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Social rehabilitation education in relation to “photo-images” in the research and in the practice of social rehabilitation interactions

Abstract: Dynamic development of visual studies inquires a new approach towards image in scientific research. This article is aimed at joining the discussion concerning utilizing photographic visuals in research and application of social rehabilitation pedagogy. Moreover, it evaluates the efficiency of both “participatory photography” and visual ethnography – and the associated experimental research in this very field.

Key words: social rehabilitation pedagogy, visual studies, visual research methodology, participatory photography.

Visual civilization as a source of risky behaviors of a contemporary human

More than a quarter of a century has passed since William J. Thomas Mitchell announced the “pictorial turn” to the world (Mitchell 1994). Whatever the pictorial turn is, then, it should be clear that it is not a return to naive mimesis, copy or correspondence theories of representation, or a renewed metaphysics of pictorial “presence”. [...] it is rather a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visibility, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality. (Mitchell 2009, p. 4–19).

Ten years later, Nicolas Mirzoeff characterized the visual civilization, which he recognized as the everyday life of the majority of the world's population, and argued that social practices are constructed around visuality and visibility, becoming the axis of individual and collective human actions and behaviors (Mirzoeff 2008, pp. 3–24). It is hard to disagree today with the thesis that visualizing the world is one of the basic needs of contemporary homo videns (Sartori 2007) and the society of the new paradigm can be called a photo-society (Bogunia-Borowska 2012).

The development of visual media has boosted studies on the social issues of images also in Poland, especially in the field of visual sociology and image anthropology (Olechnicki 2003; Sztompka 2006).

“Image” in the face of diverse scientific manifestations has become an increasingly significant theoretical category. There has been a development of visual studies established in the specifics of their subject domain. The lack of clarity of what this domain is about, has long been the weakest point of visual studies, seen more as an interdisciplinary phenomenon than a scientific discipline. The terms visual studies and research on visual culture were used interchangeably, with the central categories of “visuality” and “visualizing” (Mirzoeff 2003). To this day, many researchers attribute visual culture studies to the development of postmodern art history research and understand them as an interdisciplinary “image theory”, making them the genesis of visual studies.

Consideration of the potentials and threats of the impact of visual images on diverse age groups over time became interesting also to researchers in the field of education sciences. In a world dominated by images, the following are listed on the side of threats: visual propaganda (Wojtasik 1987); visual overload, some kind of “epidemic” of images (Portella 2014); power, hegemony of images (Jay 1999); spread of digital narcissism and consumption of images (Szpunar 2016); iconic panic and contemporary forms of iconoclasm (Sontag 1986); various forms of visual regimes (Hopfinger 1997).

Some pedagogical sub-disciplines have already identified problem areas that need to take this cultural change into account. Socialization in the “virtual network” has become a new challenge for social rehabilitation pedagogy (Konopczyński 2014, p. 20), especially in the context of risky behaviors of juveniles, which are increasingly often located in virtual reality.

Declared Internet users explore it in many ways. One of the dominant activities of the digital natives generation is an account and activity on social networking platforms. American research indicates that the percentage of users of social networking platforms, mainly Facebook, reaches 90% in this age group (Lenhart 2010). Similar results apply to Polish youth (Batorski 2015). They show that popular and important forms of contact for young people, made possible by new media, are a source of many positive experiences.

Cyberbullying is considered to be a negative phenomenon concerning online social interaction. It is also repeatedly linked to the image, which is due, among

others, to the contemporary meaning given to “digital self-presentation” (Bauman 2013). Social media are indeed focused on the image and their great popularity is associated with the possibility of presenting photos, including the so-called selfies. Photographs are evaluated, widely commented on and play a significant role in the process of identity formation. Positive self-presentation in social media is very important and exposes mainly visual aspects of image (Ostaszewska 2012). The basic motives for undertaking self-presentational behaviors are increasing and protecting self-esteem as well as creating and maintaining a specific identity (Leary, Kowalski 1990).

The online image is also one of the main targets of the perpetrators of cyberbullying, because the activity related to the dissemination of images has the greatest potential for victimization. Of course, the qualitative variety of acts of electronic violence is related to the amount of damage that such acts can cause (Pyżalski 2012).

