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Autoethnography in Intrapersonal and Intra-Active Training of Pedagogues. Selected Aspects and Application Possibilities

Abstract

The article presents autoethnography in the context of posthumanistic student education as a way not only for a deep self-knowledge, but also for understanding other people. In this context, the authors seek answers to questions about the essence of autoethnography as a research method and its significance for personalized intra-personal and intra-active pedagogical training. By pedagogues/educators we mean people who lead others to maturity. The article presents innovative research techniques conducive to auto-ethnographic cognition and examples of application of autoethnography in the education of pedagogical students.

Key words: autoethnography, intra-activity, intra-personality, education of pedagogues, autoethnography techniques.

The postmodernist turns and education of pedagogues

Today, varied tendencies in education including methodological aspects of pedagogical sciences bear the necessity to look at it from humanistic–personal perspective. It awakes the need for educating a reflective pedagogue, who should be a master and partner to students on the professional and personal development path.

In this context, referring to the popular theory of representation crisis and the global loss of trust in knowledge as a form of reflecting reality (Hesse, 2001, p. 105, Melosik, 1995), it is worth paying attention especially to autoethnography as a method, strategy, or even the "philosophy" of pedagogical research. Autoethnography simultaneously performs research and educative functions, thus enables conducting the intra-active education of teachers, although it often meets unfavourable comments (Forber-Pratt, 2015).

On the assumption of the multi-paradigm of contemporary pedagogy (Krause, 2011, pp. 32–33), various methods and strategies for education and training can be considered as equitable, as well as various contemporary types of research in pedagogy and education. Understanding the paradigm as "a set of ontological assumptions about the nature of reality and the role of science, which affect the acceptance of research results in a given epoch and in a given place" (Śliwerski, 2009, p. 29), the humanistic paradigm and the humanistic approach to education emerging from it, may provide an interesting perspective to understand and interpret contemporary educational problems. It gives a new perspective on the process of cognition, discovery and a student's personal development. Hence, it is necessary to refer to its significance not only from methodological but also didactic point of view that can be tied with indeterminism and the spirituality of man. Despite the fact that the humanistic paradigm appears to derive from the humanist psychology associated with A. Maslow and C. Rogers, it has a lot in common with W. Dilthey's philosophy (Sajdak, 2013, p. 344).

According to Sajdak, it is not and cannot be a response to the demand of so-called mass education as its thesis is focused on the individuality of each pupil as the constructs of human development strategies do not promise the effect of obtaining certain knowledge, enabling "efficient and effective" action (Sajdak, 2013, pp. 344–345). Particularly in pedagogical education, most of the activities are focused on the education of soft skills, which are useful in the work of educators and valued in the labour market by employers of other industries. Such activities are intended to deepen students' knowledge of themselves, develop teachers' communicative competences with young people, enhance per-

sonal development (Sajdak, 2013, p. 345). In academic teaching, the area where a humanistic approach can be applied is tutoring, where the academic teacher acts as a tutor – supporter and facilitator (Kościelniak, 2004), counsellor, guide, a person who assists the students in their personal and professional development elaborating the self-study and self-education skills, including didactic, methodological and personal competences (Sajdak, 2013, p. 346).

The humanistic paradigm used in academic didactics elicits the central educational category that is the holistic concept of the student as a subject of education. In this aspect, the active role of the pedagogue (an academic teacher) using appropriate methods and techniques seems to be significant. It is necessary to state that in the process of learning, an academic teacher learns more about him- or herself, his or her own potential and limitations, which becomes the subject of his or her self-reflection, and fosters a good diagnosis of the students' development and, consequently, enables them to make good decisions.

