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Subjectivity versus mutual determinism of individuals and social structures in selected sociological teories context

Abstract

The main purpose of this article is to present individuals' subjectivity concept and underline its importance in terms of consideration constructing of individual adaptive strategies. The verification of a thesis about mutual subjectivity determinism of individuals and structures with constructing of individual adaptive strategies required an analysis of selected sociological theories. In the context of conducted analyses it appears that a contemporary complex and changeable social reality demands from subjects a high level reflexivity in adapting to its requirements. This is not a state which is possible to maintain by subjects in a permanent way. A whole social system adaptability and individual strategies creating efficacy are based on an adequate level of optimization both automatic and cogitative actions.

Keywords: *subjectivity; sociological theories; adaptive strategies of individuals*

Introduction: Idea of subjectivity

In the tradition of an subjectivity idea consideration there were different ways of understanding the subject. The meaning of the subjectivity idea is conditioned by its theoretical context. There is no one universal definition of subjectivity. A common element for those definitions is the fact that generally subjectivity is not connected to specific people but is described as a specific

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feature of an abstract actor. Subjectivity serves as a tool to describe relations among actors with potential and social structures requirements. Individual subjectivity is always identified with social subjectivity[2]. A subject, having a certain scope of freedom of acting, directs them to influencing social relations in which he/she participates in and indirectly to a social structure itself[3]. An actor is a person who fulfills many social roles which means he/she acts according to his/her own will but at the same time functions in relation to a community as a whole. This acting is focused on one's self-development and permanent broadening one's subjectivity. Therefore it must be focused on a social world change.[4]

Subjectivity is in contradiction to passivity, defined as conformist and passive performance of all social structure requirements[5]. An actor functions in structurally defined conditions being a limit of his/her potential freedom of acting[6]. Subjectivity is not identical with anarchy, negation of social structures or social order existing[7]. It is a certain potential to active performance directed at reproduction of existing game rules or their change in a situation when they are perceived as ineffective or threatening. It is therefore a potential which is activated by individuals in certain circumstances. However, an actor who is a subject is not free from ritual acting. A difference between a subject and an object comes from the fact that a subject is aware he/she can take an effective action and this action has sense. At the same time this is a belief that social structures in which an individual functions are also subjective and accept the change of their game rules through active subjects performance.

A contradiction to subjectivity is an alienation idea which according to *Krzysztof Korzeniowski* consists of four elements: helplessness, senselessness, anomie and isolation.[8] In the psychological aspect we deal with an individual feeling of inability to influence on the surrounding reality and a feeling of frustration resulting from a lack of game rules understanding. In case of ina-

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[2] Andrea Strazzoni, ‚Subjectivity and individuality: Two strands in early modern philosophy: Introduction', *Societate si Politica*, Vol. 9 (1), 2015, p. 5–9, p. 5

[3] Ross Macmillan, 'Constructing Adulthood': Agency and Subjectivity in the Transition to Adulthood', *Advances in Life Course Research,* Vol. 11, 2006, p. 3-29

[4] Piotr Buczkowski, Ryszard Cichocki*, Podmiotowość: możliwość, rzeczywistość, konieczność* (Poznan: Nakom, 1989), p. 47

[5] Robert K. Merton, 'Social Structure and Anomie', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 3 (5), 1938, p. 672-682

[6] Steven Hitlin S., Glen Elder „Agency: An empirical model of an abstract concept", *Advances in Life Course Research*, Vol. 11, 2006, p. 33–67, p. 40

[7] Margaret Scotford Archer, 'Morphogenesis versus structuration: On combining structure and action', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 33, 1982, p. 455–483

[8] Krzysztof Konarzewski, *Między rewolucją a normalnością. Rzecz o alienacji politycznej na przełomie dekad* (Warsaw: PWN, 1999), p. 63

bility to interpret system requirements and perceiving them by an individual as contradictory or unreal an additional element of alienation is a feeling of senselessness of the surrounding reality. In individuals' behavior an alienation manifests itself through acting strategies targeted at surviving in unfavorable and obscure social conditions. An effect of long-term functioning in social situations in which an individual has no control results in shaping a strong learned attitude of helplessness. According to *Mirosława Marody* the learned attitude of helplessness is transferred to other situations and results in one's inability to act where one's own initiative is required[9]. The attitude mentioned above is additionally reinforced by fear of responsibility and threatening created by constantly changing game rules and functioning within the society where there are no clear criteria of judging one's acting. As a result we can say that individuals' and structures' subjectivity are closely related.

Analyzing the above considerations concerning alienation[10] it is necessary to refer to two levels of individuals' subjectivity: external and internal aspects. External subjectivity is an individual' feeling of influence on the surrounding reality. It is related to an effect motivating need relying on aspiration to bring, in the social environment of an individual, the results one's aimed at. An individual subjectivity feeling appears when an influence level is compatible with a personal standard. Then a stable feeling of subjectivity occurs which becomes an integral element of 'my own self'.[11] Subjectivity is defined by such four features as: feeling of effectiveness, feeling of sense, feeling of eunomia and feeling of identification. It is worth mentioning that no man has identical subjectivity in all spheres of a social life. Specifics and a different institutions' openness level cause that for example in a professional sphere an individual may feel as a stronger subject than in a political sphere.

