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Emotion Work in the Context of the Resocialization of Youth in Correctional Facilities in Poland

Abstract: This article reflects on the “emotion work” undertaken by youth in correctional facilities and the impact of such work on the resocialization process, which occurs in conditions of partial isolation. The author attempts to adapt the psychological concept to the educational activities offered in youth correctional facilities. He defends the idea that an inmate’s emotion work, which occurs through the inmate’s relations with the personnel, provides the basis for effective resocialization activities. He discusses activities to help boys and girls in correctional facilities develop accepted social mechanisms for managing their negative emotions. The findings presented in the article rest on seven years of qualitative research in resocialization centers of all types throughout Poland. The principle of triangulation in regard to method, researcher, and data was used for the research. For analysis of the empirical material, an interpretative paradigm was used to grasp the interactive nature of emotion work and the emergence of negative emotions.

Keywords: emotion work, juvenile delinquents, correctional facilities, total institutions, interaction, resocialization, social rehabilitation.

Introduction

Youth correctional facilities are institutions established in order to engage juvenile delinquents in intensive resocialization work aimed at permanently altering their behavior.¹ Resocialization involves extensive modification of the individual’s perceptual matrix as a result of work at self-improvement. Such work is performed at the interactive level, where the inmates, through their mutual relations and relations with the personnel, acquire the model of human relations that is considered proper for “normal” relations outside the facility. This model rests on the assumption that a lasting change in behavior requires intense emotion work to control emotional states, their effects, and in certain situations the production of emotional artifacts. Resocialization of this kind necessitates a continual testing and appraisal of the inmates’ successes and failures in their emotion work, which is aimed at making them pleasant, polite, and amiable (that is, meeting the collective expectations of the staff in various interactive circumstances). Proper emotion work is a priority in resocialization activities and—even though the fact is not admitted outright—it dominates

¹ Among the most important laws regulating youth correctional facilities and shelters are the Law of October 26, 1982 on procedures in juvenile cases, Journal of Laws, 1982, no. 35, pos. 228 (compiled on the basis of the harmonized text of the Journal of Laws, 2010, no. 33, pos. 178; 2011, no. 112, pos. 654; no. 149, pos. 887, no. 191, pos. 1134; 2012, pos. 579; 2013, pos. 628, 1165), and the Decree of the Minister of Justice of October 17, 2001 on youth correctional facilities and shelters, Journal of Laws, 2001, no. 124, pos. 1359.

other aspects of a youth's stay in a resocialization facility (such as educational progress, vocational studies, etc.). Although emotion work is not a matter of planned, coordinated activities in connection with a formalized program of resocialization, the personnel consider that the length of a delinquent's stay in a correctional facility and his or her future fate will depend on the results of this work. The conditions for emotion work, and how the work influences staff appraisal of the course of resocialization, are discussed in a later part of the article.

The Question of Emotion in the Interpretative Approach

The issue of emotions and their emergence has been connected with psychology from the beginning and that has taken priority in research into human emotionality. The emotional aspect of the human collective's actions came to be a domain of interest for sociologists fairly late, toward the end of the 1970s (see *Shott 1979: 1317*, *Konecki 2014: 12*; *Pawłowska 2013: 48*, cf. also *Denzin 1983: 402*), although the role of emotion in an individual's participation in social life can be found in the works of Émile Durkheim (1990: 383).

The origins of interpretative sociology's interest in human emotionality can be traced to Charles Cooley's conception of the self; he believed the processes of the self are accompanied by emotions in the form of self-fed feelings (cf. *Mucha 1991: 181*). He also ascribed the energy underlying an individual's social interactions to emotion (cf. *Konecki 2005: 173*). It is worth noting that he largely concentrated on emotions of pride and shame (1922: 184–185), linking them to the concept of the reflected self (cf. *Scheff 2003*; *Konecki 2005: 173–174*; *2014: 16*).

According to Thomas Scheff (2003), in Cooley's work the emotions of pride and shame are the key social emotions of the "socialization process, where the feeling of shame plays a very large role in the understanding of what is forbidden and in shaping social responsibility" (*Konecki 2005: 174*, cf. also *Mucha 1992: 181*). These emotions, through mechanisms of the reflected self, "control" a person's behavior in accord with the expectations of others. The process of resocialization depends on such emotions.

We can find the idea of emotion in social actions in many of Erving Goffman's works, where emotions are analyzed from the perspective of an individual's direct contacts with others (see *Collins 2004: 16–17*). Goffman writes about the instrumental behavioral techniques that people use to produce particular affects in themselves or others (cf. *Pawłowska 2013: 57–59*, cf. *Hochschild 1979: 556*). The shame and embarrassment arising "when the self projected by the individual is threatened during interaction"² (*Goffman 2008: 114*, see also *Kemper 2011: 136*), or when there is a loss of face in connection with positive values (*Goffman 2000*), are examples of the emotions he describes.