In the methodology of pedagogical research, the humanistic approach was described by D. Kubinowski as "megaparadigm", i.e. humanistically oriented pedagogy. This proposal of Max van Manen is set in the phenomenological-hermeneutic perspective where "elements borrowed from all the traditions of thinking about man and the actions of people and for people can be used, and creatively combined" (Kubinowski, 2010, p. 116). The central category in such pedagogy remains the human, and the conception of a man, oriented on his development, the creation of identity and self-realization. In the same style, the elements of interpreting / postmodern critical theory, constructivist and participative research freely fit into each other. Commensurability is a problem only when researchers want to "pick and choose" among the axioms of positivist and interpersonal models, because these axioms are contradictory and mutually exclusive (Guba, Lincoln, 2005, p. 293).

Autoethnography as a research method

Why autoethnography? Because it is a method of combining auto-ethnography and ethnography, giving more possibilities than autobiography. In post-humanism, autoethnography appears to be a way to find oneself, and thus to find others, to rediscover the known and first discoveries of new elements of the world around us.

"Reality, like the landscape, has an infinite number of perspectives, all of which are equally true and authentic. The only false perspective is that which claims the exclusive right. (...). The whole truth can only be obtained by con-

necting what our fellow human sees with what I see, and so on. Each individual is an important point of view. Integrating the truth of the universal and the absolute is possible by compiling all partial visions" (Ortega y Gasset, 1992, 89).

The number of types of self-portrait also affects its applicability in pedagogy. In attempting to structure the knowledge of this method, one can propose a division: – due to the presentation of the results of the study – emotional autoethnography (Ellis, 1995); analytic autoethnography (Murphy, 1987), although the concept of autoethnography has not been used in terminology yet. As a similar example we could use 'A Journal in the Strict Sense of the Word' by Bronisław Malinowski – one of the founders of ethnography gave at the same time foundation to autoethnography (Malinowski, 1967); multilayer autoethnography (Plummer Rohloff, 2007); performative autoethnography (Pelias, 2013); visual autoethnography (Ownby, 2013).

- due to the number of people involved in the project – individual autoethnography (Chang, 2013); duoethnography (Norris, Sawyer, Lund, 2016); collaborative autoethnography (Chang, Wambura Ngnjiri, Hernandez, 2013); community autoethnography (Toyosaki, Pensoneau- -Conway, Wendt, Leathers,2009);
- due to the time when research is conducted: retrospective autoethnography (Nowakowski, 2016); actual autoethnography (Ciechowska, Szymańska, 2018); trans-time autoethnography (Ciechowska, Szymańska, 2018)

The above classification presents the richness of forms of autoethnography (it should be noted that it is not finite yet). It influences the possibility of using self-ethnography in the intrapersonal and interpersonal education of pedagogues, which will be referred to in subsequent parts of the article. It seems necessary to mention first the number of functions which (because of their individual and community character) are characteristic to autoethnography, not only for the author himself, but also for his closer and further surroundings (the classification after: Ciechowska, Szymańska, 2018, pp.219–221). For a researcher, this will be:

- the cognitive function – it does not just have the dimension seen in other methods – that is, the extension of knowledge about the phenomenon. Here, the researcher also gains knowledge about himself as a researcher and a person – a participant in a given event /social life.
  The researcher, thanks to the autoethnographic research, conducts a thorough evaluation of his scientific progress, which leads to understanding 'how the process of research itself, the deconstruction of cultural

and methodological practices happens. Reflexivity is also a political act, revealing the relationship of power that the researcher imposes on the subject, and which is imposed upon him'. (Bielecka-Prus, 2014, p. 80) The second aspect of the cognitive function refers to oneself as a person. Noting down your own experiences and emotions is in itself a cognitive and therapeutic activity (Cichowska, Szymańska, 2017, p. 220). For the researcher-pedagogue the function of self-knowledge and the motives that drive him to help others seems to be the starting point for further education and self-education;

– the therapeutic function – as long as experiences, thoughts and emotions remain in the sphere of thought, they are disordered. However, putting them in words gives the possibility of structuring and realizing a specific speech therapy. Experiencing again certain events in the controlled process, which is their retrospection, gives the possibility of experiencing a type of catharsis;