Subjects' and social structures determinism versus individual adaptive strategies building concept in contemporary complex reality

In contemporary sociology an integrating approach dominates. It is characterized by a combination of a macro- and micro-sociological perspective. Its purpose has been to limit a phenomenon of a division of sociology as a sci-

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[9] Mirosława Marody, Sens zbiorowy a stabilność i zmiana ładu społecznego, *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, Vol. 33(1), 1989, p. 51-70, p. 62

[10] Melvin Seeman, On The Meaning of Alienation, *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 24 (6), 1959, p. 783-791

[11] Wiesława Sotwin, *Podmiotowość w sferze politycznej, czyli pragmatyzm-pryncypializm*, Warsaw: Scholar, 2003, p. 16

ence into two different exploratory perspectives. An idea of two sociologies was introduced by *Pamela Nixon* in the 60's[12], and then popularized by *Alan Dewe*[13]. This however generates a series of problems. Integrating theories focus on mutual connections largely skipping what is to be related and how in a contemporary complex world connections among subjects and a social structure are constructed[14]. It must be underlined that theories integrating micro- and macro-level perspectives often emphasize only one of the two sides, noticing its significant superiority. For example an integrating theory arising from a subject's perspective is *Randall Collins*'[15] theory and from a social structure level perspective a *Jeffrey Alexander's* theory[16]. However, there are attempts to standardize theories where an emphasis on a connection between mutual individual determinism and a social structure is crucial, and recognizing networking, complexity and nonlinearity of a contemporary society development at the same time. Integrating theories of this type mainly base on social physics, applying to such a social reality model where specified events being a continuous effect of strategic interactions among subjects functioning in a particular structural order, generate often unpredictable serious changes eg. global financial crises[17]. This is a relatively new issue where subjectivity is understood as an active influence of people's activities on a social structure transformation and structures' vulnerability to such type of influence. In that sense an idea of individual subjectivity is always dual and as such should be analyzed both from the point of view of an individual acting and also from the point of view of structural elements as a whole. Therefore, individual subjectivity has always an external dimension focused both on a social requirements perception and a possibility of a flexible transformation of a social structure. Subjects have also a high awareness of an action undertaking possibility and entering broad and more and more complex social relations networks.

Subjects' awareness consists both of assumed by them goals and acting strategies and an interpretation perspective of a present accessible to them

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[12] Robert van Krieken, 'The paradox of the 'two sociologies': Hobbes, Latour and the Constitution of modern social theory, *Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 38(3), 2002, p. 255-73, p. 255

[13] Alan Dawe, 'The Two Sociologies', *The British Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 21 (2), 1970, p. 207-218, p. 207

[14] Piotr Sztompka, *Agency and Structure. Reorienting Social Theory* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1994), p. 14

[15] Randall Collins, 'The micro contribution to macro sociology'*, Sociological Theory*, Vol. 6(2), 1988, p. 242-253

[16] Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Action and Its Environments. Toward a New Synthesis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988)

[17] Philip Ball, 'The new history', *Nature*, Vol. 408, 2011, p. 447–448, p. 448

structural order state and their entanglement in an interactive order[18]. As a result subjects undertaking their actions, despite having a possibility to change an existing social order, are also oriented to obligatory rules. In contemporary societies a natural subjects' adaptive strategy becomes both automatic acting and cogitative analyzing an existing social reality. Paradoxically, despite growing of an individualism level in postmodern societies, a complexity and networking increase of a present reality begins to generate a need to build such adaptive strategies where there must be a partially automatic adjustment of subjects. Such acting of subjects may be perceived as a compromise made each time uniquely between their goals and a complex situation context. It sets opportunities which a subject strives to use and threats which should be avoided. Therefore an actor's goals are usually variable that is why subjects' acting should be analyzed as rational only in a given situation context[19]. A present social order complexity growth begins to generate a significant intensification of the discussed phenomenon. In that sense a present social reality complexity understood as a structure of a high level of entanglement, having an ability to evaluate, characterized by a high level of nonlinearity and dispersion[20], generate subjects' new forms of adaptive strategies.

Societies have been always organized and human acting based on specified patterns[21]. It does not mean however that people nowadays are total conformists towards those patterns, they can either apply those patterns or change them. An individual still does not undertake actions independently, his/her involvement in social interactions causes his/her adaptive strategies become a specific result of individual goals and an interactive and social order influence. Subjects' adaptive strategies may be than understood as their actions based on a widely understood transformation of complex social environment data and undertaking actions adjusted to that environment[22]. Subjects' adaptation to an environment is also based on an innovations' introduction or modifications in existing social structures[23]. Subjects' adaptive strategies are therefore a crucial process both in an aspect of maintaining social integration and a transformation of existing social structures. It is necessary to emphasize

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[18] Erving Goffman, 'The Interaction Order', *American Sociological Association*, Vol. 48 (1), 1983, p. 1-17

[19] Michel Crozier, Erhard Friedberg, Człowiek i system: ograniczenia działania zespołowego (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, 1982), p. 57-58

[20] John Urry, 'The Complexity turn Theory', *Culture &Society*, Vol. 22(5), 2005, p. 1-14, p. 5

[21] Barry Smart, George Ritzer, *Handbook of Social Theory* (London: Sage Publications, 2001), p. 339-352

