

Introduction

We put at your disposal the book entitled *The Educational and Social World of a Child. Discourses of Communication, Subjectivity and Cyborgization* that comprises nearly 50 texts written by Polish, American and Israeli researchers into the child's world in order to show the complexity of this world and underline the contemporary categories of its oscillation: discourses of communication, subjectivity and cyborgization.

The texts are ordered into 3 parts, each of which devoted to a different contemporary axis of oscillation of the child's world. To bring order to the debate on the child of today, we have searched for categories that on the one hand would break with the schematic character and stereotypes in describing the child's reality, and on the other hand would present the actual, undetached from everyday life, space of life of the contemporary child. We also wanted them to be able to cover new phenomena, new ways of assigning meanings and new strategies for the construction and reconstruction of the life of a child that we observe in the world of today.

Without doubt, one of such categories nowadays is the broadly understood technology or engineering. The report prepared in 2012 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College Technology unanimously shows that contemporary children (that live in most of the developed countries of the world) "are growing up at ease with digital devices that are rapidly becoming the tools of the culture at home, at school, at work, and in the community".¹ However, children are not only technologically socialized; very

¹ National Association for the Education of Young Children & The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College Technology, *Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*, 2012, http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PS_technology_WEB2.pdf [access: 28.08.2014], p. 2.

early, they become users, and even creators of technology. In Poland, every tenth 3-year-old child uses new technologies, including computers. Among 4-year-olds this number increases to 37%, and among 5-year-olds it exceeds 50%. As far as older children are concerned, it is estimated that over 90% of them use computers and other new technologies.² At this point, it is worth underlining that these new technologies are not only a computer, a tablet or a smartphone. The latest technological solutions are more and more intensively and commonly implemented in everyday objects. We can quote BECTA and enumerate: electronic music instruments, Dictaphones, recorders, programmed toys, radio-controlled toys, as well as many other elements that can be found in the child's surroundings, e.g. remote controls, electronic office equipment, projectors etc.³ This list can be further supplemented with computer games, virtual worlds and digital cameras, photo cameras and interactive boards.⁴ Every day, the list is modified and – most importantly – radically increases. Yet, the technology that permeates the child's everyday life is just a sort of a prelude to the development of technoculture. The contemporary technological progress is directed at both permeating the reality and – more and more frequently – at permeating the man-child themselves, using technologies such as genetic engineering, electronic exoskeletons, glasses that augment reality, implants, stimulators and nanorobots that are inserted in the body.⁵ Thus, more and more often we face both the technologizing of culture and the cyborgization of people, including (or maybe especially) of children.

The technologized world of cyborg children is also a world that is shredded, blurred, difficult to define, of a complicated interpretative structure, and above all built with unclear classes of notions, which we attempted at showing in the work published in 2014 entitled *Children in the Postmodern World. Culture – Media – Social Inequality*.⁶ It is a world that is not fully defined, incomplete, having no intention of existing in a simple and quiet way. In such a world, it is more and more common to encounter problems with interpersonal functioning,

² D. Batorski, *Poles and communication technology – access conditions and modes of use*, [in:] *Social Diagnosis 2013: Objective and Subjective Quality of Life in Poland*, "Quarterly of University of Finance and Management in Warsaw", 2013, vol. 7, p. 335–359.

³ BECTA, *Foundation Stage Education and ICT* (information sheet), British Educational Communications and Technology Agency, 2001, <http://www.becta.org.uk/technology/infosheets/html/foundationstage.html> [access: 28.08.2014].

⁴ R. Bolstad, *The role and potential of ICT in early childhood education: A review of New Zealand and international literature*, Wellington 2004.

⁵ M. Klichowski, *Narodziny cyborgizacji. Nowa eugenika, transhumanizm i zmierzch edukacji*, Poznań 2014.

⁶ *Children in the Postmodern World. Culture – Media – Social Inequality*, ed. H. Krauze-Sikorska, M. Klichowski, A. Basińska, Poznań 2014.

communication among the lost citizens of the postmodern world (along the lines of child-adult, child-child, child-elderly, and also child-avatar or child-cyborg), as well as with the feeling of subjectivity in processes that without doubt objectify human existence. Next to the cyborgization discourse, we also assumed the discourses of communication and subjectivity to be the axes of oscillation of the contemporary world of a child.

We hope that with these categories we managed to enclose the most important dimensions of the contemporary world of a child. However, we would like to add that it was not our aim to collect a coherent set of “strictly directed” texts, but to build a volume of a structure and section that reflects the specific characteristics of the social and education world of children; a volume with distinct oscillation axes, yet in some sense blurred and defining the directions of considerations with the logics of dispersal rather than with the logics of systemization. In short, we wanted this book to be a collection of many diversified stories (or maybe “tales”) of the contemporary child’s world rather than its one meta-story. We hope that this approach will make it possible for the reader to familiarize themselves more deeply and broadly with the reality of the child’s life of today, and build their individual interpretation directed at constructing their own story of the contemporary child’s world.

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