– the educational function – refers to the cognitive function through which the researcher was learning his role in the research process. With the educational function he can change, improve his performance. It is carried out not only in relation to the researcher, but also in the case of the respondents describing their experiences – here: students of pedagogy

– the transformative function – thanks to an in-depth self-reflection on self-activity, which is one of the important forms of self-education of adults, the researcher (but also the subject) can undergo a process of specific formation (Szymańska, 2016), and thereby experience change and implement the desirable outcomes into life;

The second dimension of the function that autoethnography performs concerns its wider impact, hence it can be called the community dimension, represented by:

– the democratic function – Mark Neumann (1996, p. 189) sees the main function of autoethnography in the fact that "autoethnographical texts democratize the representative sphere of culture by putting the individual's experiences in tension with the dominant expressions of discursive power." The very possibility of exposing what is important to an individual, publishing it in the scientific form is an important prerequisite for representation in a broader arena of individual interests;

– the emancipatory function – it is closely related to the abovementioned one. It is particularly relevant in the case of social issues, compiled in the framework of community or collaborative autoethnography, whose

specific in-depth nature can be successfully compared to the importance of statistical studies, showing, for example, the life in care homes in important, but for a different reason, numerical indicators. The introduction of grassroots changes has already begun in "locating who we are, what we do" (Starr, 2010).

Immersing deeper into the topic of autoethnography as an intra-personal and intra-active method, it is also necessary to quote the most important techniques used in it, including self-observation, self-questioning, auto-ethnographic essay, or performance (Ciechowska, Szymańska, 2018, Kacperczyk, 2014). Due to the fact that it is a dynamically developing method and its intra-personal and intra-active nature, other innovative techniques may be used in the studies that will be described below.

Innovative techniques of autoethnography research in the pragmatic dimension

The nature of autoethnography research, regardless of the types of autoethnography, indicates the need for reflection on individual and social levels; personal, professional and social, especially in the context of communication. This context implies the need to "enter" into ourselves, so that we can learn and understand the mechanisms that drive not only one's self but also the other's, and the mechanisms that shape the community of people in mutual relations. The qualitative spiral system of discovery and exploration of new internal and external areas by the research subjects requires maturity of reflective practice (Raelin, 2002, pp. 66–79; Schön, 1987, Carter, Cividanes, Curtis, Lebo, 2010). It is worth stating that "Reflection is an active process of witnessing one's own experience in order to take a closer look at it, sometimes to direct attention to it briefly, but often to explore it in greater depth. This can be done in the midst of an activity or as an activity in itself. The key to reflection is learning how to take perspective on one's own actions and experience—in other words, to examine that experience rather than just living it. By developing the ability to explore and be curious about our own experience and actions, we suddenly open up the possibilities of purposeful learning — learning derived not from books or experts, but from our work and our lives" (Amulya, 2015, p.1).

It can be assumed that the proper implementation of auto-ethnographic techniques in the research process should be aimed at the good of individuals and society, which suggests a need for a reflective action. Their exemplification may be: journal of reflection (Szymańska, 2017, pp.143–163), reflective-digres-

sive essay, reflective poem construction (Szymańska, 2017, pp. 266–268), as well as other innovative techniques such as reflective auto-storytelling, reflective auto-excursion, which when used in praxis, can be a valuable source of information not only for the researcher but also for the participants in the study. In addition, by reflecting on the mental, social, cultural and spiritual levels, there may be an opportunity to improve the moral character, to shape the maturity and even eminent creativity (Nęcka, 2003, p. 218). These techniques are to enhance transformative creativity (Szymańska, 2017, p. 204). It is worth remembering that "Reflective practice is simply creating a habit, structure, or routine around examining experience. A practice for reflection can vary in terms of how often, how much, and why reflection gets done" (Amulya, 2004, p. 2). The use of signalled techniques allows us to create and experience unique stories of the human fate, whose individual dimension is reflected in the social dimension – the community. The author claims that "By examining a story we tell about a significant event, we build our understanding of what happened and why. By engaging in collective dialogue about an event from multiple perspectives, a group can look at the meanings it has taken from that experience and excavate the qualities that made it significant" (Amulya, 2004, p. 3).

