Sonata Maciulskyte

The Code of Society Transformation in Social Work:

Modelling the Construction of Lithuanian Social Work Professionalization

University of Lapland,
Faculty of Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

The main topic of this meta-analysis is the disclosure of the process of social work becoming a profession in Lithuania under complicated conditions of society transformation. When we speak about the process of any activity becoming a profession we speak about professionalization.

The aims of this meta-analysis are:

1) to analyse social work professionalization in Lithuania in the light of constructivist and systemic theoretical perspectives.
2) to extract and elaborate the main factors creating the conditions for professional social work development in Lithuania over the period of 1992-2013.
3) to answer to the main research question of the meta-analysis – *how did Lithuanian social work professionalize?*

The code of society transformation becomes an ultimate assumption for modelling the construction of social work professionalization, highlighting its manifestation. In Lithuania, there is a lack of a detailed work, which would sum up the results of twenty years of social work development from micro- through meso- to macro-levels trying to cover the whole multi-complexity of the phenomenon; and there is also a need for a comprehensive theoretical conceptual analysis on the issue of social work professionalization.

The theoretical conceptual model of Lithuanian social work professionalization is constructed as an answer to the research question. The theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization manifests the main domains and dynamics of the process from micro- through meso- to macro-levels and does not include smaller scale agents or processes which are tied to the development of a profession. Thus, it leaves space for additional mechanisms to be integrated into it.

The created theoretical conceptual model can be interpreted as follows:

On the one hand, social work practice, studies and science are in the centre of social work professionalization. In Lithuania, these three social work fields develop simultaneously, leading to their tight interdependence. However, each of them is developing by its own pace. Extremely intensive processes of creation of the profession are revealed causing many

contradictions. The contradictions are caused by the lack of stability of the social work professionalization basement, consisting of social policy and education policy.

Social workers work in the system of social care, which is one of the most regulated spheres in the state management. Social care is a part of the state policy defined by a general concept *welfare state* and described in terms of the state social policy, public funding and administrative-bureaucratic apparatus, as well as ideological background and economic behaviour of the society. The lack of stability in the Lithuanian welfare state, predetermined by the lack of experience and the consequences of post-communist transformation, affect the development of state social policy, which in its turn affects the construction of social work as a profession.

On the other hand, the more complex and intellectual professions become, the more the centre of gravity gradually moves to the emphasis on education. Education and training sectors begin to play an increasingly active and influential role in the creative process of professional standards and qualifications. Nowadays, social work is developing rapidly, supported by a growing and becoming stronger community of professionals. An important assumption is namely a lack of traditional scientific heritage and still dynamic professional identity due to still developing legislation regulating social work as a profession in Lithuania. Legally, the requirements for social workers' qualification growth, behind that the standards for social worker's education, seek to construct a much clearer professional identity, as well as professional status of social work.

The lack of communication between the main state institutions implementing social and education policies creates the perpedulum/ swings effect, and causes the turbulence processes in the centre of social work professionalization.

On the other hand, all these professionalization processes are promoted, supported and maintained as well as interfered by the networks of educational institutions and professional associations. The networks of educational institutions and professional associations attempt to perform the balancing as well as shaping and creating a more unstable role in the processes of social work professionalization.

While the model is illustrated as the one functioning in the institutional child care system in the meta-analysis, it can be applied in other

fields of social work, too. This model can also be adapted to theorising the experience of other countries and can also be beneficial for international comparative analysis.

Key words: social work, social work professionalization, post-communist transformations, social constructivism, welfare state, social work education and training.

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Preface

The main topic of this meta-analysis is the disclosure of the process of social work becoming a profession in Lithuania under complicated conditions of society transformation. When we speak about the process of any activity becoming a profession we speak about professionalization.

Social work as any other profession develops as a response to a demand. Chambon and Irving (1999) argue in the Introduction of *Reading Foucault for Social Work* that the social work profession is being challenged today to adapt to changing societal and cultural conditions and to carve out a new societal niche. The cultural and economic effects of those changes cause the reformulation of welfare states. Because the modern identity of social work has been closely tied to the various welfare systems, it is bound to respond to all forthcoming changes.

After the restitution of Lithuanian Independence, which inspired a lot of changes in economic, political and social spheres, the social problems, instead of decreasing, have increased as new and even more complicated ones: from appearance of social layers, social polarisation and poverty, to human trafficking, child prostitution, parents' emigration and children left behind.

The old (social) support practice became unable to cope with time-related challenges. These changes revealed the inability of post-communist (social) support to solve the rapidly increasing social problems. A personal problem started to be treated as the result of plenty of objective and subjective circumstances. The awareness started to take shape that it can be effectively solved only when you try to remove the causes instead of improving the consequences. The issue of professionalization has emerged to solve social problems.

Today more than twenty years have passed since the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe; so, is the issue of post-communism still relevant when analysing the realities of the present-day Lithuania? I would answer *yes*, it is still relevant because, on the one hand, the 'transitional' post-communism period has been taking considerably too long a time, though the phenomenon itself is less frequently remembered these days if compared to the last decade of the 20th century. On the other hand,

there is still a large part of society in Lithuania who witnessed not only the restoration of Independence, but also the Soviet times. This society is still active in the political and social life of the country with a significant contribution to the formation of social work, too.

My road to social work was long and winding. While still studying for a Master's degree in Political Sciences, I started working at Klaipėda University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Social Work. Though the Master's degree studies were specialised in Public Administration, my scientific research interests were increasingly turning towards political sociology – analysis of social problems (specifically – poverty, deprivation) in post-communist Lithuania, studies of the emerging social welfare state in the country. Due to the aforementioned reasons, having my Master's degree studies completed, I was invited to become a part of the academic staff of the Department of Social Work. Since 2001, I have been delivering subjects on social policy for Klaipėda University social work students. By 2010, my research was carried out in the fields of political sociology and sociology. Over less than a decade, a number of personal and collective research results have been published.

Thus far, I have seen myself as a political scientist and an expert in political sociology. This allows my cognition of social work from the 'outside' rather than from the 'inside', as is customary in the case of Lithuanian social work research, by applying, however, a certain specific social cognition perspective. Such a position may be seen as both advantageous and disadvantageous, depending on the objectives of the research. In 2010, collaboration with my colleague Dr. Indrė Dirgėlienė and publication of a research article as a result of this collaboration encouraged me to apply my knowledge and experience to explore the field of social work. Once, during a consultation, Professor Emeritus Kyösti Urponen, one of my remarkable supervisors, encouraged me to stop looking fear in the face and to acknowledge my difference by making it my strength: "social work as a science is some kind of political science, and social work practice is a political work. That is why, for example, if we compare physics in different countries, it is quite similar, but if we compare social work in different countries, we can find many differences"[1]. Besides, Payne (1997) argues that

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1   Quote from the audio recording, made during one of the consultations [21-02-2013].

the development of practices and theories of social work is also a political question in the sense that these are constructed as a dialogue between actors (social workers, clients, teachers and researchers) (cited in Närhi, 2004, 31). More than a decade of academic work experience in the context of social work and education in political sciences, as well as later studies of sociology, formed a specific – interdisciplinary – approach to social work, thus forming a basis for this meta-analysis as a whole.

Having passed this long way of exploration, discoveries and losses, which lasted for 10 years in my case, I wish to express my gratitude to a number of people, who, at one or another time, took part in the process of my scientific growth, and in one or another way contributed to the completion of this work.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors Prof. Emeritus Kyösti Urponen and Prof. Juha Perttula from the University of Lapland. I appreciate their patience and sincerity for the time devoted to consultations and reading my papers. I felt great support and tolerance on their part, which contributed to the fact that today, after passing a certain distance in my scientific growth and now looking back, I can see the result. I am thankful to them for their constructive insights and advice, which helped me to overcome the extremely difficult and complicated task I have set to myself.

I am extremely grateful to Prof. Dr. Elvyra Acienė from Klaipėda University, who encouraged me to take this challenge, who believed in me more than I believed in myself, and who accompanied me over all these 10 years. I am especially thankful for her support, advice, suggestions as well as for criticism and sometimes – 'cold shower'. All this shaped me as a personality and a researcher. I am thankful for the school of life, which I completed in these 10 years. Moreover, I am especially grateful for her dedication and immeasurable advice in the final stage of preparation of the academic dissertation.

My most sincere thanks go to my colleague and friend Assoc. Prof. Dr. Indrė Dirgėlienė from Klaipėda University. She not only shared her experience and provided professional assistance and support in preparing our first article but also devoted her time to reading my articles and giving feedback on the issues related to the articles and this dissertation. This was a person who gave me the spiritual and emotional support in those critical

moments when I was about to quit with all this. I am most grateful for the friendship which helped me to pass this long way.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to a very special person whom I met long before I took the challenge of scientific cognition. This special person is Prof. Dr. Vaidutis Laurėnas from Klaipėda University – my first academic supervisor, who contributed a great deal to the fact that I had an opportunity to take this challenge on the whole. This was the advisor who helped me to develop the basic scientific research and analytical skills in my undergraduate and postgraduate studies, who saw the abilities in me that I was not aware of myself, and who still remains in my eyes as a model of a scientific research advisor.

I am also thankful to Žaneta Čėsnienė, a translator and proof-reader of my writing, who helped me to prepare the final version of the dissertation.

I am extremely happy that during all this period I was surrounded and supported by all these people. Only with the help and support of all of them I have overcome this so far the biggest challenge of my life. My sincere thanks go to all of them.

Finally, I express my profound gratitude to Klaipėda University for the financial support in preparing the doctoral dissertation.

1. Introduction

> If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people together to collect wood
> and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them
> to long for the endless immensity of the sea.
> *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900-1944)*

Practical and Theoretical Relevance to the Topic

The development of social work in Lithuania has taken a little more than 20 years. In the overall global context of social work development, it is a very short period of time but a very significant one both for the country and for the global social work development: these two decades of social work development are marked by such intensive creative processes which have never been observed in Western countries. In Western countries, professional social work has consistently developed over the 20th century: it emerged as a practical activity, gradually was made academic, and eventually turned into a science. In Lithuania, all the three fields of social work are developing, in principle, simultaneously, and today we can speak about the results of one or another kind achieved in all of these fields. This unfolds extremely intensive processes of development of a new profession, which are predetermined, on the one hand, by an optimal exploration of the opportunity to become familiar with and to apply international experience; and, on the other hand, by a significantly faster growth of the need for professional social work than the actual possibilities to satisfy that need. The expanding variety and the scope as well as globalization of social problems are considered as major challenges for all societies, and especially for those which lack experience to manage social problems. In this context, it makes sense to speak about social work professionalization as a social reality that we can observe today.

There are many concepts of professionalization, as well as the ways to disclose and highlight the process. In the general sense, professionalization can be understood as the whole of actions, which, on the one hand, allow the newly formed activity to acquire the structure of a profession,

professional status, acknowledgement in the labour market and society, to occupy a separate professional area, to have standards of activity as well as professional training and certification; on the other hand, professionalization defines the historical process and expresses the adaptation of a professional to the changing conditions and requirements for the activity (Hughes, 1985; Huberman, 1989; Corcuff, 2002; Paradeise, 2009; Jatkauskienė & Jatkauskas, 2010).

Talking about social work, it is not a creator of its own making; social work is the product of its institutional context, continually re-inscribing the conditions of practice (Macdonald, 2006, 5). Social work has to continually renegotiate its position within its host state. It seeks a dominant, secure and uncontested position in society, which is evidence of a specific arrangement through which it seeks to hire itself out to the social state (Lorenz, 2000, cited in Welbourne, 2011, 403). Considering the above stated, the disclosure of social work practice, studies and science will be applied to disclose the process of social work professionalization.

The concept *profession* implies more or less specialized work, a certain adequacy between specific human characteristics and the structure of his / her performance characteristics, a certain fixed dependence on a particular environment (institution), a constant evolution of the performance characteristics, and a renewal of the personality parameters characterizing the activeness of employees. Profession is a specific personalized and institutionalized type of human performance (Laužackas, 2008, 25). The Anglo-Saxon tradition of sociology started to take interest in professions back in the first half of the 20th century. Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) presented the definition of a professional; according to them, a "professional is a person, who distinguishes himself / herself by his / her morals, ethics, social usefulness, sharing scientific knowledge, participation in regulation of social reality" (cited in Dubar & Tripier, 1998). In other words, a profession combines human personality characteristics and features as well as specific working conditions (relevant requirements, rules, relationships) (Laužackas, 2008, 25). Aspirations to professionalize social work is a natural process of a liberal market economy, and this process is greatly influenced by people who are interested in working in the field of social work and make their living from this activity (Kavaliauskienė, 2005).