Without an in-depth study of the image, a methodology that encourages reflection on how different social groups form the “framework” for the reception and creation of images, consisting of pervasive visual communication, it will be increasingly difficult to understand social phenomena and processes. Contemporary practices of viewing, creating and using images concern all social groups and generations, attributing various meanings to visuality. Effective education or social rehabilitation that fosters the development of the critical competence of viewing and image production practices, and thus finding by children and young people of their place in the world, should recognize and use this cultural change.

Representatives of social sciences generally agree that the effectiveness of mechanisms of control over adolescent youth, functioning in the area of family, school and peer groups, is changing. The search for psychosocial factors that determine risky behaviors of schoolchildren is located on the side of tasks important from the point of view of research and provokes many questions: Do problems related to the prevention of risky behaviors of youth take on a new dimension in the visual civilization? How, in the today’s world, can we empirically explore the issues that focus on recognizing the problem and the conditions of risky behaviors in adolescents from the generation of digital natives?

Known problems, often unresolved, gain a new context, perhaps also a new level of difficulty. Analyses made over many years by Wiesław Ambrozik (2001, 2010, 2016), Marek Konopczyński (2006, 2013, 2014), Irena Mudrecka (2017, 2018), Bronisław Urban (2001, 2005, 2008), Andrzej Bałandynowicz (2015, 2019), Maciej Muskała (2016), Maciej Bernasiewicz (2019) and others prove that the basic causes lie in the hitherto established factors and in this context these feeding the already existing scientific knowledge concerning the problems of conditions and development of social maladjustment of youth are consolidated. They confirm a certain already known and described state of affairs, illuminating the premises also feeding the contents of classical criminological theories.

The knowledge gained from empirical projects proves the known links between deviant behaviors of youth, e.g. with negative patterns or the location of social control. The effectiveness of activities in the area of social rehabilitation does not increase either. Stanisław Jedlewski wrote critically about this fact already in the sixties in his work entitled *Analiza pedagogiczna systemu dyscyplinarno-izolacyjnego w resocjalizacji nieletnich* (Pedagogical analysis of the disciplinary-isolation system in the social rehabilitation of minors). Therefore, it seems that not much has changed over the past few decades. Marek Konopczyński diagnoses this state of crisis as a success of apparent actions (2013).

Within the psychosocial conditions of risky behaviors of young people, there are many phenomena the research on which are located on the border of various scientific disciplines, visual studies, visual sociology create new planes of reference. In pedagogy, and especially in social rehabilitation pedagogy, the need to explore them is conditioned by the need to develop social rehabilitation practice that effectively responds to new phenomena, also allowing them to be inscribed in an ever wider social context.

Wiesław Ambrozik spoke about the totalizing nature of corrective measures taken without an in-depth diagnosis of phenomena and processes requiring correction in his lecture "O konieczności uspołecznienia systemu profilaktyki i resocjalizacji" [On the necessity of socializing the system of prevention and social rehabilitation], delivered in 2018 at the meeting of the Correctional Pedagogy Team with the Committee of Pedagogical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He emphasized that the problem lies not only in the methods of social rehabilitation impact, but above all in the change of the whole model of social rehabilitation of juveniles to date, in the need to socialize it, communitarize activities referring to a reliable diagnosis of the current state of affairs. Then it will be possible to integrate and coordinate the various forces that lie mainly in local communities, which will implement the students into appropriate social roles and reconstruct their disturbed social ties with the family and other components of the educational environment under the coordinating eye of appropriate rehabilitation centers. Rather than isolating and subjecting them to disciplinary measures or therapeutic measures deprived of social participation, they will activate them and implement them into socializing social participation in ever wider areas of socio-cultural life.

Therefore, the psychosocial conditions of risky behaviors of adolescents, in the light of the conclusions formulated in the literature on the subject, require research and further description, using the entire potential of social research methodology. This, of course, brings with it many challenges, which always arise when we push boundaries, looking for new contexts of already known phenomena.

