

WIESŁAWA LEŻAŃSKA
ORCID: 0000-0002-6098-6495
The University of Lodz

DOI: 10.17460/PHO_2018.3_4.03

THE IMAGE OF THE EARLY SCHOOL EDUCATION TEACHER IN THE PEDAGOGY OF STEFAN SZUMAN (1889–1972)

THE AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC INTERESTS OF STEFAN SZUMAN

Stefan Szuman was born on January 2nd, 1889, in Toruń into the family of Leon Szuman, a well-known surgeon and a community activist. *Documented sources state that distant ancestors of Stefan Szuman were the Gdańsk patricians (the first records date back to the 16th century), who in the 19th century adopted the Polish spelling of their name, emphasising in this way their national identity. The Szumans, in defence of their Polish identity, took part in all demonstrations of freedom, starting from the uprising in 1863 to World War II*¹.

The talents of the parents, medical of the father and musical of the mother, greatly influenced the way of life Stefan had decided to follow. At the age of 12, he played the second fiddle in the orchestra in Toruń and completed his medical studies in 1913 with the degree of doctor of medical sciences. Just like his father, he specialised in surgery, however, it did not become the passion of his life. As he wrote about himself: *he had a soul full of images*². He was interested in painting and literature. In the letter to Henryk, his brother, he wrote: *I love beautiful things and truths, and I am happy there where I can see them*³.

The cruel war experiences induced him to psychology. He graduated from psychology and defended the doctoral thesis, which was published under the title

¹ R. Stachowski, *Stefan Szuman – w setną rocznicę urodzin. Prekursor psychologii humanistycznej w Polsce [Stefan Szuman – on the 100th anniversary of the birth. The precursor of the humanistic psychology in Poland]*, „Przegląd Psychologiczny” 1989, No. 2, p. 256.

² W. Okoń, *Wizerunki sławnych pedagogów polskich [The images of famous Polish pedagogues]*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo „Żak”, 2000, p. 348.

³ Ibid.

Sztuka dziecka. Psychologia twórczości rysunkowej dziecka (The art of the child. Psychology of child's drawing creativity) (1927). This thesis is the synthesis of his two greatest passions: art and human development. Thanks to this dissertation, he initiated his rich scientific activity.

Pedagogues place Stefan Szuman among the creators of the axiological stream of cultural pedagogy. He placed basic values in the centre of his interests. *The values are the essence of the culture*, emphasised Szuman, while writing about ideals and ideas. His concept of cultural pedagogy was embedded in the philosophy of life, Christian personalism and Neo-Platonism. A human being understood by Szuman as a person striving for values and realising values through culture and in culture is basically considered as *homo creator, homo axiologicus*. Therefore, upbringing is a process which is aimed at making a human being a co-creator of values and one of its goals is objectification of human aspirations. Co-creation of values is a strong educational moment for a human being as active co-creation engages his/her entirely and what follows is the feeling of their own contribution.

Cultural pedagogy is also commonly called humanistic pedagogy. According to Bogdan Suchodolski, this stream derives from reconstructing the foundations of humanistic studies⁴, demonstrating the autonomy of the humanistic world phenomena in relation to the phenomena of natural world, and thus, the independence of humanistic cognition from natural cognition.

S. Szuman continued the research line of Heinrich Rickert (1863–1936), who characterised the creations of culture as a vital component of humanistic research. This line of researchers made it possible to realise that the subject of humanistic research is – in a broad perspective – the creations of culture as psychophysical creations that have their objective meaning, and what is more, a value resulting from the fact that they fulfil the goals of human actions. The above mentioned researchers also claimed that one can get to know a human being and understand him/her not only through psychological experiments but also on the basis of history and culture. The contact of human beings with culture takes place through experiencing and assimilating the values. As a result, a pupil is formed who experiences and understands the culture of personality. Thus, the process of upbringing is based on the fact that students by penetrating the goods of culture, experience and understand the timeless values found in them – truth, justice and beauty. It is a natural way of shaping the character and autonomic personality of the pupil.

The scientific activity of Stefan Szuman focuses mainly on the pedagogy of a small child. His name is mostly associated with pioneering research on speech and the child's art as well as on education through art. Szuman took up the important and basic problems, always looking for innovative solutions. Hundreds of his works mainly focus on the child's development and education. Many of them are unique works constituting the publications of a permanent value in the world

⁴ B. Suchodolski, *Przebudowa podstaw nauk humanistycznych [Reconstructing the fundamentals of the humanities]*, Warszawa 1928.

literature. He often “painted” in them an image of a human being – “the co-creator of culture”, whose “spiritual” development grows together with knowledge and experience, a human being who can develop his/her own personality and work on shaping his/her character.

