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The Pedagogical Model of Thought and Activity in the Social World of Interaction Rituals, in the Thought of Erving Goffman

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Abstract

Research objectives (aims) and problem(s): The purpose of the article is to point out the pedagogical implications of selected elements of Erving Goffman's thought.

Research methods: To achieve this goal, the author used the methods of hermeneutic interpretation and existential problematisation.

Structure of the article: The topic may be boiled down to the essence of the ethos which underlies authentic pedagogical thought and activity. This issue has been problematised in terms of Erving Goffman's theory of the presentation of self in everyday life and social interaction rituals. In this context, reference is made to the heuristic semantic potential of the metaphorical figure expressed in the concept of the "schoolboy model" and "schoolboy's world." In fact, it symbolises the essence of the ethos of pedagogical thought and activity, which always paves the way to authentically acquiring personal and social competencies – requiring time, effort and self-discipline. On this path, individuals gain genuine respect and recognition in society whilst acquiring the skills needed to fulfil their social roles. In this meaning, the heuristic figure

of the “schoolboy model” mainly depicts the authentic, honest effort needed to follow the path that leads to personal and social development by facing the challenges and demands of education with integrity. Therefore, the metaphorical figure of the schoolboy model, referring to the rule of fairness (i.e., evaluating students based on their actual merits and achievements), assumes the validity of facts that can only be produced by means of diligent and honest work.

Research findings and their impact on the development of educational sciences: Thus, the subject matter calls for the application of selected categories of Erving Goffman’s work in contemporary pedagogical discourse and its key categories: the subjectivity, autonomy, self-education and self-realisation of the pupil.

Conclusions and/or recommendations: The model of pedagogical thought and action inspired by selected aspects of Goffman’s thought can be linked with the ways of understanding pupils’ status which express beliefs about individuals’ ability to create their own social and cultural status through their choices, reflexivity, activity, commitment and subjective agency. Thus, the heuristic figure of Goffman’s schoolboy model exposes the authentic acquisition of subjective competence for personal and social human development.

Keywords: everyday life, thought and activity education, schoolboy model, interaction rituals, reality of facts, philosophy of education, subjective agency

Introduction

The issue addressed herein is the sociological theory of the presentation of self in everyday life or the presentation of a performance (Goffman, 1956, p. 113) and social interaction rituals. The metaphorical figure itself, expressed in the concept of the “schoolboy model” and the “schoolboy’s world” (Goffman, 1967, pp. 42–43),¹ should be closely linked with

¹ Goffman emphasises that in his method of describing social phenomena he refers to peculiar linguistic figures, expressed in imagery that clearly appeal to the

the theoretical contexts surrounding “the syntactical relations among the acts of different persons mutually present to one another” and the context in which these people directly participate in “the moments and their men” (Goffman, 1967, p. 3) or refuse to participate as the actors in “face-to-face interaction in natural settings” (Goffman, 1967, p. 1) that are social in the framework of particular interaction rituals. Therefore, social interaction rituals are always associated with the

class of events which occurs during co-presence and by virtue of co-presence. The ultimate behavioural materials are the glances, gestures, positionings, and verbal statements that people continuously feed into the situation, whether intended or not. These are the external signs of orientation and involvement – states of mind and body not ordinarily examined with respect to their social organization. (Goffman, 1967, p. 1)

From this perspective, the issue mentioned in the title is heuristic in nature. It is connected with the search for a specific line of thought and linguistic figures that enable us to describe and explain in a sense-creative way the social and cultural significance of that which is pedagogical in nature and irreducible in its positivity (constructivity), in contrast to that which is devoid of the qualities of pedagogical thought and action.² Therefore, both that which is pedagogical in nature, expressed in Goffman’s metaphorical figure of the schoolboy model and schoolboy’s world, and that which is non-pedagogical, but at the same time takes on a formal

imagination. Some of them unmistakably take the linguistic form of metaphors (Goffman 1967, pp. 19, 100, 234; see also Jacobsen, 2017, pp. 213–215).