Therefore, the aim of the article is to join the discussion on the use of the image, and more specifically, the photographic image in research and pedagogical practice in the field of social rehabilitation pedagogy. The usefulness of so-called

participatory photography will be considered in this context. I will also briefly refer to my own research experience, which I have gained when implementing projects using visual ethnography.

Potentials of photographic techniques in discovering the invisible – social rehabilitation work with photo-image

The titular participatory photography is a research technique based on cooperation with the respondent. The person taking part in the research takes pictures connected with the subject given by the researcher. Most often this technique is combined with interviewing (Koseła 1989, 1990) or writing photo-essays by the author of the photography. In this context, the literature also uses the name photo-voices, visual voices or talking pictures (Wang 1999, 2006). The use of it may accompany the work with the image focused simultaneously on other purposes. A researcher with additional competences in the field of integrated personal, environmental and cultural-civilizational interactions with people who violate the social order may, for example, use photography for action research, in which it works perfectly. This perspective seems particularly promising for pedagogues, who very often function on the borderline between education studies and pedagogy.

A notable example is the long-lasting activity of Hubert Kupiec, a passionate photographer, who skillfully makes it a toolbox used for many professional tasks. For many years, he was a tutor of the Social Rehabilitation Students' Club at the Institute of Pedagogy of the University of Szczecin, he created its program based on multi-purpose photographic workshops entitled “Photography in social rehabilitation”. This original project was based on Marek Konopczyński's theory of creative social rehabilitation and, in time, research in action. Work on the attribution tactics of juveniles and their creation of an alternative social self-presentation through the visualization of identity (Konopczyński 2006, p. 106–121), was based on the use of photo-images.

In the first edition, students of school counseling and social rehabilitation conducted photographic and theater workshops for girls from the Janusz Korczak Youth Education Center in Szczecin, in the form of weekly 4-hour meetings. In 2012, a six-month application and research project “Social rehabilitation through photography” was carried out with socially maladjusted young people staying in the Youth Education Center in Szczecin, in the Youth Education Center in Trzebieża and in the Juvenile Shelter in Szczecin. In total, the Social Rehabilitation Research Club organized four series of workshops “Creative social rehabilitation through photography”, from 2008 to 2014, attended by 36 students and 36 pupils.

Several years of work with the use of photography accompanying the reflection on the personal development of socially maladjusted youth, aimed at internalizing their self-presentation as a process of creating the Self, is a unique

undertaking on a national scale, especially a smooth transition from practice to scientific research on deviant identity has occurred. The above-described application and research project is an exemplification of the implementation of the postulate of adapting the social rehabilitation practice and educational activities to specific conditions of manifestations of deviant identity.

Taking pictures of one's own life by the pupils of the educational centers corresponds to the assumptions of self-definition through photography in visual methodology. This technique, as one of the ways of using participatory photography, is most often combined with a specific task, e.g. a request to indicate in the photographs the places with which a person participating in the research identifies or objects identifying him/her at a given stage of his/her life (Drozdzowski 2008).

Photography, which is at the same time an element of creative social rehabilitation and a research tool, reveals great possibilities, acting as a kind of catalyst improving not only communication, but also the processes of change and development of socially maladjusted youth. Taking pictures and talking about them, in the case of the reported workshops, eliminated negative emotions, creating social ties. Taking and viewing photographs together are the commonly known and described bonding activities (Bourdieu 1965).

Above all, however, the self-presentation encouraged one to reflect on one's own life situation and verbalize it in relation to various time perspectives, including the past. The process of becoming aware of and observing one's own characteristics, which are manifested during the visualization of one's own identity parameters, combined with the presentation of oneself to other people, allows one (a young person JN) to become convinced that he/she has the same characteristics as those present in the image he/she created (Konopczyński 2006, p. 119).

Creating photo-images is effective both in relation with one person and when working with a group. Young people appreciate working with self-portraits or portraits taken by others and autobiographical photographs. However, the use of photographs can be varied, e.g. as metaphorical sheets helpful in discussions on many difficult subjects.

