such great store by diagnostic competences suggests that their schools badly need qualified advice from a psychologist, a logopaedist or some other specialist. A similar divergence can be observed in the assessment of the skills connected with the use of multimedia (ie. computers, various graphic programs, interactive whiteboards, etc.) and artistic skills. Whereas teachers from the urban setting believe that such competences are of little use (three respondents, or 6%), teachers from the countryside find them fairly important (16 respondents, or 32%). The reasons for this state of affairs may vary, yet surely one of them is the fact that in urban schools informatics and the arts tend to be taught by subject teachers and, in effect, the non-specialist lower primary school teachers do not have to be involved. Conversely, teachers from rural areas are concerned about the competences in question because they have to handle those subjects themselves. Finally, of least importance to both groups of teachers are the negotiating competences (nine teachers, or 18%, from urban areas, and seven, or 14%, from the country).

Table No. 2

Professional competences of the lower primary school teacher as assessed by teachers and parents

Professional competences of the lower school teacher	teachers N=100				parents N=130			
	town N=50		country N=50		town N=60		country N=70	
Professional knowledge	29	58%	21	42%	24	40%	32	46%
Methodological competence	26	52%	40	80%	13	21,6%	32	45,7%
Diagnostic competences	2	4%	22	44%	5	8,3%	16	22,8%
Skills connected with the use of multimedia; artistic skills	3	6%	16	32%	2	3,3%	7	10%
Communication skills	32	64%	25	50%	37	61,6%	37	52,8%
Negotiating competences	9	18%	7	14%	14	23,3%	28	40%

Now let's move to the second part of the survey to see how parents assess the competences of their children's teachers. Both groups, that is parents from the urban areas and from the country, agree that the teachers can effectively communicate with the children/parents (37 respondents, or 53%, from both groups). Parents from the rural areas have on the whole a better opinion of their teachers than parents from towns. While 32, or 46%, of the latter believe that the teachers are well prepared, i.e. possess the necessary knowledge, for their job, only 24, or 40%, of the urban parents agree with that statement. The disparities widen when the teachers' methodological, diagnostic, media and artistic competences are assessed. Parents from the rural are as are by far more impressed by the teachers' methodological competences than the urban parents (32 respondents, or 46%, and 13 respondents, or 22%, respectively). A similar pattern can be found in favourable assessments of the teachers' diagnostic competences (16 respondents, or 23%, and five respondents, or 8%, respectively) and artistic and media skills (seven respondents, or 10%, and only two respondents, or 3.3%, respectively). Surprisingly, both groups of parents share the opinion that neither the diagnostic competences nor the artistic and media skills are important at that early stage of their children's education.

Summing up the assessments of both groups of parents taking part in this survey, we can say that the teachers are credited with adequate knowledge, the ability to co-operate and methodological skills and that their competences are more appreciated by parents from the country. The teachers' diagnostic competences and their artistic and media skills appear to be poor, especially in the opinion of the urban parents.

The competences and personality characteristics may vary depending on their definition, but they are not disjoint sets. The structure of competences can be arranged on three levels — knowledge, skills and individual/personal characteristics, or as it is commonly known, the human factor. Alternately, competence can be understood as a one-dimensional concept (A. Sajdak, 2010, s. 130). According to Czesław Banach the teacher's personal profile consists of a bunch of integrated features such as worldview, interests, motivation, special abilities and gifts, intelligence, type of temper, character type and typical pattern of self-management (Cz. Banach, 2009, s. 264–265). In Jolanta Wilsz's profile of the teacher should be an accomplished transformer and reproducer. Natural ability, or talent (which is inseparable from a genuine interest or passion), is a great asset because it can inspire and propel the pupils' own interests. The teacher need not be exceptionally talented, or he/she may get easily frustrated and discontented. An outstanding pedagogical ability is, however, welcome in any circumstances, especially as it tends to go hand in hand with a medium level of what Wilsz 'dodatnia emisyjność', i.e. a moderate, non obtrusive teacher domination of the classroom interaction, a high degree of tolerance and low vulnerability (J. Wilsz, 2009, s. 90–91, 264–265).

As the research results indicate (Table No. 3) the most appreciated personality traits in lower primary school teachers in the opinion of teachers from the urban and rural areas are:

- fairness — according to 45 (90%) respondents from the urban environment and 38 (76%) from the rural areas;
- tolerance (lenience) — 32 (64%) and 30 (60%) respondents respectively;
- consistency — 27 (54%) and 30 (60%) respondents respectively.