During the study, it is necessary to pay attention to the qualitative, competent support of the researcher to the subject of the research. Conducting autoethnographic narratives by educational subjects in the form of proposed techniques may promote the activation of their creative potential – developmental one, it may also be therapeutic. Their application in the work with the subjects should serve both the researcher and the subjects, especially if the basis for their implementation is the subject-participatory paradigm (Ciechowska, Szymańska, 2018, pp. 42–51). The following short presentation of these techniques can be considered as a prelude to further exploration in the methodological, didactic, pedagogical, ethical and axiological fields.

The first presented technique is a journal of reflection, a structured narrative form oriented on working on oneself in the context of problems that are solved through informal and formal search (e.g. professional literature) on three levels: personal – expressed by asking questions, exploring-penetrating the environment of one's inner life leading to finding the right answers according to one's own conscience; professional – expressed by asking questions about the related aspects of working life – in order to improve working tools, in accordance with one's own world view; social – aimed at improving the quality of community life (environment) in which one lives. It is noteworthy that the journal of reflection structured in this way allows for the refinement of critical

thinking processes as well as critical, communicative learning (Boud, 1985; 2001), which is extremely important in the performance of tasks in the aspect of professional life. Boud states: "Journal writing is a multifaceted activity that can take many forms for many purposes. It can be used in many different ways to promote reflection. Different strategies and devices can be used at different stages of learning to focus on events anticipated as well as those that have passed. The conditions under which journal writing takes place can have a powerful influence on what is produced and the extent to which writers can engage in critical reflection. If journals are to be used in courses, then great care needs to be taken about how they relate to assessed work. In general, reflective activities should be distinguished from those graded" (Boud, 2001, pp. 6–7).

The second technique is a reflective-digressive essay, which is a structured narrative form that requires three levels of reflection: "by action", "in action", "on action" in the area of existing primarily with one's own "I". These three levels of reflection should be accompanied by digressions (direct and indirect) spontaneously appearing as they are written. This element of the essay reaches into the Stern composition. The proper point of reference for these digressions is an aspect of cultural life, aesthetic experience, impression and even emotion. The anthropological and axiological context would be a valuable element for research subjects. This form requires systematic work on the person writing the essay, and a careful analysis, interpretation of the content by the researcher.

The third technique is a reflective poem, which is, in a sense, a structured form of narration, leaving a huge free space for one's creative activity. It requires a reference to a particular literary work selected according to the preferences of the subjects. The spontaneous analysis and interpretation of this piece in the form of "superimposing" layers of data fragments on their own experiences leads to the creation of a new, own piece according to one's own formula, which is a response to problems or questions posed. This impressive-expressive tactics used this way allow to reach places that are deeply hidden and which may be the source of finding oneself also in social contexts.

The fourth technique is the auto-storytelling. It is a slightly structured form of expression, showing the three levels of reflection, as above. It is advisable to precede the use of this form with a free conversation, e.g. concerning the interests of the research subjects. The use of this technique can be an important part of the diagnosis and so on.

Finally, the fifth technique is the reflective auto-excursion technique – a structured narrative form of observing the stages of the trip into the depths of self. Each stage should be planned, implemented and evaluated. Each of them

is to be accompanied by reflections, expressed in the form of questions asked to oneself, to another man, the world and God. This technique requires the creation of a specific exploration plan leading deep into oneself. It requires determining the centre of one's path to the goal. Recording events in the form of reflection and digression is probably very valuable here, especially since it gives the opportunity to explore new areas of constructive perception of oneself in relation to each other, the world or God. Enriching the narrative about oneself by narration of others about the protagonist can promote updating one's own creative potential. Building a narrative picture of the journey, containing the novum of oneself, may resemble the process embodied in Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse* (1989).