In Lithuania, social work as a profession started to take shape after the

restitution of Independence in 1990. In one of the first books in Lithuania about social work, Lukoševičienė (1996) writes that after the state Independence, essential social problems emerged along with the need for corresponding professional help (cited in Naujanienė, 2007, 9). The idea that social work in Lithuania started together with the state Independence is also supported by foreign scientists who worked in Lithuania during the first decade of Independence and contributed to the development of social work in the country (Ritchie, 2003; Tunney & Kulys, 2004; etc.). Jordan (2001) studied the development of social work in Central and Eastern Europe during the first decade of post-communist transformations. According to him, in Lithuania as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, social work is the product of a certain crisis period that is the period of transformation from communism to capitalism. It does not mean that there were no social problems in the Soviet Union. Social problems did exist but it was forbidden to speak about them. It was developed and maintained by the official government position that the political system and social guarantees naturally protected an individual from social problems (Leliūgienė, Giedraitienė & Rupšienė, 2006, 64). Only after the fall of the totalitarian state, under the breeze of democratic winds, as Leliūgienė (2003) puts it down, social problems started to be openly addressed.

In the third decade of Independence, we can state that we have a number of results that show the entrenchment of social work in the country: social work as a profession is included in *The Lithuanian Classification of Occupations*, the network of institutions and legal framework were developed, the social workers' training network was expanded, a clear training system was established, and the professional support mechanism is in the process of development. In 2010, Bagdonas summarizes the results of social work development in Lithuania and presents an updated and expanded periodization of social work in Lithuania. According to the author, the development of social work in Lithuania has so far experienced the following developmental periods:

1) before 1990, the period of non-professional social services;
2) the period of 1990-1991, the beginning of application of the concept *social work*;
3) from 1991, the beginning of social work education and training;
4) 1993 – the beginning of professional self-identification;

5) from 1998, the beginning of active social work professionalization (certification and mass education and training of social workers);

6) from 2005, it is considered that social work as a profession is implemented in Lithuania;

7) after 2010, internationalization of social work […].

Considering the stated above, it becomes clear that the creation of social work profession in Lithuania has already been completed and nothing else can be said here. So, rephrasing Epstein (1999), what can one say about the nature of birth and development of social work in Lithuania that has not already been said? Epstein (1999, 7) argues that something much more meaningful needs to be understood about social work because it is a large and impressive social institution that has spread its influence widely, but still everybody understands it vaguely.

According to foreign authors, the question of social work as a profession has not been answered even after a hundred years of discussions (if we assume that the starting point is the question "Is social work a profession?", raised by Flexner in 1915). An extremely intense debate concerning the issues of social work professionalization took place in the West in the 2nd half of the 20th century (50s – 70s) (Greenwood, 1957; Bartlett, 1970). Baird (1972) was the one who actively participated in the debate: he formulated the concept of social work and named the choice of occupational criteria as the key measure when making a decision to name this activity either a profession or a semi-profession. Nevertheless, even in the turn of the centuries, Johnson (2001) wrote about the ongoing debate on social work as a profession subject, naming the absence of a "clear and comprehensive definition" as the main reason of this debate (cited in Kavaliauskienė, 2005, 231).

The study of the issue of professionalization in social work in Lithuania is fragmentary; usually the aspect of social work identity as a profession is addressed. In 2003, in her monograph "*Socialization and Child Welfare*", Kvieskienė discusses the issue of social education (work) development as a profession in the context of child welfare. Dirgėlienė (2008), Kavaliauskienė (2010) address the professionalization aspect by exploring the opportunities of reflection in the social worker's professional activity.

Over 20 years of social work development in Lithuania, many works

have been published addressing various issues of social work. However, only two comprehensive works have been published in the area of social work: in her doctoral dissertation, Jurkuvienė (2003) explores social work as innovation; Čepukas (2005) touches upon the topic of social work while exploring the non-university training tendencies of social pedagogues in his doctoral dissertation. There is also a need for a comprehensive conceptual analysis of the issue of professional social work development.

The analysis of social work professionalization gains significance taking into consideration the fact that from the very beginning, when forming its professional identity, social work had to compete with another social profession – social education, which started its professional identity development in the final years of the Soviet Union existence (Leliūgienė, 2003), and which initially had much stronger positions and more favourable conditions for development in post-communist Lithuania. Nevertheless, rapid development of social work as a profession was observed during the last decade, meanwhile, as far as social education is concerned, its influence reduced and development slowed down. Social work, with the accompanying requirements for professional skills, fills the gaps in professional skills that are characteristic of social education (for example, Indrašienė, Kvieskienė, Merfeldaitė (2007) indicate the lack of team work in social educational assistance). No doubt, the educational aspect is important in social work as well, although not as important as in social education; this aspect is analysed by Dirgėlienė (2010). She states that social work practice integrates those educational elements which contribute to a client's empowerment, and together with the psychological and social work elements creates effective integrated support methods. Meanwhile, social education, according to Juodaitytė (2007), survives the crisis, caused by a certain stagnation, which is described by the author as a non-conscious or not enough conscious evaluation of major social changes taking place in recent decades.

Design and Composition of the Meta-Analysis

This meta-analysis is based on a social construction theory. Self-questioning, characteristic to social constructivism, is not new to social work, too (Chambon & Irving, 1999), especially to the intellectual wing based

on the Foucauldian approach. Foucault's fundamental suspiciousness to taken-for-granted realities had affected a number of social work scholars in Western countries, who developed a Foucauldian approach in social work research. Irving (1999, 260) warns that "things are not simply as they are, they come to be; we come to be as we are along with them". On purpose to unravel the origins of various social work practice ideas, they create what they call 'histories of the present', ignoring the dominant position of historians in creating and interpreting History. Within a historical perspective, Specht and Courtney (1994) challenged social work to reclaim its historical roots. Within a Foucauldian perspective, Cree (1995) examined how administrative requirements intrinsically shaped the daily practice of social workers. She studied the archives of the British Agency. There are a number of published collections, where the works of the most famous representatives of the approach were selected: for example, Chambon, Irving (1994) Chambon, Irving & Epstein (1999). Jurkuvienė (2003), Naujanienė (2007), Večkienė (2007) and others apply the constructivist approach to the Lithuanian social work research; however, not much research was done.

On the other hand, the construction of social work as a profession actively involves not only individuals; social support activities and structure get 'professionalized', too (based on Le Boterf, 2008). Thus, professionalization is also manifested as a system and as a process. In addition, the construction of social work as a profession is taking place in the context of complex and intense social transformation. All these circumstances motivate using the principles of systems theory to support the theoretical analysis. The concept of social systems, including interactions, organizations, societies (according to Luhmann, 1995), in the theory of social systems, defines the closed (*self-referential*), self-reproducing (*autopoietic*) communication (concepts by Maturana & Valera, 1984), inevitably taking place in the content-filled environment, and responding to it. The systems theories help to reveal the relations among different functional systems. Vass (2005, 21) writes that the systems theory offers the social worker a perspective which encompasses both individuals and their social environment. Social work as a practical activity is continuously producing and reproducing new social systems that operate in the economic, political, cultural, social environment and are influenced by it, and its main task when providing

social support is to mobilize (organise) internal and external resources of a respective system (interactions between a social worker, a client and the client's social environment) and to guide them to the right direction. On the other hand, Luhmann (1995), by classifying the methods for system self-differentiation or self-organization, helps to explain the essential question of social work causality: where does the need for social work in modern society come from? The essential experience of a modern society, in Luhmann's (1995) terms – society of functional systems, is that individuals as such are not a part of social systems (Bommes & Scherr, 2000), which is the main cause of social problems. Thus, to facilitate the participation of society members in social systems, the welfare state mechanisms and social work have emerged and have been developed. Furthermore, the systems theories establish and give a sense to the relationship of a welfare state and social work: social work as an activity of support organization in modern society allows individuals to access separate functional systems where the current need is satisfied. Social work performs its role in modern society through intervention into the life of a separate individual and his / her social system (Bommes & Scherr, 2000).

Whereas I am a political scientist feeling more self-confident in analysing and explaining political and societal processes, my focus in the meta-analysis is placed on the cognition of social work dynamics from the 'outside' rather than from the 'inside' perspective. The aims of this meta-analysis are:

Firstly, to analyse social work professionalization in Lithuania in the light of constructivist and systemic theoretical perspectives.

Secondly, to extract and elaborate the main factors creating the conditions for professional social work development in Lithuania over the period of 1992-2013. These factors are:

(1) the welfare state, which is under development in the country;

(2) social work practice with a client and a social worker as the main agents constructing the practice;

(3) education and training of social workers and social work scholars under lifelong learning conditions, which is also far from attaining a stable evolutionary development;

(4) the meta-analysis explores as a separate factor historical circumstances, which create specific conditions for the development of social work, determined by post-communism.

These factors highlight specific features shaping social work profession-alization in Lithuania.

Thirdly, resting on the idea formulated by Lorenz (cited in Shardlow & Doel, 2002, 11) that the nature of professional social work activities in each country is based on a particular historical and cultural context and is conveyed through its political, economic and social system, i. e. constructed and reconstructed when all these conditions are changing, and that profes-sional social work is a process, not a result, the main research question of the meta-analysis – ***how did Lithuanian social work professionalize?*** – was raised. The theoretical conceptual model of Lithuanian social work profes-sionalization is going to be constructed as an answer to the research question.

The general outline of the meta-analysis can be illustrated as follows: the dissertation consists of four published articles and the present meta-analysis. The logics of the four articles discloses the manifestation of the process of social work professionalization.

The four articles are united by the idea of professionalization combining *practice, studies* and *science* in social work. The published articles have been written and are presented in the same order as in Figure 1, so the reader can follow the author's thinking and the research process. Before starting the meta-analysis under the logical sequence presented above, I will present the main ideas of those four articles.
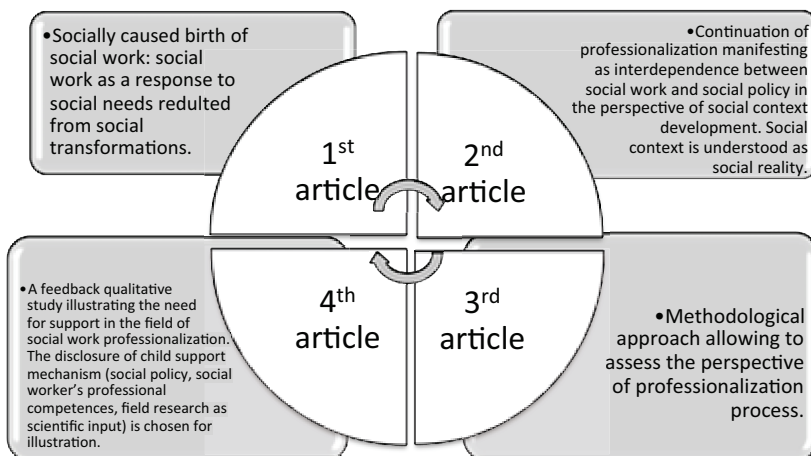

Figure 1. **Research design.**

The 1st article "Interaction of Social Worker and Client in Social Work Process: Lithuanian Case" (Appendix 1), by applying the interaction model, reveals the complexity of social work as a profession.

Practice is one of the three fields allowing to disclose the process of social work professionalization, so it was very important for me (together with the co-author) to disclose the complexity of the social work process, starting at the micro-level – the impact of the subjective characteristics of a social worker and a client on the social support process – , and finishing at the meso- and macro-levels.

The article reveals an understanding that social work is not a laboratory class, where you can control the internal and external circumstances which affect the process. It indicates the significance of the external – social, political, economic – environment in the social work process and to the social work process. All these insights are formulated on the basis of the social work interaction model introduced by Bagdonas (2001). The essence of the interaction model in social work is as follows: the interaction between a social worker and a client includes three important components of the social work process: (1) a social worker; (2) a client and (3) a context, where the interaction takes place. This model allows the prediction of factors that determine activities and professional experience of social workers. The interaction model confirms that social work as an activity is not a temporal, onetime reaction, but rather a process proceeding under intensively changing conditions.

According to the model, social work interaction involves three elements – a social worker, a client and the external environment – which are characterized by unique subjective and objective features, making each social work interaction unique. The whole of these daily social work interactions – social work practice – constructs social work as a subjective and objective reality, typical to a specific society at a specific time.

To illustrate the theoretical analysis, the article uses the data from two research works. The role of the components of the social worker and client interaction model – a client and the external environment – in the social work process is disclosed through the analysis of the problem of confidentiality maintenance, and the complex analysis of the causes of the *low social status inheritance*. This article is prepared in collaboration with a co-author. The authors, with respect to their knowledge and experience,

played different but equally significant roles in preparing the article. I have analysed the client and the external circumstances which participate in the social work interaction. In addition, to illustrate the theoretical analysis, the data from one research work, which involved my personal participation, were used.

The first article suggests that the social work process takes place not in an empty space but is contextual; it is determined by a number of circumstances: external factors (legal framework, cultural traditions, socio-economic situation), client characteristics (biological, psychological, behavioural and adaptation characteristics, etc.), social worker's characteristics (professional competence, age, sex, education, economic status, attitudes with respect to social risk persons, etc.). Here the significance of the external – social, political, economic – environment in the social work process and to the social work process is clearly indicated, and the interaction between social work and the welfare state is disclosed, and this aspect is developed not only in later articles, but also is finalized in this meta-analysis.

