

THE CONCEPT OF VALUES AND HEARING IMPAIRMENT

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Summary

The author is dealing with the system or hierarchy of values in a very specific area – in children and adolescents with hearing impairment. The main goal is to introduce a list of values, which was built up by the author and which is, at the same time, used in practice in a pilot study. To be able to compare the results of Maslow's, Schwartz's and the present author's portraits of values, the aim is to look for larger research focused on this topic.

Key words

values, hearing impairment, Maslow, values portrait, education,

The present paper has been compiled in response to the currently held conception of the notion “value”, a word that is constantly repeated and referred to in various contexts. Within professional literature dealing with values, probably the most recent and comprehensive work in this field was that published by P. Cakirpaloglu – Psychology of value¹. A long-term study of behaviour in children and adolescents with hearing impairment has brought to surface the question of how this particular group perceives values. We assume this group to be of considerable significance, not only from the point of view of educational activities. Taking into account that (as far as we are aware) no research studies have been conducted to date in this field in our country and that, as a result, there are even no theoretically supported methodological guidelines for our special education practice, we undertook to investigate this area. In accord with this undertaking, we focused our attention on values in the extent of forecasting research activities and additionally, in-depth theoretical studies.

For the purposes of this study, values and their interpretation shall be applied from the axiological point of view, i.e. among others, as a set of axioms applicable without the need of evidence. These axioms represent basic rules,

¹ Cakirpaloglu, P. *Psychologie hodnot*. 1. vydání. Olomouc: Votobia, 2004, 427 s. ISBN 80-7220-195-6

the accuracy of which has been verified through experience. At present, we may also come across the notion “timology”² (p. 621) which is defined as a discipline dealing directly with the philosophy of values, their hierarchy, and their definition.

As an introduction to our paper, we refer to a quote from a document which can be, for a number of reasons, regarded as fundamental in the field of education. This is the Frame Education Programme³. At the beginning of Chapter 4, Key Competences, it reads: “Key competences represent a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and *values essential for personal development and assertion of each member of a society. Their selection and conception results from values generally accepted within the society and from a generally shared idea about which competences of an individual contribute to his/her education, contentment and successful life and to strengthening functions of civil society*”⁴.

The purpose and the objective of education is to provide each and every student with a set of key competences at a level that is attainable for them and thus to prepare them for further education and assertion within a society. Practising key competences is a long-term and complex process which finds its foundations in pre-school education, continues through primary and secondary education, and is then gradually developed in the course of life. The level of key competences achieved by students at the end of primary education cannot be considered as final but these competences serve as an important basis for the lifelong learning process of the students, their entry into life and for the impending work experience.

Key competences do not exist independent of each other; instead they blend together in various ways, are multifunctional, have an interdisciplinary form and can be obtained always only as a result of a complete educational process. It is for this reason that the entire education content and school activities must lead and contribute to creating and developing the key competences. It results from this text, binding for Czech schools without reservation, that students be trained to appreciate values as a long-term and considerably complex process. Further on, we learn that these values are not specified and their selection and conception follows: ... *from values generally accepted within the society and from a generally shared idea about which competences of an individual contribute to*

² HARTL, P., Hartlová, H. *Psychologický slovník*. 1. vydání. Praha: Portál, 2000, 776 s. ISBN 80-7178-303-X

³ kolektiv: *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*. VÚP Praha, 2004.

⁴ Emphasis added.

his/her education, contentment and successful life and to strengthening functions of civil society. Hartl⁵ characterized value, quite unambiguously, as an opinion on what is and is not required from the perspective of an individual. G. Marcel⁶ approaches values in a rather interesting manner – from an existentialism point of view. On page 57 of the stated work, he cites an example which is rather illustrative of this type of approach. Our selected extract from the text quotes: knowledge is great mercy, mercy of the highest. Mud is called mud. And we also know that mud is mud. Such cognition, if it really is cognition, is also an evaluation at the same time. In such context, truth and value cannot be realistically separated. Marcel further continues in his consideration by saying that value fulfils a certain function in relation to life. We would like to point out that, so far, we have been hovering only at a very general level and working with values at this level really tends to be rather a philosophical disputation. An interesting input can be the very controversial and debatable work of a sociologist and, beyond doubt, an excellent analyst P. Bakalář “Taboo in social sciences”⁷. It refers to work and evaluation of groups by cultural classification and searches for common and different aspects, among others, also in values. It does not mean that we have to necessarily agree with the author, but his analytical methods and the technique of compilation are certainly remarkable. A group of immigrants seems to be a rather specific group from the point of view of description and hierarchy of values. In our country, there also exists a group, very multifarious in all parameters, which still remains a very intriguing element even from the sociological viewpoint. This is, for us, a very interesting group in terms of its diversities on the inside as well as the outside. This diversity is reflected in the work of J. Chaloupková and P. Šalamounová⁸. We have included this source in our consideration for the evident reason of existence of culture, concept of culture and cultural minority in relation to the majority culture. We shall follow the anthropological concept of culture and return to values as an integral part of the systems which is called culture and from which are derived and which