In conclusion, the use of the above self-reflection techniques seems to be of great importance for self-development on the path to achieving fullness of humanity, the concrete expression of which is the realization of happiness through the realization of good (Wojtyła, 2000, p. 216–217) in the space of personal, professional and social life. It may also be conducive to the proper process of formation of the teacher and student (Szymańska, 2017, pp. 17–29)

Autoethnography as a chance for the intrapersonal and intra-active education of pedagogues

The concept of intra-active training is still not firmly rooted in the literature of the subject. While the interactivity of the education process has permanently entered higher education standards, intra-activity is still associated with psychology and processes not available in higher education didactics. The concept of intra-activity is as broad as the context for intra-personal training; hence this concept will be explained first.

So far, the terms such as: intrapersonal conflict (Brown, 1957, pp. 135––154), intrapersonal communication (Honeycutt, Mapp, Knasser, Banner, 2009, pp. 323–335) or intrapersonal intelligence have appeared in social sciences. The latter is a component of the scientific model of emotional intelligence and includes such elements as emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-observation, self-actualization, independence (Mayer, Salovey, 1999, pp. 21–70). What is the intrapersonal education then? It can be said that it is a concept of education that uses various aspects, possibilities and roles of the person treated as an integral whole. It considers such determiners as the background, the worldview, values or preferences developed in the lifetime, which can help a person to deepen inner experience leading to her/his formation.

Talking about the possibilities of a person, we mean the possibilities that are reliant on their mental and physical health. The real perception of one's possibilities, and what's involved – also limitations – gives a person a realistic perspective on the choices they will make and potentially prepares them for possible failures. Assessing one's own abilities is one of the most responsible tasks, especially in the case of mental or physical health disorders, as it can take place in the case of a person with disability who has a tendency to withdraw from social life. Sometimes, overestimation of one's own abilities can result in a sequence of failures, and a consequence of a collapse in the implementation of the self-development plan.

The person's abilities are also reflected in the concept of self (own competence) and own development in relation to other members of the group in which the student resides (Marsh, 1984, pp. 799–806).

The role of a person is another key component for intrapersonal education. The multiplicity of social functions performed in the contemporary world, even by young people, requires paying appropriate attention to each of them, understanding their interconnections and exclusions. The sociocultural environment in which we interact affects our emotional processes, the roles and functions of these processes in social interactions. Consequently, they show impact on the environment in which we perform social roles (Frijda, Mesquita, 1994, pp. 51–87). The roles played by a pedagogy student concern the family, social, professional sphere (if he or she has already started work), and the research area. Teachers and students should be, according to James McKernan, overwhelmed by the spirit of research (McKernan, 1996), which inscribes into autoethnography and can serve as one of the research methods that creates opportunities for intrapersonal and intra-active understanding and self-knowledge.

Intra-active learning refers to the still not widely spread concept of intra-active pedagogy, which has its origins in feminist realism. Ontological and epistemological aspects of the intra-activity concept have been explained by Karen Barad (1999, 2006). She believes that the matter that surrounds us, as well as the meaning, is not given once, "Matter is always a historic one, it does not refer to a solid substance, rather it is a substance in intra-active becoming, it is not a thing but an action. (...). It is a stabilizing and detrimental process of intra-action "(Barad, 2003, pp. 801–831). In addition, performative post-humanism assumes that matter becomes matter. Referring to autoethnography, especially to the form of performance, one can say that one's experience becomes the experience of others, which results in the fact that a common platform for dialogue and cognition appears.

Intra-active pedagogy is one that does not downplay human relationships with the environment and all its elements. "Intra-activity here relates to the physics of terminology and the relationship between human and non-human" (Taguchi, 2010, p. 4). At a university level, it is still a novelty and requires serious studies. The idea of intra-activity is further promoted at the level of pre-primary education by the texts of Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, including the monograph 'Going Beyond the Theory/Practice Divide in Early Childhood Education. Introducing an Intra-active Pedagogy.'