The 2ⁿᵈ article "The Role of Changes of Social Processes in Manifestation of Social Work in Lithuania" (Appendix 2) focuses on the analysis of one of the components of the social work process.

Why is the issue of post-communism, constructing professional social work, explored? Is this issue still relevant when analysing the realities of the present-day Lithuania? I state *yes*, it is still relevant. On the one hand, following Lorenz's idea that the construction of professional activity is accompanied and influenced by a particular historical and cultural context and is conveyed through its political, economic and social system, studying social work as a profession in Lithuania, it is necessary to pay special attention to the processes of post-communism and post-communist social development, because post-communism is a historical social reality of Lithuania. Besides, post-communism expands beyond the actual boundaries of political geographic ex-communism. On the other hand, there is still a large part of society in Lithuania who witnessed not only the restoration of Independence, but also the Soviet times. This society is still active in the political and social life of the country with a significant contribution to the formation of social work, too.

Having that in mind, this article reveals what the post-communist transformation is, and what influence it makes on social work evolution and

development in Lithuania. In order to evaluate adequately the social work stand in a contemporary Lithuanian society, the article highlights the key features of the welfare state, where the Lithuanian social work develops. Herewith, the article reviews the debates on social professions – social work and social education – in the period of their becoming professions. The following passages include the main ideas that have formed as a result of the analysis of the aforementioned issues.

Social work has formed along with and under the influence of social development processes. Social development is the feature of historical development of all societies; in Lithuania, however, as in other post-communist Central and Eastern European countries, social development is characterized by two contradictory processes. On the one hand, Lithuania still feels the ravages of the post-communist social change. On the other hand, the changes, experienced in the post-communist countries over the last twenty years, make a part of the global processes taking place all around the world (the emerging differences and growing diversity). To describe such events of civilization development, the concept *transformation* is used, which reveals essential changes in the lifestyle. To describe the ongoing processes, the changes in Lithuania, as in other post-communist Central and Eastern European countries, extended the meaning of the concept *transformation*. Transformational processes, characteristic to post-communist countries, embody essential changes in all the public spheres: political, social, economic and technological. In addition, transformation in Central and Eastern European countries is a complex process, evidenced by rapid changes and controversial trends. The plenitude of strategic changes in the economic, political and social spheres of the country, not only failed to reduce, but on the contrary, led to new and more complex social problems. The current need for social work formation and development in Lithuania emerged as a response to the spread of social and economic problems preconditioned by the post-communist transformation.

Social work is a tool of the welfare state to combat social problems; meanwhile, a welfare state is the whole of social institutions, economic conditions and ideology cherished in the context of public historical experience and dominant social values. A precondition for a welfare state (self-)formation is the (self-)establishment of a mechanism of corresponding (political) measures to offset social contradictions caused by the market economy. The

welfare state functions well only if it meets specific public needs. At the same time, a welfare state allows the formation of a competitive socio-economic behaviour of the country's population. It is developed in the Independent Lithuania after having destroyed the state monopoly in all spheres of social life. In Lithuania, as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, a peculiar post-communist welfare state model is evolving with a relatively large coverage, but low-level social insurance programmes. This model implicates the features of a liberal residual and conservative welfare model variation, more practiced in Southern Europe, but it still lacks a more explicit form.

In the socio-economic situation predetermined by the post-communist transformation, Lithuania adopted a strategy to apply such problem-solving techniques that have been used in most of the modern social welfare states during recent decades; in other words, to create a stable social security system and to provide professional social services. The Lithuanian higher education system was challenged to find a suitable model to train such qualified specialists of social professions who would meet the needs of the changing society. A number of discussions took place over the need for new social professions – social work and social education – and professional training in Lithuania, especially when the first social work and social education study programmes were launched. This period was full of questions. One of these questions was the problem of integrity of social work and social education professions. The primary conflict between social work and social education can be identified as the actual beginning of social work construction in Lithuania. Both of these professions are developed in Lithuania; however, the division between social work and social education professions is increasing in social policy and practice.

The second article suggests that the welfare state in Lithuania is underdeveloped. The underdevelopment is caused by the significant influence of post-communist transformation and lack of time and different kinds of sources – economic, ideological, and social – for the development of this sphere of the state life. Also, the underdevelopment of the welfare state leads to inconsistency and flouncing in the development of social policy, which in its turn leads to the construction of professional social work. This idea is further developed in this meta-analysis.

The 3rd article "Professionalization of Social Work in Lithuania from Social Construction Perspective" (Appendix 3) is written to explore the

constructivist nature of social work. Choosing the social construction as a theoretical framework gives me a strict and at the same time worldwide and in a way trendy theoretical perspective, what makes my approach to social work rather novel. Also, it serves as a socially, politically, culturally contextual theoretical background for the development of the concept of social work.

The scope of the research ranges from the analysis of documents, covering the period from 1992, when the first legislative act related to the sphere of social work in Lithuania came into force, to 2012, when the project of *Social Work Study Field Descriptor* was announced. The article also analyses the scientific output that occurred over the given period – articles, books, project work, which discuss social work issues in Lithuania. These resources reveal the birth and development of the social work profession.

The results of document analysis (applying the Foucauldian discourse analysis method) confirm the assumption that the ideas of social work are rooted in the Lithuanian social, cultural, political, economic environment, and are supported by the ability of this society to accumulate and duplicate them. The very first ideas of modern social work have been *imported*; along with the development of social work schools' network, they started to be generated with respect to local social work training, education, research and practice, and established themselves in the welfare state: the more a welfare state develops and the bigger role it plays in the implementation of social control, the faster the ideas spread and the more they are supported by the public.

Another significant moment revealed through the analysis of various sources about social work in Lithuania was the contradictions occurring when assessing and interpreting the rate, scale, quality and authenticity of social work development. The official, political discourse, as reflected in legislative acts, official notifications, reports, relies mainly on quantitative parameters that are put in the '*before – after*' frames, and declares a rapid development of social work practice. Having expanded the network of social work schools, having achieved that social work was included into *The Lithuanian Classification of Occupations*, social work as a discipline has moved to the stage of qualitative development. Meanwhile, the scientific discourse reveals a significantly smaller and slower development of Lithuanian social work.

The third article suggests that social work is developing rapidly, and separate fields of social work – practice, studies and science – are develop-

ing simultaneously. Nevertheless, the pace of development of these fields is uneven; this is determined by both, internal and external causes. The main ideas of the research results presented in this article are further developed in this meta-analysis.

Furthermore, the third article confirms the choice of a theoretical perspective allowing the disclosure of the constructive nature of social work, and helps to clearly formulate the strategy of preparation of this meta-analysis.

The 4th article "The Problem of Transformation of Professional Competence: Aspect of Institutional Care" (Appendix 4) is devoted for a more detailed exploration of the change of professional competence. The analysis is based on the case study of the institutional children care. Why? *Former educators of children's social care homes and social workers without necessary education*, who had recently retrained, also contribute to the development of social work in Lithuania. Transformation of professional competence is relevant in various areas of social work practice, but the disclosure of this problem in the institutional care system is a new and extremely sensitive issue; the problem itself is also very *fresh.* Since 1998, when *The Law on Child Care* (1998, No. VIII-674) was adopted, basically initiating significant changes in the sphere of child care, these changes and reforms have so far remained unchanged. This is one of the most dynamically changing social work fields currently observed in Lithuania, combining social work philosophy, practice, research, transforming the attitude to a child as an object and subject of social work, his or her needs, and the very concept of child social care. The dynamics of social work in the sphere of institutional child care is also evidenced by the following circumstance: in January 2013, when the field survey was carried out, respondents were unable to say anything about the changes which were anticipating child care homes due to the contemporary reform, which will result in the Lithuanian institutions with no more than 60 places by the year 2015. When finalizing this article, the details of the reform started to become more apparent, requiring new competences to be acquired by social workers. The constructivist nature of social work is extremely clearly disclosed exploring the institutional care. Approaching the situation from the perspective of constructivism, I am interested in the specialists working in child care institutions and the contribution they make to the development of social work in the country.

For a long time children care institutions were seen as educational institutions, where educators applied intensive training methods to correct the children's socialization *errors*. The educational discourse sends a message that strict educational measures and discipline have to help a child to socially reintegrate and ensure his / her positive continued social development. It is believed that education naturally solves other social problems of a child. Commonly, the understanding that the main method of work with a client-child-ward is education means that teachers have sufficient knowledge, skills and values to deal with the socialization issues of the residents of children care institutions.

Meanwhile, children who lost parental care on a temporary or permanent basis are especially vulnerable. Sutton (1999, 185), following Millham et al. (1985), describes children who have entered the welfare and social care system as 'drifting', meanwhile the situation increases the risk of losing contacts with the family. Therefore, their subsequent psychological and physical development highly depends on the ability of people who provide care to the child to create a positive environment and relations, which could ensure the welfare of the child, namely: physical and psychological safety, care and love, possibilities for self-expression, nurture and development of proper social skills and competencies. A modern approach emphasizes the development of child's abilities to adapt to the environment, renewal of the contacts with the society, comprehensive integration into the society, complex social and psycho-social functioning, psychological adaptation through the analysis of the child's sexual behaviour, as well as his emotional disorders and addictions, support in managing the effects of traumas by correcting emotional and behavioural disorders. While working with such children, the educational aspect remains of great importance, however, the educational methods alone cannot ensure the formation of comprehensive social skills.

As far as the aim of this study was to reveal the nature of professional competence construction in social work, based on accounts by social workers in child care homes about their relation to the profession, 10 employees of Klaipėda region children's homes were interviewed. These were social workers, social educators and administrative staff, working in the child care system from 1 to 30 years. The Foucauldian discourse analysis method was applied to analyse the research data.

If the third article studies the evidence found in various sources and documents, which prove the process of social work professionalization, then the fourth article touches upon the profession constructed in the social reality. The exploration of the topic in this article clearly discloses the interrelation between all three fields of social work – practice, studies and science. Here I verify some aspects of a chosen professionalization concept on the basis of the research results. It is referred further in the meta-analysis.

The four reviewed articles represent the evolution of the need for social work professionalization. Starting with the analysis of social work practice, evolving as a need preconditioned by social transformation, in the first article, I reveal the link and interdependence between social work and a welfare state, conditioned by the post-communist social reality, in the second article. Then, the third article presents the main methodological approach, chosen to disclose the construction of social work as a profession in the country as well as allowing to assess the results of social work professionalization so far, followed by a more detailed exploration of professional social work development in one of the areas of social work – in the institutional child care system – in the fourth article. The fourth article appears as a feedback qualitative study, returning back to the origins of the first article to assess the results of meeting the need for professional social work so far. The logics of these four articles helps me to understand the integrity of constructing processes of social work as a profession as well as the structural relationships between them, and to construct the theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization.

Some of the following theoretical chapters have paragraphs named "Links to the Research Results". These paragraphs are meant to reveal the practical relevance of the discussed theoretical material. Also, I insert extracts from the articles to the meta-analysis text, attempting to create a dialogue with theoretical assumptions and practical findings. The practical results from the above mentioned articles help me to enrich and ground my theoretical ideas and vice versa, thus forming a closed circle of mutual influence between theory and practice. The gathered research data and theoretical assumptions of the articles, together with extended theoretical material of the meta-analysis, form a sufficient ground for answering the research question.

2. Theoretical Approaches to Social Work Professionalization Analysis

The Constructivist Nature of Social Work

Since I focus on the cognition of social work professionalization from the 'outside' perspective, emphasizing the societal and political nature of the profession, I formulate the main theoretical assumption of the meta-analysis that social work as a profession is socially constructed; social work practice does not exist as a simple phenomenon but is created via an interaction process between the parties involved in it. It is interesting that postmodernism and social construction perspectives started to be applied in social work research only in the last decade of the 20th century (see, for example, Howe, 1994; Parton, 1994, 2002; Hall, 1997; Leonard, 1997; Meinert et al., 1998; Chambon et al., 1999; Jokinen et al., 1999; Pease & Fook, 1999; Fawcett et al., 2000; Healy, 2000; Parton & O'Byrne, 2000; Taylor & White, 2000). Overall, the turning point in relation to social work took place around 1980, moving from positivism (searching for one correct answer) to constructivism (not trying to seek for the monopoly of truth) (Pivorienė, 2003, 38). In addition, the development of social construction theoretical perspectives in global social work research is essentially the same and is caused by global social changes and an increased diversified – personal, social, professional – feeling of insecurity. This theoretical perspective had quickly taken root in Lithuanian social work research, too. Naujanienė (2010) writes that the social construction perspective offered a critical look at a person as a free and independent individual, paying attention to the social, cultural, political, economic, environmental influences on human functioning (Ibid., 66). A number of other social work researchers in Lithuania link the appearance and the development of social work profession with the response to social needs, characteristic to the most recent country-specific historical development phase (see Lukoševičienė, 1996; Bagdonas, 2001; Jurkuvienė, 2003; Naujanienė, 2007; Večkienė, 2007, etc.).