In considering the interpretative current, Harold Garfinkel's ideas on the emergence of emotions are also worth mentioning. For him, they are connected with the "basic context of understanding," which he adopts from Alfred Schütz (1982: 12, cf. also *Garfinkel 1963: 380*; *2007: 67*) and in which "certain judgments on some part of reality, which I consider ob-

² Translated from the author's Polish translation.

vicious, are also considered obvious by you...and everyone who is one of us.”³ For Garfinkel, emotions are produced when the participants in an interaction find that the harmony of their (taken-for-granted) assumptions about reality is disturbed. The more the misunderstanding concerns a matter of value to the participants, the stronger the emotions appear to be. The bases of mutual trust are one such important element of harmony (Garfinkel 2007: 67; 1963).

Susan Shott’s contribution should also not be overlooked, as she developed one of the first ideas within the interactionist current and referred directly to the Chicago school (cf. Turner 2004: 497, see Shott 1979: 1320–21). Shott views the experience of emotion from the perspective of symbolic interactionism; she points to individuals’ ability to react to each other as objects, by which they also become the aim of their own activities, in adopting the role of the generalized other.

An interpretative analysis of emotion could also rest on Randall Collins’ theory of ritual interaction. Like Hochschild, Collins was inspired by the thinking of Goffman, and also of Durkheim. Collins (1993: 206, 2004: 33) operated at the level of small groups, analyzing “chain interactions” and the factors that somehow shape and intensify them. Collins’ work points to the strong emotions arising from the loss or weakening of group belonging (cf. Simmel 1955; James 1890, vol. I: 293).

The subject of human emotionality was also viewed in the socio-interactive perspective by Theodore Kemper, a pioneer in the sociology of emotion and a close collaborator of Randall Collin. He stressed the fact that there are four basic emotions—namely, fear, anger, depression, and satisfaction—onto which derivative emotions are grafted in the course of socialization (Kemper 1987: 265). Like Collins, Kemper’s stance was that the appearance of basic emotions is connected to the relations of status and power characterizing all social relations.

In regard to the subject of the present article, Thomas Scheff’s idea is interesting. Drawing inspiration from the work of the leading interpretative thinkers, including Dewey, Cooley, Mead, and Goffman, as well as Freud and Durkheim, Scheff made the ideas of shame and pride central to his thinking (2003; 2006, cf. also Konecki, n.d.). In pointing out that “pride signals solidarity and shame signals alienation” (Scheff 1997, no title), he comes close to the claims of Norbert Elias (cf. 2011: 550–552). Scheff drew the interactive conditions for shame (Scheff 2006: 53) from Cooley’s concept of the reflected self, presented in *Human Nature and the Social Order*.

In adopting emotion work as a priority in resocializing juveniles, it is worthwhile to address at least a few sentences to the interpretative perspective on defusing negative emotions.

Strategies for Managing Negative Emotions, from the Interpretative Perspective

Emotion work presupposes the initiation of a strategy of managing emotions, particularly negative ones. In terms of the issues considered here, the ideas in Goffman’s book *Asylums*, on the conditions typical of closed organizations, would seem to be germane. Goffman

³ Translated from the author’s Polish translation.

lists five techniques for managing the suffering produced by more or less severe isolation, namely, withdrawal, rebellion, adjustment, conversion, and cold calculation (2011). Without entering into the details of the strategies, it should be emphasized that they result from a kind of calculation on the part of the inmate, requiring not only the restraint of emotion but above all a kind of “fitting” into the administration’s image of an inmate. This means the adoption, if only temporarily, of a set definition of oneself. Goffman speaks of the inmate’s moral career and of “ego mortification.” The emotional strategies of inmates of total institutions are mediated by a change in the self that occurs under the influence of mortifying experiences, through exposure to the impact of the place⁴ in which they find themselves (cf. Konecki 1985: 200, Higgins, Butler 1982: 135–136). Although Goffman does not state the idea directly, the entire process of adjusting emotional strategies can be connected with an initial and secondary adaptation. The first instance involves an individual’s set of reactions to being placed in an institution whose conditions are novel and require the commencement of adaptation actions. Goffman (2011: 182) explains that at this stage the “individual becomes convinced that official expectations are that he must become what he is being prepared to be.”⁵ The emotions experienced by the inmates and how they deal with them result from the direct impact of the institution—to the moment when they enter the phase of secondary adaptation, which allows them to achieve illegitimate aims by ignoring the organization’s rules. An inmate will divine what models of behavior are desired and rewarded by the institution, and also what views may be expressed: his reactions thus acquire an instrumental nature (cf. Pawłowska 2013: 67).