In the case of other traits the respondents' opinions diverge widely. So firmness is very important for urban teachers (31 respondents, or 62%), while for teachers from the rural areas it is of little importance (9 respondents, or 18%). It would seem therefore that pupils in the country are relatively well-disciplined and it is unnecessary to impose on them a strict code of behaviour. For lower primary school teachers from the urban environment the following traits are far less important for their colleagues from the country: kindness (18 respondents, or 36%, and 36 respondents, or 72%, respectively), empathy (15 respondents, or 30%, of the urban teachers) and patience (15 urban respondents and 34 respondents from the country, or 15% and 72%, respectively). The figures make it absolutely clear that a 'soft' approach works well in schools outside the urban areas. Finally, there seems to least demand in either setting for honesty (integrity, painstaking care) or tolerance.

Table No. 3

Personality traits that are advantageous for the lower primary school teacher
in the opinion of teachers and parents

Personality traits that are advantageous for the lower primary school teacher	teachers N=100				parents N=130			
	town N=50		country N=50		town N=60		country N=70	
fairness	45	90%	38	76%	26	43,3%	40	57,1%
consistency	27	54%	30	60%	13	21,6%	17	24,2%
kindness	18	36%	36	72%	28	46,6%	41	58,5%
firmness	31	62%	9	18%	12	20%	11	15,7%
empathy	15	30%	16	32%	11	18,3%	10	14,2%
tolerance/lenience	32	64%	30	60%	24	40%	33	47,1%
patience	15	30%	37	74%	33	55%	48	68,5%
Honesty/integrity	11	22%	12	24%	12	20%	34	48,5%
tolerance	8	16%	1	2%	1	1,6%	1	1,4%

The parents taking part in the survey appreciate most the following personality traits in the lower primary school teachers:

- patience — according to 35 (55%) respondents from the urban environment and 48 (69%) from the rural areas;
- kindness — 28(47%) and 41 (59%) respondents respectively;
- fairness — 26 (43%) and 40 (57%) respondents respectively;
- tolerance (lenience) — 24 (40%) and 33 (47%) respondents respectively.

Of lesser importance are such traits as empathy, firmness, consistency and honesty/integrity (though only for urban parents; those from the country (34 respondents, or 49%) find that character feature important. According to both groups of parents tolerance is the least practicable value at that stage of their children's education.

In conclusion it can be said that fairness and tolerance (lenience) are the most advantageous traits for a teacher working with children in a lower primary classroom. Consistency is more important for the teachers from the rural areas, while the teachers from town schools prefer to rely on firmness. The least mentioned value is tolerance (lenience). Its unimportance may result from the fact that small children neither have opinions nor behave in a way that would make the teacher think twice about tolerance and its limits. At that educational stage it is the teacher himself/herself that sets an example for the pupils to imitate. Perhaps more telling are the results concerning patience and kindness: they are very important for all parents and for teachers from rural areas, but not so for teachers from the urban environment. What is most perplexing is that sensitivity — a personality trait which is crucial in interactions with children — is practically disregarded by all respondents. One wonders how they can do without it. After all leaving it out is like denying the very idea of love and an emotional tie without which no effort to bring up and educate a child can succeed.

In modern lower primary education the teacher can move away from the traditional domineering presence and ‘chalk and talk’ method towards a number of more collaborative roles like that of a mentor, master, innovator, guide, carer, advisor, supporter, animator, facilitator. The lower primary school teacher is also an educational diagnostician always busy identifying his/her pupils needs and expectations, an intermediary fusing the personal goals of the pupils with the goals of the schools, an organizer of the pupils’ learning environment, a dispenser and at the same time collector of information, an agony aunt always ready to help solve problems and to offer advice. The choice of one role does not exclude another one; in fact the teacher may find them complementary.