The main idea of social construction is that the reality, which is described by people in words, is socially constructed. Berger and Luckmann (1999) argue that reality is socially constructed, so it becomes relatively subjective. Naujanienė (2010) suggests that though subjectivity, as well as subject, is defined in many ways, this is the basic idea of social construction. Every social problem thus consists of an *objective condition* and a *subjective definition*. The objective condition is a verifiable situation which can be checked as to existence and magnitude by impartial and trained observers. The subjective definition is the awareness of certain persons that the condition is a threat to certain cherished values (Fuller & Meyers, 1941, 320). Cooper (2001, 91) argues that subjective definitions are the different *takes* that different people bring to social situations.

> Solving the problem of families at risk as a social phenomenon, the discourse of exclusion is prevailing for a long time [in Lithuanian children care system]: risk families are included in the 'blacklist' of social services, often limiting the parents' right to children; children are given to custodian care, more than every third child is taken to institutional custody. Thus, within a relatively short period of time, the number of social risk families rose to 18,672, with 42,820 children growing in them. Institutionalized care creates the conditions to flourish for the old social problems and for emergence of the new ones (*Social Report 2000,* 2001). <…> In the official discourse, care institutions have been seen for some time as educational institutions, where teachers apply intensive educational measures to correct the socialization *mistakes* of the care institution inhabitants. The educational discourse sends the message that strict education measures and discipline must help a child to reintegrate into the society and to ensure its continued positive social development. It is believed that education should help to solve other social problems of the child. Meanwhile, the main source of problems appearing in social risk families does not receive attention it deserves: parents and foster parents 'are punished' by limiting their parental rights, but in general nobody works with them. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

A range of different contexts and cultures available at any one time and place set different *takes* to a social situation, what leads to a plethora of different meanings, knowledge and truths available, as well as many experiences and the self-identity. Ethnomethodology, whose conceptual heritage

contributed to the development of the social construction perspective, emphasizes that the reality is constructed by reflectively using *language* and *interaction*.

The processes involved in the social construction of reality take place through networks of relationships. These networks are made of individual people, where each person embodies a complex set of unique perspectives (Cooper, 2008), and who, through interaction with other individuals, construct ways to understand the world as well as categories and concepts about it (Naujanienė, 2007). Global experience is understood as composed of the meanings that are given to things. From the social construction perspective, the meanings are created by the context (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; cited in Naujanienė, 2010, 67). Mead's (1962) conceptual position played an important role in the development of the social construction perspective; according to him, people respond to social stimuli not mechanically, but using their inner mental world and subjective experience, reflect on what a particular social environment of the stimulus means for them, in this way assigning meanings to those stimuli (cited in Layder, 2004). By assigning meanings to stimuli, people subjectively modulate the behaviour that they think is suitable for a particular situation. This assumption of symbolic interactionism helps to explain the relatedness of social relations and cultural environment. Developing the question of context, Naujanienė (2010) bases on a number of authors (Burr, 1995; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999) and formulates the idea that socially constructed reality depends on the time and place where the reality is manifested, and the ways in which people get the knowledge about the world together, have historical and cultural specificity.

Historical and cultural specificity can be developed at various levels. The macro-level analysis highlights the past Lithuania's historical stage of development, with us being direct witnesses of it, which is rich with the social context that constitutes the opportunity to observe the birth and development of new social phenomena. The meso- and micro- level observations allow us to recognize the historical and cultural features of the social work profession's birth and of a subjective personal relationship with the social environment.

Applying the theory of social reality construction for social work research, Večkienė (2007) uses Bell's (2003, 221) idea which states that "the society

seeks to determine the system of meanings through which people relate to the world" and "largely human character and the model of his social relations is determined by the type of work performed by him".

> Professional knowledge is a diffuse power which creates a visible through social agencies and an invisible but tight enough network to regulate the behaviour of particular groups. The social and governmental effect expands the field of professional domination. Particular forms of knowledge, characteristic to a particular profession, are more sophisticated, more informed, not appropriate for those who are outside it. The knowledge of particular groups / persons is excluded and labelled inferior to others, whether because of being viewed as having less experience or dependent, less well read, new to a field, and so on. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

Through the social work's perspective, the interconnection with the world is revealed through the elements of individual social work processes, such as the relation of a social worker and a client. The meanings, significance, importance, implications and values that a social worker places upon a client, and the surrounding social circumstances, make a social worker's own world-view of his / her role in the relationship with a client. In other words, the processes of assessment are themselves increasingly recognised as constituting an intervention. Furthermore, Cooper (2008, 91) argues that "it is almost an interpersonal impossibility for there not to be changes". These processes are essentially socially and personally constructive (Parton & O'Byrne, 2000; Paris & Epting, 2004), and thereby constitute a reality for those involved in constructing those realities.

> Since 2002, when the NGO child day care centres' programme has been started, till 2010, the number of social risk families decreased by 42 percent, and the number of children growing in them decreased by 40 percent (*Social Report 2010-2011*, 2011). This decline is caused by a significant extension of the range and the volume of social services in the municipalities, by the activities of child day care centres, and by changing the very concept of a social risk family. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

Everyday practice creates social reality of social work practice, existing in a particular society at a particular time, which is understood by the society

as canon. Regularly occurring events consist of habituated activities. In such a way, social work can be perceived as an agreed set of understandings about the world that is an accepted and stable social reality.

Social work is created by defining it; those involved in everyday social work interaction create social work practice, naming it and giving it a meaning. Thus, social construction takes place through human interaction under both oral and written language assistance. We are sustained, or constructed, as persons in our roles and relationships through *talk*. Furthermore, Cooper (2008, 91) argues that *talk* helps us to locate, negotiate and maintain ourselves and our relationships within a reality that is *social*. Language is one of the main sites in which our social identities are negotiated (Humphries, 2008). So, communication and negotiation in social work practice are very important assumptions, actuating change. A focus on patterns in language in use, as Humphries (2008, 122) emphasizes, reveals "the set or family of terms that are related to particular topics or activities, and the ways meanings are created or eroded as part of on-going social change. It describes this as the employment of 'interpretive repertoires' and is interested in social and cultural contexts rather than particular interactions. <...> lengthy utterances, phrases, clauses or even single words are used methodically in everyday interaction to achieve particular ends".

"Language is not innocent", as would MacLure (2003) state in her work. Language is not a neutral medium or vehicle for providing access to the world, or to a thought (Ibid., 180-181). Language is not just a verbal representation of reality, as Naujanienė (2010) notes, basing on Wetheller and Potter (1987), it affects the functioning of the human (Ibid., 68).

> New interpellations of social problems constructed by language gradually penetrate and change societal mentality. In Lithuania, the changes start after the year 2000: the attitude towards the *other* changes significantly together with the language and vice versa. Having realized <…> that contemporary social work must not only solve the client's problem, but also enable the person to modify his activity effectively, a social worker starts to look for client's personal powers, which, woken up by a social worker, can cause positive changes. This new approach reveals the efforts to believe in the inborn personal power of a human-being to improve or solve his personal problems. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

Looking at a particular conversation we can understand how a particular life (or lives) is (are) constructed by what is said (Shotter, 1993). Cooper (2008, 93) points out that language is the very one which makes up the foundation, builds blocks and complex structures and processes of social work. The author refers to Gregory and Holloway's (2005) argument that language helps to 'shape' the general sense of professional identity and influence general understanding of what is being done when social work is done: "it is what is said; how it is said; why it is said; and when and to whom, that conveys the message and the meaning of social work relationships and agreements" (Ibid.). Words accumulate different resonances according to the institutions and discourses from which they emanate, and the institutional and social location of those who are making or critiquing them (MacLure, 2003, 16). As Bakhtin (1981, 293-294) puts it, "all words have the 'taste' of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life" (cited in MacLure, 2003, 16). A number of authors (Layder, 1994; Cooper, 2008; Naujanienė, 2010) propose to use language and other symbolic forms for the analysis of professional experience.

Active construction of meanings through language and other symbolic measures and multidimensional reality creates the assumptions to talk about deconstruction. This is the approach presented by Derrida (1967) in the middle of 60s of the 20th century. One of the most important propositions of deconstruction is that our dealings with / in the world are *unrelievedly textual* (MacLure, 2003, 179). However, the textuality, in the deconstructive sense, is not just a linguistic phenomenon or just a game of words. It carries an ethical and a political charge, since, as MacLure (2003) comments on Shapiro's (2001) position, deconstruction has the power to show how every social order rests on a forgetting of the exclusion practices through which one set of meanings has been institutionalised and various other possibilities have been marginalised. Deconstruction as a text analysis method allows revealing internal contradictions and antagonism in what is said or written (Naujanienė, 2010, 69).

Deconstruction is only one element within the broad intellectual landscape of post-structuralism. Foucault's works provide multiple sights from which to view the impersonal forces that play roles in construction

of a client, a social worker, the rules for their interaction, and how their interaction is defined. This problematization uses Foucauldian holism and poststructuralists' views (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983) as multiple sights of possibility; one perspective or possibility is not viewed as more advanced, accurate or sophisticated than the other, as would be expected in a linear construction of truth oriented theory (Cannella, 1999, 37-38).

Language helps to create discourses, and this is Foucault's contribution to the intellectual development of post-structuralism. Discourses facilitate and limit, enable and constrain what can be said, by whom, where and when (Parker, 1992). These constructions, in turn, make available certain ways of seeing the world and certain ways of being in the world. Parton (2002, 241) states that discourses are structures of knowledge, claims and practices through which we understand, explain and decide things. In constituting agents, they also define obligations and determine the distribution of responsibilities and authorities for different categories of persons, such as social workers, their clients, other officials and so on. Chambon (1999, 52-53) maintains that clients do not exist outside the historical activity of social work; they are the result of that activity. The starting point is not inside the client but inside social work. Discourses offer subject positions, which, when taken up, have implications for subjectivity and experience (Willig, 2004, 171). Humphries (2008, 124-125) reminds us the Foucauldian approach, according to which discourses give meaning to the events, i. e. subjects exist meaningfully within the discourses about them. Moreover, these discourses are historically and culturally specific, produced, regulated by the disciplinary techniques of particular societies and times. For Foucault (2005), discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which we speak, and he argues that we are difference, that our reason is the difference of discourses, our history the difference of times, our selves the difference of masks.

Epstein (1999) notices that Foucault's works are of importance to the practice professions because he studies only ideas as they exist in actual practice, and he studies practices as they have been played out and as they created the ideas associated with the practices. "By playing around with these ideas, we get hold of a framework for considering the nature of the social sciences, the nature of the helping disciplines, and the nature of their practices", as she used to say (Ibid., 13).

Moreover, Foucault has brought together into a single fold the two poles of the social work profession that are traditionally kept apart, the micro- and macro-levels of the person and the environment. Chambon (1999, 56) points out that Foucault has made visible the linkages between a person and society: how industrial practices generate social identities. It opens new ways of understanding. Further, the author continues the analysis of the Foucault's ideas' application in social work research by pointing out that Foucault's works are characterized by their close examination of practices and unearthing of daily details, what is highly compatible with social work (Ibid., 60). By examining concrete practices in their most minute details, social workers question institutional mechanisms and gain a new understanding. Chambon (1999) refers to Richmond's (1917) ideas and states that detailed documentation is necessary to build a case. Social workers do more than inquire in their everyday practice. They sift through evidence in clients' lives. They assess, weigh, and discard sets of information. As they collect data, they simultaneously draw inferences and interpret their findings.

From the social constructivism perspective, social work can be understood as a discourse which socially constructs subjects as well as objects of social work by defining, as Naujanienė (2007, 25) would say, what a client is, what a social worker is, and what the rules for their interaction are.

Social Work as a Social System

Social work as a contemporary profession encompasses a range of activities: from a daily social work practice to specialist training and qualification upgrading. Legal framework, a network of social institutions, education and training system ensure the professional development of social work as well as the construction of professional identity. Thus, when we speak about construction of social work as a profession, we perceive social work as a system, along with its main sub-systems, and take into consideration its dynamic nature. In this case, the social construction theory in the meta-analysis is valuably complemented by the theoretical perspective of social systems.

In his theory of social systems, Luhmann (1995) distinguishes between three methods of social systems' self-differentiation (organization) and

describes a modern society as the one which is organized from functional systems – different in size and significance, but not subordinate to each other. The characteristic feature of this society of functional systems is that an individual being born into such a society, in contrast to the earlier – segmental (communal system) and hierarchical (medieval estates system) – societies, is not fully integrated into any of the functional systems that comprise it. In a sense, a human is free to choose whether or not to participate in any of functional systems, but in turn, each functional system has corresponding *conditions* of inclusion (e. g. in order to become a doctor, one needs to complete medical studies; in order to buy, one needs money, etc.) (cited in Švedaitė, 2004). The problem is that an individual with a long history of *exclusions* (according to Luhmann, 1995) from functional systems, hardly is able to satisfy the conditions of these and / or other systems, therefore he / she does not fit in or falls out from them. Bommes and Scherr (2000) and Wagner (2003) write that modern societies, with the help of the states, react in two ways to the individuals' problems of *inclusion* in social systems:

1) create the primary social security system, and
2) initiate social work as a secondary social security system.