To return to Susan Shott’s ideas, it should be stressed that she places the experience of emotion in the context of socialization, because individuals define their emotions from the perspective of cultural norms in the circles to which they belong (Shott 1979: 1319). According to the premises of symbolic interactionism, in interaction with other people human beings define a situation through a symbolic interpretation of the reality surrounding them. A person’s line of action thus undergoes crystallization (cf. Blumer 1969: 66–67), which Kofta (1979) identifies to a certain degree with emotional strategies. These in turn, according to Shott (*ibidem*: 1323–24) are connected with the idea of a social control whose existential condition is the person’s acceptance of the “role of the other.” The empathy that results from obtaining another person’s perspective furthers emotional work and is even a condition for it (cf. Turner, Stets 2009: 127).

The notion of emotion work is associated with emotion understood in the dramaturgical spirit and with the emotion management methods promoted by Arlie Hochschild. The latter is supported by research into work environments (cf. Szczygieł and team 2009: 156) and is based on the idea of a culture of emotions consisting of “sets of ideas about how people in various types of situation should feel” (Turner, Stets 2009: 51). Hochschild (1979: 551) claimed that “emotions can be and are the objects of management efforts.” This is an important subject on account of the efforts—which I observed during the

⁴ Konecki (1985: 198) gives the curious example of the exposure of concentration camp prisoners to artifacts (gallows) revealing the identity of the place in which they were situated; this impacted their ego transformation (in the moral-career framework). It should be noted, however, that generally every institution of a total nature has physical artifacts that constitute its identity.

⁵ Translated from the Polish translation.

course of my research—of correctional facility personnel to restrain the negative emotions of the inmates. In this context, Hochschild’s idea of emotion work⁶ in relation to “acts of attempting to change the degree and quality of emotions or feelings”⁷ (*ibidem*: 561) seems interesting. Hochschild primarily emphasizes the effort invested in the change rather than its result, using such ideas as emotion control and emotion management, which assume an active attempt to change the existing emotional state (Hochschild 2009: 238). Hochschild’s proposed division between “surface” and “deep” emotion work also seems useful. In surface emotion work, “the work tool... is the body and not the soul”⁸ (*ibidem*: 41), because it is based solely on outward behavior while the “emotions remain unchanged” (Szczygieł and team 2009: 157). Hochschild considers the body to be an instrument of emotional expression (Hochschild 2009: 42). In regard to surface emotion work, a person’s conscious transformation of his or her physical appearance can have significance for analysis. Such behavior is observed among inmates, who through self-adornment, tattoos, body mutilation, and a whole range of gestures, try not only to produce specific emotions in others but also in themselves. In the case of deep emotion work, the end result is the awakening of a specific emotion, whereby behavior and emotional expression accord with each other to lesser or greater degree (cf. Zapf 2002: 242–243).

The Concept of Emotion Work in Youth Correctional Institutions

An attempt to use the concept of emotion work from the perspective of Arlie Hochschild in the conditions of a closed institution such as a correctional facility or youth shelter requires a few sentences of explanation.⁹ The aim of the present article is to attempt to bring the concept of emotion work to bear on the realities of educational interactions undertaken in regard to juvenile delinquents placed in closed correctional institutions. If only on account of their total character these facilities evoke strong negative emotions, which undergo a process of adaptation. Resocialization activities occur in situations producing strong emotional stimuli, while there is simultaneous pressure from the personnel on the inmates to undertake efforts to regulate their emotions. In my opinion, the personnel’s insistence on inmates’ ability to work with their own emotions justifies an attempt to seat the concept of emotion work in the conditions of a closed institution, where the behavior of the youth is subject to control, orders, and regulation.

⁶ It should naturally be emphasized that an inclusive concept of emotion work or emotional labor can not be used in the case of the institutions studied here as the nature of interaction between the parties has an entirely different character and different aims from the free market rhetoric of relations between employees and customers.

⁷ A fundamental review of the literature in regard to emotion work can be found in Dieter Zapf’s article (2002), “Emotion Work and Psychological Well-Being: A Review of the Literature and Some Conceptual Considerations,” *Human Resource Management Review* 12: 237–268.

⁸ This and previous quotes in the paragraph are translated from the Polish translations.

⁹ In this place I wish to thank the Reviewers for drawing my attention to the difficulties resulting from use of a fairly specialized concept that arises from research conducted in an entirely different area than the subject of the present article. The idea of “emotional labor” comes from research among people in service occupations who make efforts to regulate their emotions in contacts with their clients.