[22] Lawrence G. Hrebinia, William F. Joyce, 'Organizational Adaptation: Strategic Choice and Environmental Determinism', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 30 (3), 1985, p. 336-349

[23] Guy Rocher, *Introduction à la sociologie générale, troisième édition* (Montreal: Hurtubise HMH, 1992), p. 686

that individual adaptive strategies are a continuous and dynamic process of a formation of constant connections between aggregated individual needs at a given time and a level of individuals' satisfaction from structural possibilities of their realization. Each individual's adaptation is always social because a specified structural and interactive order enables subjects describing their identity or a social position[24]. In that sense individual adaptive strategies are a construct which refers to an assumption that an interactive and structural order may belong to both micro- and macro-levels[25]. A theory assuming structure duality is to a large degree restrictive because it does not use a possible spectrum of network and complex relations between subjects' acting and structure acting. *Mouzelis* underlines the meaning of a strategic monitoring taken by subjects in order to reproduce or structure change. According to Mouzelis monitoring strategies clearly assume that actors as subjects distance themselves from rules in order to see them as social objects requiring intervention[26]. Individual adaptive strategies do not always refer to a present structural order either. *Archer* underlines that nowadays subjects often go beyond a structural order and experience its changes which are a result of both present and past actions[27]. In a result an academic understanding of mutual individual and social structures determinism requires nowadays a new theoretical concepts supplement. An idea which explains a mutual interaction of subjects and social structures in such a complicated order is emergence. According to *Keith Sawyer* many concepts of mutual determinism of subjects and social structures use the emergence idea to argue that collective phenomena are created jointly by people acting in a specified social context but their explanation may not be reduced to autonomic individual categories[28]. Individual adaptive strategies on one hand targeted at internalized by them values and standards and owned resources and on the other hand dynamic interactions with other people and a surrounding social order interpretation, are a key process through which a complex contemporary society may emerge. This concept underlines a social unity and an interdependence of elements it consists of[29].

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[24] Venelin Terziev, 'Conceptual frame work of social adaptation', *Conference: INTCESS 2019-6th International Conference on Education and Social Sciences*, 4-6 February, 2019, At Dubai, p. 494-503, p. 495

[25] Nicos Mouzelis, *Modern and Postmodern Social Theorizing, Bridging the Divide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008)

[26] Nicos Mouzelis, *Back to Sociological Theory: the Construction of Social Orders* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 29

[27] Margaret S. Archer, *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)

[28] Keith Sawyer, 'Emergence in Sociology: Contemporary Philosophy of Mind and Some Implications for Sociological Theory', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 107(3), 2001, p. 551-585

[29] Ali Aït Abdelmalek, 'Edgar Morin, sociologue et théoricien de la complexité: des cultures nationales à la civilization européenne', *Sociétés*, Vol. 4 (86), 2004, p. 99 – 117

That is why an analysis of subjects' adaptation is a basic element which enables understanding relations between complex society parts and a society as a whole. Such assumptions cause that current considerations of individual and social structures mutual determinism should apply to such adaptive strategy models of individuals which would be adequate to a complex non-linear and network social reality.

Contemporary sociologists criticize in their integration theories an unacceptable dichotomy of absolute external limitations and unconditional totally voluntary subjective acting. As a result they propose to replace it with concepts emerging from subjects' complex social interactions but still determining a social structure and individuals' acting shaped into their adaptive strategies. In this theoretical approach it is underlined that external structural limitations occur as a result of network and significant social acting. The significant social acting is therefore oriented on values, standards and calculation methods and through mutual communication among subjects. On that basis subjects' dynamic individual adaptive strategies are created which undergo constant transformations as a result of functioning in a contemporary complex and network social order. It constitutes however only a partial solution of structure-subjectivity dualism because it has not been theoretically organized yet. Integration theories still lean towards treating an arising social structure as limiting subjects' acting and they focus on subjects' socialization, treating social acting as governed by repeated patterns independently from strategic contexts[30].

In this article a thesis is made that mutual determinism of individual and social structures subjectivity has an influence on creating individual adaptive strategies. It is important to state how the mentioned determinism refers to a contemporary situation of functioning in more and more complex and network society where hit her to assumptions require an adequate supplement. The purpose of this article is an analysis of selected social theories, chosen according to agreed criteria (described in the methodological chapter), referring to described above new pattern of subjects' individual adaptive strategies. A specifics of the particular theories analysis refers to the agreed criteria of the analysis and the theoretical introduction. Because of a wealth of the analyzed material and a necessity to maintain clarity of an academic argument it has been necessary to assume some simplifications in the conducted in this article analysis.