Child’s art is a special area of Szuman’s interest. By analysing children’s drawings and colourings, he distinguished the phases and periods that a child goes through in the process of acquiring drawing skills. And after the period of scribbling, a child enters the period of ideoplastics and draws what he/she knows about the reality, without paying attention whether the object in the drawing is consistent with its real look or not. By obtaining more and more subject knowledge, the child takes account of more and more details and their drawings are more similar to the things they see. Szuman called this easily noticed naturalism – physioplastics.

Szuman’s doctoral thesis is almost a basic textbook for all tutors and parents. The same can be said about his habilitation thesis entitled *Badania nad rozwojem postrzegania i reprodukowania prostych kształtów przez dziecko (Research on the development of the perception and reproducing simple shapes by a child)*, published a year later. The dissertation, as one of the first works, explains the phenomenon of syncretic perception in children. This paper paved his way to full scientific independence. He was appointed associate professor in November 1928 and took charge of the Department of Educational Psychology at the Jagiellonian University.

*Faithful to the ideals, which he owes to his biological education, Szuman can in his scientific activity combine the realism of the representative of natural medical sciences with humanistic and artistic elements. Thanks to extraordinary diligence and perseverance, his talent and scientific passion, his new and valuable psychological publications are published each year*⁵.

In 1934, only seven years after achieving habilitation, he was nominated full professor and in 1939 he became a correspondent for Polish Academy of Learning.

However, the academic career was not the purpose of his life. As his daughter said, the most important was *the interest in the subject of research and studies as well as the enthusiasm for work so exactly that what characterises the real scholars*⁶. Until 1939 Szuman had published nearly 100 dissertations, articles, and monographs regarding the child’s art and aesthetic education, issues of physical education and sport, the analysis of individual processes and psychical functions (perception, imagination, thinking), and the process of shaping of human’s

⁵ M. Przetacznikowa, *Twórczość naukowa profesora dra Stefana Szumana [The scientific creation of Prof. Stefan Szuman, Ph.D.]*, in: *Rozwój i wychowanie; księga ku czci profesora Stefana Szumana w 35-lecie Katedry Psychologii Pedagogicznej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. W hołdzie uczniowie i współpracownicy [Development and upbringing; the book in honor of Prof. Stefan Szuman marking the 35th anniversary of the Department of Pedagogical Psychology of the Jagiellonian University. A tribute by the students and co-workers]*, part 2, ed. M. Żebrowska, Warszawa, NK, 1963, p. 22.

⁶ W. Okoń, *Wizerunki...*, p. 351.

personality. During this period, the following outstanding works were created: *Geneza przedmiotu (The origin of the subject)* (1932), *Psychologia młodzieńczego idealizmu (The psychology of youth idealism)* (1933), *Osobowość i charakter człowieka z punktu widzenia biologii (The personality and character of the human being from the point of view of biology)* (1934), *Organizm a życie psychiczne (A human body and mental life)* (1938, Stanisław Skowron as the co-author), *Rozwój myślenia u dzieci w wieku szkolnym (The development of thinking in school-aged children)* (1938), *Rozwój pytań dziecka (The development of child's questions)* (1939), *Talent pedagogiczny (A pedagogical talent)* (1939).

In the works from that period, Szuman combined the issue of psychology with its biological sources and looked for the basis of physiological development phenomena. In the interwar period, this position was not very popular; the political atmosphere was not conducive to the spread of psychology based on the principles of natural sciences. However, this bold research attitude presented by Szuman and the independence of his scientific ideas made the Jagiellonian University the centre of the progressive psychological thought. Thus, Szuman continued the line of experimental psychology development initiated by Władysław Heinrich.

Shortly after the war Szuman was engaged into rebuilding the Polish psychology. To satisfy strong educational needs, he concentrated his scientific work on preparing textbooks on child's psychology, which were very popular among students, teachers, kindergarten teachers and parents. *Psychologia wychowawcza wieku szkolnego (The educational psychology of the school age)* published in 1947 presented the results research conducted by Szuman and his co-workers.