Research Methodology

Methodological Premises

According to Blumer (1969: 22–23), the choice of research methodology should respect the complexity of the reality surrounding us and resist its tendency to hide its composition. The present research, which reflects the concepts and intellectual schemas of social actors, also rests on premises similar to those of Erving Goffman (2011: 8), who considered that research into total institutions should involve participation in the respondents' activities and draw on their experiences. Goffman's dramaturgical perspective, which forms part of the paradigm of interpretative sociology (Turner 2004: 456), makes it possible to view the everyday nature of the interaction from the "frog's-eye view" postulated by Georg Simmel (Simmel 1955; see also Piotrowski 1985). Such a perspective is based on the accepted optic of viewing phenomena in some measure "from below," where they actually occur, within the framework of the socially constructed reality at the basis of the social order (cf. Czyżewski 2013: 14). In this case, the organizational order is created through the interaction of the inmates of correctional facilities with each other and the personnel. In studying a total institution, it should be assumed that it will to some degree "protect" its secrets (Moczydłowski 2002; Kamiński 2006). These considerations incline the researcher to conclude that a key problem in describing the phenomena occurring in total institutions is the unwillingness of those studied to expose their "real" views and motives.

Research Techniques

Considering the above premises and the specifics of the subject, it seemed most appropriate to use techniques that would ensure long-term contact between the researcher and the persons being studied in order to achieve greater mutual confidence and on occasion enable the researcher to see through the latter's declarative statements (techniques based on short-term contact ordinarily deal with the declarative level) (Konecki 2000). I thus decided to use overt participant observation and in-depth interviews. Both these techniques permit the researcher to follow interaction in the environment over a longer period and to discover at least some of the conditions underlying individual and collective activities (Hammersley, Atkinson 2000: 16–17, cf. Miszewski 2007: 36 as well). I also analyzed documents (observation reports, internal regulations, descriptions of unusual events, opinions of a diagnostic department about individuals' degree of demoralization, etc.) and footage from the institutions' surveillance cameras. In analyzing this type of data, I occasionally had the help of the institution personnel, who explained the nature of the inmates' interactions and activities, and were also available for consultation on my findings concerning visual manifestations of group sociometry. These proceedings made it possible to decipher the true nature of the inmates' words and gestures and increased the possibility of bringing sufficient observational sensitivity to bear in interpreting and defining the inmates' interactions.

Research Material and Characteristics of the Research Sample

The research presented in this article is based on 52 in-depth interviews with the male and female personnel of correctional facilities and 42 in-depth interviews¹⁰ with male and female inmates. While researching the subject in the years 2008–2015, I spent a total of 7 months “in the field,” using the technique of overt participant observation. I tried to participate in all the activities of the inmates: I was in workshops during vocational studies, in the cafeteria during meals, and in the dormitory during the time free from didactic activities.

The in-depth interviews involved 12 girls and 30 boys, who were between 13 and 21 years of age and were in youth shelters or correctional facilities. On account of the key role of confidence in acquiring information, the interviews were repeated many times with the same persons, making it possible not only to obtain new information but also to verify the earlier material. In addition, the files of certain inmates were made available by the personnel (26 documents) and were analyzed, as were 182 opinions written by a diagnostic team for family courts and prosecutors. A statistical analysis of the diagnostic documentation made it possible to aggregate data on the youths’ families¹¹ and symptoms of pathologies (Table 1).

Table 1

The Dysfunction of Inmates’ Families on the Basis of the Opinions of a Diagnostic Department

Type of family	Dysfunctional family (%)	Family without signs of dysfunction (%)	Total (%)
Two-parent family (including reconstructed)	43 (23.6)	43 (23.6)	86 (47.2)
Single-parent family	71 (39)	25 (13.7)	96 (52.7)
Total	114 (62.6)	68 (37.4)	182 (100)

Source: own calculation.

Research Aim, Issues, and Hypotheses

The aim of the present article is to attempt to show the connection between the inmates’ emotion work, the informal taxonomy of inmates created by the personnel, and the effectiveness of resocialization actions.

Furthermore, the following research hypotheses were adopted for the article:

The personnel of an institution create an informal taxonomy of the inmates based on their anticipated chance of social reintegration;

¹⁰ After transcribing the interviews, I had nearly 1,000 pages of empirical material, as well as 100 pages of records of overt participant observation. This material was then processed by open, selective, and substantive coding in the ATLAS TI program for the analysis of qualitative data.

¹¹ The opinions made available by the diagnostic department of correctional facilities concerned the years 2002–2015. The data in these opinions made it possible to reconstruct facts about the female inmates of interest for this article. On account of the random selection of opinions (access involved the arbitrary decisions of the management of certain correctional facilities), a generalization can not be made on this basis, although it is possible to speak of certain obvious regularities in the population studied.