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[30] Bob Jessop, 'Interpretive Sociology and the Dialectic of Structure and Agency', *Theory Culture & Society* Vol. 13(1), 1996, p. 119-128, p. 123

Methodology

Verification of the thesis put forward here about mutual subjectivity determinism of an individual and structures and building individual adaptive strategies required a secondary analysis of available scientific studies. For this purpose a systematic survey of literature was conducted[31]. It is defined as the survey subordinated to a clearly specified problem or to a scientific literature classified for this review, with utilization of identification, selection and analysis critical judgment methods[32]. It is worth having a look at selected contemporary subjectivity theories in reference to the thesis put forward here. They were chosen in relation to the following criteria:

- a critical approach to traditional sociological theories (functionalism, conflict theories and evolutionism);
- showing a connection among individual adaptive strategies and stability and an existing social order change;
- creating a paradigm connecting micro- and macro-sociological perspective;
- perceiving individuals as free subjects who rationally plan their actions. It does not however exclude routine actions or actions motivated by a particular emotional state. Results of subjects' acting are not always intended.;
- individuals reproduce an existing order through implementing into their acting strategies requirements functioning on different levels of social structure;
- individuals make changes in a social structure through a modification or entirely rejecting the game rules which they regard as ineffective or harmful. The process of aggregation of dissatisfaction with an existing social order is important. The result of that is an individual or collective acting aimed at transformation of particular elements or the whole social order.;
- individuals agree on a social order existing and defined limits of their free acting through subordination to two kinds of control: external (game rules defined by for example law, tradition, religion) and internal (value and standard systems);

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[31] Jane Webster, Richard Watson, 'Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: Writing a literature review', *MIS Quarterly*, Vol. 26 (2), p. 13-23
[32] Hannah Snyder, 'Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 104, 2019, p. 333-339, p. 333

Outcomes: Subjectivity in terms of various theoretical approaches

The factors which influenced a contemporary understanding of the subjectivity idea were two processes shaping the content of theoretical considerations on the subject.[33] The first one was humanization characterized by attributing driving forces within a society not to supernatural and natural powers but to particular outstanding individuals. In that meaning charismatic individuals[34] had adequate competences to stimulate masses of people to organized acting which resulted in a whole society changes. The second process was a socialization of the subjectivity idea which attributed a power of social structures changing and means of individual or group acting to a self-regulating social organism[35]. This is an approach typical to dominant in sociology in the 19th century an organicist and evolutionistic orientation. In this approach subjectivity is treated as a force independent from individuals which change the surrounding social reality. It is based on perceiving a society as a solid objective and organic whole undergoing specific autonomic modifications according to unshakable natural law inevitabilities. Subjectivity is in that sense socialized but at the same time dehumanized. Contemporary sociological theories perceive subjectivity through humanization and socialization. In that sense an individual has a limited driving role. However, social changes should be perceived as their collective effect.

One of the precursors of denying an opposition between an individual and a society was *Norbert Elias*. His figurate theory focuses on changeable human relations (figurates/figurations), which are a specific link between system requirements and subjective possibilities[36]. All individuals functioning within specified figurations are mutually interdependent, creating a specifically structured whole. According to Norbert Elias a whole is not an aggregation of its parts but it is managed by special rules which cannot be explained by examining its elements. The whole which is built of a particular system of human relations has a specified inner structure and is a part of other absolutes of a broader range. Each of these absolutes has specified methods of keeping a social order and a particular dynamics of changes. According to this the-

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[33] Piotr Sztompka, *Socjologia zmian społecznych* (Cracow: Znak, 2005), p. 183-184

[34] Paul Joosse, 'Becoming a God: Max Weber and the Social Construction of Charisma', *Journal of Classical Sociology* , Vol.14(3), 2014, p. 266-283, p. 270

[35] John Offer, 'Herbert Spencer, Sociological Theory, and the Professions', *Frontiers in Sociology*, Vol. 4(77), 2019, p. 1-11, p. 4

[36] Norbert Elias, 'Problems of Involvement and Detachment', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 7(3), 1956, p. 226-252

ory individual adaptive strategies are not possible to analyze without taking into consideration figurations' specifics in which they function. Individuals projecting their acting strategies do not function in a social vacuum but they try to adjust to their relational partners and to the existing game rules. Game rules changes happen only within particular figurations. An individual himself/herself has no sufficient driving force to conduct important changes of a structural character. It is possible only through co-creating relations with other individuals which will support his/her new individual acting or build new forms of collective acting[37].

Piotr Sztompka's theoretical proposals refer to a dichotomy among subjective individuals and social structure requirements[38]. At the same time the author in his society creating theory underlines the meaning of a social system self-transformation as a consequence of a mutual interaction among individuals and social structures. A society never exists in a final form but it is always only becoming. It never is but it is always becoming.[39] Therefore, a society is a specific resultant of subjects' actual acting and particular structural requirements[40]. In that situation a society is never static but always undergoes transformations. The difference is on the level of intensity of those changes. The basis of his considerations is a statement that in a social reality there is no individual-structure dichotomy and their differences show only on a potential level but never on a level of realization[41]. Individuals and structures are specific categories which in a real society overlap inseparably in so called individual-structure dynamic field. The main element of this field are social events connected with one another in a certain time and space forming a social-historical praxis. Subjectivity is realized by a praxis manifested in social events. This horizontal connection between subjectivity and a praxis is behind the term of happening. It is an again convergence of actualizations happening on different levels, fusion of structure development and subjects' mobilization. Thus it is conditioned from up and down but it cannot be reduced to any of those processes.[42] The important element in Piotr Sztompka's considerations is a statement that a potential for acting both as far as subjects

[37] Sebastien Chauvin, 'The Society of Individuals by Norbert Elias; Michael Schrter; Edmund Jephcott', *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 32(4), 2003, p. 527-528

[38] Piotr Sztompka, *The Sociology of Social Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993)