In the post-war period, Szuman significantly expanded the area of his scientific research. They concerned the following issues: mental development of children in the family and kindergarten, development of speech and thinking process in children, psychological and educational problems, as well as didactics, psycho-didactics and aesthetic education. One of the most significant and original works in the field of mental development of a child entitled *Rola działania w rozwoju umysłowym małego dziecka (The role of action in the mental development of a small child)* was published in 1955. As the basis for his reflections, the scientist adopted the thesis of dialectical materialism that *the human being recognizes reality by influencing it*. In this way he demonstrated the relation between thinking and acting in the early stages of the ontogenetic development. The following dissertations are applicable in the same field: *Aktywność własna jako czynnik rozwoju dziecka w okresie lat 7–14 (Self-activity as a factor of child development between 7–14 years old)* (1956), *O naukowym poznawaniu cech psychicznego rozwoju dzieci i młodzieży (On the scientific cognition of the characteristics of mental development of children and youth)* (1956), *O czynnikach kształtujących psychikę dziecka w wieku przedszkolnym (On the factors that shape the psyche of a pre-school child)* (1960), *O dojrzałości szkolnej dzieci siedmioletnich (On the school maturity of seven-year-old children)* (1962).

The team managed by Szuman conducted as well research on the interdependence of speech and thinking in children, which were very valuable for the development of the kindergarten pedagogy. Szuman promoted the thesis that the language skills are not only used for social communication, but also play a vital role *in shaping the child's mind, as the language is an important tool, i.e. a proper basis for organizing conscious, concise, logical and clear thoughts in the process of mind's functioning and developing*⁷.

In the period 1949–1954, Szuman conducted research on the psychological foundations of teaching, the effect of which was a dissertation entitled *Aktywizowanie i kształtowanie uwagi dowolnej uczniów na lekcji w szkole (Activating and shaping the top-down attention of students during lessons at school)* published in 1961. This paper contains the description and results of precursory research on manifestations of attention and inattention during the lesson, and promotes the teacher's activities that activate the student's attention while learning.

However, as far as the theory and pedagogical practice are concerned, the greatest credit should be given to Szuman for aesthetic education. The original and valuable output from this area of his work was found in the work *O sztuce i wychowaniu estetycznym (On the art and aesthetic education)* (1962). In his opinion, *art makes it possible to see the world in a different way than the average and common one, it allows us to discover a new quality of already known things and phenomena, it awakens experiences, and favours forming the attitude of openness*⁸.

According to Szuman, education through art differs from ordinary didactic and educational activities, as it teaches how to perceive, experience and feel reality, as well as to understand the essence and purpose of human life through the *prism of art*. Thanks to this perception of reality, a child wants to seek, perceive and experience beauty. And beauty does not teach, but rejoices, saturates our consciousness, senses, imagination, and feelings. In his concept, education by art – as a method of aesthetic education – includes: 1) an aesthetic tutor (a person educating through the values of art), 2) an aesthetic pupil (a person educated by the values of art), and 3) a work of art in the process of education through the values of art. In the process of aesthetic education, the psychologist recommended two methods: the first is to introduce art receivers into the world of artistic culture, while the second is to develop this creative activity among pupils. He perceived artistic creativity as improving our own personality, and deepening the awareness of our existence.

⁷ S. Szuman, *Znaczenie opanowania mowy ojczystej dla umysłowego rozwoju dziecka [The importance of mastering the mother tongue for the child's mental development]*, in: *Studia nad rozwojem psychicznym dziecka. Dzieła wybrane, t. I [The studies on the child's psychological development. Selected works, Vol. I]*, collected and edited by M. Przetacznik, G. Makiełło-Jarża, Warszawa, WSiP, 1985, p. 182.

⁸ M. Kielar-Turska, *Nestor polskiej psychologii rozwojowej i wychowawczej – Stefan Szuman (1889–1972) [The nestor of the Polish developmental and educational psychology – Stefan Szuman (1889–1972)]*, „Wychowanie w Przedszkolu” 2000, No. 6, p. 345.

Throughout his scientific career, Szuman was looking for the answers to the following questions: Who is a human being? What is his/her nature? Personality? Character? What determines the pedagogical talent of teachers-educators?

A TEACHER IN THE EARLY-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE PAPERS BY STEFAN SZUMAN

A well-known position written by Szuman in the field of pedagogical psychology is the dissertation called *Talent pedagogiczny (A pedagogical talent)* (the first edition in 1939). The reflections upon talent might be regarded as the basis of his pedeutological concept. By claiming that the results of the activities and work conducted by a teacher-educator are determined by the “pedagogical talent”, Szuman explains that it cannot be reduced only to some inborn, particular predispositions, but also to personality traits as a mental structure. *There is nothing which can constitute pedagogical talent as a separate innate disposition, or in my opinion, innate instruction of educational love in the human being who comes into the world, but there are qualitatively different emotional dispositions, out of which, depending on their intensity and complexity, a teacher’s love to his/her pupils, a living, emotional tendency to undertake educational missions can emerge once again, and this is undoubtedly in the cooperation of other inborn traits and favourable conditions*⁹. All elements pedagogical talent is composed of are shaped during the personality maturation according to its nature – it is not a disposition that human beings are gifted with when they are born. *However, I do not argue*, Szuman said, *that there is no pedagogical talent. Yes, I admit that some people show a greater natural aptitude for the teaching profession than others. They are outstanding educators based not only on their education and development in this direction, but thanks to their inherent nature that facilitates it against the background of a special personality structure that perfectly harmonises with the functions and objectives of the teaching and educational profession*¹⁰.