² With reference to the formula of pedagogical thinking and action, I allude to the meaning that Dietrich Benner ascribed to it. This formula implies two fundamental questions: firstly, the indissoluble nature of the action of thought and action itself, which, in this case, is pedagogical, and secondly, the specific identity of pedagogical practice, which is expressed in specific thought and action. In this way, pedagogical thought and action, as such, can be distinguished from other types of human *praxis* and the rationality that accompanies it, e.g., artistic or political thought and action (Benner, 2015, pp. 11–14, 33–67; see also Gara & Stępkowski, 2024, pp. 9–11).

(institutional or structural) form of educational activity (formation and teaching activities), always conveys a specific manner of thought and action and is reflected in the social space of interaction rituals.³

Selected models of understanding children and the status of pupils in the education process as a context for situating Goffman’s figure of the “schoolboy model”

There are four ways of perceiving a child’s status that reflect four specific pedagogies, considered from the perspective of children’s learning models: seeing children as imitative learners, as learning from didactic exposure, as thinkers and as being knowledgeable. In the first case, children are perceived as being unable to learn something independently. However, by following certain patterns, pupils can learn what they cannot do. In the second case, children are perceived as passive recipients whose minds are like a *tabula rasa*. As a result of the learning process, pupils’ minds are filled like vessels, thus accumulating knowledge. In the third case, children are seen as beings capable of interpreting their own experiences with the ability to reflect on their thinking, and thus are treated as reflective participants in cognition and learning. Finally, in the last case, children are perceived as beings who understand their surrounding world, and thus are treated as people who can distinguish personal and subjective knowledge from universal and objective knowledge (Bruner, 1999a, pp. 53–63; see also Bruner, 1999b, p. 70).

Pupils, as participants in pedagogical interaction, may also be considered from the perspective of various assumptions that affect the manner

³ Goffman’s work has essentially been adopted and applied in the context of educational issues, mainly in light of the problems he addresses concerning “interactive order” and “interactive rituals” that refer to the aspects and questions of interpersonal relations in the school environment. It is these issues that are most often raised in the context of the pedagogical implications and applications of his thought (see DeMeulenaere, 2023; Gourlay, 2022; King, 1973; Mifsud, 2018; Tomczyk, 2022; Vanderstraeten, 2004).

in which a system of pedagogical interaction itself is determined. Furthermore, a specific system of pedagogical interaction determines how both the status and role of teacher and pupil are determined. In this context, three basic and contemporary ways of determining the status and role of the pupil can be identified. In this regard, we may refer to images of children related to three basic educational ideologies: “romantic”, “transmissive” and “progressive”. The *romantic* ideology views children and their development through the prism of self-actualisation and individual autonomy. The *transmissive* ideology regards children and their development according to patterns of socialisation and acquired social roles. Finally, the *progressive* ideology views children and their development from the perspective of integrating subjective experience as action and agency whilst interacting with their surrounding environment (Kohlberg & Mayer, 2000, pp. 23–16; see also Śliwerski, 2001, pp. 31–37).

The way of defining the pupil’s status in the educational process may also be considered from the point of view of the general sociocultural changes that have taken place in the contemporary world. These changes indicate a fundamental shift in the perception of pupils from passive participants in the learning process to active subjects of learning and the authors of their own development. In the first case, therefore, we can speak of an instrumental model of perceiving the status of children, which requires a directive shaping it in accordance with an arbitrary pattern. Pupils, as passive and receptive beings in the education process, are therefore trained to be obedient and imitate and adopt static models of social roles and related adaptability skills. The second case is a model for the subjective perception of children’s status based on their activity and agency as authors of their own development and the process of building relationships with the surrounding world. Thus, pupils are treated as creative individuals, capable of seeking knowledge and developing their own way of acting, and thus capable of agency and creating their own activities and ways of entering into social and cultural roles (Bałałachowicz, 2009, pp. 198–212).

