Lajos Somogyvári

The Knowledge Transfer and Spaces of Education inside and outside the Institution
(Visual Interpretations in the Hungarian Educational Periodicals, 1960-1970)

Theses of doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Supervisor:
Habil. Dr. János Géczi professor

Pécs
2014
1. Research problem

My researches were motivated by several complementary questions, combined with various methods and approaches; according to the nature of the visual interpretation. The title of the thesis booklet reflects the main goals of my study: photographs connected with educational spaces to interpret and explain the represented knowledge transfer and education inside and outside the institution. Spaces, images are fundamental and specific to the historical period of the 1960’s in Hungary in the perspective of everyday cultural practices, formal and non-formal education and nurturing. By these we can express a general experience. The visual Hungarian educational periodicals provide the sources of the research.

I prefer visual sources instead of verbal ones, and that lead to a lot of problems in a historical study. We can produce different worldviews from the photographic corpus, determined by the characteristics of visuality. Images about students and teachers are simultaneously unique and common (Rousmaniere 2001), corresponding to the essential duality of the photograph. Taking a picture means to capture a moment: that is why spontaneous and intentional signs inseparable constitute the surface of the photo (Mietzner – Pilarczyk 2010). Social sciences in our days are concerned with more attention to the visual studies, especially the functions, specifics and cultural meanings of the images, related to the personal and group identification mechanisms. It is important to apply this visual aspect in the Hungarian History of Education, because there have been only a few studies in this area of scientific knowledge yet.

2. Topic and structure of the dissertation

Images spread widely between 1960 and 1970 it is practical to study the roles of pictures in the Hungarian press in this period. Choosing the beginning and closing date of the study was random on purpose, to avoid the historical interpretation and narratives of the repression after the revolution of 1956, the consolidation started from 1961, or implement the New Economic Mechanism in 1968. I have selected six Hungarian periodical journals to study, considering three aspects: these periodicals distributed nation-wide, they published photographs frequently and were maintained by the Ministry of Culture. Journals fit to the criteria are the following: Család és Iskola (Family and School), Gyermekünk (Our Child), Köznevelés (Public Education), Óvodai Nevelés (Education in Kindergarten), A Tanító (The Elementary Teacher), A Tanító Munkája (The Work of the Elementary Teacher). There are altogether 5371 anthropological photos altogether (with human figures) in these periodicals in the 1960’s – that is the base of my study.
The dissertation contains ten chapters: in the introduction I presented the hypothesis and theoretical-methodical background, with the demonstration of the previous scientific literature in Hungary and abroad in this topic. I described the History of Education in 1960’s Hungary by using contemporary statistics, actors and tendencies of educational policies. A short review of the six periodicals followed, and then continued in the second, main part of the study: analysis of the educational spaces and places, the knowledge transfer. It began with the inquiry of the main educational institutions: kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, higher education, including 1224 photos. I separated other photo-sequences too: teacher training and further training (40 images), different spaces of producing and transmitting knowledge, for example: visual representations of book-publishing, libraries, movie, television, audio-visual tools and technical instruments of programmed learning (all in one, 149 pictures). 114 photographs show additional institutional environments like nurseries, day care centres, orphanages, child protection and child homes, schools of special education. Summarizing the former examples: 1527 photos were taken of institutional spaces of education. We have to extend the inquiry to the imagery of outdoor education and activities, pictures of the Pioneer Movement, art and physical education (782 images). At the end of the visual interpretations we can see the sequence of the Labour School, the transition from school to working life of society, seen in 606 pictures. To sum up the data, 54 percentage of the whole visual corpus (2915 photos of the total 5371 elements) were examined in the study. The doctoral work is finished by the conclusions and a supplementary, the latter review the relevant actors of the Hungarian pedagogy and education sciences in 1960’s Hungary.

3. Theses of the research
Points of the hypothesis I made at the beginning are half methodological, half about the possible results of my research.

Methodological points:
1., Connection of educational spaces with photos reveals different anthropological meanings, which express the everyday experience of schooling and pedagogical activities everywhere in the society. The cultural constructions of childhood and youth have constant and changing elements, too.