⁵ HARTL, P. *Psychologický slovník*. 1. vydání. Praha: Budka, 1993, 301 s. ISBN 80-90 1549-0-5

⁶ MARCEL, G. *Hodnoty v existencionální filosofii Gabriely Marcela*. 1. vydání. Praha: Academia, 2003, 150 s. ISBN 80-200-1070-X

⁷ Bakalář, P. *Tabu v sociálních vědách*. 1. vydání. Praha: Votobia, 2003, 343 s., ISBN 80-7220-135-2

⁸ Chaloupková, J., Šalamounová, P. *Postoje k imigrantům a dopadům migrace v evropských zemích*. Sociologický časopis, 42, 2006, 1 s. 57-81, ISSN 0038-0288

delimits diversities specific for the cultural minorities. More on this topic by V. Soukup.⁹

The above-mentioned concept of cultural specification of a group, to which we are approaching and which is seemingly a considerable digression, fully complies with the concept held by those with hearing impairment. We are considering a group of people who are declared to be people with impaired hearing, i.e. they have been assigned this status on the principles of certain cultural diversities in comparison to the culture accepted by majority in the society (herein people with healthy hearing). And it is here that our approaches merge. If all of this is accomplished with the argument that these people declare themselves a language and cultural minority¹⁰, not only in foreign studies but also in our country, then the understanding is complete. Most numerous and obviously also of highest quality, from a professional point of view, are, above all, some linguistic¹¹ and sociolinguistic studies. They apply a scientific viewpoint in their examinations which contributes more to the development of such a wide issue than some statements devised on emotions of non-sympathizing authors. Efforts culminating from the reflection and determination of a cultural minority are to be found in areas other than our regions. It is rather a belated phenomenon which has arrived to our country from abroad and which has its own justification, genesis and national diversities. The issue to be discussed and disputed is the perception by people with impaired hearing; this interpretation in principle is presented by two most common approaches – medical and cultural. For the purposes of our study, it is not relevant to tamper with profound excursions in this direction, so let us just remind you briefly that the *medical* conception focuses on a hearing defect, its extent and aetiology, with the possibility of compensation or other remedial methods or subsequent re-education. The *cultural* conception is understood as acceptance of the group which, due to their demonstrated parameters – history, values, language, culture, aims at recognition as a cultural minority. Like in English (Deaf/deaf), the Czech language also uses for these differently perceived groups the denotation Neslyšící

⁹ Soukup, V. *Přehled antropologických teorií kultury*. 2. vydání. Praha: Portál, 2000, 229 s. ISBN 80-7178-929-1

¹⁰ Kourbetis, V., Adamopoulou, A., Ferentinos, S. *Deaf Communities and social inclusion: a cross-national comparative study*. in: *Inclusion of Deaf People in Education and Society: International Perspectives – proceedings inc. conference 21-22 March, 2003*. 1. vydání. Patras: DSU, 2005, 247 s. ISBN 960-630-894-4

¹¹ Macurová, A., Petříčková, J. *Poznáváme český znakový jazyk. Poznámky k vyjadřování mnohosti*. Speciální pedagogika, 14, 2004, 2, s. 107-127, ISSN 1211-2720

(Deaf) /neslyšící (deaf). N (D) stands for the linguistic and cultural minority and d/n for medical diagnoses of hearing loss. More can be found on this issue in the work of Potměšil.¹² There is enough information on the given areas in foreign literature.¹³ Self-conception and reflection on cultural diversities in people with hearing impairment is described, on more occasions, in a publication by P. Knight and R. Swanwick¹⁴ who occupy themselves with pedagogical aspects of upbringing and education of students with hearing impairment, especially in the light of Bi (lingualism) and Bi (culturalism), i.e. by means of probably the most effective approach in (surdopedic) education thus far. For example, languages are mentioned here as being existentially conditional on external as well as internal cultural context. We are again talking about information which shoves us towards areas that we need to examine and duly describe.

Education of people with hearing impairment poses a number of difficulties. Common significant shortcomings are certain problems in **understanding pro-social conceptions**. Hereto, it is necessary to draw attention to communication and language incompetence which are the main reasons of insufficient conception resource applied when denoting people and situations during the period when social relations are only being constituted. In the event that we speak about **problems in conception of interpersonal relations**, then we are heading for reduced ability to establish and, above all, to maintain a relation. Partly, this fact is caused by cultural diversities – if it is a child with impaired hearing¹⁵, and partly it can be considered as a negative influence of the boarding school system which, even in the case of the best facility and the best prepared programme, cannot compensate for the natural opportunity of establishing social links in real life situations with all inherent successes and failures. Insufficient conception resource and shortage of feedback from social environment, in which the child lives and practises his/her first social experience, result in **insufficiencies in empathy development**. In the event that this essential base for social adaptability is missing or underdeveloped in a human, we may encounter hardly acceptable behavioural manifestations which may exercise, in the final form, an essential