[39] Piotr Sztompka, 'Teoria stawania się społeczeństwa', *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, Vol. 35 (1), 1991, p. 17-26, p. 26

[40] George Ritzer, 'Society in Action: The Theory of Social Becoming. By Piotr Sztompka. University of Chicago Press, 1991', *Social Forces*, Vol. 73 (2), 1994, p. 770–771

[41] François Boudreau, 'Reviewed Work: Agency and Structure: Reorienting Social Theory by Piotr Sztompka', *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 21 (3), 1996, p. 442-444

[42] Piotr Sztompka, *Socjologia zmian społecznych* (Cracow: Znak, 2005), p. 207

and a social structure is activated in particular conditions[43]. In other cases it functions in a dormant state as a possibility but not a necessity of definite acting. From the point of view of considerations about individual adaptive strategies constructing it is worth mentioning that a specifics of continual events happening in a praxis sphere in a particular time and space affects repeatedly on the basis of feedback both subjects and a social structure. Reproduction processes, modification and creation run with a participation of subjects and structures in a praxis sphere. As a result of these actions a praxis itself undergoes changes repeatedly influencing both elements of an individual-structure field. It results in a subsequent redefining the ways of acting on both levels. These are permanent and independent modifications which overall form a dynamic object of the highest level of complexity: a social-historical praxis. It is a field of cumulative events in a particular individual-structural praxis at the same time creating a complex system which cannot be diagnosed by reducing to particular individuals or structures.

Anthony Giddens' structuring theory is based on a conviction that a fundamental object of researchers' interest should be an organized social practice[44]. This is an assumption with a criticism of functionalist and structuralist theories as a base from which, according to the author, another assumption arises that a social reality is so dynamic and complex that one cannot talk about a permanent influence of specified principles or social rules on individuals or groups. In the centre of his interest there was a process of structuring which was based on a gradual transformation of principles and social rules through a process of using them in actual social acting by individuals[45]. All the rules functioning in a society in a given time are a result of subjects' particular acting and their lasting is dependent on their social reproduction in a process of social interactions[46]. Anthony Giddens calls that process a self-regulation. Human social acting is recurrent. This means that actors do not create them but constantly reproduce through the means appropriate to them as to actors. Through their acting and as its result they reproduce conditions of possibilities of those actions.[47] The basis of individual acting is knowledge and reflex-

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[43] Piotr Sztompka, *Society in Action: The Theory of Social Becoming* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991)

[44] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984)

[45] Seth Oppong, 'Between Bandura and Giddens: Structuration Theory in Social Psychological Research?', *Psychological Thought*, 2014, Vol. 7(2), p. 111–123, p. 112-113

[46] Marlie van Rooyen, 'Structure and agency in news translation: An application of Anthony Giddens' structuration theory', *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Vol.* 31(4), 2013, p. 495-506, p. 497

[47] Joas, Hans, 'Giddens' Theory of Structuration: Introductory Remarks on a Sociological Transformation of the Philosophy of Praxis', *International Sociology,* Vol. 2 (1), 1987, p. 13-26

ivity. People take action basing on previous knowledge about a surrounding social reality, principles and rules, which condition their behavior. They are able to monitor cogitatively their actions but also actions of other actors. Each actor assumes that other individuals also constantly monitor their actions and other people' actions. Subjects are able to explain rationally what and why they are doing not only in their case but also in case of other people. The important problem of Giddens' theory is an assumption that actors' motivation is not always identical with actual acting. He emphasizes that motives directly influence actions only in rather unusual circumstances, in situations where a routine is broken. Generally motives provide with overall plans, programs within which various actions take place. Majority of everyday acting is not directly motivated[48].

In everyday life practice routine actions dominate, targeted at a reproduction of commonly accepted rules. Dynamic implementing of motivation into an acting system by subjects serves arranging a social reality, creating its new reading and taking particular actions spread over time. In the situation where a reality is changing subjects must from time to time include their practical motivation into specific adjustment actions planning in order to organize an existing social world around them. Individuals' target is always such organizing an existing reality through particular acting strategies that a reality would show itself simple and predictable. This does not mean however that such rational and considered actions always give specific results. The product of subjects' acting who function in mutual interaction networks are often not intended consequences which require subjects' repeated active adjustment to a surrounding. Individual adaptive strategies are not static and possible to plan. They are, according to Anthony Giddens' theory, a resultant of specified knowledge which individuals have in a given time, their motivation types, ways of cogitative monitoring their own and others' actions and functioning in a social reality being a result of previous consequences of their actions.

The important theory in our considerations is an active society concept by *Amitai Etzioni*. According to his theory a society foundation is an individual autonomous social activity aimed at other individuals and a social structure[49]. Amitai Etzioni demonstrates how individual subjectivity through a mediation in communities and social subsystems gains a possibility to influence a whole society as well. The above mechanism is a main driver for whole society changes and is its base to last in time. A human ability to act

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[48] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), p. 5

[49] Edmund Dahlström, 'Book Reviews: The Active Society. A Theory of Societal and Political Processes. By Amitai Etzioni. New York: The Free Press, 1968', *Acta Sociologica*, Vol.12 (1), 1969, p. 40-43, p. 40

is cumulated within defined group and community borders but a constant communication among individuals generates processes of exceeding those borders, building new networks mobilizing individuals to collective acting[50]. A community consists of sub-communities, not individuals, which include consistent micro-individuals, aggregated not accidentally. This means that a community has its own internal structure.[51] In that situation an assumption is generated that informal connections and direct interactions among community or group members are not sufficient to their overall efficient functioning. Communities or groups based on community connections cannot exist but those connections and communication forms must become more formalized. Amitai Etzioni calls this process of an internal subsystem regulation in a given system as a loyalty extension which refers to an institutionality phenomenon. The mentioned process is dependent from three factors: leaders, shared values, communication channels institutionalized within a community.