The results of that part of the survey which is concerned with the professional roles of the lower primary school teacher are gathered in Table No. 4. According to their declarations, the teachers from the urban schools slip most often into the role of an animator (35 respondents, or 70%), less often into those of an educator (17 respondents, or 34%) and a guide (12 respondents, or 24%). Only rarely do they choose the roles of an arbitrator (nine responders, or 18%), a facilitator (eight respondents, or 16%) and a carer (six respondents, or 12%). Only sporadically do they choose the role of a thoughtful man of practice (four respondents, or 8%) or an interpreter (two respondents, or 4%). The teachers from the rural areas prefer the roles of an educator (29 respondents, or 58%), a guide (28 respondents, or 56%), and a carer (25 respondents, or 50%). They go less often for the role of a thoughtful man of practice (15 respondents, or 30%), and least often for that of an animator (four respondents, or 8%) an interpreter (four respondents, or 8%), a facilitator (three respondents, or 6%), or an arbitrator (one respondent, or 1%). There is a clear difference in the preferences of the two groups of teachers. Those that work in the urban setting are attracted most by the role of an animator whose function is to enliven and invigorate the class, stirs them to action, whereas their colleagues from the country favour the more traditional roles of an educator, a guide, or a carer.

The majority of parents from both urban and rural environments see the lower primary school teachers primarily in the role of a guide (34 respondents, or 57%, and 43 respondents, or 61%, respectively). Parents from urban areas emphasize the educative

role of the school and the role of the teacher as an educator (39 respondents, 65%), but they hardly notice the teacher's other roles (only two respondents, or 3%, are aware of the teacher as interpreter and seven, or 11.6%, of the teacher as facilitator).

Table No. 4

Professional roles of lower primary school teachers as seen by teachers and parents

Professional roles of lower primary school teachers	teachers N=100				parents N=130			
	town N=50		country N=50		town N=60		country N=70	
guide	12	24%	28	56%	34	56,6%	43	61,4%
animator	35	70%	4	8%	23	38,3%	6	8,5%
facylitator	8	16%	3	6%	7	11,6%	10	14,2%
intrepreter	2	4%	4	8%	2	3,3%	39	55,7%
man of practice	4	8%	15	30%	0	–	30	42,8%
arbitrator	9	18%	1	2%	0	–	7	10%
educator	17	34%	29	58%	39	65%	26	37,1%
carer	6	12%	25	50%	20	33,3%	25	35,7%

Meanwhile the other group, parents from the rural are as, have a rather different picture of the roles of the lower primary school teacher. In their opinion he/she often plays the role of an interpreter (39 respondents, or 56%) and a thoughtful man of practice (30 respondents, or 43%, but only occasionally that of a facilitator (ten respondents, or 14%),an arbitrator (seven respondents, or 10%), or an animator (six respondents, or 8%).

We can see that also in this portion of the survey that the urban/rural division is a significant factor in perception and ranking patterns. Although the majority of both groups of parents see the teacher primarily as guide, this view corresponds with the self-perception of the teachers from the rural environment. It is interesting that although the majority of both groups of teachers do not like the role of an interpreter of an increasingly complex reality to which the children are exposed this is noted only by the parents from the country.

In conclusion it can be said that the modern lower primary school teacher is less censorious and has a more personal connection to his/her pupils, he makes fewer prohibitions and offers his/her support more often, he pays less attention to the final result but shows more appreciation for the effort, he does not cling slavishly to the curriculum but is more attentive to the child, he cuts down on what he can say and lets the children discover things on their own, he talks less himself and makes more room for dialogue.

The teacher should be fully aware of who and what he is, what are his values and convictions, what he believes to be right and what wrong, what he finds beautiful and noble, and what is disgraceful and shameful. For when he does not know himself, how can he knowingly and responsibly try to shape the character of other people? How can he move towards a goal if that goal is unknown to him? How can he do things effec-