2., Due to the visual material, the methodology have to be interdisciplinary. Beside the traditional analysis of the educational spaces (i.e. classroom studies), I study different visual spaces of indoor and also outdoor education, for example photos of organising the afternoon free time.
3. The personal empirical knowledge of nurture, teaching and education, the approach of microhistory (Szabolcs 2013) should be combined with the discourses of the educational policy (also politics), and the scientific-professional utterance, the public opinion, represented by the press.

4. The semantics of cultural meanings, the visual interpretations can be modified, completed and rephrased, correspond to the plural, ambiguous signification of images.

Possible results of the research:

1. Imagery of knowledge transmitting and education accompany the life of an upbringing person, from the kindergarten to the initiation of work; they emphasize the beginning and the end of the process.

2. Each period has an educational ideal, a conception about a well-educated person to achieve. Between 1960 and 1970 socialist pedagogy determined the image of the student who lived in the community, qualified physically and mentally, becoming a cultured, self-conscious socialist citizen at the end. The images reflect the realization of the normative ideal; they rarely show discrepancy from the socialist model.


4. The ideological education was more stressful at the verbal level than visually, although the indirect effect of Marxism was present in the press.

4. Methodology of the research

4. 1. Anthropology

Education sciences and the history of education nowadays show increasing interest in the field of anthropology, which can establish a complex human-cultural science. The so-called historical-pedagogical anthropology (Németh – Pukánszky 2004) originated in different traditions: the German philosophy, the French Annales, sociology and the Anglo-Saxon cultural studies together contributed to this development (Kontopodis – Wulf - Fichtner 2011). Exploration of the worldviews emerges from the dialogue between pedagogy and anthropology; determining the images of education in different historical eras. The notions of mental and physical image, worldview and ideal have a common visual nature in etymology; the pictorial turn underlines the same (Mitchell 1994).
Pictures of child and adult, student and teacher appear in the context of space and time: this trivial sentence directs to another paradigmatic shift, the spatial turn. From this point of view the geographic spaces have transformed into cultural spaces, where human bodies, activities and relations are formulated, focusing on the construction of spaces, accept the character of space as natural and social together (Ayers 2010). We can divide the anthropological space into three types. In the first anthropological space one can concentrate only on the human figure, its biological characteristics (body, face, express of emotions etc.) and social specifics (clothes, hair, extras). The portraits give good example to this, showing the face exclusively. Most of the photos represent the second anthropological space, showing more actors, various actions and interactions, the surrounding environment, locations of formal and non-formal education. Expansion of human relations and communication, crossing borders to the territory of ideology, temporality and symbols give the third anthropological space in the name of the socialist internationalism (the partition is based on: Géczi – Darvai 2010). Disassociation of the three types is not easy (and there are other possibilities), the majority of the spaces is mixed, but using this distinction has the advantage of comparison and contrast.

4. 2. Iconology and iconography

There are a number of difficulties in the case of visual interpretations, because of the main principle of the Western, European culture, the verbal literacy (Nyíri 2001). Iconology and iconography - former methods of history of art - provide help to solve the problem: the levels of interpretation (sketched by Panofsky in the 1920’s, 1930’s, see. Panofsky 1972) show surprising similarity to the goals of anthropology. The primary, pre-iconographical analysis defines the signs of a painting, referring to explicit objects, activities, and the everyday life-experience. The iconographic description follows this; add allegories, definite stories to the surface of the pictures – like narratives in the photographic-interpretations, as we will further see. Finally, iconology, world of the symbolic values ends the explanation, which is the same as the semantics of the third anthropological space, the ideology.