It should be assumed that the model of pedagogical thought and action inspired by selected aspects of Goffman’s thought, in line with

the general assumptions of symbolic interactionism in terms of how sociocultural practices are constructed (Carlin 2022, p. 51; see also Karowska, 2011, pp. 211–238), can be directly linked with the ways of understanding pupils' status, which express beliefs about individuals' ability to create their own social and cultural status through their choices, reflexivity, activity, commitment and subjective agency. In this context, the categories of Goffman's thought that emphasise the way of shaping one's own way of being and personal competencies, allowing one to enjoy authentic credibility and recognition in social relations and related interactions, play a key role. First of all, such categories indicate subjective agency and the authentic shaping of one's own biography, including "to have face" and "to take a line".

The metaphorical nature of Erving Goffman's thought as the heuristic context of explaining the interactive "ritual order"

In Goffman's work, one may notice the inspiration of Alfred Schütz's phenomenological sociology and his concept of "multiple realities", or, more broadly, inspirations associated with the general attitudes and cognitive perspectives of Edmund Husserl's phenomenological philosophy and his concept of "the life world" (*Lebenswelt*) (Husserl, 1970, 1973; Schütz, 1945; Schütz & Luckmann, 1974; see also Goffman, 1986, pp. 2, 251–252, 347). This is exemplified by the research orientation found in Goffman's books, which is expressed in attempting to investigate the essence of specific phenomena by describing the basic structure of the experience related to these phenomena. In such categories, one may also consider Goffman's cognitive attitudes outlining the conceptual layer of his research on sociological theory by referring to two of his famous books: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1956) and *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Goffman, 1986). In this context, it is also worth noting that Goffman refers so often in these books to various examples related to school as a social institution, or to problems related to school in general, that it can hardly be regarded as casual or

insignificant. And although Goffman did not directly address the problems of pedagogical theory and practice, the presence of such examples seems to contain a lot of pedagogically valuable inspiration (Goffman, 1956, pp. 23, 30, 56, 63, 70, 76, 80, 96, 101, 103, 119, 127, 128, 134, 141, 145; Goffman, 1967, pp. 109, 138, 201, 220, 225, 232, 254).

As a result, in my attempt to conceptualise the fundamental problem articulated in this article's title – “the pedagogical model” of thought and activity in the social world of “interaction rituals” – I refer to selected problems and solutions related to them, which reflect broadly understood phenomenological inspirations, both hermeneutic and existential.

The heuristic contexts of Goffman's work may also be rightly considered from a cognitive perspective, which Polish philosopher Józef Tischner (2002) described as “thinking from within a metaphor” (p. 462). Therefore, the methodical procedure of metaphorical thinking may be perceived as a particular thought process that enables us to closely examine the object of cognition, which is difficult to grasp directly and emerges from experiencing the world of everyday life. This metaphor involves “perceiving a certain similarity” (Ricoeur, 1984, p. X) and allows us to apply a way of thinking about one cognitive subject to a completely different one. At the same time, this metaphor represents a linguistic utterance in which specific “semantic transformations” are applied. Moreover, the metaphorical utterance thus opens a particular horizon of understanding as a certain “clue” or “system of meaning” (Stępnik, 1988, pp. 36–37). A metaphor as a linguistic figure of speech therefore creates a collocation with a meaning different to the literal meanings of the words invoked because metaphorical expressions always indicate something other than their literal significance as a phrase (Konersmann, 2009, p. 7).

Therefore, metaphors possess a semantic surplus in the layers of their meanings that may demonstrate or reveal the specific nature of something else that is difficult to understand or ambiguous in the forms or manners in which it appears and exists. For this reason, metaphorical thinking – “thinking from within a metaphor” – allows us to understand and reveal that which is significant, subtle and hidden in its ambiguity in the world of human affairs. All this cannot be fully expressed and grasped

in objectified reasoning (behavioural script or empirical scheme). As a result, investigating something specifically human may require metaphorical thinking (Tischner, 2002, p. 468). In thinking from within a metaphor, one searches for ways to comprehend that which cannot be expressed directly. In this meaning, it is thinking from deep within the experiences encoded in the symbolic form “of fundamental and unchangeable truths”. Therefore, if a metaphor becomes the most evocative way of expressing the content of human existential experience, metaphoricality is a linguistic way of expressing that which is specifically human.