The primary social security system performs the role of an intermediary, dealing with the most general problems of participation in social systems. Social workers no longer directly distribute resources (food, money, do not care for the supply of accommodation, treatment or clothes) for those in need, but deal with those particular people and cases who lack this primary social security, so as to enable their independent inclusion into corresponding functional systems (Švedaitė, 2004, 45). Therefore, Švedaitė (2004) draws a conclusion that social work as a profession is a product of modern society, resulting from the elimination of the reciprocity principle when providing assistance, which was characteristic to the earlier societies and which has evolved from the primary social security system (Ibid.); the latter system in the meta-analysis is referred to as a welfare state. Thus, social work is an active actor of a modern society that performs a specifically assigned function, necessary for this society to exist.

In summary, since the meta-analysis is focused on the disclosure of the dynamics of social work professionalization, emphasizing the societal and political nature of the profession, the social construction is chosen as

a theoretical framework, giving a strict and at the same time worldwide theoretical perspective. Also, it serves as a socially, politically, culturally contextual theoretical background for the development of the concept of social work.

On the other hand, the construction of professional social work actively involves not only individuals; social support activities and structure get 'professionalized', too. Thus, professionalization is also manifested as a system and as a process. In addition, the construction of social work as a profession is taking place in the context of a complex and intense social transformation. All these circumstances motivate using the principles of systems theory to support the theoretical analysis.

3. Peculiarities of Post-Communist Transformation in the Context of Social Work Construction

Links to the Research Results

The 3rd article presents a review of documents and reports written over the period of 20 years, which reveals that passive labour policies, provision of social services at home for client groups usual for Communist times, monetary contribution-based social support, a poor social services package dominate in the developing sphere of social care in Lithuania. It is noted in *Social Report 2007-2008* (2008) that social care quality has been measured for a long time only by quantitative technical parameters (square meters given per person, the number of bed clothing sets given per year and so on). Personal satisfaction with an emphasis on the quality of life has not been measured.

It is likely that the lack of professional social workers, also the lack of experience in making first steps approaching the creation of a professional social work field, significantly influence the construction of such characteristics of social care measures. To describe the elements participating in the professional social work development in Lithuania, the discourse of post-communist transformation is applied. The discourse of post-communist transformation in social work is constructed by the societal behaviour and focus on the application of direct power in the actions of social workers and social work methods in practice. For example, in the sphere of social work with a family, it leads to the construction of the discourse of exclusion. In case of solving the problem of families at risk, a social worker is considered to be a professional, authorized and applying a practice to limit parents' right to children and to give children to custodian care. Another striking attribute of post-communist behaviour is the educational dimension, which is tried to be adapted to different cases of social reality. The educational system, which was widely developed during the Soviet times, was applied as an alternative to modern social control mechanisms, including the involvement of the social security system, as well as education and other areas of state government.

In the official discourse, care institutions have been seen for some time as educational institutions, where teachers apply intensive educational measures to correct the socialization *mistakes* of the care institution inhabitants. The educational discourse sends the message that strict education measures and discipline must help a child to reintegrate into the society and to ensure its continued positive social development. It is believed that education should help to solve other social problems of a child. Meanwhile, the main source of problems appearing in social risk families does not receive the attention it deserves: parents and foster parents 'are punished' by limiting their parental rights, but in general nobody works with them. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

A striking attribute of the post-communist transformation in the development of social work is a post-communist mentality. The conditions for its formation occurred when the outdated models of behaviour and thought faced a new social reality – creation of an independent, democratic, open state of Lithuania. What is that new social reality, which is named in the meta-analysis as post-communist transformation, and under the circumstances of which professional social work is developing in the country?

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Following Lorenz's idea that the construction of professional activity is accompanied and influenced by a particular historical and cultural context and is conveyed through its political, economic and social system, studying social work in Lithuania, it is necessary to pay special attention to the processes of post-communism and post-communist social development. As Valantiejus (2012) would say, the creation of Communism as an alternative modernity condition used to be the Lithuanian social reality for 50 years, and its collapse in the end of the 20th century did not disappear without a trace.

There are many ways to theorize the post-communist social reality. Political, economic, sociological theories focus on different aspects: some of them focus on positive aspects, the others are critical ones. The former tendency relates with the focus on state independence, democratization, and economic liberation. The latter tendency emphasizes a wide range of processes: from overlapping of originally contradictory changes, to social crisis, growth of old and appearance of new social problems, and the prosperity of a post-communist mentality.

To describe the dynamics of post-communism, the concept *transformation* is used to reveal essential changes in individual, societal and the state lives. This is an important social concept to define the post-communist change.

In general, the concept of *transformation* is used to express any dynamics of development of a society as a system, consisting of people and groups defined by common social characteristics and features, which accumulates and expresses the same and obviously similar values towards a common implementation of interests and goals (Melnikas, 2002, 71). As far as a society is characterized by a spatial multi-level condition, by a multi-level integration of social nature which is interrelated, forming a complex network of conflicting internal relations, Melnikas (2002, 76-77), looking at a society as a social system, identifies the areas of transformation as describing the natural features of changes: (1) political transformation; (2) social sphere transformation; (3) economic transformation; and (4) technological transformation. The whole of these features and the cognition of this whole allow a comprehensive description of the essence of a society transformation.

The changes in Lithuania, as in other post-communist Central and Eastern European countries, extend the meaning of *transformation* to describe the ongoing processes. In the case of Central and Eastern Europe this is not just a concept which describes the processes of evolutionary changes and gradually changing societies without major structural shake-ups. In the first decade of post-communist transformation, the concepts of *dual or double transition* and *triple transition* were among the most popular concepts to describe the processes of transformation. The former concept reflects the first acquaintance of many post-communist countries with the processes of democratization and economic liberalization. The latter concept extends the former, in addition focusing on the fact that these countries are still going through the state of *post-colonialism* (Smith, 1999, 5-6) and *post-modernization* (Valantiejus, 2012).

Sociological theories focus on the societal consequences of post-communist transformation, stressing the internal tensions within the society, which result in the structural contradictions of the latter. When explaining the fields of social tensions caused by post-communist transformation, Grigas (1998, 11) applies such a concept as "demographic, ethno-cultural, moral, economic, political, legal, religious, and organizational relations' crisis". Praspaliauskienė

(2000) links post-communist transformation with the appearance of new and growth of old social risk groups. In this case the post-communist transformation is viewed as a problem, and the development of social work is related to dealing with the negative consequences of the process.

Although post-communist transformation is defined as the one that causes a social and economic shock, at the same time political scientists emphasize post-communist transformation as being far from revolutionary. As Valantiejus (2012, 5) points out, political practice shows "more signs of continuity rather than a radical breakthrough". It enables a number of post-communism researchers (Sakwa, 1999; cited in Valantiejus, 2012; Smith, 1999, etc.) to support the idea of formation of a "continuous hybrid condition of modernity" (Valantiejus, 2012), which not only has taken considerably too long, but also demands a lot of time. Elster, Offe & Preuss (1998) and Gudžinskas (2009) use the metaphor of *rebuilding the boat in the open sea* to describe the first decade of post-communist transformation. The post-communist continuity is also relevant to the social work development, because a part of Soviet experience is transferred (by reconstructing) into a modern social work practice, which is reflected, for example, in the field of institutional care or by the mentality properties of both social workers and clients.

An attitude to social work as equal to other professions is slow in formation both in the society and among the people who, due to political decisions, unexpectedly fell into the field of social work. The teaching profession held especially strong social positions in the country during the Soviet period. Teachers are very reluctant to easily give away the professional status position once held, especially to new 'undistinguished' professions, such as social work. The institution, where a social worker comes to work, has its own rules, the range of working measures, the organizational culture, finally, a new worker is acquainted with their duties by the senior colleagues, who are trying to keep to the traditions of the institution. What kind of institutions are child care homes? These are the institutions with a long history of Soviet tradition, where the persons engaged in practicing traditional methods of working with children for many years find it difficult to change them, and keep following the outdated concept of working with children. These are the people who needed to adapt to new requirements, which was extremely challenging or even impossible for the major part of them. *(Extract from the 4th article, Appendix 4)*

Nevertheless, reconstruction of social order and social identity is considered to be based on the all-new foundation in terms of quality. The concept of *post-communist transformation* also reflects the substantial moment of changes: the overlapping of originally contradictory fields of transformation in time and space. The overlapping is defined, *firstly*, as the impossibility without and at the same time incompatibility with the democratization of radical economic reforms under the post-communist transformation (Šaulauskas, 2000, 25), and the like are considered as facts justifying a natural increase of the risk of instability in political, and most importantly, social life of the state. *Secondly*, the overlapping of the changes is conceptualized also as the creation (or re-creation) of the very institutional structure of the state, which should be able, by applying legal means, to ensure the implementation of significant political and economic reforms. *Thirdly*, the overlapping is about the smooth integration of the newly created post-communist state into the international political and economic space (Gudžinskas, 2009, 129). As far as this overlapping reflects several major challenges, a number of scholars primarily question if it is at all possible to overcome all of them equally successfully.

Another issue to describing the construction of social work as a profession is about the current condition of post-communist transformation: is it still an important factor in the process of social work professionalization in Lithuania? There are some authors (Outhwaite & Ray, 2005; cited in Valantiejus, 2012, 4), who construct the experience and transformational form, conceptualized as 'post-communist capitalism', still remaining. Moreover, post-communism is defined as expanding beyond the actual boundaries of political geographic ex-communism (Ibid.). There is another opposing group of Lithuanian political analysts (Norkus, 2008, 2010; Gudžinskas, 2009), who position the state of Lithuania as "successfully transformed into Capitalism" (Norkus, 2010), and as further developing in the evolutionary way, according to Šaulauskas (2000).

Maintaining a systematic approach to the construction of post-communist transformation, the essential aspects of these processes that make influence on the construction of social work as a profession, are overviewed in political, social and economic fields of transformation.

Political Transformation

The main aspects of political transformation, affecting the construction of social work as a profession in Lithuania, include the following:

On the one hand, the change of political system in Lithuania, as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, is marked by the spread of new forms of society coexistence in terms of quality. The scholars of the country (e. g. Gudžinskas, 2009; Norkus, 2010), evaluating the secession from the Soviet authoritarianism from the twenty-year perspective, define this as a model of a successful post-communist transformation. This leads to a concept *refolution*, coined by Ash (1989), reflecting successful half-reform and half-revolution seceding from the Soviet authoritarianism during the first decade as a way to democratization (Norkus, 2010, 16-20). However, the price of this achievement, especially social, is considered as extremely high.

Different scholars apply various concepts assessing the period following the year 1991: 'shock therapy' period, 'free fall' period, 'non-creative destruction' period. The point is that no matter who was in power – conservatives or ex-communists, as Norkus (2010) and others name them, – the post-communist political transformation has been dominated by a clear radical discourse position: the 'dismantling' or 'discontinuance' of the former structures of the state (Norkus, 2010, 38), and thus the creation of democracy and capitalism. Valantiejus (2012), however, observes that the change of ideology rarely (not so rapidly – *auth.*) changes the actual patterns of human behaviour. The author refers to human behaviour as continuous but only keeping a 'cynical distance' from the professed values, and expresses a possibility that people, actually or supposedly refusing the Soviet ideology, do not necessarily adopt new ideas (Ibid., 22). Such behaviour conditions and constructs a post-communist mentality. Writing about the impact of the Soviet years on individual consciousness, Kuzmickas (1996) remarks upon the following changes: disappearance of features such as independence, individuality and a feeling of responsibility; appearance of obedience, passiveness, a tendency to wait for instructions and collective irresponsibility (Kuzmickas & Astra, 1996). In different sources, the post-communist mentality, conditioned by the behaviour and thinking of the society and its separate members, is described using such concepts as 'passivity', 'unwillingness and inability to take care of yourself', 'alienation',

'distrust in official authority', 'distrust in the general sense', 'lack of personal and civil responsibility', 'clientelistic relationship'. Confrontation of the dominant post-communist mentality with the ruling elite's excessive reliance on their potential in terms of quality and quantity to implement unprecedented post-communist reforms and radical anticommunism explains the destruction of traditional attitudes with respect to policy, economics and social structures (Mačiulskytė, 2003). To describe the consequences of the confrontation, such concepts are applied as 'social instability', 'social alienation', 'increasing social deficit' and 'socio-economic polarization'.

On the other hand, post-communist transformation cannot be adequately understood if conceptualization of 'domestic' and 'international' processes and events are separated (Smith, 1999, 4). Some of the trends of Lithuanian development over the last decade – membership in the European Union – highlight the contours of a welfare state together with the further development of professional social work. The European Union membership is assessed as related to new challenges, which are far more complicated than the previous ones for the development of Central and Eastern European societies, including Lithuania (Gudžinskas, 2009, 128). According to the author, the complexity of the development process of these states is conditioned by the European integration-related changes in the state itself and its relationship with the society. Difficulties to maintain social solidarity under conditions of unemployment, poverty, expanding social pathologies are considered as major social challenges for new European Union member states (Ibid., 133).