The image stands in the centre of the scientific interest of human studies in the 1990’s again (Boehm 1994) – like linguistic turn, it was a major development in the western thoughts. The visual literacy have become more important, shaping our identities, worlds and everyday activities – visual narratives told by the images are just as crucial to scientific investigation as the verbal documents (Mitchell 2008). I made a database of the analysed
photographs; the main aspects are the following: name of the photographer, title of the picture, publication data, the verbal context, motives, themes and symbols (Mietzner – Pilarczyk 2010). The researcher has to isolate the strictly description of the picture (identify and fixate the visual elements) from the verbal interpretation (Kunt 1995:14): this separation is always problematic because of the scholar’s historical-sociological presuppositions. The images have not occurred alone, we have to find out the connections between them to separate different sequences of photos. These photos are embedded in the socio-historical reality of their publication period, which means different consequences. The background of the picture (history, sociology, politics and so on) is a helping tool, but also limits the interpretations, influences certain directions. Permanent reflexion about the interference and conflicts of different viewpoints can avoid the above written contradiction.

4. 3. Temporality and History of Education

The socio-historical, chronological attitude is essential in my research: this attitude utilize statistics, documents of policy and policymakers. The quantitative methods (e.g. analysis of the Educational Law in 1961, regulations of the MSZMP - Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party -, data about teachers and students, decrees etc.) complete the background of the images’ anthropology and worldview. Image and text explain and comment each other, in this mutual process we always have to take the influence of the ministerial maintenance and the editorial staffs, manifested in picture selection, -publication into consideration.

History of the press has not widely examined in the Hungarian education sciences. In this research area the professional - scientific self-reflexion, claim of the legitimation require to survey the photographers, the publishers, strategies of the periodicals and the institutional system. Theories of professionalization (Keller 2010) suggest that the professional communication and the organizational background are important measuring data to evaluate the autonomy of the pedagogy and the education sciences. The other dimension of this issue is public opinion: assessments in the topic of the sociology of reading are absent, so we can only describe the phenomenon of “implied, ideal reader” (to this notion, see: Eagleton 2000:105).

History of education has new tasks and topics in the postmodern era (Bíró – Pap 2007): instead of writing the History, the lives of great historical personalities (the macro level), researchers begin to study stories of everyday life, the local meanings, in other words, the micro level. Consequently, some new historical trends emerge, like microhistory, history of mentalities (or attitudes) and Alltagsgeschichte (history of everyday life, see: Spode 1999).
Recent historiography combines traditional, event history analysis and chronologies with the results of cultural history; analogue to this an image–interpretation has got a historical background and the unique socio-cultural context, too. To historicize the culture means to contextualise our everyday life’s experience, like schooling, a general observation in the European, North-American world, which helps the understanding of social groups and activities (Németh – Szabolcs 2001).

4. **Narrative based interpretation**

History of Education tells familiar narratives to us: for example “the Innocent Child” (Golnhofer – Szabolcs 2005), or the teacher roles of official, educator and expert (Trencsényi 1988) – these ideas turn up both visually and textually. The narratives play an important role to produce and shape identities, which is called narrative identity in the study of literature (Ricoeur 2001). Some scholars think that narrative is the base of the scientific discourse (Bruner 2004, White 1973), its coherency, explanation power and logics decide the relevance of the narrative. Our individual and collective experience about schooling, the history of everyday life is constituted by the same narratives (like in the western anthropology, see: Bán 2008:207-215).

Images and texts create discourse networks, every actors of education participate to maintain them, produce and disseminate the systematic knowledge (Foucault 1990) about pedagogy and pedagogical mechanisms. This knowledge is determinated by the researcher’s viewpoint too: our questions limit the possible answers of the interpretations (Eco 1994), warn the hermeneutics. Spatial and temporal distance cause misunderstanding, the main goal is to put meanings back in their original context (for hermeneutics, see: Gadamer 1984). Narratives are part of the professional-scientific discourse, with definite argumentation and set of concepts – to enter a dialogue to these cultural constructions differs, according to the researchers’ experience and knowledge. We have to reflect this, discuss several opinions critically and not searching the one and only Truth.

