Marzena Chrost
Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie
Wydział Pedagogiczny

Introduction

Introducing children into the social world takes place in a concrete social space and historical time. From the pedagogical perspective, a child's social sphere formation appears very important, and therefore providing him/her with an appropriate social level of development is one of the crucial elements of school readiness. The child's social development is understood ambiguously and is defined as socialization or social –emotional development. The main issue of this quarterly volume "Elementary Education in Theory and Practice" is *Child Socialization*.

Defining socialization in a varied way emphasizes the multi-aspect character of this process. Socialization is the personal process of acquiring the value system, norms and examples to follow which should be respected in a peculiar society group. This process runs gradually and is connected with obtaining different social experiences, the child' s adaptation to life, obtaining the skills of collaboration with people, entering wider social circles, taking on varied tasks and performing social roles. Socialization is a broad process that man undergoes from the beginning of his life. It is constant, slow, and life-long And, particularly, it plays a very crucial role for children and youth in the period of childhood and adolescence.

In the course of socialization, the child learns the social alphabet, the foundations of interaction, becomes acquainted with the norms of acting, values and forms their own personality. What is more, he/she learns elementary examples, behaviors, and social roles. Socialization brings effects such as following: the child can play in teams, respects the fixed order and the plan of play, is independent in getting in touch with others, develops collaborative skills, more often takes into account the group opinion, becomes independent from adults, and applies their own criteria of the selection of friends. The child becomes a member of a peer- group, conscious of the obligatory

norms functioning in it, their own position and the roles performed by the self and obtains rich and differentiated knowledge of the world, people, and themselves.

Thanks to the process of socialization, the child becomes a part of a social group and learns the life principles obligatory in society. He/ she finds out what behavior is appropriate, and what is inappropriate, what results in learning how to behave in particular situations and to recognize these situations. That is why if the child is to behave in a particular, desired way in society, this should be appropriately supported, stimulated and inspired. The process of socialization takes place through the influence of the social environment. The most important role in this process is primarily performed by parents, then form-teachers, teachers, peers, and institutions (kindergarten, school). Thus, one can state that socialization refers to the numerous lessons given by parents, siblings, peers, teachers, and other adults who take care of a child.

Socialization is a crucial factor determining child development. Putting new tasks in front of the child fosters the development and formation of his/her social competences. All socialization activities should aim at enabling the child to enjoy complete participation in social group functioning, and support his/her maturity.

Child socialization is not only a process of forming his/her identity, but it teaches the child skills of recognizing other people's needs. Educational support provides the chance for those who experience difficulties in self-adaptation. Furthermore, it is necessary to bring the child into the world of the contemporary media. His/her introductory into the world of adventure provides the possibility for faster socialization. The outlined aspects of child socialization are explored in detail by the Authors of the articles in this volume, both from a theoretical and an empirical perspective.

Translation: Maria Szymańska