Because of the broad understanding of a human as a person/individual, we want to propose a new concept of intra-activity in pedagogy, required by complicated, modern times, where often the lack of reference to spiritual values reduces the possibility of human development.

Intra-activity in pedagogy is the acceptance of profound, shaping human relations with the material and non-material elements of the environment. This is the admission of emotional bonds to the animated and inanimate parts of the environment (primarily with the like, the closest to him physically and psychologically human) and, above all, the relationship with the transcendental and the spiritual. In such understanding of the intra-activity, the psycho-anthropological concept of human needs is compatible with the integral concept of man as a bodily and spiritual person (John Paul II, 1993). Incorporation of the spiritual aspect into intra-activity (or interest in "holy doctrine", "sacred experience" and the necessity of resurrecting the experience of oneself and the world (Reason, 1993) gives an additional possibility of autoethnography – exploring "sacred space" (Richardson, 1997), unique places, where the spiritual encounters social research (Denzin, Lincoln, 2009).

The intra-activity understood in this way is necessary at every other level of education, especially higher education, through which the student – the pedagogue can discover his or her interactions with everything that surrounds him or her – everything that shapes or defines. These are sunrises and sunsets, souvenirs, pictures, music, but also – or, above all, it's his or her spiritual development, deep understanding of the meaning of human life, of the world, and of one's role in it.

Intra-active pedagogy is "pedagogy sensitive to places" (Mendel, 2006, pp. 21–37), pedagogy open to human relationships with the surrounding elements constituting his being in the world and at the same time being part of the world. How can you implement the concept of intra-active self-knowledge and the world at the level of higher education pedagogues? This is an opportunity for autoethnography as a research method, but also as a method of learning the

closest to the student – learning oneself through ourselves and our relationships with the environment.

Possibilities of using autoethnography in intrapersonal and intra-active training of pedagogues

The reflections discussed in this article are intended to show the need for promoting autoethnography in pedagogical education. Considering the types of autoethnography and the wide range of research techniques, it can be safely said that it is possible in many cases. According to the methodological nature of autoethnography, it is to be used as a research method in: individualized, duoethnography and collaborative autoethnography, where the subject matter with its meanings and values can be discussed and agreed upon. Recent experience of this method application appears to be highly valuable for the authors and pedagogy as a science, as well, for it has the self-therapy dimension (Ciechowska, 2018, p. 197).

That is why, autoethnography can be recommended to be used while arranging student practices. Depending on the university, a variety of documents are required from the student – describing the practical activities in the field offices. It is worth exchanging schematic summaries for in-depth studies showing the changes that have occurred (whether they have occurred or not but were expected by the student) when encountered with the pedagogical reality.

Conclusion

The process of educating pedagogues needs to make them know themselves in depth, which can result in knowing others on their way to adulthood. It happens through the intra-personal and intra-active acquisition of knowledge that the use of autoethnography provides. This can be implemented in a variety of ways in academic fields (diploma thesis, optional classes or vocational apprenticeship evaluation) with the use of various auto-ethnographic techniques. It appears beneficial for both the student himself (thanks to its cognitive, therapeutic, educational, transformative functions) and the society (democratic and emancipatory ones). Such research on the "flourishing of man" (Heron, Reason, 1997), here: the pedagogue, for himself and others offers hope that the answer to the question "What do pedagogues produce?" Can be: mature, knowing themselves people – able to know others and eager to help them achieve their maturity.

In conclusion, autoethnography in its intra-personal and intra-active nature can be seen as a specific "remedy" in such processes of education that are more and more often focused on unreflective acquisition of knowledge. Humanistically oriented, it will be the culmination of education to be a reflective practitioner for others, which justifies the use of the synergy of the paradigms eliciting the personal perspective.

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