5. **Conclusions**

Analysis of education and knowledge transfer should not be restricted to the classroom-activities – the outdoor education and non-formal scenes are equally important. On the contrary, I have not examined informal learning, influences of family and peer groups, because it is not possible to segregate such photograph categories – the informal knowledge is
more hidden, than formal ones. The latter connected with the main institutional levels (kindergarten, elementary and secondary schools), with additional differentiated pedagogical spaces, extension of the education. The socialist paternal state guaranteed child protection and social cases by its own principles: this is indicated by the growing number of elementary and secondary student hostels, the special institutions (antecedent earlier in this thesis booklet) and organizing the afternoon free time and the outdoor activities with the Pioneer Movement, sports and arts. This multiplies the processes of learning and teaching, with the complex structure of autonomous and controlled knowledge transfer or rather different forms of the educational system. The educational policy had broadened range to manipulate and rule the society of teachers, students and parents with using formal and non-formal methods of educational organization, of course a lot of local and temporal versions in the realization.

There is a permanent representational problem of knowledge transmitted by images, which includes the connection and difference between pictures and reality, the relevancy of visual meaning. Each photo has a context, with publication mechanisms, verbal interpretative discourses around the pictures, wants of the readership, the photographers’ view, topics of the periodicals and the relations amongst images. The importance of these aspects depends on the researcher’s questions - we can make different interpretations and narratives from the same group of pictures. One solution to the representational problem is, if we do not compare pictures with reality, but focus on the represented reality, existing in the imagery only. Knowledge space and visuality (Lévy 1997, Mitchell 2008) are significant concepts in the human studies in these days, with increasing effects in the future. Representational problem brings us to the issue of the ideal student and the teacher, goals of the pedagogy.

“Ideal pedagogy” (or pedagogical ideal) phrases definite values and mental patterns, transmitting them, with the help of the authorities (Buda – Horváth – Simonfalvi – Szekszárdi 2000) – the consequence is an ideal (some say utopic) image about the child, a normative and prescriptive regulation. The elements of the ideal in the 1960’s were the forthcoming: living in the community (and for the community), strong ideological basis, self-determination, prepare for the working-life and developing the whole (mental and physical) personality. The final goal is to create the socialist citizen, to work for the materialization of communism (at the beginning of the decade), or to achieve the socialism (at the end of the decade). Individualism was condemned by the press in the 1960’s several times: performances on the stage, effects of TV-programmes and sport-competitions gave a handle to the negative judgement. The child socialized through several groups, the Pioneer Movement step by step
build organization (kisdobos – little drummer, úttörő – pioneer, kiszes – young communist) helped this process too, also the extension of the educational-pedagogical space to the afternoon free time and the summer (camps). Pictures represent mostly the socialist ideal, rarely the discrepancy or the failure of the ideal (for example, demonstration of the juvenile delinquency).

My first hypothetic assumption is about connecting knowledge, space and visuality to create cultural meanings. It verified in the analysis, because the visual interpretations gathered cultural-educational semantics, a possible map and construction about the 1960’s. The analysis is based on a large scale of sources, so we can make relevant consequences from the examined corpus. I made several logically ordered narratives on the score of photographs and photo-sequences: differentiation of the educational spaces; quantitative progress of the knowledge transfer; expansion of the educational space and the domination of the work-education on every stage of schooling.

In the first narrative we can overview the personal development from early childhood to employment. Institutionalization of the child began in the kindergarten that time (there were only a few nurseries) in homogenous environment (garden and inside spaces) and this little world satisfied every educational needs: play, physical education, arts and intellectual training. There were various represented activities in relatively small number of spaces – for example the garden was the scene for work-education, PE-lesson, play and environmental education too. The integrated and a bit closed world of the kindergarten is similar to the family socialization, which helps the child to take steps into the institution. At the level of elementary and secondary schools the differentiation of the spaces started, activities became specialized: the spaces of vocational education, the gym, the science room, the library, study groups and stages of the Pioneer Movement.

Traditional medium of the knowledge-transfer is book, library and classroom – according to the technical-scientific revolution in the 1960’s new elements were added to this. Beginning of the information society gave significance to knowledge producing – distributing systems, analogue this television, movie, tape recorders and early computers (i.e. teaching machines) appeared. Usage of modern tools were mainly the territory of pedagogical innovations and experiments, we haven’t got enough information about the practical spreading of these tools.

