Socialization Project of Personality in the Modern Risk’s Society

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Abstracts. The article is analyzed the problem of the socialization of a personality in polydisciplinary character in the field of social sciences and the modern risk’s society, the resources of a personality, the formation a personality worldview, personality behavior strategies.

Keywords: personality socialization, anxiety, fear, routine, risk’s society, Social field’s concept, Symbolic capital, theory of the structuration, social education, social work.

Introduction

The problem of the personality socialization has polydisciplinary character in the field of social sciences. These are such as sciences – psychology, sociology – and arts – social education, social work, philosophy, cultural studies which are engaged in the study of this problem.

All of them have quite a lot of diverse approaches to solving the problem personality socialization, which may not always give an effective result as a theory which explain this phenomenon, as well as the method of correction or prediction.

In the modern field of scientific knowledge productive from the theoretical and praxeological point of view is the understanding the importance of the attracting of relevant theories of these disciplines to create a common understanding of the socialization process, it content and outcomes.

I would like to submit a small an experience in which I tried to demonstrate the potential of this approach, the result of which, as I see it, is the project of socialization of personality that is formed in the conditions of modern society.
Processes occurring in the functioning and reproduction of society, are making adjustments to the process of socialization of individuals who are members of this society. Among modern sociological concepts of socialization most prominent is the theory of structuration by Anthony Giddens (2003) and the Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of social fields (Физическое и социальное пространство: проникновение и присвоение, 1993).

Entoni Giddens considers a modern man as an intellectual and educated person who attains perceptions about activities based on the personal experience in the process of socialization. The activities of modern man are endowed with a certain routine that creates the conditions for the deployment of the personality’s psychological mechanisms that minimize anxiety and fear and it helps maintain a sense of ontological security. Personality structure is represented as a union of the three levels – the level of basic security system (unconscious), and the levels of practical and discursive consciousness (Гидденс, 2003).

Modeling of positive socialization process

Understanding the process of personality’s socialization in the modern world, according to Giddens, is based on the tradition of ego-psychology and humanistic psychology. The first one considers the experience of person’s basic security as the foundation for its socialization process that helps guiding the process to a balanced deployment (Erikson, 1963). The humanist tradition also focuses on the necessity for good practices of meeting the protection needs as one of the fundamental needs of an individual, the absence of which makes effective socialization impossible (Maslow, 1987). A. Giddens understands the need for security as the basis for determining the social behavior of an individual within everyday life.

The other two levels in the structure of personality in the frame of Giddens’ concept are related to reflexivity as individual’s competence in his/her everyday activities. This suggests the need for continuous monitoring of not only their behavior but also the behavior of others. Such reflexivity helps reducing anxiety and expanding the scopes to build the most effective strategies for action. Giddens understands the need for security as a source for the formation of the routine in everyday life, that is, the recurring patterns of behavior and activity lead to a stable social life (Отрешко, 2009, p. 139).

Reflexivity of practical and discursive consciousness is essentially limited in favor of routine and repetition of algorithms and behavioral reactions, their patterns and the like. This situation, on the one hand, creates the conditions for reducing stress of the individual, on the other – reduces the potential for creativity (Отрешко, 2009, p. 137–138).

Routine of everyday life, indeed, provides stability, for example, in traditional society, but can not ensure the stability of the modern one because of high communications speed in it. Moreover, it is dangerous from the point of view of the organization of everyday life of a modern man. Thus Giddens after Ulrich Beck defines modern society as “Risk society”
where a dominant place becomes occupied by the uncertainty of the basic forms of life, breach of a person’s trust both to himself / herself and to the social system as a whole, as well as globalization’s risk takes part in the destruction of traditions. For example, today there is no job security for all life, which, in turn, makes it impossible to predict either the career or salary, an active process of man’s technological penetration into environment has the potential of fundamental social consequences, so people are constantly experiencing insecurity and anxiety in front of changing everyday life (Giddens, 1991).

The reasons for this phenomenon is the contradiction of modernization, which overcomes some uncertainties and creates others. Thus, ambivalence construct of all modern progressive changes is present in determining the risk society. Previous, industrial society functioning form created stable, traditional institutions of socialization, which are destroyed in a risk society, which, in turn, requires individual responsibility for individual risks. Only personal efforts to overcome such risks and refusal of help from the state or the community may serve as a person’s support here (Зубок, 2003, p. 95–98).