Participatory photography also relieves other methodological tensions in education, including social rehabilitation. The study of conditions of risky behaviors of youth, including the need to diagnose personal and social dimensions, is a problem area located at the meeting point of psychology and social rehabilitation pedagogy. On this borderline, doubts about the legitimacy and, above all, the possibility of research on "personality traits" carried out by educators are verbalized many times. Not all educators share the concern associated with being accused of barging into the competences of psychologists. In pedagogical research the category "identity" sounds in many ways, and scientists representing education sciences agree that its multiple reconstructions can only take place on the dialectic borderline of philosophy, psychology, sociology and education. The argument in favor of such a possibility is a holistic approach to the human being in peda-

gological research, allowing to capture the constitutive features of the essence and structure of the components that could be useful in conceptualizing the created identity models.

An example of research illustrating these issues is the monograph by the already mentioned Hubert Kupiec, entitled *The identity of juveniles and the motivation to change in the conditions of the social rehabilitation centers [Tożsamość nieletnich a motywacja do zmiany w warunkach placówki resocjalizacyjnej]*, created around the basic theoretical category of "deviant identity". It deals with the rarely explored issue of the relationship between the deviant identity of juveniles and motivating them to make constructive changes within themselves. Identity research, in this case on conditions and manifestations of deviant identity, does not have to mean the need to use psychological tests, but a specific projection mechanism inscribed in the contact of humans with the image, especially the self-created one.

A precise description of the possibilities of using and researching images by social researchers, involves the need to answer numerous questions: about the essence of what an image actually is, about the relationship between word and image, about the methods and mechanisms of (re)constructing the world through the image and many others. Citing the category of "image" only in relation to visibility is a major simplification.

The framework of this text does not allow the development of the key issues of embedding the 'pictorial turn' in the context of the 'linguistic turn' (Rorty 1992), or the essence of the textuality of Roland Barthes's image (2000), which poses the question of the relation between the image and the possibility/necessity of its reading through language.

It can be clearly emphasized, however, that it is not only about the projection potential of an image, read in terms of psychological usefulness of pictorial tests occurring, for example, in the form of schematic drawings, photographs or color spots with the already canonical example of the Rorschach test, but also about scientifically legitimized use of visual data, going beyond the mechanism of projection. The tests are obviously of great importance for educators, e.g. in the context of diagnosing the functioning of a person in their natural family system (Braun-Gałkowska 2009, 2017). However, the very understanding of the "projection method" introduced in the field of psychology, with a view to therapeutic measures and the possibility of gaining insight into the opinion of the respondents, far from the meanings arbitrarily established by the experimenter/researcher, goes beyond the meaning of a pictorial test. Projection methods show the subjective and subject-individual way of perceiving and constructing the environment (Sęk 1984, p. 5). The projection techniques presented in this way are particularly useful in qualitative research, the aim of which is an in-depth analysis of the examined phenomenon, understanding of preferences, gaining opinions of the examined persons on the basis of what they say about other people, things,

phenomena or situations. It is, therefore, the creation of a kind of situation for projection without targeting, suggesting or forcing answers. Projective properties of the image stimulate the participants to be active, the actions taken are spontaneous and free, because they do not require extraordinary communication skills from young people. They are also of educational nature if combined with, for example, workshops in a darkroom.

It is worth mentioning at this point that in the practice of social rehabilitation, the thread of adapting educational activities to the changing identity of adolescents is rather rare. The problem of totalizing correctional centers, which are places of faulty adaptation or apparent social rehabilitation have already been discussed in many scientific reports. There is no shortage of interesting and valuable theoretical solutions to counterbalance this.

Andrzej Bałandynowicz (2015, 2019), the author of the theory of probation (multi-band theory of social rehabilitation with the participation of society), stresses its application in supporting and acquiring communication, development and adaptation skills of convicts and values creating their personal, social and cultural identity. It is a way of understanding the probation activity as social change, which is a supportive social rehabilitation with the participation of society. The author postulates in social rehabilitation activities to experience emotional freedom or to respect the need for the right to choose. This is one of the basic challenges for people struggling with their difficult life situations.