Taxonomies are labile in nature and the mobility of inmates is a consequence of the direction of change the personnel perceives in their behavior;
 The personnel associate an inmate's aggressive behavior with unsuccessful emotion work or its relinquishment;
 The personnel associate an inmate's emotion work with his or her chance of social reintegration;
 In contrast to surface emotion work, only deep emotion work leads to social reintegration.

Emotion Work and the Creation of Taxonomies by the Personnel

The personnel of a correctional facility interactively create taxonomies of the inmates, depending on the individual inmates' anticipated chances of full social reintegration. These taxonomies are implicitly created through negotiation, forming a collectively shared opinion of a given youth. After a time, the dominant definition of a given inmate's chance becomes the informal "obligatory" one in contacts with the juvenile, constituting a perceptual matrix that sanctions the actions taken in regard to him or her. Taxonomies emerge based on factors to which the probabilistically formulated determinants of the resocialization process are ascribed. Such determinants are specific behaviors that are perceived as predictors of the inmate's moral career (Goffman 2011). If, for example, the youth continually displays aggressive behavior, which is inappropriate for the accompanying interactional context, then his anticipated chances for resocialization are rather small—and he is thus defined, and in consequence, attached to a group whose probability of reintegration is estimated to be low.¹² Such a group could be formally separated from others (including spatially) and be subject, among other things, to restricted privileges (visits, outings). Members of the group might also be made to wear physical signs of belonging (see Foucault 1993: 218–219),¹³ for example, clothing provided by the institution (photo 1) indicating inclusion (prison uniform).

Of course, of course, he's sure of himself, but nevertheless, I say... well, like I said, I've noticed here... really, those very strong juveniles don't play around with any sort of mental journey or anything, because they are just... particularly the ones who, like I said, are waiting to get out of the facility, they sort of isolate themselves from others; they know their position and strength. But I'm saying they don't play around with any challenges, any getting to a higher level, they just want to make it through here on the side until... [the end of their stay] (staff member).

In constructing a taxonomy, the dynamic and trend of an inmate's behavior are more important than the level. For example, if an inmate continues to disrespect fellow inmates, but now that disrespect takes an aggressive verbal form in place of a physical one, this is perceived as progress and a pedagogical success; noted in the observation card, it opens the possibility of further improvement, including through the concentrated attention of the personnel, who see in such activity the chance for reintegration.

¹² It is tempting here to consider the mechanism of stereotyping in relation to the theory of imprinting present in the literature. However, this is not the subject of the present article.

¹³ Michel Foucault discusses the example of a military school in which there was a division into classes based on ranks and grades awarded to recruits for achievements. The various classes were differentiated not only in terms of privileges but also in clothing, which emphasized their belonging to a given group.

Photo 1

Roll Call in One of the Correctional Facilities

Interviewee 1 (inmate): *Here [the staff member] knows how I was, because he read my papers.*

Interviewee 2 (staff member): *Yes. There were a lot.*

Interviewee 1: *My parents also say they're in shock that I changed, right?*

Researcher: *There's a change?*

Interviewee 2: *There's a very large change. There's a very large change, but there has also been a lot of very hard work. On the part of [name of the inmate] and ourselves. When someone understands, he'll be on our side. But they have to want it...*

Interviewee 1: *...but honestly, the staff... tell me honestly, sir. When I get out, will I manage?*

I2: *You'll manage. Of course you'll manage.*

The dynamic and direction of change in an inmate is a factor that conditions the lability of the taxonomies created. Their elasticity is as a rule inversely proportional to the degree of rigidity in relations between the staff and the inmates. The frequency and intensity of direct contacts is important; the less frequent and more indirect such contacts, the greater will be the degree of formalization and hardening of the taxonomy.

Emotion Work as an Element of Institutional Security

Although the idea of emotion work does not enter into the vocabulary of the personnel of correctional institutions, long observation of the mutual interactions of staff and inmates permits its attributes and interactional artifacts to be perceived. As in Edgar Schein's concept of organizational culture (1989, 1990), emotion work is expressed in basic values that correspond with the personnel's unarticulated conviction that a direct cause of juvenile delinquents' difficulties is their inability to manage negative emotions. At the operational level, this conclusion affects actions and their prioritization. The emotional level becomes the immediate focus of educational activities, leaving behind other aspects—such as academics or vocational training—of an inmate's stay in the facility.

[...] on the other hand, we do that because it's a lesson and we are supposed to do it, but when a problem arises sometimes we don't have the lesson, we just talk about the problem, because there's the resocialization to keep in mind (teacher).