Nevertheless, Lithuania's participation in European integration processes promotes professional social work development. For example, entry of Social work study field in the *List of Study Areas and Fields* in 2009 (according to Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania "*On the Approval of the List of Areas and Fields of Study at Higher Education Institutions and the List of Qualification Degrees*", 23-12-2009, No. 1749) is related to the active involvement of Lithuania in the processes of European integration, including the Bologna processes. The issue concerning social work academic acknowledgement is developed in Chapter 6.

Social Transformation

The trajectories of a planned chronological 'transition' at the origins of social transformation are constructed as neither very straight nor clear (Valantiejus, 2012, 13). The following aspects are emphasized as the major social changes, influencing the development of social work:

First, post-communist social transformation is constructed as the period of social cataclysms, change of values, reconstruction of economic relations, and political instability (Ruškus, 2002). The discourse formations based on the territorial, inter-branch and position values have been substituted by the discourse formations of ownership, asset and income, occupational prestige and authority. Significant dynamic processes took place in the discourses of education and occupation (profession).

On the other hand, in the light of political and economic transformations, when social consequences of the implemented reforms were not assessed and in general hardly considered by anyone as worth thinking about, the Lithuanian society was named as the society of *patience culture*, for the sake of which residents tended to suffer drastic economic reforms, instead of openly protesting and seeking to overthrow the elected authority (Gudžinskas, 2009, 130). Only much later – at the end of the first and beginning of the second decade of the post-communist transformation – the concept of *protest culture* began to emerge describing political behaviour of the society (for more on this issue see Riekašius, 2001, 2003; Mačiulskytė, 2003, 2006).

Another issue for the construction of social work as a profession is related to the general processes of globalization as observed all around the world, and especially intense in Europe, where Lithuania is also taking an active part. It is worth distinguishing the recent processes of integration and globalization resulting in significant social consequences. For a part of society, globalization is related to an opening of new opportunities of activity, employment and other mobility. Another concept applied to describe globalization is *localization*. Bauman (2002, 9) constructs the being 'local' in the globalized world as social deprivation and degradation, what leads to a concept *glocalization*. This is not necessarily attributed to territorial isolation of certain social units. Migration, which reduces unemployment in Lithuania and has resulted in the loss of 286,094 residents of the country

since 2004[2], changes the structure of the society, and can be attributed to the consequences of glocalization. In the case of glocalization, a professional social worker faces negative aspects of the process: the occurrence of new social problems, appearance of new client groups of social work, and search for new social work methods.

Furthermore, globalization is one of the important trends which has an impact on the professional social work development by shaping its professional identity. Lorenz (1998) demonstrates that identity as a concept can never be simple or fixed, and that the references which help to establish 'packages' of identity, such as nationality, gender or education, are becoming more fluid and can change their character rapidly. He also points out that social professions are implicated in this process of complex identification. As social work is a profession engaged in changeable and multiple self-definitions, openness and clarity, for example, it has become particularly important. In facing those issues social workers should not "reject attempts to make them more accountable, and try to declare openly what their 'products' are and how they account for interventions" (Ibid., 15; cited by Večkienė & Eidukevičiūtė, 2005).

Economic Transformation

One of the most radical attributes of the post-communist transformation is economic transformation. The essential aspects of economic transformation in the meta-analysis include the following.

Post-communist economic transformation is constructed as radical economic liberation and turn to capitalism: breaking free as soon as possible and as much as possible from the state property. Norkus (2008) applies the concept of *liberal capitalism* to characterize the trend of Lithuanian post-communist economic transformation (Ibid., 75). One of the most important discursive formations of economic liberation is privatization. The flaw of the first privatization phase was the form of voucher privatization. The main idea of voucher privatization is, by dividing privatization vouchers' packages per capita, to promote the creation of economic rela-

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2   Data provided by the International Organization for Migration - Lithuania. Internet access: http://www.iom.lt/ [08-05-2013]

tions and initiate the free market mechanisms, and to create conditions for the formation of a stable social structure of a particular society with a strong and financially viable social layer of proprietary, – the middle class.

Privatization critics emphasize 82 percent of the population (Šabajevaitė, 1999, 72) who have lost in the partition of property, and focus on social consequences of post-communist economic transformation. Pensioners, low-qualified or non-qualified workers, *blue-collars* (middle level managers, cultural workers, teachers), agricultural workers are considered as losers in the privatization process. From this point of view, voucher privatization is described as an uneven and spontaneous, economically unjustified mechanism for redistribution of wealth, which has caused crucial damage to the development of further social and economic reforms.

Economic liberalization created the pluralism of ownership forms. The pluralism of ownership is described as liberalization of labour relations: the change of the prevailing role of the state by the prevailing role of employers and social rights restrictions of employees, and an increase in social risk. The concept of the liberalization of labour relations explains a common post-communist phenomenon leading to the concepts to define employees as the users of the social support schemes, unemployed and long-term customers of labour-exchanges or labour emigrants. Illegal work, double accounting and pay, unpaid overwork and the like are considered as characteristic to post-communist liberated labour market in Lithuania.

In the light of economic transformation, the most common discursive formation referring to the Lithuanian society is a post-communist mentality and economic illiteracy, which explain wealth differentiation, even polarization, in the society. A complicated socio-economic situation leads to such phenomena as social exclusion, increasing delinquency, spread of addictions, resulting in danger for human health, intellectual and social development, the spread of organized crime. These are considered to be complicated issues creating the conditions for the demand of professional social work.

Furthermore, recent macro-economic indicators make a direct influence on the development of professional social work. Economic *ups and downs* shape the speed and trends of social work professionalization. On the one hand, an attempt to reduce the costs of funding full-time social services triggers the expansion of part-time services, the establishment of new staff

positions in the institutions which provide part-time social services. On the other hand, the onset of the economic recession in 2008 prevented the development of the social infrastructure.

Considering the stated above, this chapter presents professional social work development in the light of the country's historical and cultural context as a socially constructed self-directed and self-supporting system which operates in and responds to the environment, which is manifested through political, economic and social systems, created and recreated when the systems undergo changes. The country's aspirations for global and regional integration create favourable conditions for the penetration of the European social work culture to Lithuania. However, the resources, including the development of welfare infrastructure, are necessary for the process of social work professionalization.

A distinctive attribute of post-communist transformation in the construction of social work as a profession is a post-communist mentality. A post-communist mentality can be defined by such behavioural and worldview characteristics as passivity, inability and unwillingness to take care of one's own life, alienation, and distrust in general. A social worker who works with a client, featuring such thinking and behaviour, finds it difficult to empower him / her to solve personal problems. Furthermore, the profession of social work exists in a wider cultural context; meanwhile, a social worker is a member and a 'cultural product' of the same society. Therefore, a social worker is always at risk of operationalization of the attitudes already existing in the society, including stereotypical ones, affecting the social risk groups or individuals. Thus, post-communism, in general, shapes the development and manifestation of social work practice, as well as influences the trends of the state's political development.

4. Lithuanian Welfare State Characteristics, Conditioning Social Work Development

Social work is the product of its institutional context, continually re-inscribing the conditions of practice (Macdonald, 2006, 5). Social workers work in a system of social care, set forth in laws and legislative acts and funded by the state. The system is a part of the state policy defined by a general concept *welfare state* and described in terms of the state social policy, public funding and administrative-bureaucratic apparatus (Gvaldaitė & Švedaitė, 2005, 11–21), ideological background, and economic behaviour of the society. A welfare state is constructed to aid individuals and groups, and leads to the concepts of 'satisfying standards of life and health', 'life quality', 'development of full capacities', 'well being' (Friedlander, 1980, 4), 'competitive socio-economic behaviour'. Thus, social work – as it is found in one or another country – is constructed in a welfare state; meanwhile, the construction of the latter is based on the historical experience of the society as well as social institutions, economic conditions and ideology, cherished in the context of dominant social values (see Figure 2).

This dependency is typical not only to the Lithuanian context. Social work as a profession is considered to be the result of welfare state development. The role of a welfare state in the construction of social work is also discussed among foreign authors: Julkunen (2002), Williams & Popay (1999) and others propose that Scandinavian countries have an extended theoretical and empirical tradition to analyse social policy, and use the concept of social welfare to define it (Julkunen 2002, 34). Three social welfare discursive formations – *having*, *loving*, *being* –, as proposed by Allardt (1976), form the basis of this tradition (Julkunen, 2002, 34). In the case of social work activity in a welfare state, a social worker as a professional faces all three social welfare discursive formations: provision of social services (*having*), formation and maintenance of social skills (*being*), and support / empowerment of a client to deal with his / her problems (*loving*). In addition, Allardt (1976) emphasizes that the concept of social welfare contains the aspects of person's behaviour, values and lifestyle (cited in Julkunen, 2002, 34). These are social work objects, which are primarily dealt by a social worker in social work practice.
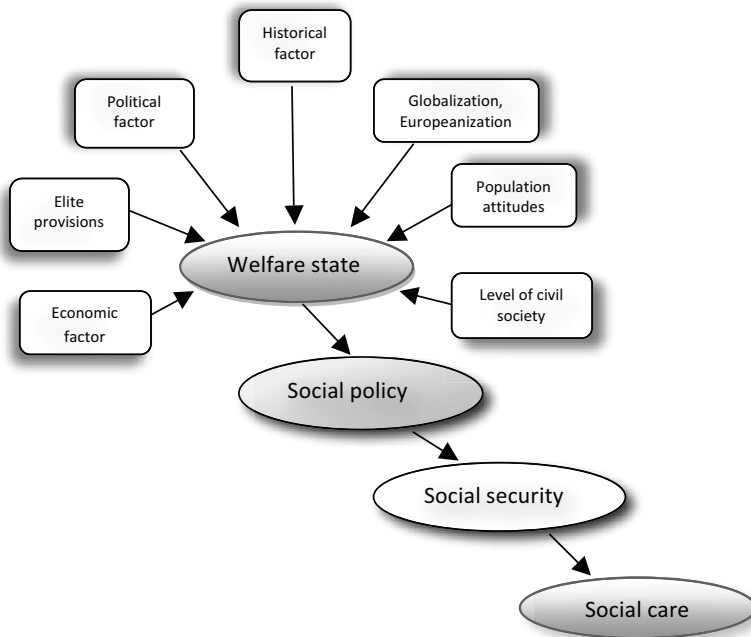
Figure 2. Relationship between social care and the welfare state (based on Aidukaitė, Bogdanova & Guogis, 2012).

The dynamics of the Lithuanian welfare state construction rests on changing discursive formations defining it: 1) before 1990 – an era of the dominating Communist expansive social policy and non-professional social services; 2) the period between 1990-1993 – a *refolutionary*, in Ash's (1989) term, change period with a minimal role of the state in social sphere and destruction of the inherited Communist social security mechanism; 3) since 1994, the conservative and liberal discourses predominate in the construction of contemporary Lithuanian welfare state.

The Origins of Today's Lithuanian Welfare State

A welfare state in the Independent Lithuania has been constructing after the destruction of the state monopoly in all spheres of social life. How was this state monopoly constructed?

According to Standing (1996), the state monopoly was constructed by:

1) the development of social security and social services irrespective of the needs of the contemporary social reality;
2) an inseparable linkage between social welfare and workplace;
3) strictly restricted labour mobility;
4) subordination of all social groups to mass production: men and women equally;
5) extensive social measures such as, for example, double pensions provided to pensioners and people with disabilities (cited in Jurkuvienė, 2003, 19-20).

In the sphere of social care in Soviet Lithuania, institutional stationary services were provided in a network of centralized institutions – boarding houses with 300 and over wards. The main task of boarding houses was to ensure medical and material supply for the wards (Vareikytė, 2010). Non-stationary social-pedagogical practice appeared in Lithuania in the 70s and 80s of the 20th century; at that time the workers of different professions began to organise extra-curricular activities at schools and after-work activities for adults at trade unions, medical institutions, executive committees, social divisions of workplaces, party committees and other organizations (Vareikytė, 2010, 24; also Alifanovienė, 2002). In Soviet Lithuania, social security was an integral part of the socio-economic system (Guogis & Bogdanova, 2012, 42). The Soviet government had a full control over the market and performed the functions of the market: participated in the distribution of income and resources; meanwhile, social security was created by the minimal, but extensive universal social programmes and services (Jurkuvienė, 2003; Guogis & Bogdanova, 2012).

Guogis (2012b) defines this type of social security as the 'Eastern-type model of Communism', constructed as the denial of social problems, according to Vareikytė (2010); therefore, there was neither social workers nor the general system of target social support need to.