Working with participatory photography evokes a reflection going in this direction. This is a kind of start of adaptation to freedom, beginning with an attempt to depict it in its broadest sense in relation to oneself. The camera lens works a little like a magnifying glass, allowing you to see the invisible and capture a look. Careful framing is a metaphorical mechanism of shaping identity, which can be used in a very conscious way in social rehabilitation.

Photographic techniques and methods in visual methodology

Visual methodology as a relatively young field of knowledge, although diverse in terms of methods and techniques used, requires basic, maybe even naive – literal – categorical distinctions. The lack thereof reduces photography to a document, cancels its potential as a visual information, making photographs an objective evidence that reflects reality in details. Meanwhile, the same thing photographed by different people can mean something completely different, because it always has its own unique context, which we do not realize until it is described. Participatory photography makes it possible to examine ways of viewing, according to the thesis articulated by John Berger that an image embodies the way the artist sees it (Berger 1997). A contemporary researcher in the field of juvenologic

issues is able to collect richer empirical material by asking young people: “show me who you are,” than by giving them a task: “tell me who you are”. The latter task also takes on a different meaning if you use the photonarration created by a teenager invited to comment on the photographs posted eg. on their own Instagram account. Marianna Michałowska uses the notion of “photo-text” defining it as an intentionally created structure, referring to photographic images of material objects, representing cultural meanings and individual experiences of the audience (2012, p. 12).

Visual narration, which is the basis of participatory photography technique, seems to be a very important manner of communication with the world for this generation. Whether this digital natives’ photo-voice is certainly a fully conscious need or just another visual regime is another interesting problem in the area of questions about the hidden oppressiveness of multimedia.

Therefore, to sum up the categorical decisions, it should be emphasized that photography is a technique of recording an image using specific equipment. The effect of its application is a photograph, i.e. an image that has been recorded on a specific medium that allows to give this view/image a materialized character. A photographic image is therefore the appropriate subject of analysis.

A photographic image is given a meaning with a clear temporal character. It is usually treated as a transfer of something that was, happened or already took place to a certain level of conventional reality. It is a materialized trace of memory. In research using participatory photography, this assumption is often wrong. Photo-images¹ can be a projection about the future of the photographer. The photographer creates his/her own vision of the expected world, realizes his/her goal, self-defines himself/herself, creating his/her surroundings, often creating an illusion of reality². For this reason a “photographic image” is sometimes replaced by the term “visual representation”. Gillian Rose makes a clear distinction between what is seen and how it is seen. Its consequence is the conviction that visual representations are interpretations of the world, not transparent windows for viewing reality (Rose 2010, p. 20).

Mirzoeff uses the term “visual event”. He understands it as a visual impression obtained thanks to tools and visual technologies, e.g. through photography, in which a person seeks visual information, meaning or pleasure (Mirzoeff 2002, p. 6).

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¹ A photo image in the sense of material image (*picture*), i.e. an analog or digital photograph.

² Those who take part in research where photography is used for self-definition are often surprised by the final effect of self-creation. This moment triggers the need for a narrative, thanks to which the researcher becomes a witness to the reconstruction of the course of life, often also the process of becoming. In the case of young people at risk of risky behaviors, the importance of this experience is multiplied by triggering deep self-reflection, often also in autobiographical memory. In such cases, we can talk about the emancipatory potential of the research process, typical of qualitative research embedded in a critical paradigm. Entrusting someone with photographic equipment can also be ennobling, empowering the respondent. Even if these are only disposable cameras.

John Grady believes that images have their hidden ideological text (politic) as well as their “careers”, moving from one context to another, changing the meaning that is attributed to them (Grady 2009).

Vilém Flusser generalizes a thesis about the special properties of the camera and the impossibility of faithfully reproducing reality by introducing the “apparatus” category. He believes that every camera stimulates thinking and that it enables people with imagination to produce and decrypt images that are just another perception of reality (Flusser 2014).

A camera in the hands of the researcher or the person taking part in the research can therefore provide very diverse empirical material, depending on what status the photograph will be given, who will take the photograph and whether the visual material will be completed with an interview.