The above-mentioned prioritization results from the personnel's strong conviction about the organizational identity of correctional facilities. Of course, correctional insti-

tutions differ from one another in their degree of openness,¹⁴ which to some degree affects their restrictiveness and their emphasis on control or education. However, it should be emphasized that in all such institutions emotion work begins with control, which aids the ongoing regulation of behavior and the possibility of making predictions about the near future. Emotion work is universally connected with facility security (Chomczyński 2013: 106–107), as it translates to the state of emotional equilibrium, which is operationalized by the personnel in the concept of “educational situation.” This constitutes both an element of the collective information transmitted to new staff members by those who are more experienced and a point of reference for the diagnosis of current relations between the juveniles.

[...] as I said, since the secret message was eliminated, there is no such thing, but there are sometimes periods in the school year when something in the whole system is so off, not... in the gear wheels... But as to that, what I'm saying is that at a certain moment we try to observe and prevent it, but whether we succeed later—that nothing, no one, can tell, because it is unknown. At the moment everything's fine, good, but it's not known how it will be in a week, a month; therefore, we have to act together (teacher).

The emotion work initiated by the staff is coupled with “mindfulness training,” which is based on mutual control, support, and emphasis on the importance of observing even the most minor behavioral artifacts that could prove that the equilibrium is threatened and the previously satisfactory educational environment is changing for the worse.

[...] here it's as if everything was natural [...] but it has to be analyzed all the time; it has to be monitored all the time so it won't go wrong, and one has to accept that but of course not get carried away. It can't be that [some] boys or girls rule—and there are such places—and the rest do what we want to have peace and quiet (staff member).

[...] you have to pay attention to details, to some quite tiny nuances, to the blinking of an eye [...] things like that; you have to watch things like that (staff member).

Emotion Work as the Reproduction of Cultural Patterns

In looking at the activities of the staff who initiate the inmates' undertaking of emotion work, it might be worthwhile to consider what patterns they rely on in instructing their charges in the sphere of “proper” behavior and etiquette. I naturally agree with Norbert Elias (2011) that the behavior considered to be model is based on civilizational development, and certain behavioral artifacts constitute a *signum temporis* in regard to the norms and values we currently profess. I might also mention Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron's theory of reproduction (2006), which in reference to the habitus of the educators could help clarify what is reproduced (and how) by the instruction underpinning inmates' emotion work. However, I would like to concentrate on the educators' construction of a common perceptual matrix and a certain taxonomy of activities based on the aims they want their charges to achieve through emotion work.

Emotion work, by reproduction of the socially dominant manner of dealing with difficult emotions, is assumed to make the inmates “invisible,” that is, not behaving in ways that differ strikingly from those deemed typical and appropriate to the interactional context.

¹⁴ In Poland, there are open, semi-open, and closed facilities, and facilities with increased supervision.

What irritates me the most... one of the guys weighs sixty kilos and he's really flexing his muscle. He walks heavy through the hall, right? And I tell you that I specially—specially—get out of his way, right? Because I don't want him... to provoke me, you know? I just like that, I get out of his way... I get out of his way, right? I shouldn't... I should grab him at once and smash his face, right? But I don't want to do that (female inmate).

Here the question could arise as to where the educators draw information as to what is emotionally proper and what is not in a given context. What emotion can be displayed and what must be hidden? What might the behavioral manifestations of the emotion experienced at a given moment be? How much spontaneity can persons allow themselves at a given moment? The answer is provided in part by Garfinkel's concept of the basic context of understanding (1963: 380; 2007: 67), which is based on the conviction that "if something is obvious to me (taken for granted) it should be obvious to you too."¹⁵ The educators explicitly rely on their own experience, bringing it to bear on a situation experienced by an inmate or a hypothetical situation. The common perceptual matrix—of which Alfred Schütz (1953) writes—is constructed on this basis. The greater the degree to which it is common to staff and inmates the greater the chances that the desired social attitudes will be reproduced by the latter. "Normative closeness" means that a staff member is convinced of the possible pedagogical success of an inmate and thereby increases efforts to ensure he or she achieves the goal. This interaction is to a certain degree autopoietic, because observation of the positive effects of resocialization confirms the staff member's conviction that the steps taken were proper, thus legitimizing succeeding ones, which again strengthen the final effect. The staff member is here part of a "transmission belt" for the reproduction of desired social attitudes. The more he or she is "attractive" to the inmate, the greater the chance that even when not all the messages seem right and comprehensible to the inmate, their internalization will be "credited" to a degree because of the inmate's confidence in the staff member and thus his or her trust that this is the way to behave in a given situation in spite of the feeling of uncertainty.