As Hannah Arendt notes, metaphors as “transferring” consist in “the transition from one existential state, that of thinking, to another, that of being an appearance among appearances, and this can be done only by analogies” (Arendt, 1978, p. 103). Metaphors therefore reveal “an intuitive perception of similarity in dissimilars” (p. 103). Thus, as Paul Ricoeur indicates, metaphors as a specific figure of speech allow us to introduce a “semantic innovation” which takes place at the level of linguistic discourse and consists in “producing ... a new semantic pertinence by means of an impertinent attribution” (Ricoeur, 1984, p. IX). As such, metaphors as “a new pertinence in the predication” constitute “the new thing – the as yet unsaid, the unwritten” (p. IX) in linguistic utterances. For this reason, as Ricoeur (1984, p. XI) states, metaphorical utterances are a new way of “seeing-as”, thanks to which that which cannot be described non-metaphorically may be expressed and described in another way, revealing incomprehensible or unknown dimensions of human experience and reality.

When reflecting on the role and significance of metaphorical utterances in the history of philosophy, Arendt pointed out two fundamental groups of metaphors of thinking that originated in antiquity: the metaphor of vision and the metaphor of hearing. The former was relevant in Greek philosophy, whilst the latter appeared in the Hebraic religious tradition. Similarly, as truth in Greek philosophy was only “seen”, truth in the Jewish tradition was only heard (Arendt, 1978, pp. 110–111). Therefore, truth conveyed in the categories of hearing requires one to hear what is being said, and truth expressed in the categories of seeing requires one to see the nature of a given object personally. Just as the

“invisibility of truth” serves as an axiom in the Jewish faith, so the “ineffability of truth” is also axiomatic in Greek philosophy (Arendt, 1978, p. 119).

The sources of the metaphorical thought that we often encounter – not only in philosophy but also, as it can be assumed, *per analogiam* in the humanities and social sciences – also appeal to a great extent to the order of the metaphor of vision (that which can be seen and what may be identified and considered obvious when viewed directly) (Arendt, 1978, p. 121). Since philosophers, along with researchers in the humanities and social sciences, strive towards rationally exploring their areas of interest, metaphors of vision inherently prove to be more accessible and precise. They are not as fleeting as something that resonates and can be heard, slipping away from the attention of those engaged in observation and cognition (Arendt, 1978, p. 122).

In the issue mentioned above, associated with the work of Goffman, it appears that we also encounter “metaphors of seeing”. They play an essential heuristic role in the layer of narrations of phenomena and processes associated with social “interaction rituals” and the corresponding “ritual order”. Linguistic figures, including metaphors such as “interaction ritual”, “to have face”, “to maintain face”, “to lose face”, “to take a line” or “a front region and a back region” play a key heuristic role here. These figures and metaphors refer to the habitus of certain behaviours subject to social perception and the behavioural schemes of those behaviours.

The ritual principle of the interactive order of having, maintaining or losing “face”

In Goffman’s view, the metaphoric figure of “face” is closely related to the category of “social role”. The fundamental importance of understanding the concept of “face” and its various configurations of meaning in the scope of interpreting and describing specific rituals and codes of interaction – “having face”, “maintaining face” or “losing face” – should be attributed to this category (Goffman, 1967, pp. 7, 9). According to such metaphorical specification, face is “an image self-delineated in terms

of approved social attributes" (Goffman, 1967, p. 5), which may refer to both a desired "collective image" and a desired "individual image". The former refers to an image that reflects (embodies), for example, a given profession or religion. In contrast, the latter refers to an image that reflects a person's attitude or conduct as a representation of themselves and thus underlies their reputation and how other members of society perceive them. As a result, the concept of face expresses "the positive social value a person actively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman, 1967, p. 5).