Many researchers overlook the possibility of handing over the camera to the respondents. Krzysztof Konecki lists four attitudes, mainly entrusting the camera to the researcher and making this a basic and purposeful research strategy. The researcher can use the “photographic thematic list”(shooting scripts), containing, at will, the researcher’s questions, derived from e.g. fieldwork. These are usually the instructions for taking pictures.

The second and third attitude is the use of photographs depicting specific objects of social importance for analysis as existing materials and linking them to generated materials (i.e. to narrations and verbal comments made by the respondents on the photographs shown to them). A fourth equally popular strategy is the use of photographs as evidence to support conclusions or as an illustration for conclusions from studies where the main data were verbal texts or figures and statistical representations of data (Konecki 2005, 2008, 2010, 2012).

Marcus Banks, dividing visual methods, mentions cooperation with social actors to create visual performances, i.e. photographs or films (researching the community through the creation of images by its members) and researching existing visual performances (studying images in order to obtain information about the community) (2009).

The documentary method, which aims to reconstruct the knowledge acquired through everyday experience, also uses the interpretation of video recordings, images and photographs (Bohnsack 2004). The study of the image in the context of media research conducted by Gunther Kress and Teo van Leeuwen is an expression of our belief that we are witnessing the replacement of language culture by image culture (2006).

Visual studies can be found in texts by Walter Benjamin, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan. The highly diversified visual studies around the world combine the issues of media with the basic category of “visuality”, many times making the semiotic concepts of Roland Barthes (2000) the basis for theoretical clarifications. Many researchers focus on the social phenomenon of constructing representations of reality in order to give it meaning. The ordering function in this respect is ful-

filled by the arrangements made by Mirzoeff as regards the already mentioned “visual event”, which illustrate the infinite freedom of ways of perceiving and the related possibility of bringing images to life (Mirzoeff 2003).

There are many theoretical proposals for image analysis, the conscious researcher is faced with the choice of semiological, hermeneutical, structuralist or several other interpretations, with visual theory at the forefront. Many analysis variants are based on classical content analysis, focused on discovering and understanding hidden senses. In his series of photographs, Norman K. Denzin indicates several structures of meanings (narrations). The basic ones are visual text (narration) and spoken text (narration) as a commentary of photographers to their photos. Another story is visual and spoken text combined into one story. Separate analyses are carried out in relation to interpretations and explanations that the viewer or the author of the photograph (together with the researcher) gives to the visual and told texts (narrations) (2000, p. 423).

The contemporary compulsion to create photographs and be photographed provides many people with a sense of more complete participation in society, but also the pleasure of being watched (Pontremoli 2007). The method of participatory photography, initially quite skeptically perceived in social sciences, is gaining a stronger position thanks to these new contexts. Naturally, the choice of photographic technique must correspond with the problems and theoretical assumptions of the research project.

The photography is successfully used in ethnographic research, emphasizing the need to take into account the cultural perspective, in research in the field of social sciences as well as in pedagogy (Nowotniak 2012). Photographic techniques in a sense are theoretically rooted in ethnography, which encourages reflective telling of social stories through images and/or texts. A notable example was the project of John Adair and Sol Worth referring to auto-photography. Researchers distributed cameras to Navajo Indians, trying to find an answer to the question about the daily life of the tribe, the way they perceive themselves and the social reality in which community members function (Banks 2009).

Therefore, cultural knowledge is gathered assuming the “emic” (internal) cognition – it is the internal knowledge of the members of the studied community, it has a clear cultural context (Wolcott 1992). Photographic techniques, especially participatory photography, seem to meet the epistemological assumptions set out in interactionist ethnography (Gobo 2008).

Visual data help to expose the category of the place recurring in different contexts in the social rehabilitation pedagogy. The issue of the place directs the persons taking part in the study to the world of values, reveals e.g. the meaning of the family home and the importance of its existential location for the creation of subjectivity of the young person. It reveals diverse images of social order and social worlds, often leading to reflections on the existential sense of being. Photographic images reflect the visual symbolism of social worlds that are difficult to

capture using data of other types. Educational institutions, school and educational centers are kind of closed cultural scenes, where one can observe phenomena connected with the place of formal and informal socialization, teaching and education as well as social rehabilitation.