At the societal level, stability is the key to minimizing the risks (achieving it in the present conditions is almost impossible) and the transformational reforms have generated a social anomie – the state of society in which certain areas of social life, relationships, human behavior do not correspond to the current standards of regulation on the part of society for various reasons.

From the socio-cultural imbalance perspective, the problem is described in analysis of the social crisis and the causes of anomie in the theses of Robert Merton, one of the “fathers” of the theory of anomie, who focuses on two main components of the social system - the culture (which is the source of the prevailing concepts of success, thereby motivating people to a particular behavior to achieve this success, the corresponding position of status) and social structure, which presents first of all those institutionally fixed norms of human relations considered acceptable in this society. Imbalance of goals and norms, lack of access to resources associated with success has lead society to a situation of anomie, when means which are by far not approved by society can be used to achieve socially approved goals. The American researcher has developed a typology of people’s reactions to the socio-cultural imbalance, built on a ratio of acceptance / rejection of socially approved goals of an individual and therefore the adoption / rejection of social norms. In the typology of reactions to such an imbalance (including conformism, innovation, ritualism, retiritism, protest) only conformism as a reaction to the adoption of socially approved goals and socially approved (legal) means of achieving them is a common behavioral response to Standard norms. All the rest are the forms of deviant behavior that is individual manifestations of social anomie (Мертон, 1992, p. 104).

It should be noted that Giddens’ determination of the risk society pertains to more stable and advanced western communities. Proof of this is the conclusion is arrived at by the American psychologist Roman Trach (Трач, 2001, p. 19). He insists that the rational-technical thinking and its comprehensive technological application in modern
civilization has led to a significant increase in welfare in Western countries, but yet have not helped to improve life satisfaction, have not generated more happy people. Although the citizens of these countries as a whole are satisfied with their financial situation, fewer of them feel happy.

What is the success in life today? Which of the goals does the personality want to find in the process of socialization? The dominating model of success in a risk society has the focus on one’s own subjectivity and competitive position in the struggle for scarce resources associated with success. This are money, power, and career positions. Volumes, dynamism and aggressiveness of consumption that are active in this model are composite message about the success in life.

The transformation of cultural norms and the formation of life styles, which are based on these factors, are becoming cause alienation that there is the process of transformation into a force that becomes dominant over the personalities, which violates and destroys their biological, psychological, social, and moral integrity. Alienation is considered by most researchers, including Pierre Naville, Alain Touraine, Robert Blauner, Francis Fukuyama (for ex. Blauner, 1964; Фукуяма), as a paradoxical process of transformation of the achievements of human activity into a force independent and hostile towards the man himself that repels and removes individuals or entire groups from phenomena and processes functioning in the society.

Thus alienation of the individual in the context of Giddens’ personality concept is clearly defined by routine of his / her daily activities.

Such alienation can be exemplified by information that appeared in a Russian Internet site about Swedish capital Stockholm, where 90 % of the dead are cremated, and 45 % of families refuse to take these urns. The vast majority of funerals there are «without ceremony.» Crematorium’s workers do not know exactly whose remains are burned, as urns are marked by an identification number only. For economic reasons, the energy, which is derived from the burning of the dead can be optionally included into heating of family’s own home or into heating system of the city (http://aftershock.su/).

One could say that this information was made available in the Internet with an ideological purpose of bringing discredit to European values for the post-Soviet people, the more that the Nordic countries are leaders in social state’s reforms. But a criminal TV series «The Bridge» (BRON. BROEN), made together by Swedish and Danish filmmakers, has demonstrated the depth of alienation lying between the people living in a society with functioning modern technologies of social assistance for those members of society who are in difficult life conditions. The series shows the depth of alienation which is present in a family. Indeed, There is the routine of daily lifetime which eliminates the possibility of the individual’s reflective feeling about his / her life.

The question arises – is there socialization process so joyless today, in this society of risk, uncertainty and routine? The answer to this question can be given by a different
concept of socialization process. This concept was developed by a French scientist Pierre Bourdieu. He describes the resources or funds of a personality in socialization process.