The participants in various forms of social interaction always enter into specific interactions because, by definition, they live "in a world of social encounters" (Goffman, 1967, p. 5). This social "world of encounters" thus manifests itself in certain people entering into "face-to-face" relations or "mediated contact" (p. 5). In this manner, people who "have face" or would like "to maintain face" make efforts within the framework of particular social interactions to stick to their proper social role. "To take a line" is "a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself" (p. 5). As a result, the extent to which and how particular actors in society should or can participate in "mediated contact" whilst undertaking actions to "rescue" it in specific situations constitute an integral part of specific codes of interactions for a given society (p. 9). At the same time, Goffman argues that in such a system of complex dependencies, which are directly associated with social codes and rituals, "ordinarily, maintenance of face is a condition of interaction, not its objective" (p. 12). In this context, the very need to maintain face becomes an impulse to initiate activities that, as a result of "an interchange" (p. 20), are intended to eliminate the threat of losing face, thus "re-establish[ing] ritual equilibrium" (p. 19) in relations with other members of society.

The category of "interaction ritual" also assumes the existence of separate, special zones that Goffman describes as the "front region" and "back region" (or "backstage"). The roles played in the front region and back region also underlie attitudes demonstrated in various ways regarding the need to respect assumed rules of conduct. Whilst the principles of an

interaction ritual enacted in the front region are pressurised to respect them, they can be waived or suspended in the back region. In a manner more or less explicit, these rules are thus subject to intentional violation. The ritualisation of social roles is based on the need to maintain face or the fear of losing it socially (Goffman, 1967, p. 7). Therefore, man as a causative agent is entangled in a game of interactive rituals in both the front region and the back region. The problematic nature of daily life, its goals and strategies, are played out here as part of a game between authentic and stimulated being, between the spectacular scenario of the front region and the “naked” scenario of the back region and between the need to maintain face and the irreversible danger of losing it.

In the logic of dramatising the forms of social interaction, to the extent that the front region is based on recognising the need for clear rules for playing roles, there are also places in the back region where such rules are not only blurred but have been entirely neutralised. The back region is therefore based on “silently” eliminating that need, and the validations that officially accompany them, according to which the recognition of such a need is an element of the socially desired (image) “game”, which occurs in the open front region. The attitudes and facts about people that come to the fore and are made visible in the back region remain generally unseen or are hidden in the front region. Goffman (1956) concludes that “it is here that the capacity of a performance to express something beyond itself may be painstakingly fabricated; it is here that illusions and impressions are openly constructed” (p. 69). In line with this logic, what is respected in the front region is necessary in terms of image, whilst in the back region it no longer applies in the rituals of dramatisation and maintenance of the dramaturgy of the assumed meanings. For this reason, the back region becomes a regressive hiding place in relation to the front region itself (Goffman, 1956, pp. 152, 156).

“The pedagogical model” of thought and activity in the social world of the interaction “ritual order”

Goffman defines and specifies “the pedagogical model” of thought and activity in the context of the categories of “ritual order” and “ritual code” (Goffman, 1967, pp. 42, 44) by which individuals employ “accommodative lines” in terms of social expectations, and at the same time go a long way to meeting difficult expectations which demand effort and self-discipline. Along the way, individuals acquire specific competencies associated with their social roles in an authentic and not falsified way. Furthermore, these patterns related to this way of thinking and activity are exemplified by Goffman with the assistance of the “schoolboy model” mentioned above. This metaphor reflects “a hard, dull game” (Goffman, 1967, p. 42) undertaken by students to gain authentic recognition and respect in their community. Such attitudes should be distinguished from thinking and activity demonstrated in the “social game” based on “half-truths, illusions, and rationalizations”. The goal of the social game thus understood is that “the person insulates himself” (Goffman, 1967, p. 43) or maintains a fictitious notion of his image in others’ perception. The metaphor of the schoolboy’s world claims that if “a person wishes to sustain a particular image of himself and trust his feelings to it, he must work hard for the credits that will buy this self-enhancement for him” (Goffman, 1967, p. 42).