The potential of visual data in social rehabilitation pedagogy is confirmed by research projects carried out by Maciej Szaszekiewicz (1997), Sławomir Przybyliński (2007), Anita Gulczyńska (2013), Piotr Chomczyński (2014) and Małgorzata Michel (2016).

The advantage of visual techniques is the possibility to adjust research tools to the cultural potential of the respondents. The study of the micro-world of socially maladjusted people requires the methodological instruments to be adapted to their preferences for building a narrative. The visual narrative satisfies the need to be “somebody” in the world, allowing those who use the undeveloped code to verbalize their reflections more freely.

The researcher gets a chance to understand what social discourses guide the vision, how a teenager functions within their social structures. Re-interpreting them, if they become the subject of visual messages, helps the individual to re-construct his/her understanding of himself/herself, marking the contexts that are missing. Every subsequent attempt to frame a photographic image is connected with reflection on what to show, how and why. It is an opportunity to talk, photographing as well as sharing its effects gives young people pleasure. Another advantage of techniques referring to photo-imaging in research and social rehabilitation practice is the initiation of the process of visual literacy in institutional education and social rehabilitation, combining the nature of the scientific challenge with the potential of the social praxis.

This potential can and should certainly be used in the education of social rehabilitation students. I will devote the last part of the article to this issue, referring to the relevant exemplification.

Training of young staff as a holistic project – concluding remarks

The idea of using the achievements of visual studies has already gained a group of supporters among the scientific authorities of the world of social rehabilitation in Poland, with Marek Konopczyński as its leading representative. The new qualities introduced into the concept of creative social rehabilitation allow for highlighting of the significant issue of raising the awareness of minors, which is important from the perspective of awakening their motivation to work on identity change. The use of photo-imaging is also possible in the area of social re-adaptation, diagnosis in social rehabilitation, methodology of socially rehabilitating education, institutional social rehabilitation, social rehabilitation in an open environment or in creating prevention and social rehabilitation programs.

The need to modify the ways in which minors are motivated to take action to change their existing behavior clearly indicates the need to establish, in the process of social rehabilitation, goals, tasks, methods and measures aimed at evoking and strengthening the motivation of minors to work constructively on themselves. The presence and cooperation of students in these tasks seems to be significant.

It is difficult to estimate today whether the level of motivation to change, declared during the workshops described in the article, will be maintained in the students after leaving the educational institution and to what extent the return to an open environment will allow the stability of the student's motivation to change their behavior developed and strengthened in the institution. But certainly visual techniques have involved teenagers in reflective activities. The same can be said about students, which clearly reinforces the need to search for practical solutions resulting from these activities and to implement them into the teaching process of pedagogical students.

Educating young staff by engaging them in such projects corresponds to the current profile of intergenerational (multimedia) activity of students of social rehabilitation pedagogy. It extends the skills of both theoretical analysis and cognitively interesting empirical verification. It strengthens their diagnostic competence.

The implementation of visual research projects is also conducive to expanding knowledge in the field of social research methodology (Nowotniak 2012). The usefulness of visual ethnography in teaching methodology also highlights the ethical aspect of contact and research with young people and children threatened by risky behavior³. Ethnographic field research is an opportunity to professionalize the professional competence of a researcher-diagnostician, potential social risks associated with e.g. experiencing poverty. Poverty is often the context in which children and teenagers are deprived of their needs. Visual ethnography using participatory photography gives a chance to focus on the individual dimension of the problem, in a way that escapes the rigor of words, e.g. eliminating the feeling of shame. The participatory photography, supported by the author's unforced commentary, situates the problem of poverty in the sphere of valorization and evaluation, at the same time exempting the child from the obligation to talk about his or her position in the interview conducted by the researcher. Photographs of de-

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³ These are the conclusions from the implementation of a research project carried out together with students (first year of school counseling and social rehabilitation – second-cycle studies) on the risk of bio-socio-cultural development of a young person experiencing poverty, carried out in 2011 (Nowotniak 2012). The initiative was taken mainly due to the fact that they were students of social rehabilitation, the subject was teenagers threatened by risky behavior. Three research groups worked on the premises of three tenement houses with a separate internal courtyard which is a place of meeting and playing for children and young people. The search for the research area was consulted with probation officers and social workers cooperating with the University of Szczecin. The key term "culture of poverty" was adopted from Elżbieta Tarkowska (2000, 2001).

stroyed staircases, courtyards indicated as favorite playgrounds by children taking photos, exempt them from the obligation of uncomfortable comments.