Each teacher-educator is a different personality with a specific character, has its own attitude to the world and a specific lifestyle. Undoubtedly, not every type of personality is suitable for the teaching profession, but also not only one type makes it possible to achieve pedagogical success. Szuman compared a vocation for teaching to a passionate artist: [...] *because in the process of upbringing and education, a separate personality of the pedagogue affects the material which is formed under the influence of his/her style and acquires a certain individual expression, a certain style*¹¹. A teacher affects his/her student as an artist influences the material. The difference lies in the fact that a child, having his/her own style,

⁹ S. Szuman, *Talent pedagogiczny [A pedagogical talent]*, Katowice, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Pedagogicznego w Katowicach, 1947, p. 15.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 22.

is shaped under the influence of the educator, but is not transformed into his/her style. The teacher is not only a *reservoir* of knowledge, norms, ethical and educational provisions, but affects the student with his/her personality and style. Therefore, the pedagogical process is determined to a great extent by this.

The issue of personality becomes the subject of his wide considerations. Szuman calls personality *an in some way updated human nature, which according to the possibilities of its nature, develops, acts and experiences the world*¹². Thus, with regard to personality, one can talk about its preservation, attitude or conscious process of shaping. Personality is passively shaped by experience and the environment. When a human being has contact with reality, it is *created through a personal response to the conditions of real existence, to the social environment, to traditional views and ideals of humanity, to the issues related to the disturbing mystery of existence*¹³. By getting to know the surrounding world, the objects and phenomena, interpersonal relationships, experience is gained thanks to which we learn how to act and live. Under the influence of the environment, manners, habits and customs are formed. Thanks to them, the personality stabilises. *Passively acquired personality traits are shaped especially in childhood, when a child more or less passively absorbs what he/she experiences, when his/her teacher's will directs him/her, and their own will starts to awake when the child unknowingly gets attached to his/her surroundings and grows into it*¹⁴. Of course, the process of personality formation is influenced not only by what passively and unconsciously shapes it, but also by all taken and performed actions, and the human actions are driven by the character. Therefore, the formation of a tested and valuable character, which is a self-acquired and worked out value complements the personality development. Hence, by directing the personality development towards the moral good, an autonomous character is achieved that has shaped its own goals, ideals, views, norms, and behaves in accordance with them.

A teacher, by educating and teaching children, serves the whole society. That is why it is so important to develop a good and ethically valuable character. Each personality matures, getting to know its possibilities and limitations. Each teacher should be a mature personality who knows themselves well. Szuman, describing the personality aspects of the teacher, states that there is no ideal teacher who would have all the positive qualities, abilities and virtues that would make it possible to teach and educate well, because some of these features are mutually exclusive. Each human being has, e.a. a different temperament, which can decide on the specific type of behaviour of the educator towards his/her pupils. It all depends on how teachers use their dispositions and character for pedagogical purposes.

¹² S. Szuman, *Natura, osobowość i charakter człowieka [Human nature, personality and character]*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo WAM, 1995, p. 91.

¹³ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 95.

Szuman used to say often that there was no perfect educator with only a set of desirable qualities and merits, but there are features that every teacher should have. To his mind, the first place was taken by *pedagogical tact* i.e. psychological intuition suggesting how to deal with people, influence them, gain their favour, and to avoid unnecessary conflicts. Tact requires having decent knowledge about ourselves, strengths and weaknesses, abilities and measures. Each teacher should acquire this ability as it can decide on the effectiveness of their actions. Pedagogical tact as a factor of proper contact with a child consists in having empathy for children, requires restraint, patience and listening to their reasons. A tactful teacher has a similarly friendly and objective attitude towards all children, and hence, gains their trust and provided them with a sense of security. Ease of contact with children in any situation, characterised by kindness, facilitates the work and makes it more effective.

The *treasury of a real teacher* with a rich personality formed on his/her own includes as well *conscience that does not consist in innate sensitivity or ethical insensitivity, but on an objective, factual assessment of good and evil. Through conscience, personality demands its ideal*¹⁵. Szuman added to the treasure as well a whole wealth of aesthetic and mental life. Also in this respect, a perfect tutor does not exist, but he/she must have some spiritual wealth to distribute it to the students. If a teacher wants to teach a child some teacher's authority will be undermined¹⁶.