Social field’s concept (Физическое и социальное пространства: проникновение и присвоение, 1993) examines a social space where personality’s socialization process takes place. All social space or personality’s social field is divided into economic, political, cultural, religious, and several other fields. According to Bourdieu, peculiar characteristics, patterns of functioning and development, and fight for status and power between people acts in each field. Thus, the field is understood by Bourdieu as a place of correlation of strength and struggle, directed at relationship transformation, so each field becomes a place of incessant changes (Физическое и социальное пространства: проникновение и присвоение, 1993, p. 33–35).

For Bourdieu, the idea of confrontation between people remains relevant, and in his opinion, such a struggle leads to a set of fields of power, which have their own direction of the force. The researcher concludes that, unlike physical space in which an object can exist regardless of other objects, in a social field the personality relates and identifies himself / herself with a particular position (i.e., the actual position) which acquires a certain value only in comparison with the other positions of the social field. Thus, the structure of social field will always be hierarchic (Физическое и социальное пространства: проникновение и присвоение, 1993, p. 47). These fields intersect and form a stable interaction in the macro-network, or a combination of objectified relations of the forces, which are imposed on all individuals who fall into force fields. Fields can not be correlated with individual personalities or their direct interactions. Thus, the problem of freedom of action for an individual, according to Bourdieu, is not in avoidance of social pressure, but rather in a way of choosing by personality the optimal strategy of behavior in order to achieve goals within the framework of social fields, knowing himself / herself objectively existing restrictions, and taking a conscious position.

There are more general, global field of economic and political power and the private fields (which also contain sub-fields) – religion, education, science, art, etc. The logic of the functioning of such a hierarchized space becomes clear in the course of understanding of a person’s motivations which encourage him/her to certain actions. For the process of socialization in Bourdieu’s theory has become an important phenomenon that occurs as a result of activity of social space – symbolic violence – which elite’s power has imposed as a system of values, a hierarchy of values, which, on the one hand, mandatory for all, on the other hand unconsciously perceived by people and can be used for managed the most of them. The French researcher introduces the term “ignorance” to determine the distorted, incomplete, mystified knowledge, using which the so-called symbolic power exists with the complicity of the people managed by it, people who acknowledge its legitimacy. But in these conditions one can receive a reward – the capital which considered by Bourdieu in innovative interpretation. In social field theory he classifies four main types of capital which an individual tends to accumulate and to possess in the process of socialization:
– Economic capital, traditionally understood since the time of Karl Marx;
– Social capital (the position in the social hierarchy, social status, preferred social roles, acquaintances and relationships);
– Cultural capital (represents legitimate knowledge, ideas, skills, competencies, level and structure of education (educational or academic capital), cultural code that allows you perceive “adequately” works of arts of the “high culture”, the degree of mastering of a “prestigious” (cultural) form of the language and its variants (linguistic capital);
– Symbolic capital (prestige, recognition, renown, name, even “canonization”, everything a person has in the social space, all that can be useful).

The concept of “symbolic capital” defines the autonomy of the field of symbolic production. Autonomy of the field of symbolic production does not mean complete independence both from an economic and from other social fields, and indicates only the presence of a specific law (or rules) in such a field. But under certain circumstances, a significant symbolic capital can be converted into economic or political capital.

On the other hand, the symbolic capital is a person's resource which symbolizes the position of the person in the entire social field and the degree of acceptance by the group, so access to the symbolic capital is the most limited. Symbolic capital is a form of capital, which can easily be converted into another. That is why individuals fight for this kind of capital in different fields, which has represent the influence of a personality on the power balance in the group. In social communities' life, strategies are aimed at increasing the symbolic capital are not less important than the strategies of physical survival, even in circumstances where they are not profitable from an economic viewpoint (Бурдье, 2001, p. 156). For example, recall the tradition “potlatch” of Native Americans, when not only friends but also enemies of a family were invited to a celebration of an important event in family’s life (marriage, birth of a child, etc. ). During the festival, the owners deliberately gave everything what they had in their household. This symbolized the neglect by the family of the material values and a way of influence in the community. The message of the ritual is: “We are so strong that we can give away all our possessions. We’ll find a way to gain new ones”. According to Marcel Mauss (1996), sometimes this ritual led to the death of a whole tribe, which remained without things required to ensure, for example, survival in the winter.