tively? (Z. Nowak, 2011, s. 24) Today a modern teacher is expected to act out not just a single role but a bundle of them. He must be a professional, a person effectively using the knowledge of his subject and his methodological proficiency, an educator, a creative and innovative personality. It is a multiple role which is of special importance at a time of educational reform, when schools and teachers are given greater autonomy and are encouraged to draft their own syllabuses. To act effectively in that role it is not enough to combine on-the-job training with an extramural vocational course. The teacher's profession is not just another job, but a calling and an art (S. Palka, 2003, s. 121).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adamek Irena (2001), *Kompetencje nauczyciela do edukacji zintegrowanej*, [w:] *Nauczyciel i uczeń w edukacji zintegrowanej w klasach I–III*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, Kraków.
- Banach Czesław (2001), *Osobowość nauczyciela*, „Gazeta Szkolna”, nr 6.
- CCEA (2007), *Active Learning and Teaching. Methods for Key Stage 3*, APMP Publication.
- Eurydice (2014), *The system on Education in Poland*, Eurydice FRSE, Warszawa.
- Gnitecki Janusz (2005), *Kompetencje nauczyciela w cywilizacji informacyjnej*, [w:] *Rozwój zawodowy nauczyciela*, red. Henryk Moroz, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków.
- Niemiec Barbara (2010), *Pedagog — człowiek mądry, człowiek dobry*, [w:] *Paradygmaty akademickiego kształcenia pedagogów*, red. Anna Sajdak, Danuta Skulicz, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków.
- Michalak Renata (2004), *Aktywizująca strategia nauczania w zintegrowanej edukacji najmłodszych uczniów*, [w:] *Edukacja elementarna jako strategia zmian rozwojowych dziecka*, red. Helena Sowińska, Renata Michalak, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, Kraków.
- Nowak Zbigniew (2011), *Powinności nauczyciela*, [w:] *Z teorii i praktyki edukacji dziecka. Inspiracje dla nauczycieli przedszkoli i klas I–III szkoły podstawowej*, red. Krystyna Gąsiorek, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, Kraków.
- Palka Stanisław (2003), *Pedagogika w stanie tworzenia*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków.
- Sajdak Anna (2010), *Kształtowanie kompetencji dydaktycznych pedagogów*, [w:] *Paradygmaty akademickiego kształcenia pedagogów*, red. Anna Sajdak, Danuta Skulicz, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków.
- Wagner Iwona (1999), *Zadania szkoły w okresie przemian społecznych w Polsce*, „Edukacja”, nr 4.
- Wilcz Jolanta (2009), *Teoria pracy*, Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”.

Łucja Reczek-Zymróż

WSPÓŁCZESNE ROLE NAUCZYCIELA WCZESNEJ EDUKACJI

Streszczenie

W tekście artykułu dokonano analizy zmian, jakie nastąpiły we współczesnych rolach nauczycieli wczesnej edukacji. Artykuł zawiera część teoretyczną i badawczą. W części opartej na literaturze przedmiotu omówiono funkcjonowanie nauczycieli w kontekście celów i zadań współczesnej szkoły podstawowej oraz wyzwań, które stoją przed nauczycielami wczesnej edukacji. Ponadto zaprezentowano zmiany w systemie kształcenia i wychowania, które powodują transformację postaw nauczycieli — od osoby stanowiącej centrum decyzyjne, które transmituje wiedzę i zarządza zasobami ludzkimi, do osoby organizującej środowisko uczenia się, będącej animatorem, facilitatorem, przewodnikiem — mistrzem. Opracowaniu poddano również rolę ucznia, który z biernego odbiorcy staje się współtwórcą procesu zdobywania wiedzy i umiejętności.

Część badawczą poświęcono omówieniu znaczenia nauczycieli wczesnej edukacji; pożądanych cech osobowych, kompetencji, które powinien posiadać, ról jakie pełni — z perspektywy 100 nauczycieli klas I–III szkoły podstawowej oraz 130 rodziców z terenów miejskich i wiejskich z południowo-wschodniej Polski.

Na podstawie uzyskanych wyników badań można stwierdzić, iż nadal znaczenie nauczycieli w początkowym okresie kształcenia uczniów jest bardzo duże; nie różnicuje tego środowisko terytorialne ani wykształcenie respondentów. Bardzo istotne okazują się w pracy z dziećmi kompetencje komunikacyjne oraz przygotowanie metodyczne i merytoryczne, a sprawiedliwość i wyrozumiałość nauczycieli stanowi o ich sukcesie. Zmieniły się także role, jakie pełnią w pracy z dziećmi. Nauczyciel to coraz częściej animator i przewodnik nie tylko po świecie wiedzy, ale życia młodego człowieka.

Podsumowując można stwierdzić, iż współczesny nauczyciel wczesnej edukacji mniej nakazuje, rzadziej koryguje — częściej wspiera, słucha, rozmawia, zwracając uwagę nie tylko na efekt końcowy podjętych przez dzieci działań, ale wysiłek towarzyszący przechodzeniu na kolejny etap ich rozwoju.