In that process of extended loyalty creating an idea of complex social networks is crucial. Those networks are built from numerous elements performing usually different functions, connected in a complex but yet precise way, networks grow, adjust to environmental changes, optimize their acting, creating useful and eliminating redundant connections. Groups or communities in order to be able to function in a particular social context and to regulate inner relations among their elements must rely on complex networks which are fundamental for a loyalty extension process. Adaptability and efficiency growth of a given group or community but also of their members, depends primarily on their flexibility and adaptability to social reality requirements. Amitai Etzioni emphasizes that such internal and external communication structures are crucial to lasting and development of a system, and sharing common values by community or group members plays an important role in consistency creating[52]. Collectivity data should have more association than community characteristics if they want to generate efficient and adaptive complex networks[53]. A social system such a community is can be described as an open system[54]. This comes from the fact that a complex system[55] has to

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[50] Jack Demaine, 'Education and Families in The Spirit of Community: questions of identity, individuality and diversity', *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, Vol. 6(1), 1996, p. 37-48, p. 38

[51] Amitai Etzioni, *Aktywne Społeczeństwo* (Cracow: Nomos, 2012), p. 107

[52]   Amitai Etzioni, 'Communitarianism revisited', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol. 19 (3), 2014, p. 241–260 p. 249-250

[53]   Albert Reka, Barabási Albert-Laszlo, 'Statistical mechanics of complex networks', *Reviews Modern Physics*, Vol. 74 (1), 2002, p. 47-97

[54] Wolfgang Mayrhofer, 'Social systems theory as theoretical framework for Human Resource Management: Benediction or curse?', *Management Revue*, Vol. 15,(2), 2009, p. 178-191, p. 181

[55]   Tom Burns, 'The Sociology of Complex Systems: An Overview of Actor-System-Dynamics Theory', *The Journal of New Paradigm Research*, Vol. 62 (6), 2006, p. 411-440

adapt continuously to a changeable social environment and regulate internal relations among elements. All that requires optimizing community and association connection features in a collectivity and creating complex communication networks. In such a system active individuals' role is crucial. A measure of a degree in which an individual is active socially towards his/her own structure in which he/she functions is to what extent he/she perceives his/her own organization as prone to change. Active subjects can function only in properly open and undergoing regulations social structures. An acting actor cannot be weak and thoughtless but has to have suitable communication competences and motivation to take risk to mobilize other people. As a result the above factors point at a high level of individual strategies' dynamism adaptive to a social reality.

According to Amitai Etiozni there is no even one abstract efficient decision-making strategy isolated from a social context in which it was taken and from actors' control abilities. The most efficient strategy is a strategy adjusted best to a particular situation and an actor's abilities. A rational strategy is highly inflexible, it proposes the same recommendations in all situations and to all actors.[56] Individuals' strategies cannot be inflexible, they must adjust to a specifics of functioning in complex networks which tend to permanent extension and adapting new elements. Subjects' acting strategies must have an ability to overall searching existing social structures, analyzing them so deeply as their structural potential to transformation allows.

Academic discussion: Individual and structure mutual determinism as a theoretical base for an analysis of individual adaptive strategies

Theories connecting humanization and socialization processes in an aspect of driving forces changing a social reality emerged on a wave of criticism in the 60s and 70s of the 20th century. One of the key scientific texts of that time was *Denis H. Wrong's* work who created his critical concept of over-socialized human being and over-integrated society. His concept is directed against sociological theories which do not include into their considerations possibilities of influencing a social reality by active subjects. Denis H. Wrong emphasizes a lack of realism of traditional sociological theories and their detachment from a real existing society and its functioning. The author clearly underlines that a human being is a social animal, at the same time not being an animal totally socialized. A social nature of a human being is a source of

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[56] Amitai Etzioni, *Aktywne Społeczeństwo* (Cracow: Nomos, 2012), p. 279

conflicts and antagonisms itself which through standards resist socialization in all societies.[57] An academic criticism applied to a negative reference to sociological theory assumptions which did not include into their considerations the meaning of subjectively acting individuals who in a cogitative way analyze a surrounding social reality, calculate and choose particular acting. This is a crucial moment in our considerations of an individual adaptive strategies idea. Only in case when scientists in their studies consider mutual determinism of actively' acting subjects and limiting them social structures, one can talk about an academic analysis of strategic plans particular individuals in a society create and realize. These are acting strategies in a social reality which is recognized, described and categorized in order to choose a particular acting by individuals from the point of view of internalized by him/her values, standards, rules or principles acceptable in a society.