All pedagogical activity, as Szuman noted, is an autonomous work, similar to artistic creation. It is not about a perfect technique of teaching and educating, but the richness of the teacher's personality, an ethical, aesthetic and mental wealth.

The above pedeutological statement is of fundamental importance for the pedagogy of culture, and in a narrower sense: for education through art, because it affects the choice of the so-called "an aesthetic educator" as it is easier to make an "aesthetic educator" from an artist than an artist from an educator¹⁷. *The artist cannot be unaware that his/her artistic creation has a shaping, aesthetic and extra-aesthetic influence on society and must take account of that fact*¹⁸.

S. Szuman (in the spirit of Spranger's pedagogy of culture) stated that it is easier to make a professional teacher from a professional artist than the other way around, i.e. from a professional pedagogue – a professional artist. However, a good aesthetic educator will only be someone who knows and loves art, understands and experiences it in a direct and lively way.

Szuman consistently dealt with aesthetic education for over several decades. He laid the foundations for the realisation of universal aesthetic education, stating

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 196.

¹⁶ S. Szuman, *Talent...*, p. 32.

¹⁷ Idem, *Czy wychowawczyni powinna umieć rysować? Wywiad z prof. S. Szumanem. Rozmowę przeprowadziła Zofia Topińska* [Should the tutor be able to draw? An interview with Prof. S. Szuman conducted by Zofia Topińska], „Wychowanie w Przedszkolu” 1958, No. 5, p. 226.

¹⁸ Idem, *O kunszcie i istocie poezji lirycznej* [On the artistry and essence of lyrical poetry], Łódź–Toruń, Wydawnictwo Poligrafika, 1948, p. 63.

that in the social field, its links are the processes of dissemination, facilitation and access to art. *The aesthetic educator* would act as an intermediary in *giving people the treasures of art masterpieces*¹⁹. According to him, aesthetic educators are intermediaries that shape the sensitivity and aesthetic culture of society on the basis of already created and shared works of art. Szuman noticed the importance of art for all stages of human development, emphasising its role *in strengthening the affirmation of life*²⁰.

Generally, each teacher should be an aesthetic educator and should be suitably prepared and trained for this purpose. Szuman put forward three postulates in this matter:

1. *Aesthetic education should find its proper and sufficiently wide place in teachers' training institutions, pedagogical colleges and universities.*
2. *It is not enough to familiarise the candidates for teachers with the art of teaching drawing, singing, and literature – but it is necessary to educate future teachers through art i.e. through wide access and skilful simplification of masterpieces of art. They must not only acquire a minimum understanding of art, but it must be loved by them, so that they are able to penetrate the works of art, understand them and adequately, profoundly experience.*
3. *Aesthetic education of teachers is ultimately aimed at shaping their personal culture and sensitisation to art – without which it is not possible to shape a comprehensively developed personality*²¹.

Special skills are required from teachers of small children by Szuman. Less important is whether they can paint and draw, but it is very important whether they know the course of drawing and painting development in children and whether they can properly evaluate their creations. For tutors of small children it is necessary to know that a child's drawing at every stage of development is its own transformation and configuration of the image of reality with the help of strokes and colours in the area of building the drawing's elements. What a child at a given development stage draws and paints, how a child does it, is not a simple result of technical improvement, but is an expression of the process of maturing, his/her growing knowledge of the world, and interests or needs. Thanks to this knowledge and such qualifications, teachers will be able to properly guide the child's development²². The stage of early education in the child's entire school career occupies a special place. Drawing, painting and constructing are – contrary to appearances – very complex forms of child's activity, which in the act of

¹⁹ Idem, *O sztuce i wychowaniu estetycznym [On art and aesthetic education]*, Warszawa, WSiP, 1975, p. 28.

²⁰ W. Leżańska, *Przedszkole jako środowisko wychowania estetycznego [Kindergarten as the environment of aesthetic education]*, Warszawa, WSiP, 1990, p. 16.

²¹ Ibid., p. 29.

²² S. Szuman, *Czy wychowawczy...*, p. 226–228.

creation give a part of themselves; show how the children see, what they feel and how they think. Children's creativity is a dynamic activity that shapes personality. It develops creative abilities, teaches how to ask questions and, at the same time, answer them, teaches to think and make associations.