The Construction of Contemporary Lithuanian Welfare State

There are many attempts to theorise the construction of a welfare state in Lithuania. In the period of restored Independence (1990–2012), a number

of publications emerged that evaluate the dynamics of welfare state: articles and monographs written by Aidukaitė (2004, 2009a, 2009b), Lazutka (2007a, 2007b), Guogis, Bernotas and Bitinas (Guogis, 2003; Bernotas & Guogis, 2006; Guogis & Bitinas, 2009); Aidukaitė, Bogdanova and Guogis (Guogis & Bogdanova, 2012; Aidukaitė, Bogdanova & Guogis, 2012). Some authors focus on the search for a unique theoretical model of a welfare state due to institutional differences (Bazant & Schubert, 2009; Kangas, 1999) and dynamic social and economic activity (Manning, 2004). They emphasize the remaining post-communist practice influencing contemporary development of the Lithuanian welfare state. Another group of authors look for similarities with theorised practice of other countries or regions. However, the authors, who focus on Lithuanian welfare state studies, have not agreed yet on a number of aspects of evaluation; they base their findings on different indicators and data. In Guogis' (2012a, 15) terms, this is due to a relatively underdeveloped Lithuanian social statistical database and an insufficient meta-theoretical level of assessment.

The last decade of the 20th century in Lithuania is marked by the focus on market economy, competition in terms of production and pluralistic participation of market players. The discourse of free market in a welfare state refers to narrow social guarantees, in terms of Paluckienė (1999). The author concludes that the 'residual' Anglo-Saxon welfare state, preconditioned by liberalism, is constructed.

The complicated issue of identification of a developing welfare state in Lithuania is characterized by contradictions when implementing single elements of different welfare states' practices, as notice Aidukaitė (2010) and Guogis (2012b). Guogis (2012b, 22) observes that low retirement and disability pensions, though paid under the principles of a conservative-corporative model, correspond in size to the amounts of the liberal marginal model of the underdeveloped countries (e. g. Central and South America). On the other hand, large maternity benefits are provided in Lithuania, what surprises even veteran politicians from Scandinavia. Meanwhile, the comparative weight of retirement pensions (but not their amount), if compared to social services, makes the Lithuanian social model closer to the South Europe, but not to that of the states located further north. These contradictions mislead scientists and lead them to search for an intermediate position of a developing welfare state. Aidukaitė (2004, 82–83) assumes

that the construction of Lithuanian welfare state occupies an intermediate position between the liberal residual and conservative welfare regimes, as identified by Esping-Andersen (2000).

The managerial discourse in social administration draws attention to the process of 'drifting' of the developing Lithuanian welfare state from the conservative-corporative model towards the liberal, marginal model, in Guogis' term (2012b, 20-21). The elements of new public management in the most decentralized management chain – in the activities of the departments of municipal social assistance – complement a traditional, hierarchical social administration model. According to Welbourne (2011), managerialism leads to the focus on 'output'. State social work has more emphasis on establishing eligibility and 'enabling' the purchase of services, rather than their direct provision (Ibid., 406). New public management refers to contracts and 'procurement of services', as well as the benchmarking, participatory research and 'customer satisfaction' surveys' application when providing services.

The discourse of post-communism is well-rooted in the construction of Lithuanian welfare state. Aidukaitė (2010) notices that in the case of Lithuania's membership in the European Union, the discourse of post-communism manifests in the practice of following the EU legislation, but only partially, the European countries. (An explanation for such post-communist behaviour is provided in Chapter 3.) Rather wide-ranging, but low-level social insurance programmes, small pensions and modest other social benefits, but accessibility of healthcare and secondary education to everyone (Aidukaitė, 2010), also social payments (such as state pensions) to the 'deserving people' (Guogis, 2012b), refer to the discourse of post-communism. Resting on these social welfare practices, the authors conclude about the construction of a post-communist welfare state (Aidukaite, Bogdanova & Guogis, 2012). The post-communist welfare state acknowledges its formal responsibility concerning citizens' welfare, however, the provided care does not always guarantee a dignified standard of living to the citizens facing social risk (illness, old-age retirement, unemployment or poverty) (Ibid., 7). The concepts of 'Eastern-type features of social security administration', 'clientelism', 'corruption', 'wide-ranging social programmes' are applied to describe the construction of the post-communist welfare state.

With the clientelistic relationships remaining well-rooted and constantly

acquiring new forms of expression, to explain them only in the light of the post-communist heritage is also rather incorrect, therefore, back in 2006, Bernotas and Guogis began to speak about the similarity of the Lithuanian social security system to the practice of South Europe or even South America and Asia (Guogis, 2012a). Preconditions to look for such similarities rest on the characteristics of Lithuanian society. The construction of Lithuanian welfare state takes place in the society, which is characterized by a high level of social inequality, poverty and unemployment (Bernotas & Guogis, 2006), social differentiation, even polarization (Mačiulskytė, 2003), structural and functional uncertainty (in Grigas' term, 2001, 13). In that case, similar characteristics of societies in Lithuania and South Europe bring them together, and at the same time distinguish from other Western and Northern Europe and Eastern European countries – Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland (Guogis, 2012a, 32).

In summary, social workers are the implementers of the social services provided and funded by the modern state. Gvaldaitė and Švedaitė (2005), referring to Galuke (2002), emphasize the dependence of social work on the state social policy, public funding and administration – bureaucracy – as those ones of five specific features of social work as a profession. Social policy, public funding and administration are parts of a general welfare state, which is still under construction in Lithuania. The authors (Aidukaitė, 2010; Guogis, 2012b; Aidukaite, Bogdanova & Guogis, 2012) evaluate the expression of the welfare state formation in Lithuania as vivid and intensive dynamics. The opportunities of the emerging social work are directly related to the vision and mission of the welfare state in the process of its creation, i. e. how social welfare is visualized in the state, and how the aim of social policy is formulated. The lack of stability in the Lithuanian welfare state, predetermined by the lack of experience, fluctuations in economic development, and the consequences of post-communist transformation, affects the development of state social policy and welfare infrastructure, which in its turn affects the construction of social work as a profession.

Links to the Research Results

It seems that social work opportunities as well as limits are encoded in the social policy of the state, which incorporates measures and political actions

aiming at social welfare. How can we describe the effects of Lithuanian welfare state dynamics on the social work professionalization process?

The respondents of the survey presented in the 4th article (Appendix 4) – social workers, working in the institutional child care system, – highlighted the question of instability of the Lithuanian social policy as a significant obstacle to the consistent creation of the welfare state in Lithuania. This is also reflected in the dynamics of the requirements for social work as a profession. The 4th article (Appendix 4) analyses the system of children's institutional care over the period of 23 years of Lithuanian independence, and over the period of more than 20 years of the development of children's institutional care system, it has experienced four significant changes for these institutions: first, child care homes were transferred from the subordination of the Ministry of Education and Science to the supervision of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and they have turned from educational institutions into social institutions, along with their administration being placed under the competence of the county; second, the Social Services Law of 2006 (19-01-2006, No. X-493) defines strict qualification requirements for the employees taking a social worker's position in social institutions, causing a wave of workers' retraining and turnover in the institutions; third, at the same time when the county administration was cancelled, the subordination of child care homes was transferred to municipal administrations, realising the idea that management of social services has to be as close as possible to a potential client; four, the reorganization of the child care homes' system currently taking place and due to be implemented by the year 2015. All these changes, directly related to the development of the Lithuanian welfare state, have rocked the established practices of social institutions and had the effect on the employees working in the system; in addition, they add to the development of professional social work.

Interestingly, in Lithuania, a major part of reforms related to the development of social policy measures is constructed 'from the top down', but not 'from the bottom up'. This causes dissatisfaction 'at the bottom', obstacles occur which hinder the implementation of these reforms: failure to understand the desirability of the reforms, experience of professional career losses ("all of us, who had been working earlier, all of us, faced the changes, for the worse rather than for the better, with respect to the working

conditions, work payment, holidays" (quotation from the interview with Elena; line 91-92), "everyone had to start everything from scratch" (quotation from the interview with Elena; line 41, 102)), mistrust in the promises of the authority ("visitors from the Ministry arrived, we received letters, which said that educators, who had been working for so many years, really do not need any training, maybe some refresher courses only, we will get a different qualification and that's it, and we'll continue working as we've done before. And what happened? Like that, that if not the funding from the European Union, we might have lost our jobs. We were told that this was your problem, you have been warned, and you had to study" (quotation from the interview with Elena; line 118-122)), employees resist or are only formally implementing the requirements of the reforms (see Appendix 4).

5. The Construction of Social Work in Practice

Social Work Practice in Interaction Model

Since I follow the assumption in the meta-analysis that social work is socially constructed and social work practice is developed via an interaction process between social work subjects, I also acknowledge the systematic nature of social work practice. The elements of social work practice system are disclosed in this chapter.

Social work as a system is comprised of countless daily activities, described as the social work practice. Each social work activity has a clear repetitive structure and basic components of its construction. To unfold the social work practice, I refer to the interaction model proposed by Bagdonas (2001), where he marks the main components of social work: a social worker (with his / her knowledge, skills, and values), the client system, and external social conditions (see Figure 3).
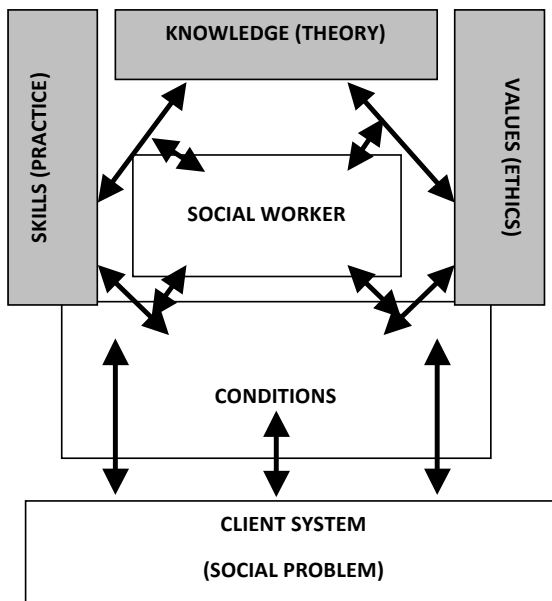
Figure 3. The main components of social work practice (Bagdonas, 2001).

The interaction model confirms that social work as an activity is not a temporal, onetime reaction, and the interaction process proceeds under intensively changing social conditions. It is a daily social work practice, echoing in many cases of social work interaction, each of them involving all the three elements of social work as identified in the model which constructs social work.

On the other hand, the development of social work in Lithuania is interrelated with the development of social interventions, associated with the establishment of the welfare state (analysed in Chapter 4). Both the one and the other are developing consistently by creating and improving their instruments in the historical and cultural context (Chapter 3 explores this context). As Parton (1999, 112) notes, social work mainly provides an important but ambiguous strategy to enable 'government at a distance' or indirect methods of social regulation to take place. A developed welfare state creates and maintains social work to solve all unusual cases (departing from the accepted norm). In this respect, social workers perform the function of social control normalization, because they have to restore the client's ability to live according to the usual norms of society (Gvaldaitė & Švedaitė, 2005, 19-20). For that reason, a social worker very often becomes 'a hostage of the system' due to the functions he / she fulfils, which are hardly comparable: a) social control, and b) personal assistance. This contradiction is defined as a *'double mandate' dilemma* in professional literature on social work (according to Galuke, 2002; cited in Gvaldaitė & Švedaitė, 2005). *Government at a distance* creates the image of maintaining an autonomous free individual who is governed at the same time. The concept is developed by Foucault (1979), who argues that part of the process of the modernization of society has been achieved through citizens learning to govern themselves and to be governed by others (Liljegren, 2012, 296). This is a normal social regulation tool in the developed democratic state.

Discussions about *governmentality* and institutionalization always involve the issue of power. Power in the discourse of social work cannot be pinpointed, and thus separated and isolated from public social institutions, such as social agencies, common lodging-houses, foster homes, also schools, hospitals, prisons, and it is ubiquitous as a productive factor (Andersen, 2003, 3). However, power is not something that one person or powerful group *has* and weals against weaker opponents. Power is diffuse, circulat-

ing in a capillary fashion around and through institutions, reaching 'into the very grain' of those who are made subjects through their involvement in the discourse – social workers, clients, therapists, claimants, and so on (according to MacLure, 2003, 176). Rephrasing Andersen (2003, 3), who provides examples of criminality and illness as discursive positions, social services and other welfare tools as discursive formations are established with the intent to control.

Constructing Social Work Practice
A Social Worker and Professional Competence

Resting on the interaction model, proposed by Bagdonas (2001), a social worker is one of the elements constructing the process of social work. A professional social worker is considered to be the one who shows that he or she is properly prepared to perform a certain activity and is competent in performing it (Gvaldaitė, 2007, 144). Competence, by Lepaitė (2003, 6), defines an individual's "ability to act", determined by his / her "knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes, personality traits and values". Thus, these elements construct the system of social worker's competence.