The third, general narrative declares the enlargement of educational spaces on multiple levels. First of all, as I mentioned earlier, the Pioneer Movement, social institutions, student groups, art education and popular sports belong to this (expressing the idea of permanent
education). Secondly, references of internationalism, other countries (the Third World) and memories of the historical past and schooling are part of the so-called pedagogization (Depaepe – Herman – Simon – Surmont – Van Gorp 2008). It means to educate the society through upbringing the children, in the welfare states in Western Europe in 1950’s as well as in the reform-socialist Hungary (Kornai 2007:32-49) in 1960’s. To support my hypothesis of the stronger relation between society and education, the symptom of the pedagogization should be further researched in the Hungarian Education Sciences.

Work-education had priority in Socialism; manifested in the Marxist ideology, legislation and statements, it embraced all school degrees and institutions, from the kindergarten to the university. This narrative occurred in different areas, like gardening in kindergarten, high school-students in factories or on a plough field, voluntary camps, guidance and patronage by several industries. These offered different roles and status to the teacher and to the student: the children and the young could try the positions of the worker, the independent adult, the pioneer or actor of the public life (in the self-government of a brigade, for example).

Presentation of personality development accompanied by the pictures about the knowledge-transfer, the Hungarian educational press stressed the beginning of the process, entering into the institution (662 photos) and the closing period, leaving the institution, starting employment (606 photos). Spaces of transition are decisive in shaping the identity, visualised by several rites, for example graduations, certifications, school-leaving ceremonies and inaugurations. Existing in a community, in an institution means a usually indirect control above the younger generations – an average child in Hungary in the 1960’s had lessons in the mornings and student groups or pioneer-patrol projects in the afternoons. ¹

Time’s dual nature – the eventual linear progress and the repeating, cyclic time (Kaempfer 1997) – can be observed on several levels. Another fundamental question is the temporality of the space. On the one hand synthesis of time and space signifies the levels of schooling, built on each other (elementary, secondary, higher education and other educational places); on the other hand, space was economized by time as we can see it on a school-day / year. My analysis mainly directed to the first aspect (drawing the places of education), but can create other interpretations from the photographic corpus. For example, we can describe the symbolic order of the school day / year: in the first case ring before the lesson, repetition, repetition, repetition...

¹ Time-table has covered more and more areas during the modernisation, which established a „Time Régime”, control above the personality (Goudsblom 2005). Schedules are the manifestations of the time-table in school, to the pedagogical aspects of time see: Németh 2010.
interval, afternoon activities and homework should be the main intersections of this possible inquiry. In the second case the commencement, ceremonies, graduation or vacation would be considered. My study partly affected these cultural practices although the emphasis was not on these time-tables, but to oversee an ideal child’s and young’s development through institutions and educational places.

If we study the chronological order of the educational spaces transformations and changes are constant – the integrated and closed space of the early childhood split up, micro-cosmos of the garden and the kindergarten is occupied by specialized different spaces, like class-room, science-lab, gym, factory or vocational environment. We have to take notice of the more traditional chronology (the history of education), too, make the interpretation diachronic. Several turning points articulated the 1960’s; nevertheless this period is visually homogenous. Approval of the Educational Law (1961) was signed at the beginning of the decade, the legislation goes back in the past to 1958, the consolidation of the Kádár-era. The first half of the 1960’s characterized the reform tendencies, new schedules, textbooks, but to 1965 some elements of the Law (i.e. 5+1 training) failed, so the educational policy revised them. With the implementing of the New Economic Mechanism in 1968 the professional interest-groups became stronger, new reforms started, the tendency reached its highest point with the fifth Congress on Education in 1970.

My last hypothetic point was the direct or indirect effects of ideological indoctrination in the discourses and on the surfaces of the photos. The results meet my previous expectations: I hardly found direct and obvious ideological symbols; visual references (red star, flag, and image of Lenin or coat of arms). The only exception was the pioneer-tie widely represented, but this was often an automatic clothing requisite, without ideology. Near to the ceremonies and anniversaries symbols cumulate – April and November were the most important period in this aspect.