It can be assumed that the key element of social structures determinism on individuals is functioning in a society of particular common knowledge resources understood as a set of the facts socially shared as something natural and not requiring a deeper reflexion. According to *Izabella Anuszkiewicz* a given fact has a character of common knowledge in a particular group of people if it is known to all of them and additionally if each of them knows it is known to others and if each of them is aware that everyone knows about that fact.[58] Each individual has his/her own knowledge about a surrounding reality, about what a given subject knows about possible states of the world. In practice it means that an individual has particular socialized 'social instruments' of learning, describing and evaluating events happening around him/her thanks to which he/she can analyze an influence of particular structure requirements on his/her acting choice. Taking into consideration a crucial for our deliberations concept of adaptation based on a mutual regulation and an active subjects' and social structures adjustment principle it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that to talk about adaptability of a whole social system it is also necessary to refer to its basic elements which are individuals[59]. Surviving of a whole social system is dependent from its each element's ability to transform in such a way that a whole not only would last in time but also develop its complexity and functionality.

An internal regulation among various social system elements is frequently done by negotiations or social conflicts activating adaptive mechanisms of a

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[57] Denis H. Wrong, 'The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Sociology', *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 26 (2), 1961, p. 183-193

[58] Izabella Anuszewska, *Sondaże-zwierciadło społeczeństwa. Rytuały komunikacyjne a kreowanie wiedzy wspólnej (*Warsaw: CeDeWu, 2010), p. 21

[59] Michael Reed, 'In praise of duality and dualism: Rethinking agency and structure in organisational analysis', *Organization Studies*, Vol.18(1), 1997, p. 21–42

whole social system which result in changes not only on a level of structures but also on a level of individuals' mentality. According to *Bogdan Mach* in considerations of social subjectivity it is always necessary to take into account both individuals' subjectivity and social structures subjectivity. This comes from an assumption that an individual may be a subject only in a subjective society and in that only society he/she can be an actor.[60] Therefore, social structures cannot be oppressive to actors. Such a way of proceeding causes in time an accumulation of strong discrepancies in expectations, needs and interests of both sides resulting in a high probability of occurring strong bottom anti-system conflicts based on socially shared frustration states of individuals and ambiguity of existing social requirements. Another scenario may forecast occurring all kinds of public life pathology as a form of anti-system and individual dealing with the incomprehensible world of institutions. Mutual determinism of individuals and structures has its reflection in a way of planning and acting of actors[61]. Each actor is characterized by subjectivity and limited rationality[62]. On the one hand he/she takes specific actions oriented on common knowledge resources, defined principles and values which determine his/her conditions imposed by a social structure.[63] On the other hand he/she does a cogitative analysis of a surrounding reality in order to increase efficiency of his/her strategies realization. It is worth mentioning how a level of automatism or reflexivity of actor's[64] actions is different depending on a level of social structures openness. It is possible to say the more oppressive a social structure is the more dominant an individual automatic acting and the less cogitative acting. In this aspect it is crucial that legal or moral sanctions for innovative behavior occur, frequently identified with deviant actions and a simultaneous individuals' calculation concerning a profitability of risk taking, changing previous acting strategies.

A level of engagement in an acceptable game rules dimension refers to such concepts as feelings and emotions. It describes a state of willingness of individuals to take actions targeted at preservation or change of an existing social order. It describes an existence of strongly motivating individual acting

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[60] Bogdan Mach, +Jednostka, jako podmiot i przedmiot transformacji społecznej', In: Witold Morawski (Ecs.), *Modernizacja Polski. Struktury, agencje, instytucje*, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Akademickie, p. 357-381, 2010, p. 362

[61] Guido Möllering, 'The Trust/Control Duality: An Integrative Perspective on Positive Expectations of Others', *International Sociology*, Vol. 20 (3), p. 283-305

[62] Herbert Simon, *Models of Man, Social and Rational: Mathematical Essays on Rational Human Behavior in a Social Setting (*New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957), p. 204-205

[63] Rob Stones, 'Refusing the Realism-Structuration Divide', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 4(2), 2001, p. 177-197, p. 178

[64] Anthony Giddens, Christopher Pierson, *Conversations with Anthony Giddens – Making Sense of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p. 134

axio-normative system. The problem is an individuals' analysis of a social reality from the point of view of a particular value hierarchy marking an acceptable behavior sphere. In such an understanding of a social reality, a variability of conditions is always compared with a system of rules which in reference to each situation marks a clear normative indication of individuals' acting. In that sense it is about a creation of a consistent axiological system which establishes universal and clear normative priorities. An individual strongly engaged in a value sphere and living in a society which approves such an engagement sees a social reality through imposed opinions perceiving it as the only acceptable perspective explaining a range of possible individual behavior. A dimension of engagement into a value sphere in the highest degree shows which benefits are available to individuals when having a closed cognitive system characterized by such features as: strong internalization of standards and values, dogmatism, conformity, perceiving conflicts as a threat for an existing social order, a high level of touchiness for criticism. A strong engagement in a values sphere, basing individual actions on an organized standards and values system, is connected with actions aimed at reducing social interaction costs. It is connected with an opinion that this type of reaction results in a low level of a social risk related to a lack of predictability of consequences of acting. A clear value hierarchy generates automaticity of acting which means a low interest in a reality leading to actions directed at maximum simplification and predictability of a surrounding social world. A particular axio-normative system generates a precisely specified set of rules explaining a reality from the point of view of a good and bad behavior. A complexity of a social world is facilitated here to a simple model. Generating maximum emphasis on engagement in values is in sociology frequently related to such ideas as a closed identity - an attitude which is characterized by a strong identification of individuals with the past. An analysis of a surrounding reality is done on a basis of exclusive reference to fixed in a society standards and values canon. New standards and values coming to a high degree as a result of a globalization process are generally rejected as alien and threatening an organized social world hierarchy.