[...] once too when I came to the facility for the first time, I wanted to be so very superior, because I didn't care about anything; I just didn't care about all that. And after that rebellion, the director had a talk with me and said that I should think about my family—whether I wouldn't want to go home more often and in general... (male inmate).

Emotion work rests on the reproduction of cultural patterns, which is mediated by the personnel's perception of an inmate's chance of reintegration. Inmates' chances are based on their internalization of social norms and values, which often contrast with those held by their families (see table 1). Therefore, regardless of the declarations of staff members, there can be no clean slate for all the inmates, because to a certain degree they are subject to the above-mentioned taxonomization based on observation and past actions. This process permits certain categories of inmates to be created, depending on their estimated chances of adopting and internalizing the attitudes displayed by the "normals" (to use Erving Goffman's terminology). Here reference can be made to the above-mentioned concept of Arlie Hochschild (2009) and the "surface" or "deep" emotion work she proposes.

¹⁵ Translated from the Polish translation.

Surface and Deep Work and Social Reintegration

The taxonomy of the inmates created by the personnel translates into the type of emotion work the former undertake. Those inmates who are perceived¹⁶ by the personnel as having negligible chances of returning to society are largely appraised on the basis of behavioral artifacts. Using Hochschild's classification (2009: 42), it could be said that they are pressured to begin at least surface emotion work, which is expressed through the modification of outward signs of negative emotions. The motivation could be described as external and involves an instrumental secondary adjustment, (Goffman 2011: 182). The inmate, in having recourse to a strategy of surface action, relies on a reflected self, which tells him how to adapt to the expectations of the personnel and thus avoid difficulties that could lead to a worsening of his situation and loss of privileges.

Researcher: *Why were you there in isolation?*

Interviewee: *I was bad.*

Researcher: *Really? What did you do?*

Interviewee: *I broke windows.*

Researcher: *Mmm. Just like that on your own, or did someone annoy you?*

Interviewee: *Wellll. It's mostly the staff that annoy me, no?*

Researcher: *Mmm. What did they do that annoyed you?*

Interviewee: *It depends... Like permission to go out—I was supposed to get permission, and I didn't (male inmate).*

Neither the inmates nor the personnel view surface emotion work as part of the resocialization process. For the former, it is a way to achieve temporary advantages, while for the latter it is a sign of their authority and control, which translates into the "educational environment" and the associated sense of security in the institution. The inmates who engage in surface emotion work still feel the negative emotions but pay greater attention to the interactive context in which they can allow them to appear. Such knowledge is transmitted on the basis of mutual observation; the inmates learn from the more experienced youths.

Researcher: *Tell me how boys deal with negative emotions?*

Interviewee: *OK. Well, yes, it's nothing to hide that... that here the decisive factor is the behavior of those people who... who somehow set the standards, that is, those who are older, more demoralized, are higher in the hierarchy of this other life. The mentally handicapped, the younger, and the so-called just-ins, that is, the new ones, look to see how those others react (staff member).*

Those inmates who have initiated deep work on their emotions constitute an entirely different group. Usually, they earlier passed through the "surface" phase and, being encouraged by the positive reaction of the personnel to their behavioral changes, decided to continue and to learn to extinguish negative emotional reactions to stimuli.

[...] *those jokers, I ruled those jokers. I hammered all the rooms when I was pissed off or something. They were afraid of me and called me killer. Murderer, killer, and everything, right? "Killer, killer, what's up?"—and they were afraid of me, no? But now I don't react anymore; I don't give a shit about it (male inmate).*

A factormotivating inmates to engage in deep emotion work is a shift in concentration from the past to the future. Helping them to preserve a mental connection between a change

¹⁶ From my observation, it appears that the personnel are not guided by the opinions of the diagnostic department in creating a taxonomy but solely by analysis of the current behavior of the inmate.

in current priorities and a chance to achieve their goals usually constitutes the flywheel of this kind of work.

Once there were always problems with me, I was constantly fighting, but later it passed and now I don't give a... (female inmate).

I don't pay any attention—that they're provoking me—because I don't care about them anyhow. I just came here to sit out my time and maybe get out or maybe not (female inmate).

A deep action is usually supported by the possibility of almost instant verification of its effects, which provides a motivation for further work: contacts with the outside world are extended—for instance, there are more frequent visits of family and friends, passes, excursions to cultural institutions, outings, etc. In contacts with persons from the outside, the inmates test their achievements, which are then discussed by the personnel. The staff members use such instances in their ongoing recruitment of inmates to the group with a larger chance of reintegrating society.