In this sense, the heuristic figure of the schoolboy model first and foremost depicts an authentic and honest effort to follow the path leading to meeting the requirements of recognising and respecting students’ socially defined roles and related school obligations through their own honest engagement. Understood in such a way, “the pedagogical model” (a pattern of pedagogical thought and action), related to ways of adjusting to the obligations of school life (e.g. sports games and competitions), by definition refers to appropriate (in terms of social patterns of affirmation and recognising behaviour as well as morally desirable ideals of behaviour and exemplary values) and pedagogically accepted means to achieve educational goals. Achieving goals in inappropriate means (from the point of view of social patterns of affirmation and recognising

behaviour; e.g. fraud or theft) dooms students to potential “disqualification” and the need to perform their tasks once again within the framework of socially established and accepted rituals for the role of students.

In view of the above, Goffman distinguishes two fundamental worlds: the reality of “facts” and that of “communications”. At the same time, communications also “belong to a less punitive scheme than do facts” (Goffman, 1967, p. 43). Therefore, the schoolboy model metaphor alludes to the principle of fairness (evaluating and promoting students based on their actual merits and achievements). Thus, it assumes the validity of the reality of the facts that can only be produced by diligent and honest work. The reality of facts, understood in this way, cannot be simulated or denied. However, the social reality of the ritual order itself is paradoxically not based – as Goffman implies – on the principle of fairness, but rather on the fact that “the ritual order” is “face”. Moreover, in line with the “ritual code” of this order, a participant in social interactions receives “not what he deserves but what will sustain for the moment the line to which he has committed himself, and through this the line to which he has committed the interaction” (Goffman, 1967, p. 44). For this reason, the reality of communications, in contrast to the reality of facts, may be expressed in ignoring facts, withdrawing from communications, not believing facts, or distorting those facts in the interactive ritual order. Thus, communications may be expressed in both deforming and falsifying facts (Goffman, 1967, pp. 43–44).

The heuristic figure of the schoolboy model, and thus the model of pedagogical thought and activity, which this figure represents and illustrates, refers us to the problem that Goffman describes as “rules of conduct”. These rules are mainly actualised unconsciously through internalising a specific habitus that reflects socially binding or desired behavioural patterns. At the same time, respecting or ignoring specific rules of conduct impact the formation of a person’s self-image and creates one’s own social image as a person who affirms or denies particular rules of conduct and expresses (or not) the expectations of their actualisation (Goffman, 1967, p. 50). Therefore, the rules of conduct play a vital role in all spheres of human activity, including that related to pedagogical thought and activity. The rules of conduct always pertain to specific

guidelines that reflect socially accepted, and therefore socially desired, values and related expectations. Understood this way, rules of conduct also constitute one of the main “source[s] of regularity in human affairs”. The conduct of particular participants (individuals) in collective life who comply with a given set of rules of conduct without simulating their actual recognition and observance thus becomes a “constancy and patterning of behaviour” in social perception (Goffman, 1967, pp. 48–49).

Social rules of conduct may take the form of “directly” manifested (communicated or implied) “obligations” or “indirectly” manifested “expectations”. In both cases, it is also crucial to respect or affirm the moral commitment in terms of conduct that is considered necessary or desirable (Goffman, 1967, p. 49). Therefore, the rules of conduct, seen in categories of obligations or expectations, also demonstrate their irreducible interpersonal character. What some participants in social interactions expect from others may simultaneously be an obligation of the latter and vice versa.

An example of this dependence depicting the realities of education, to which the heuristic figure of the schoolboy’s world belongs – and which is simultaneously analogical in its significance for the example of nurses and patients, as cited by Goffman – is the relationship between the obligations and expectations that occur between teachers and students. Therefore, by transposing Goffman’s example, it could be said that teachers are obliged to implement specific educational content in their lessons, and students may reasonably expect teachers to provide them with the required educational content throughout their learning process. This example therefore illustrates the rule of conduct, which takes different forms for those involved in educational interactions (teacher/pupil). The obligations of the teacher and the expectations of the pupils simultaneously express or deny the value or state of the socially desired rule of conduct, particularly teachers providing pupils with a specific standard of knowledge within the school’s teaching process (school lessons) in a competent and accurate way.