An analysis of interest in a reality dimension refers to a social acting issue. An element of each decision taking by individuals is an analysis of both individual and context possibilities.[65] As a result it is possible from the point of view of individuals an efficient realization of assumed goals. In that sense the focus is on drawing a subjective's attention to a specified target and having a particular social knowledge level. From the point of view of a subject it is im-

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[65] Margaret Scotford Archer, *The reflexive imperative in late modernity* (Cambridge: University Press, 2012), p. 7

portant to monitor continuously a surrounding reality and gain information aiming at maximizing an efficiency of analysis leading to an effective action. These are actions requiring much time and energy of subjectives, generating at the same time a high level of risk[66]. An individual characterized with a big pressure on interest in a reality sphere is described as a person not acting against his/her own internal feelings but as a subject aiming at being in various configurations which are by him/her analyzed from the point of view of his/her own strategies. In relation with transformations a social reality undergoes, capturing by an individual such a type of transformations forces him/her to gain an ability of quick changing a subject of attention, until the highest level of a consciousness tension. Consciousness serves an individual to detect and define a multiplicity of stimuli coming from numerous sources.[67] Some of system pressures never get to human mental structures. They never become his/her own opinions and motivations to specified actions or even they get into an individual's inside, a hierarchic organization of these elements is fundamentally different from a requirement structure and rules functioning in an external world. In the second case an individual despite standard and values internalization coming from external injunction will never identify himself/herself with them fully. An individual's acting along structural patterns will be an acting controlled from the outside and simultaneously strong alienated from those patterns. The effect of that is subjects' convincing that professing a particular standard and values canon is not necessary and may be even harmful. All conservative restrictions are treated as barriers limiting an efficiency of acting.

One should pay attention to the fact that these are two types of ideal actions. Usually particular individuals in a specified time and place may be more oriented on automatic actions or a cogitative analysis of a surrounding social reality. To a large extend it is dependent from an individual perception of a social order level, a legibility of system requirements from particular social roles or a social structures openness[68]. A permanent state of an active reflexivity of actors is hazardous not only for an individual himself/herself but also for a whole social system. In a situation of negotiating and changing social game rules it is important that a system after an adaptive regulation could

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[66] Barry O'Neill, 'Risk Aversion in International Relations Theory', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 45(4), 2001, p. 617 - 640

[67] Boris Kotchoubey, 'Human Consciousness: Where Is It From and What Is It for', *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 9, 2018, https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00567/full [20.07.2020]

[68] Douglas Porpora, 'Four concepts of social structure'. In: Margaret Scotford Archer, Roy Bhaskar, Andrew Collier, Tony Lawson, Alan Norrie (Eds.), *Critical realism: Essential readings*, London: Routledge, p. 339-355, 1998

toughen and a new order would begin to be something natural to individuals, not requiring a longer reflexion. Both too high level of automatism (conservatism, a low level of internal regulations, system adaptability decrease) and too high level of reflexivity of subjects (conflictuality, increase of confusion and a social system disorder) is not advantageous for a whole social system in a long term perspective. Both adaptability of a whole social system and efficiency of creating individual adaptive strategies base on an adequate level of optimization of both automatic and cogitative actions. Whether or not an individual's actions will be rather directed to automatism or reflexivity largely depends on a social context in which he/she functions.

Conclusion

Analyzing individual adaptive strategies in a static way should be considered as ignorant towards well described subjectivity theories and mutual determinism of individuals and social structures. Appearing of a new postmodern reality characterized with a high level of complexity resulted in a fact that some researchers did not recognized how deeply their way of thinking derived from old-fashioned concepts. Obviously it is the easiest way to evaluate critically sociology of complexity achievements, maintaining it is a phenomenon which cannot be translated to classical sociology theories. It is worth underlining that a complexity experience is common nowadays. It should be noted that the complexity experience is contradictory to consolidated in sociology modern theories. Modern theories emphasized the fact that an individual as a subject has an absolute ability to control a surrounding reality. This control over the world was achieved by individuals or specialized institutions and organizations. The complexity experience questions all those opinions. Complexity theories challenge a modern scientific view of the world pointing to its inadequacy to reality[69]. However, this does not mean one should call for revolution within sociology in the name of developing complexity. Classical sociological theories, similarly to an analysis of subjectivity concept and individual adaptive strategies, again require revitalization and adjustment to a practical analysis. In that context individual adaptive strategies models should consider mutual individual and social structures determinism, a limited possibility to control reality by subjects and individual dynamic mechanisms of adjustment to more and more chaotic world.

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[69] John Robert Turner, Rose Baker, 'Complexity Theory: An Overview with Potential Applications for the Social Sciences', *Systems*, Vol 7 (4), 2019, p. 1-23, p. 1

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