In the period of early education, a child gets to know the world in the most intensive way. A teacher provides children with two basic tools that help them to do it – reading and writing. The child does not only learn about the surrounding, but also about feelings, emotions and the ways how to express them, and is already introduced into the world of universal values, namely: truth, goodness and beauty. Then, who should be a teacher that can handle these tasks? What is the specificity of working with small children?

The answers provided by Szuman can be found in his most important textbooks: *Psychologia wychowawcza wieku dziecięcego* (*The educational psychology in childhood*) and *Psychologia wychowawcza wieku szkolnego* (*The educational psychology at school age*). Knowledge about children is the fundamental requirement for educational influence on a child. A teacher must know who his/her pupil is, and what his/her abilities and limitations are. Therefore, *every tutor must be a psychologist, and one can become a psychologist, by gaining ever greater and more thorough theoretical knowledge about the psyche of children and youth, and its development, by observing and examining his/her students carefully and skilfully, and by forming at every opportunity the perspicacity of his/her psychological intuition. A tutor-psychologist must learn two things which are closely related to each other, namely must learn to: a) observe and watch the child skilfully, his/her behaviour and actions, b) intuitively penetrate, i.e., feel in and empathise with the psyche of the observed child, so as to understand and even experience the motives of his/her actions from the position of horizons, interests, concepts and motives of the child*²³. Teachers who really want to get to know their students should observe them consciously using appropriate tools, because involuntary observations are lost in memory. Keeping *individual cards* can come in handy and provide assistance in that matter. Their goal is to *get to know better the separate spiritual structure of each pupil*²⁴. A good way of getting to know children is also to analyse their written, painted, drawn or technical creations.

Kindergarten and early-school children learn about the world through action. A teacher should not only not limit these actions, but on the contrary, should trigger and organize them, as *experiences gained on the basis of own activity play a decisive role in learning not only their own and other people's behaviour, but also in getting to know relations and dependencies between things found in the outside*

²³ Idem, *Psychologia wychowawcza wieku szkolnego* [*The educational psychology at school age*], Kraków, Wiedza – Zawód – Kultura, 1947, p. 36.

²⁴ Idem, *Podstawowe zagadnienia konstrukcji i wypełniania karty indywidualności* [*Basic issues of constructing and filling an individual card*], Warszawa, Published by Stowarzyszenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe Nauczycielstwa Szkół Powszechnych, 1932, p. 3.

world, interacting with each other according to the laws governing nature, regardless of human and animal activities²⁵. A child learns to think by acting, that is why a teacher must consciously manage the child's activities and set specific tasks to be conducted. *By acting, a child learns to proceed in a particular way in order to, under specified conditions, achieve a particular goal using specified methods. By learning to master the reality in the scope of these simple fun and practical activities that a child tries to do and does, a small child learns to think*²⁶. Everything that the child's mind collects and learns, becomes later the material of systematic learning. Thus, it is the duty of teachers to enable children the multi-sensory cognition, to teacher them to perceive and observe. Another important task of a teacher educating small children is to develop their memory, and to provoke mechanical and logical memory. A child does not have to remember everything, but must notice things that more and less important. The child's memory is vivid and specific. It is a very valuable feature, but it is easily lost *in the one-sided abstracted and conceptual education of the mind. The development of conceptual knowledge gradually kills imagination in a human being. Wise upbringing should counteract this phenomenon*²⁷. Therefore, a teacher should apply such techniques that stimulate the child's imagination and *vivid remembering* and should also refer to the sense of responsibility and independence. The easiest way is to shape the top-down attention of a student. In the dissertation entitled *O Uwadze (On attention)*, Szuman wrote: *The role of a teacher in shaping students' attention consists essentially in providing help in top-down, i.e. independent attention. Top-down attention is shaped primarily in the atmosphere of discipline and obedience, but over time it becomes independent*²⁸. But it is a mistake when a teacher only directs the attention of the class, and does not explain why one should be careful and attentive, does not create an atmosphere of concentration and a reliable work, and does not show the value of knowledge and intellectual culture. Therefore, according to Szuman, a teacher should firstly start shaping top-down attention from introducing discipline and obedience in the classroom, and only later attention becomes independent and students direct it consciously. By exercising attention of students from elementary education classes, a teacher creates the basis, thanks to which a student will master the ability to learn in an effective way, which is important at every subsequent stage of education.

Another, extremely important task of a primary education teacher is to develop the child's speech. Speech is a tool of thinking thanks to which, a human being can clearly and precisely express his/her thoughts using words and sentences. *The development and construction of thoughts takes place in humans mostly against*

²⁵ Idem, *Studia nad rozwojem psychicznym dziecka, Dzieła wybrane [The studies on the psychological development of a child, Selected papers]*, Vol. I, Warszawa, WSiP, 1985, p. 168.