The main question is how to define the terms of ideology or the so-called Weltanschauung: new theories give broader definitions than organized system of political statements, conceptions, beliefs and ideas. In his paper Géza Sáska studied the contact of pedagogy and ideology (2011), beside the traditional explanations he considered crucial that an ideology present groups’ values and claims, shape identities, aims to action and claims the monopoly of justice. In this sense concept of ideology comes close to the ideal pedagogy and its normative goals. Notions about the Ideal Child are equal to child-ideologies (Pukánszky 2011) – they are future orientated, children and the young carry the future.
All scenes of the everyday life had been possible subjects of ideological intervention, imagery and texts often direct the future goals (Apor 2008), discourses of socialism always contrast the ideal future and present with the past. Progression after 1945 was represented as the opposite before the “liberation”, world of poverty and lords, the Horthy-era, enemy of the ideology. Issues of the educational press were the other attribute of the ideology: work-education (dominated the manual-physical work) and the modernization narrative (technics, innovations) supported this. The principle of equality was the last premise in the indirect ideology. We can’t see material-social inequalities on the images - except internationalist, Third World photos, and pictures of the past or backwardness of the Roma people. Otherwise, there is no hierarchy in the first anthropological space, only the individual differences (and not the socio economic status) determinate the representations.

6. Possible directions of further research

The further research will have to extend its temporal limitations, because the decade started in fact with 1957 / 1958 and closed with the Youth Law in 1971. We should compare the direct political-ideological messages of the first decade of the 1950’s with the 1960’s and the next decade. History of Hungarian (educational) press only existed in details – analysis like this contribute to a prospective study. As I mentioned earlier it would be worthwhile to examine the reception of the press, the readership. Subcultures and alternative cultures already appeared at the end of the 1960’s, these symptoms became more critical in the 1970’s. To the next steps it is necessary to analyse the family and non-formal knowledge-transfer in the imagery, although it is hard to separate this image-sequence. There is a need to integrate and digitalize the data of photographs, which can indicate additional researches and dissemination of the visual studies.

The elaboration of these aspects - in different studies - helps to create a synthesis about the visuality of the Hungarian education. Finding an adequate context was the most difficult problem in my study. Spaces of education and the knowledge-transfer verified a useful theory, whereby different circumstances clarified. Other context, other methods and other conception conduct different results.
7. References


8. Publications related to the research topic

Iskolakultúra, 2012. (22. évf.) 5. sz. 56-75.


Somogyvári Lajos: Tankönyv és taneszköz a képeken.

Somogyvári Lajos: Pedagógusképek és -szerepek az 1960-as évek Magyarországn.
Magyar Pedagógia, 2013 (113. évf.) 1. sz. 29-52.


Somogyvári Lajos: Az 1960-as évek képes pedagógiai szaksajtója Magyarországon.

Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Social Analyses, 2013 (3. évf.) 1. sz. 75–90.

Somogyvári Lajos: Képzés és továbbképzés az 1960-as évek pedagógiai tárgyú képein.

Somogyvári Lajos: Az iskolán belüli és kívüli nevelés színterei az 1960-as évek Magyarországn – beavatás az üttörőmozgalmi életbe.
Létünk, 2014 (44. évf.) 1. sz. 68-92.

Lectures related to the research topic:

Somogyvári Lajos: Tankönyv és taneszköz a képeken.


II. Interdiszciplináris Doktorandusz Konferencia, Pécs, 2013. május 15.

Somogyvári Lajos: A pedagógiai emlékezet megalkotása - Összehasonlító vizsgálat az 1960-as évek képes pedagógiai szaksajtójában.

Somogyvári Lajos: A tudásátadás oktatási-intézményi terei.

Somogyvári Lajos: Munkára nevelés a képeken - antropológiai terek vizsgálata az 1960-as évek magyar pedagógiai szaksajtójában.

Somogyvári Lajos: A test meztelensége a hatvanas, hetvenes pedagógiai sajtófotóin.