Deep emotion work never happens in a vacuum and is achieved with the close participation of a specific staff member, who, as I mentioned, is the most “attractive” to an inmate (Schütz 1953). It is hard to indicate unequivocally who chooses whom, though a certain kind of fit, which translates into the realization of aims, can certainly be spoken of. In regard to resocialization, this kind of “contract” assumes the pedagogue’s transformation into the type of figure called a “mentor” in business. This is a close, direct relationship based on mutual trust, in which the staff member initially gives the inmate “credit” by awarding additional privileges “in advance” (for instance, longer visits, less monitoring, entrusting tasks without supervision, etc.), and thus takes a personal risk. On the basis of observation, interviews, and analysis of the source material (observation cards, opinions, case files) it can be stated that it is a necessary element of effective resocialization, as it underlies the confidence-building that is the constituting attribute of a close relationship. This in turn conditions the initiation of deep emotion work. Another inherent trait of this relationship is the mutual display of emotional states, which sends an important message to the inmate, helping him or her gradually to replace negative emotions with positive ones. In this case, the emotional state of the inmate undergoes reconstruction, conditioning the “leap” from surface work—which presupposes a kind of emotional regress for the purpose of adaptation—to the stage of progress, which is characterized by affective expression. A regress takes the form of stifling negative emotions such as anger or sadness into indifference, which limits expression. In the case of deep action, progress consists in the gradual replacement of negative emotions with those involving a forward-looking perspective, for instance, satisfaction with achievements, joy, and pride.

Inmates who do not undertake either surface or deep emotion work are a separate group. These are deeply demoralized youths. The decided majority come from pathological environments (114 out of 182 female inmates according to an analysis of opinions, see table 1), and either manifest a fascination with prison culture or completely oppose the norms and values propagated by the institution. The personnel consider such inmates to be dangerous and to require special supervision. In the case of a lack of improvement—that is, the initiation of surface work over a period of several months or more—they are liable to be

transferred to a more secure institution (a closed facility or one with increased supervision, or sometimes, to a penitentiary).

Summary and Conclusions

Several years of participant observation in correctional facilities made the question of emotionality evident in the context of resocialization actions. It is not only an important but an indispensable element of the pedagogical work for social reintegration. The decided majority of the inmates in correctional facilities (around 60% in data drawn from a diagnostic department opinion—[table 1](#)) are young people from dysfunctional families,¹⁷ whose ways of dealing with negative emotions have not met with social recognition. In consequence, the youth have been exposed from their earliest years to inappropriate models of behavior, which they absorbed in the course of their initial socialization both in the family circle and their circle of friends. Deficits in their ability to deal with negative emotions determined their later fate, leading to conflicts with the law and in consequence to being placed in a correctional facility.

The emotion work discussed in this article helps to reconstruct the earlier and strongly internalized models of behavior in regard to the experience of negative emotions. A certain percentage of inmates¹⁸ will stop at the level of the initial, behavioral adaptation ([Goffman 2011](#)) to the rules and requirements of the facility. Many of these inmates declare a fascination with prison life and the sub-culture associated with it. They view members of the staff in terms of the enemy and ascribe ill intentions to them; they are thus assigned more or less formally to the group with lesser, or negligible, chances of social reintegration. Surface emotion work constitutes a *modus vivendi* for this group. Greater chances are ascribed to the group in which deep work is initiated. These inmates are more trusted and the effects of resocialization are intensified; they have the opportunity to test the results through more frequent contacts with the world “beyond the walls.”

To conclude, it is worthwhile to emphasize once more the importance of an inmate’s emotionality and emotion work, which never occurs in isolation but in close relation with staff members. Such work is a necessary element of successful resocialization actions, which require emotional stabilization, internal control of behavioral expression, and further, a mental reconstruction producing a greater share of positive emotions in the total of those experienced.

¹⁷ This data corresponds with the numbers obtained in 1998 (an unpublished master’s thesis) and 2015 (research repeated with the aid of the same tool) by Paweł Radziszewicz, director of a Youth Shelter. In a sample of 42 female inmates in 1998 and 22 in 2015, 61% and 76% respectively came from severely dysfunctional families.

¹⁸ For several reasons, it is very difficult to give here a marginal distribution for the percentage of inmates in various groups. First, the lack of unambiguous criteria for creating the taxonomy means that staff members make their appraisals arbitrarily, without necessarily agreeing with each other, because one might work better with a given inmate than another. Second, due to the lack of criteria, no statistics are drawn up on the subject. Third, inmates could behave badly in one institution but properly in another.

Laws

the Law of October 26, 1982 on procedures in juvenile cases, *Journal of Laws*, 1982, no. 35, pos. 228 (compiled on the basis of the harmonized text of the *Journal of Laws*, 2010, no. 33, pos. 178; 2011, no. 112, pos. 654; no. 149, pos. 887, no. 191, pos. 1134; 2012, pos. 579; 2013, pos. 628, 1165);
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