²⁶ Idem, p. 59.

²⁷ S. Szuman, *Podstawy rozwoju i wychowania w ontogenezie, Dzieła wybrane [Basic of development and education in ontogenesis, Selected works]*, Vol. II, Warszawa, WSiP, 1985, p. 153.

²⁸ S. Szuman, *O uwadze [On attention]*, Warszawa, PZWS, 1961, p. 42.

*the background of the linguistic creation and only thanks to it, it is fully possible. Therefore, the education of the human mind requires, i.a. care about and solicitude for the development of speech (spoken and written) in children and youth – and speech as a tool for thoughts and creations – in which they, i.e. thoughts, get precise and bright, and develop and construct themselves in concepts and judgments which are expressed with words and sentences*²⁹. Hence, the task of a teacher is to teach his/her pupils how to express freely, easily, correctly and clearly what they know and have to say on various topics, as well as to teach *intelligent thinking*, thanks to which they will create their independent and mature minds.

While organising teaching at school, a teacher is obliged to refer to the matters that a child experienced and got to know in kindergarten and outside the school. Their actions are to create a systematic basis for expanding the growing knowledge, develop interests, guide insights, refine concepts, expand the scope of messages, and organise them.

Stefan Szuman was a continuator of the following pedagogues: Jan Władysław Dawid, Aniela Szycówna and Józefa Joteyko. His psychological research was “immersed” in pedagogical practice. His work translates into specific educational and didactic tasks. As professor of educational psychology at the Jagiellonian University, he cooperated extensively with elementary school teachers, including them in his research. At the Pedagogical Institute in Katowice he maintained close cooperation with teachers from Silesia. Under the direction of Szuman, many of them obtained academic titles and degrees. He regarded his cooperation with other teachers as an obligation.

It is worth emphasising that by sharing experiences and learning from each other, teachers get to know new strategies and teaching methods that they can apply in their work. A teacher, through constant extending and improving his/her working skills, increases the offer for students, satisfies their needs, and contributes to their development. The longer teachers work, the better they know children and their work becomes more and more effective. Professional experience cannot become a daily routine, but should be based on knowledge and skills.

SUMMARY

Stefan Szuman as a scholar and an artist surprises contemporary readers with a multitude of scientific interests and a wide range of research. Wincenty Okoń, when writing about the fields of pedagogical research in Poland, described Szuman as a human institution. *I was simply thinking about his scientific research, rare in our reality, which gave us more valuable and thematically extensive scientific work than many scientific institutions could have given*³⁰.

²⁹ S. Szuman, *Dzieła wybrane. Podstawy...*, p. 234.

³⁰ W. Okoń, *O pedagogicznym dorobku Profesora Szumana [About the pedagogical heritage of Prof. Szuman]*, in: *Rozwój i...*, p. 14.

We owe the development of developmental and educational psychology to him as he created the scientific basis of these disciplines, and to his students who consolidated the Polish school in this area. Thanks to Szuman we gained the Polish school of aesthetic education which studies the broad education of aesthetic culture. His scientific achievements are used by psychologists and teachers, while learning about: the child's development in various spheres, educational psychology, characterology, education through art and views on the concept of the teacher-educator. While reading the book *Talent pedagogiczny (Pedagogical talent)*, published almost eighty years ago, we have the impression that it was written for the needs of contemporary pedeutology. Who is and what makes a good teacher? According to Szuman, we deal with a rational understanding of pedagogical talent, which is learned and acquired. Every tutor can be good and develop pedagogical talent, as it involves improving themselves and developing personal abilities and traits. Among the multitude of the scholar's insights on the personality, character and moral attitude of the teacher, the notion of an *aesthetic educator* dominates. Szuman – just like his great predecessors – perceives a teacher only as a tutor. Believing in the mission of art which is a result of the existence of *aesthetic truth* as a way of experiencing the world, Szuman demands introducing an *aesthetic educator* at every stage of the child's development, but especially at the stage of elementary education.

His views are very close to the views of contemporary pedeutology. Szuman observed that the effects of the work conducted by teachers-educators depend mainly on their pedagogical activity, and pointed to the need of looking for the sources of educational effects not in the teachers-educators themselves, but in their work, actions, behaviours, and in the contact with pupils. These studies greatly undermined "the theory of attributes" as a condition for effective actions and became the basis for having a new look at the personality of a teacher-educator, and showed the need to conduct new research – on a teacher in action.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources:

Szuman S., *Czy wychowawczynie powinny umieć rysować? Wywiad z prof. S. Szumanem. Rozmowę przeprowadziła Zofia Topińska*, „Wychowanie w Przedszkolu” 1958, No. 5.