The use of photography by the student is a natural opportunity to educate in “ethical sensitivity” e.g. in the context of obtaining the “informed consent” of the informant⁴. The researcher must be aware of the visual culture and visual experiences of the people he/she works with. There are culturally diverse ways of understanding harm and the possibility of causing it by images. There is also a danger of “non-verbal consent” of the researcher to the behavior of children who put their own good and the good of others at risk. A student taking photographs of plastic bottles thrown under the wheels of cars driving down the street (one of the games described to him/her by the children earlier), must be aware that his/her lack of reaction and focus on photography can be interpreted as a consent or even an encouragement to continue “playing”. The problem of “instrumental trust”, trust based on a “common” definition of the situation, arises (Chomczyński 2014).

In visual ethnographic research there is a significant risk of the researcher’s identification with the examined community and its difficult life situation. He/she is in constant, direct contact with the people under the research and the camera significantly shortens the distance. The students’ discovery was noticing in the children a tendency to passive begging (for fun, to draw attention to themselves), which they talked about without hesitation, commenting on the pictures with their images, taken in front of shops. The ten-year-olds found it very exciting to bet on “who will get more money or sweets” (Nowotniak 2012, pp. 222–257).

The student, involved in a research project lasting several months, has a chance to learn patience, care for reliability in field notes, distinguishing between interpretation and recording observations and descriptions of photographs. Thanks to photographic techniques, the category of the street becomes particularly important when talking about poverty ghettos in cities.

Similar value is attached to the visual material obtained from the pupils of school and educational centers supplemented by their comments. The student, as a researcher, acquires specific competences in the systematic and constructive analysis of the acquired information. The research conducted in this area become cognitively important in the methodology of social rehabilitation work, but also in the prevention of risky behaviors. It is difficult to overestimate the situations involving the participants of the above mentioned activities to manifest creative activity and reflect on the behaviors and forms of social participation presented by the pupils.

Students involved in the project for at least half a year, improve and develop their own skills in the methodology of education and social rehabilitation. They

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⁴ Tomasz Ferenc asks important questions: do we have the right to photograph human poverty? Who are the images of poverty for? [Ferenc 2001, 2009]

practice skills useful in social rehabilitation related to interpersonal communication, expressing empathy, assertiveness, ability to motivate, at the same time practicing practical skills of taking photographs (taking pictures and developing them in the darkroom). Study visits to youth educational centers enable them to become familiar with the conditions and specifics of working in these institutions and the condition, needs and interests of their pupils, and the pupils gain the opportunity to visit the university periodically to learn to build a positive image of themselves together with students through dialog and all stages of the photographic process.

Strengthening the theory and practice of social rehabilitation, not only with a structural approach to the category of "identity", but with the innovative use of various research tools, creating good models of empirical verification of key theoretical categories, seems unavoidable today. The development of a science and research workshop is an important challenge for this undoubtedly one of the youngest sub-disciplines of pedagogy.

The emancipatory potential of the photo-imaging reveals important opportunities and threats of a person in his/her relations with the social and cultural environment. The challenge of social rehabilitation pedagogy today is not to strengthen the existing system of isolation and therapy as the most effective instrument of social re-adaptation of socially maladjusted people, but to seek a more effective way of early detection of developmental risks and more creative and humanistic participation of all socialization entities in various forms of their own development and improvement.

The effects of the use of the image show further possibilities of crossing the difficult path to a new and cognitively important practice of pedagogical theory and practice, realized at the junction of what is important from the position of a person and culture, freedom and solidarity, requiring great commitment and motivational effort on each side.

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