¹² POTMĚŠIL, M. *Čtení k surdopedii*. Olomouc: Vydavatelství UP v Olomouci, 2003, 217 s. ISBN 80-244-0766-3

¹³ GREGORY, S. aj. *Deaf people in a hearing world*. Walton Hall: The Open University. 1991. ISBN 0-7492-0051-0

¹⁴ Knight, P., Swanwick, R. *Working with Deaf Pupils. Sign Bilingual Policy into Practice*. David Fulton Publishers Ltd.: London, 2002, 130 s., ISBN 1-85346-793-6

¹⁵ see the above discussion of terminology

influence on granting disability benefit for the reason of limited social adaptability. Children with impaired hearing are relatively often egocentric, which is usually explained by the absence of a skill to respect opinions of others. It may be considered that at least three basic ingredients are involved:

existence: A child must understand his/her own existence and acknowledge the existence of other people. Consequent to this, he/she understands his/her behaviour and that of the others.

need: A child should exhibit the need to understand or the necessity to assume a standpoint, an opinion, a view and/or the perspective of somebody else. A child should be motivated to do so and should do so commonly.

deduction: A child should deduce what other people think. Our experience shows that this is the most difficult area. Probably the most dangerous is the application of irony without further explanation. It is evident that a child does not understand what he/she was punished for by his/her mother if at the same time a calmer father gives a passing comment, sarcastically stating, "Well done, you are really great."

The very limited enumeration of difficulties stated here suggests that although the target group is not big in numbers, the issue for special education practice is significant and very interesting as a research topic.

These reasons led us to seek answers to the following queries:

1. Is there a difference in composing and sequencing particular items of value hierarchy?
2. Are possible differences between value hierarchies in people with healthy hearing and with hearing impairment caused by the hearing impairment?
3. Is there a significantly different group of children whose parents are D/deaf themselves?
4. Is there a significant shift in composing and sequencing values in adults with hearing impairment when compared to adolescents?
5. Is there a significant difference between the monitored groups of people with hearing impairment when compared to the control group of people with healthy hearing?
6. Is the language factor (sign-language versus majority language – Czech) manifested in the understanding of individual expressions?

7. Is it possible to compare the results of sequencing values according to the following authors: Maslow¹⁶, Schwartz¹⁷, Potměšil?
8. Are there relevant implications for special education in practice?

Certain batteries were compiled for continuation of work and prepared for training; they are to be applied for the purposes of collecting data that can provide answers to the above-mentioned queries.

¹⁶ Cakirpaloglu, P. *Psychologie hodnot*. 1. vydání. Olomouc: Votobia, 2004, 427 s. ISBN 80-7220-195-6

¹⁷ Schwartz, S. H. *Toward a psychological structure of human values*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53, 550-562

For your information, we present a sample of three batteries in the form that shall be used for a pilot study.

General information

Boy Girl Age My mother can hear Cannot hear
 My father can hear Cannot hear
 Class I use a hearing aid yes/no

SH-Maslow (B-values)

VALUES	RANKING
Truth	
Perfection	
Kindness	
Beauty	
Wholeness	
Temperament	
Uniqueness	
Ending/finalizing/completing	
Fairness/justice	
Ordinariness	
Richness	
Freedom	
Playfulness	
Independency/self-sufficiency	
Meaningfulness	

Next to words that you don't understand, write - N

HP-PVQ Schwartz Questionnaire/Application to present

		mark
A	This person does everything as he/she himself/herself is thinking	
B	This person wants to have a lot of money and wants to be rich	
C	This person wants all people to have the same rights, duties and opportunities	
D	This person only wants people to admire him/her	
E	This person avoids everything dangerous	
F	This person likes surprise, new fun, and has different interests	
G	This person believes that people should always keep to all rules	
H	This person is trying to understand other people even when he doesn't agree with them	
I	This person is modest and humble, and doesn't want to draw attention to himself	
J	This person likes to enjoy life	
K	This person wants to make his/her own decisions	
L	This person wishes that other people will be helped to be well	
M	This person wants to be successful so that people will value/appreciate him/her	
N	This person wants to see a strong government and a safe/secure state	
O	This person likes adventure and danger	
P	This person avoids everything bad	
Q	This person wants to command people	
R	This person helps his friends	
S	This person believes that it is necessary to look after nature and the environment/countryside	
T	This person keeps habits and traditions in the family	
U	This person likes fun and pleasure	

Next to sentences that you don't understand, write - N
 Assessment of statements for the PVQ

1. This person is **very similar** to me
2. This person is **similar** to me
3. This person is **quite similar** to me
4. This person is **similar** to me a **little**
5. This person is **not similar** to me
6. This person is **not similar** to me **at all**

SH- Potmesil

VALUES

RANKING

Activity	
Good employment	
Myself	
Sureness	
Love	
Mobile telephones	
Rest	
Money	
Truth	
Friends	
Joy	
Family	
Solitude	
Self-confidence	
Hearing partner	
Companionship/socializing	
Fairness/justice	
Success in life	
Success at school	
Fun	
Health	

Next to words that you don't understand, write - N

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