One of the key rates in the symbolic fight is determination of the scope of any of the fields (e.g. economic, cultural and political fields). Therefore, the mechanism of socialization in Bourdieu’s concept is presented as a mechanism of perception, or the process of environment cognition – figure’s allocation from the background. Due to this mechanism, personality perceives and constructs the worldview (a system of representations of reality accepted in the culture of a particular socio-historical space) in the process of socialization. What should be interpreted as background and what – as a major figure against this background, remains unclear for an individual until he / she receives a message through education and training what is the real figure, and what is its background.
These worldview are based on both on the ideas of common sense and scientific ideas that have become part of the established ideas about the world. The width of semantic scopes in an individual’s picture of the world is predetermined basic by philosophical metaphors and assumptions that have become truth in certain cultures. They lay the foundations of traditions of society, the dominant world outlook norm, delimit the meaning and meaninglessness, reason and madness, both in everyday life and in specific areas of cognition such as science, religion, and philosophy. Social groups (called intellectual elites), whose main task is to interpret the world, including the social one, are sent the message about facts for all the groups which function in this socio-cultural space.

These facts have announced as reality by the intellectual elite in certain religious, philosophical, and scientific worldviews, acquire an ontological value for a while. However, a question that always remains: which of the proclaimed facts actually exist? And this question is inevitably linked with the others: who and how determines what exists in the world, and what does not? The last question necessarily generates the fight between groups of intellectuals for the right to produce true knowledge of the world, therefore, be a group that defines the content of the resources which becoming the sources of social, cultural, and symbolic capital of personality (Отрешко, 2009, p. 183).

The question regarding the content of the socialization process is as follows: can and should the person trust the messages from the intellectual elites or not?

In a world where information is spread with increasing speed (in the informational society, by Castells and Toffler defining), there is a risk for the intellectual elite, linked to the fact that an individual does not recognize or does not accept many of the messages of these elites. The individual’s picture of the world will have the distortion caused by errors in his / her social perception. This means that the message of the elite about what is figure and what is background will not be heard. And, therefore, distortions in an individual’s experience of socialization will occur.

**Conclusion**

The solution of this situation is the following. In the risk society, in order to ensure effective socialization process based on the process of individuals’ mastering the strategies of the full use of their capitals, the leading role should be played by a group acting as a guardian of the value system of the society. This group is present in all societies - in traditional and contemporary informational too. Its role is to ensure the integrity and stability of the broadcast system of social values of the society, preservation of cultural codes.

This group is endowed with high potential for the formation of the cultural, social and symbolic capital. Representatives of this group are the first to encounter with the deformations of socialization of an individual or persons which have got into difficult
life circumstances. Representatives of this group are experienced in technologies of resocialization and social adaptation of an individual. This group includes social institution of Social Education and Social Work.

Unfortunately in most social communities representatives of these social institution modestly declare their claim to be the guardians of the value system of society, that is the role of the intellectual elite, which carries a message about picture of the world with minimized distortions. Moreover, representatives of this social institution sometimes do fall within the scope of routine, which limits their creativity and reduces the people’s credibility.

In such a situation I see the solution in enhancing the prestige of the social institution of Social Education and Social Work. This is possible if the content of the messages of these social institutions in the society will be able to compete by content and technology with messages of other intellectual elites, among which political, economic, and religious are the most expansive it seem to me.

How can this be achieved? I believe that this opportunity will appear, if the institutions of Social Education and Social Work will base their theoretical studies on knowledge of other social sciences – by social theory, without which it is impossible to understand the specific function of the society, by psychology – the science which allowing us to understand the content of an individual’s nature also theory and practice of social work and social education too.

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Asmenybės socializacija ir rizikų valdymas modernioje visuomenėje

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Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojamos asmenybės socializacijos ir rizikų valdymo problemas šiuolaikinėje visuomenėje, asmenybės valdymo ir ugdymo resursų patirtis, daugiafunkcės sąveikos socialinių mokslų srityje, asmenybės elgesio formavimo strategijos.

Esminiai žodžiai: asmenybės socializacija, nerimas, baimė, rutina, rizikos valdymas, simbolinis kapitalas, socialinė edukacija, socialinis darbas.

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