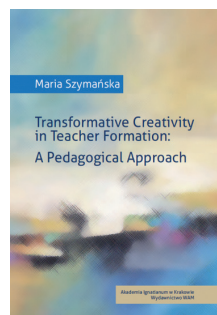


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# On the Way to Changing Teacher Education

W kierunku zmiany  
kształcenia nauczycieli

Maria Szymańska, *Transformative Creativity in Teacher Formation: A Pedagogical Approach*,  
Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, Wydawnictwo WAM,  
Krakow 2017, pp. 314



The education of teachers in the posthuman era requires innovative techniques, those which help one to find the truth about oneself and lead to change in students/teachers – to transformation. The foundation is education, in which an important role falls on the consideration of personalistic elements, the affirmation of truth as the key principle of social life is the basic condition for the maintenance of peace, culture and prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, many students study but do not experience the purpose of learning while living in the high-tech world, a world

<sup>1</sup> B. Śliwerski, *Pedagogika ogólna. Podstawowe prawidłowości*, Oficyna Wydawnicza “Impuls”, Kraków 2012, p. 384.

without reflection. Nevertheless, there are more and more scientists who are trying to tackle this problem, such as K. Robinson and L. Aronica for instance, in their remarkable publications: *Creative Schools. The Grassroots Revolution that's Transforming Education*; *Finding your Element: How to Discover your Talents and Passions and Transform your Life*; or *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*. D. Pires, V. Bolzan, S. Maria de Aguiar Isaia, A. Moreira da Rocha Maciel in the article *Teacher's Formation: the Construction of Teaching and Pedagogical Activity in Higher Education* state: "we consider that the focus of teacher formation should not be restricted to thinking and discussing teaching organization and its ramifications, but most of all, it is about mobilizing the subjects to continue learning in different work contexts. That includes reflecting in and about the pedagogical practice, understanding the problems in teaching, analyzing the curriculums, recognizing the influence of didactic materials in pedagogical choices, socializing the constructions and exchange of experiences, so as to advance towards new learnings in a constant exercise of collaborative, reflexive, and solidary practice."<sup>2</sup> Such a thesis has inspired me to deal with my own reflections upon transformative creativity in teacher formation in the context of pedagogical approach, especially in secondary school and academic teaching and academic experience.

The reviewed book consists of an *Introduction*, and five chapters: Anthropological-axiological-pedagogical fundamentals of a teacher's formation; Cognitive-humanistic approach in a teacher's formation in the selected aspects of teacher's individual and social differences; Reflective approach and transformative learning in a teacher's formation; Creativity and its transformative dimension in a teacher's formation.

Analyzing the matters discussed above, including the definition of transformation, the author of this issue makes an attempt to define creativity as transformative, something which seems to be valid for the teacher's formation with an orientation towards students' upbringing, teaching, learning and their formation. Hence, transformative creativity is the creativity that exposes significant, dynamic,

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<sup>2</sup> D. Pires, V. Bolzan, S. Maria de Aguiar Isaia, A. Moreira da Rocha Maciel, "Teacher's Formation: the Construction of Teaching and Pedagogical Activity in Higher Education," *Revista Diálogo Educacional* 2013, vol. 13, no. 38, pp. 53, doi: 10.7213/dialogo.educ.7625.

active ability and socio-moral-cultural and spiritual-transcendental quality of a person who features with reflective creative openness to constant positive change, creative-critical thinking determining individual (personal) and social (communal) development. It also characterized by: originality and novelty of work performed by creator or a group of creators; usefulness and appropriateness; constructive adaptation to varied circumstances and tasks constrains. Finally, it reveals the person's valuable (positive) transformation of beliefs, and approaches to Self, others, world and God, leading to environment transformation.<sup>3</sup>

All of the chapters are written in clear, scientific language and lead the reader to deep reflection about the role of creative transformation in the education of pedagogues. Furthermore, in the final fifth chapter, we find finished, selected strategies, methods and techniques for fostering transformative creativity in teacher formation. The basic strategies encompass the following: strategy of awareness, strategy of perception of nature, strategy of directing emotions, strategy of "closing", strategy of clearly defined goal, strategy of ideal result, strategy of germ, strategy of overabundance, strategy of overabundance, that are completed with M. Szymańska's proposals seen both from pedagogical and didactic points of view: the strategy of reflective insight, integral cognitive perception, dialectic curiosity, and a transactional approach.

The methods are: action research,<sup>4</sup> portfolio, and the insight drama method. All of them are described in an accessible way and should encourage their use in daily academic work. Finally, the author provides specific techniques for fostering creative transformation such as: reflective journal, metaphorical-reflective story building, reflective storyboarding, reflective poem constructions, reflective-digressive essay, lotus blossom, morphological analysis, mapping process, the excursion technique and computer-based creativity techniques. The

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<sup>3</sup> M. Szymańska, *Transformative Creativity in Teacher Formation: A Pedagogical Approach*, Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, Wydawnictwo WAM, Krakow 2017, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting that the author is a specialist in the methodology of action research, see: M. Szymańska, "Badania w działaniu," in: M. Ciechowska, M. Szymańska, *Wybrane metody jakościowe w badaniach pedagogicznych*, Akademia Ignatianum w Krakowie, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 2017.

latter helps to build the artificial intelligence model by means of the visualization of graphical models.

I believe that the best summary of this review would be the following citations from the work's reviewers: "We undoubtedly have in front of us an original and mature work, whose maturity leads us to believe that it will be well received and appreciated by those who take pleasure in and feel the need to reflect upon their own formation as teachers and formation in general" (Prof. Henri Vieille-Grojean, The University of Strasbourg). "It is an extraordinary book as it broadens views on teacher creativity with a transformative dimension (...). The approach to formation presented in this book is a significant one, both interesting and inspiring. It appears that the quality of teacher formation is to be reinforced through transformative creativity. Having considered all the qualities of the reviewed book, it is necessary to appreciate the efforts of the author in this regard. This book should be regarded highly in terms of the contents, methodology and the competence and critical interpretation of the factual material gathered" (Prof. Janusz Mastalski, The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków).

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