Szuman S., *Natura, osobowość i charakter człowieka*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo WAM, 1995.

Szuman S., *O kunszcie i istocie poezji lirycznej*, Łódź–Toruń, Wydawnictwo Poligrafika, 1948.

Szuman S., *O sztuce i wychowaniu estetycznym*, Warszawa, WSiP, 1975.

Szuman S., *O uwadze*, Warszawa, PZWS, 1961.

Szuman S., *Podstawowe zagadnienia konstrukcji i wypełniania karty indywidualności*, Warszawa, Nakładem Stowarzyszenia Chrześcijańsko-Narodowego Nauczycielstwa Szkół Powszechnych, 1932.

Szuman S., *Podstawy rozwoju i wychowania w ontogenezie, Dzieła wybrane*. Vol. II, Warszawa, WSiP, 1985.

Szuman S., *Psychologia wychowawcza wieku szkolnego*, Kraków, Wiedza – Zawód – Kultura, 1947.

Szuman S., *Studia nad rozwojem psychicznym dziecka, Dzieła wybrane* Vol. I, Warszawa, WSiP, 1985.

Szuman S., *Talent pedagogiczny*, Katowice, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Pedagogicznego w Katowicach, 1947.

Szuman S., *Znaczenie opanowania mowy ojczystej dla umysłowego rozwoju dziecka*, in: *Studia nad rozwojem psychicznym dziecka. Dzieła wybrane*, Vol. I, edited and collected by M. Przetacznik, G. Makiełło-Jarża, Warszawa, WSiP, 1985.

Studies:

Kielar-Turska M., *Nestor polskiej psychologii rozwojowej i wychowawczej – Stefan Szuman (1889–1972)*, „Wychowanie w Przedszkolu” 2000, No. 6.

Leżańska W., *Przedszkole jako środowisko wychowania estetycznego*, Warszawa, WSiP, 1990.

Okoń W., *O pedagogicznym dorobku Profesora Szumana*, in: *Rozwój i wychowanie; księga ku czci profesora Stefana Szumana w 35-lecie Katedry Psychologii Pedagogicznej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. W hołdzie uczniowie i współpracownicy*, ed. M. Żebrowska, Warszawa, NK, 1963.

Okoń W., *Wizerunki sławnych pedagogów polskich*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo „Żak”, 2000.

Przetacznikowa M., *Twórczość naukowa profesora dra Stefana Szumana*, in: *Rozwój i wychowanie; księga ku czci profesora Stefana Szumana w 35-lecie Katedry Psychologii Pedagogicznej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. W hołdzie uczniowie i współpracownicy*, ed. M. Żebrowska, Warszawa, NK, 1963.

Stachowski R., *Stefan Szuman – w setną rocznicę urodzin. Prekursor psychologii humanistycznej w Polsce*, „Przegląd Psychologiczny” 1989, No. 2.

Stefan Szuman (1889–1989). W stulecie urodzin, ed. M. Przetacznik-Gierowska, A. Wyszyńska, Kraków, Wydawnictwo UJ, 1990.

Suchodolski B., *Przebudowa podstaw nauk humanistycznych*, Warszawa 1928.

Wołoszyn S., *Nauki o wychowaniu w Polsce w XX wieku*, Kielce, Dom Wydawniczy „Strzelec”, 1998.

The image of the early school education teacher in the pedagogy of Stefan Szuman (1889–1972)**Summary**

The paper is a continuation of the series presenting views of the Polish researchers on the early school education teacher within the space of the 19th and 20th centuries. The paper consists of two parts. In the first, the author presents the areas of scientific interest of Stefan Szuman, and in the second, she analyses his pedagogical and psychological works in the field of his conception of the early school education teacher.

Stefan Szuman created fundamental principles of the Polish child psychology (developmental and educational). His empirical research classified him to the representatives of the applied psychology. His scientific findings concerning the cognitive development and the creative activity of children are still applied by teachers. Szuman was addressing his research results to students, teachers, educators, tutors and children care providers. His works on child cognition and every day work with children are still invaluable.

We owe the Polish school of aesthetic education, the subject of which is to learn broadly understood aesthetic culture, to Szuman. He, similarly to his great predecessors, first of all saw the teacher as a tutor. However, he demanded that he should be, especially at the stage of early school education, an aesthetic tutor.

Keywords: Stefan Szuman, pedagogy of culture, applied psychology, model of the early childhood education teacher, education through art, aesthetic education.