Of course, exceptions to such an ideal educational situation are possible. Either the obligation met by the teacher or the pupil’s expectations

may affirm the assumed standard expressed in the educational relationship of teaching (implemented by the teacher) and learning (by the pupil). Furthermore, an “act that is subject to rules of conduct but does not conform to them is also a communication – often even more so – for infractions make news and often in such a way as to disconfirm the selves of the participants. Thus ‘rules of conduct’ transform both action and inaction into expression, and whether the individual abides by the rules or breaks them, something significant is likely to be communicated” (Goffman, 1967, p. 51). An example of this may be seen in three hypothetical educational situations in which the rules of conduct, taking the form of an obligation or expectation, are expressed in the following types of dependence:

1. When fulfilling their obligations, teachers actualise the pattern of competent and accurate implementation of educational standards (and therefore educationally assumed/desired “rules of conduct”), during which the pupil shows no interest or any expectations that the teacher will competently and accurately familiarise them with the required content.
2. When fulfilling their obligations, the teacher fails to actualise the pattern of competently and accurately conveying the educational content, whilst the pupil expects that the teacher will do so.
3. The teacher, as part of their obligations, fails to actualise the pattern of competently and accurately implementing the education, and the student shows no interest or any expectations that the teacher will do so.

Therefore, the source of indolence and ignorance in terms of the educationally assumed/desired rules of conduct in the examples provided are as follows: in the first case, it is the way the pupil’s educational role is actualised; in the second case, the manner the teacher’s educational role is actualised; and in the third, how the educational role of both the teacher and pupil is actualised.

When exploring the various socially constructed aspects of the rules of conduct, at least three fundamental distinctions should be taken into

consideration that enable us to distinguish their separate classes: “symmetrical rules” versus “asymmetrical rules”, “formal rules” versus “informal rules” and “substance rules” versus “ceremony rules”. When referring to these distinctions, the author of *Interaction Ritual* also focusses on them to some extent, citing examples of certain types of rules of conduct.

Therefore, the *symmetrical rules* refer to a situation in which specific individuals have the same obligations and expectations in relation to other participants in social interaction as others have towards them (e.g. both teachers and pupils share obligations and expectations in showing mutual respect). In contrast, *asymmetrical rules* indicate a manner of conduct in which specific individuals are treated by other participants in given interactions differently than they treat them (Goffman, 1967, pp. 52–53); for instance, it is the teacher’s prerogative – and not the pupils’ – to oblige pupils to complete particular tasks from the curriculum and to expect them to perform these tasks.

On the other hand, it should be assumed that *formal rules*, although Goffman does not specify them, are established and regulated by binding laws, statutes, regulations or official guidelines, to be respected by all concerned. For example, a school trip guide is obliged to follow the itinerary of a school trip, whilst the participants have the right to expect the same from the organiser and school trip guide. In turn, *informal rules* are usually customary and not directly formulated and also express a specific social practice or related tacit knowledge (Goffman, 1967, p. 53). For example, a school trip guide whose participants are disciplined and interested in the trip suggests an additional place not on the official itinerary to visit in their free time. This type of practice always results from specific arrangements made in various environments that are not found in any official declaration or commitment. They may also serve various departures from standard routine activities (favourable or otherwise) subject to specific codifications and directly verbalised (Collins, 2010, p. 158).

Finally, both *substance rules* and *ceremony rules* relate to a specific aspect of given activities or functions attributed to them. It should also be noted that substantial activities such as rules of conduct also have or may have ceremonial meaning. In contrast, it cannot be said that ceremony

rules of conduct contain substantive meaning or are somehow correlated with them. Moreover, *substance rules* are always of primary importance and refer to principled decisions (e.g. legal, moral or ethical) because they define these aspects of conduct, which, as Goffman states, “guides conduct in regard to matters felt to have significance in their own right, apart from what the infraction or maintenance of the rule expresses about the selves of the persons involved” (Goffman, 1967, p. 53). These principles may be exemplified by a pupil who does not copy from other pupils during an exam because they adhere to such values and not because they do not have the opportunity to cheat. Furthermore, the ceremonial rules of conduct are of secondary importance and are associated with specific polite or social conventions. As a result, they serve the purposes of self-presentation and expressing one’s opinions concerning other participants engaged in social interaction. For this reason, the basic forms of ceremonial activities include showing respect and self-presentation (Goffman, 1967, pp. 54–56). These principles could be illustrated by a teacher who informs pupils beforehand of the official rules for sitting an exam and makes it clear that copying always has been an aspect of coping during an exam.

Conclusion – pedagogical implications of the heuristic figure of the “schoolboy model”

Bearing in mind the various types of rules of conduct, it should be pointed out that the heuristic figure of the schoolboy’s world and the related pedagogical model of thought and activity refer us in a particular way to the rules of conduct in their asymmetrical, informal and substance dimensions. It should be assumed that, considering the structure of everyday life in human experience, these types of rules of conduct play an essential role in shaping the attitudes expressed in the thought and activities in line with the moral and ethical ethos of diligent and honest work to meet educational requirements. Consequently, they also encourage authentic efforts to gain certain competencies and finally acquire social

recognition and respect, as reflected in the metaphorical figure of the schoolboy model.

Whilst investigating these issues in a somewhat broader context, from the perspective of phenomenologically conceived fundamental structure of human experience in the life-world,¹ several basic points can substantiate the arguments and conclusions in this summary. Of course, first and foremost is the pedagogical model of thought and activity, taking into account the specific, constructive role of the rules of conduct in its actualisation, as assumed in the context of this problem.

Thus, asymmetrical rules are most significant in explaining the process of shaping the attitudes embedded in a pupil's conduct regardless of what they could expect from their social environment or the demands generally made of others in the same social environment. Therefore, the schoolboy model represents rules of conduct within which the pupil themselves (based on the interior locus of control) takes advantage of an educational situation to diligently learn and acquire specific skills even though their teacher paradoxically does not display an ambitious approach to conveying the content or subjectively activating their pupils within the scope of the curriculum.

In turn, informal rules, in reference to the sphere of tacit knowledge, sensitise the pupil to those practices that – although they are not

¹ The “life-world”, both in Jan Patočka’s view and according to the original intention of phenomenology by Husserl, is given “directly”. It is a subjective world, “lived in its concrete whole” as a world of concrete existence “here” and “now”. Thus, it is a world of everyday situations and practical action, a world in which people meet, learn and work (Patočka, 2016, pp. 28, 116; Landgrebe, 2016, p. XXVII). Goffman touches upon the phenomenological idea of the “life-world” in his own way and adopts it for his own research perspective by employing the concept of “everyday life” (Goffman, 1956). It is worth mentioning here that in his phenomenology of life-world, Jan Patočka indicated several basic dimensions of it and the related experience – time (man as *homo temporalis*), carnality (man as *homo copus*), home (man as *homo domesticus*) or work (man as *homo laborans*) – that constitute human experience in “everyday life” (Patočka, 1996, pp. 1–52; Patočka, 2016, pp. 52–84; Gara, 2021, pp. 67–75). These dimensions of the life-world should therefore be closely linked to the spheres of experience that also play a key role in shaping the attitudes relevant for the schoolboy model.

officially prescribed or required – outline certain expectations stemming from an environmental ethos, proven methods or moral patterns concerning how socially and culturally necessary goals (ambitions and aspirations) are to be implemented to achieve success and gain full social recognition and respect. An example of the importance of such rules could be a pupil who achieves outstanding results in sports competitions yet may or may not enjoy the common opinion that they have a “fair play” attitude towards their colleagues and other athletes.

Finally, substance rules not only play an important role but are even essential to the schoolboy model because they refer to fundamental decisions regarding socially and culturally esteemed values (e.g. a solid education, showing manners, knowledge of one’s environment or being specially prepared to fulfil specific social and professional roles) and situations acknowledged to be morally valued (e.g. diligent and persistent work, a conscientious approach to one’s duties or striving for self-improvement and personal development). Therefore, the pedagogical model of thought and activity considered herein is based on precisely defined values and situations which are significant for one’s social and cultural condition, the quality of one’s attitudes and social involvement and one’s personal development.

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