For social work to operate quietly and in an uncontested way, it requires a supportive social mandate and an internal professional confidence and coherence (Parton, 1999). Pease and Fook (1999, 14) specify that social work practice confines social workers to a particular knowledge base. Knowledge in social work is based on specific methods and theory one can actually grasp and apply in practice (Johnson, 2001) and relies on an understanding how a society functions, what role and how a client acts in it, about a human, his / her environment, relations and factors that determine a client's relationship with the environment. Social work with addicts, carriers of communicable diseases, victims of human trafficking, the ones engaged in prostitution, those confronting perpetrators or those having returned from prisons, refers to a crucial need for general professional knowledge (Dirgėlienė, 2008, 94). That knowledge base can be achieved both *via* education and training, and practice. (Social workers' education and training issues in Lithuania are disclosed in Chapter 6).

Kavaliauskienė (2010) writes that social work is considered to be a wide, multidimensional, complex, emotionally intense activity. This pro-

fession is associated with dedication, servicing others, the essence of life, mission (Ibid., 164), handled by people who do care about the fates of others, who feel comfortable analysing other people's problems, in terms of Okunišnikova and Rumianceva (2007, 158). Since social workers deal with the most vulnerable members of society, Ivanauskienė and Valžinskienė (2007), Dirgėlienė (2010) view values as one of the most important elements constructing social worker's professional competence. Ivanauskienė and Valžinskienė (2007, 77) argue that the core values are those that have something in common with a human value and dignity. Moreover, the authors refer to Compton and Galaway (1999) to describe the values; the values for these authors are unproven and perhaps impossible to prove, beliefs about human nature. These beliefs indicate the direction and participate in the construction of social work practitioner's daily work.

The social worker's value system is constructed of three types of values, by Johnson (2001):

1) the ultimate (or final) – these are the most abstract values, acknowledged by many people. These include freedom, human value and dignity, justice and others;
2) the closest (or direct) – more specific values, related to the final desired state. For example, a right to abortion, a right to punish your own child. There are disagreements about these values, and
3) the instrumental values allowing a particular behaviour and determining measures to achieve a goal. For example, confidentiality, the self-determination right. These are measures to express human value and dignity.

In 2006, Ivanauskienė and Valžinskienė (2007) conducted a quantitative descriptive study where they examined the peculiarities of professional competence of social work practitioners and social workers' professional values. The conducted research revealed that social work practitioners' work is based on values; social work values are adopted and recognized as valuable and important to the social work practice and the client support process. Among the social work professional values, the following values were named as the most important ones: confidentiality, acceptance, empowerment, professional responsibility, controlled emotional involvement, social justice, knowledge sharing, client rights, and individualization.

Among the personal values used in professional activities, the following values were most frequently named: understanding, tolerance, patience, respect, acceptance, empathy, ability to listen and hear, good-will, sincerity, openness, as well as love to a human, humanity, consideration, cooperation, communication, sensitivity, responsibility, activeness, work with all one's heart. (Ibid., 79-80).

Dirgėlienė (2010) is often referring to the world's practice while speaking about the inborn values and the values acquired by social workers and constructing their professional competence. As an example – at the University of Manchester (United Kingdom), values are given a particular role – admission to the social work studies is determined not by the average grade, but by a test on values (to analyse a candidate's values the admission system applies several types of tests) (Ibid., 33).

Why are values so important in the constructing process of social worker's professional competence? Because, if your work with people who have social problems is not guided by values, you may cause damage instead of providing help (Ivanauskienė & Valžinskienė, 2007).

The reality of social work professional practice is dominated by 'difficulties', 'problems', which raise disturbance, are unpleasant, complicated, which are difficult to learn to live with, to solve or overcome. In order to overcome them a social worker needs good professional preparation, skills, a wide range of knowledge, creativity and imagination (Kavaliauskienė, 2010, 164). Skills are the third element constructing social worker's competence. Skills are considered to be a component of practice, connecting knowledge and values, as well as converting them into actions, responding to a concern or need (Johnson, 2001). Skills refer to the social work process and lead to such professional activities as identification of needs, planning, implementation, monitoring, review of results, assessment, and prediction of future prospects. Thus, for a social worker, who provides social care and support, it is necessary to have a variety of skills: reflective (linking theory and practice, giving meaning to and reconsidering the values) (Jucevičienė, 2001; Gvaldaitė & Švedaitė, 2005; Dirgėlienė & Kiaunytė, 2008; Dirgėlienė, 2008, 2010; Kavaliauskienė, 2010, etc.); gnostic (search for information, understanding and selection); projecting (setting goals and tasks, forecasting); design (selection and adjustment of content, methods and tools); organization (setting conditions, stimulating a purposeful and

natural change of clients' situation); communication (communication skills, socialization, development of relationships); expertise or evaluation (comprehension and critical process analysis) (Leliūgienė, 2002, 389).

Links to the Research Results

Considering the stated above, professional competence is constructed by combining innate and learned characteristics: values, professional knowledge and skills. How do social work practitioners themselves describe the professional competence necessary for their daily professional activity? The 4th article (Appendix 4) presents competences of a social worker employed in children's home as constructed by the research respondents – social workers, social educators, and administrative staff of children's homes. These competences highlight four aspects of social worker's professional competence: personal, professional, institutional and intuitive.

The personal competence discourse – social worker's personality, his / her inner resources – is dominant in the speech of the workers themselves. This is absolutely understandable, after all, as Dirgėlienė (2010) observes, the situation is confusing, the becoming of profession coincides with the intensive changes going on in the society, whereupon the person's inner resources absorb the synchronic dynamics of the two processes. Patience, tolerance, ability to forgive, openness, initiative – these are the qualities named by the workers themselves, including those with basic social work education as well as the retrained ones. Talking with respondents, I have noticed a consistent pattern: the answers to the question about social worker's knowledge, values and skills usually begin by defining the social worker's personality and his / her inner resources.

The professional competence dimension is not clearly articulated, but it is noticeable in the behaviour of the research participants during the interview; it is revealed in those parts of the interview where the respondents talk about specific cases from their daily professional activities. Confidentiality, knowledge of professional ethics as well as the ability to apply it, the competence to timely understand and professionally select the aid measures, the identification of the 'burnout syndrome' symptoms, and the ability to willingly take preventive measures, are dominant in the behaviour and reasoning of decision-making among the workers with basic social work education.

The retrained workers or those who have decided to take advantage of the provision of Part 3 of Article 37 of the *Law on Social Services* (19-01-2006, No. X-493) and refused to get retrained, transmit verbal and non-verbal information which features insufficient or poor professional competence discourse, meanwhile the aspect, which I name as an intuitive competence, is dominating. This means that they base their decisions not so much on social work professional knowledge or clearly formulated values required for a social worker, but more on their personal experience brought from the family as well as the universal – humanistic – values. During the research I happened to see children's home staff who decided not to get retrained, these are the ones who have recently retired or are about to retire due to the retirement age, characterized by their colleagues as excellent, and by the children as 'mummies', able to find that mysterious balance between 'strictness and leniency', however, whose behaviour strongly features the lack of professionalism, resulting in a high level of 'burnout syndrome' risk.

The institutional competence discourse becomes apparent as the aspect limiting full unfolding of social worker's competences. Organizational control is a normal phenomenon. Analysing occupational and organizational professionalisms, Liljegren (2012) emphasises that there are internal organizational mechanisms of control that instruct professionals about what to do and how to carry out the tasks (Ibid., 297). The institution where a social worker is employed has its own rules, a range of working measures, organizational culture, and finally, new employees are acquainted with their duties by the senior colleagues, who are trying to retain the old traditions of the institution. Some workers take this naturally, as a norm; meanwhile others see this as the factor limiting their possibilities.

A Client in Social Work Practice

Jucevičienė (2001), Kvieskienė and Indrašienė (2008) claim that modern social work aims not only at solving a client's problem, but also at enabling a person / a family / a community to effectively modify their activities. By participating in the problem-solving process, not only a social worker, but also a client constructs social work practice while acquiring problem-solving skills, which help to overcome other obstacles of social functioning. Every case of interaction is a case of acting and solving a client's problem

'here and now', rather than in accordance with a pre-established plan or a method suitable to everyone (Gvaldaitė & Švedaitė, 2005, 10-16). Traditional social work methods, applied when providing assistance for the disabled, elderly, poor people, and addicts, do not fit for work with such client groups as sexual minorities, victims of human trafficking and prostitution, national minorities, violators, ex-convicts, and groups (family and community). Special social work methods are required to assist these new client groups. Furthermore, a social work client in Lithuania has an additional characteristic – the post-communist mentality –, shaping social work practice. (The characteristics of post-communist mentality are analysed in Chapter 3). Considering the stated above, for a social worker, usually acting in the client's environment and adapting a methodological operation to each client's specific case, it is important to reveal the particular characteristics of a particular client. Thus, a client in social work interaction process is an active agent constructing social work practice.

Social Care and Social Services Institutions

Social work interaction process takes place under the conditions of social care and social services institutions, which formalize social work practice and legitimate its implementation. At the beginning of 2012 (according to the data from municipal and state institutions), about 7,600 persons were employed in positions related to social work in municipal and state budgetary institutions and townships (according to the data from the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, in 2010, overall about 9,900 persons worked in positions related to social work in Lithuania) (*Social Report 2011-2012*, 2012). Under the *Law on Social Services* (19-01-2006, No. X-493), social services in Lithuania are provided by the social services providers: institutions of social services and social care. Social services' institutions organise and provide general social services and social care. Social care services are organised and provided in the social care institutions under an appropriate licence. In addition, children's social care may be organized and provided in a foster family as well. The services provided by all of these institutions are divided in the *Social Services Directory* (05-04-2006, No. A1-93) into general and special social services. Depending on the area of social services provision, social workers and social worker's assistants provide social services either in an institution or at home.

Professional development is important for a social worker. The conditions for professional development are partly determined by an organization in which a social worker works. Institutions are important settings where a professional group acquires a concrete form (according to Hasenfeld, 1992; cited in Liljegren, 2012, 297). It refers to a particular internal organizational culture, the procedures, attitude of the management to the profession and its expediency. This constructs the attitude of workers and their disposition to the new profession as well as the opportunities for changes creating conditions for the construction of professional status.

Developing the network of social services' institutions in Lithuania, a part of the institutions, particularly in the area of social services, are newly established. These institutions create their status on the basis of the experience of other national and foreign institutions involved in a similar activity, as well as on the professionalism of the employees, and thus form, if possible, most favourable conditions for the development of their professional competence. In the field of institutional care, it is largely based on the network of institutions inherited from the Soviet times. The practice applied by these institutions is controversial: on the one hand, the institutions are implementing formal requirements as foreseen for them under the law; however, they are combined with the old traditions.

Links to the Research Results

How can we define an organizational impact on the construction of the social work profession? The research presented in the 4th article (Appendix 4) allowed me to experience that impact.

The research was conducted in the children's home. Institutional care is considered to be one of the characteristic attributes of the former Soviet system. It was based on different types of institutions – boarding-schools, boarding-houses, children's homes, etc. –, where people with physical and / or mental disabilities, children left without parental care, juvenile delinquents and other individuals, who failed to meet strict standards of the created communist society, were isolated. The residents of such institutions were subject to a narrow scope of impact resulting from the staff's emphatically homogeneous professional qualification, depending on the institutional subordination. A similar fragmented approach was

shown when handling the problems of the warded (supervised) persons. So far the rudiments of the former practice are more or less practiced in children's homes: from the informal addressing to the social workers and social worker's assistants to the obscure actual description of the content of the positions held by the workers. Finally, new social workers, who come to the organization with a special professional training, internalize the organization's practice in as much as this practice is supported by the culture inside the organization.

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Social Work Practice Professionalization

As far as social work is defined in the meta-analysis as a process, it is in the condition of a permanent change, influenced by changing *external* and *internal* conditions. External conditions are analysed in Chapters 3 and 4. In this section, I will focus on the internal changes of social work. Internal social work practice development in Lithuania is related to the changing characteristics of human recourses employed in this occupational field. As it is written in the Introduction (Chapter 1), a significantly faster growth of the need for professional social work than the actual possibilities to satisfy that need is one of the conditions promoting extremely intensive processes of creation of a new profession. The Lithuanian social work practice in this period can be named as *reactive social work*, as there were a lot of inveterate social problems, and quick action was needed (Večkienė & Bižys, 2003). Zaviršek (1999), resting on Payne, names this period of social work development as 'individualistic-reformist', when quickly trained people and the first graduates start to work with clients in newly established social work services, meeting individual needs and improving social services in order to work more effectively (cited in Večkienė & Bižys, 2003). Referring to the periodization of social work development in Lithuania, presented by Bagdonas (2010) (in Chapter 1), the first decade of social work development can be assigned to the 'reformist' period. I explain this period as a hardly possible mature (developed) social work practice.

People working in the social sphere – former teachers, engineers, technologists, chemists, etc. – had to deal with new social problems here and now on the basis

of personal qualities and life experience, which they gained nowhere else but in the Communist political system. The lack of professional social workers, the first steps approaching to the creation of the welfare state, accompanied by an inherited post-communist mentality, which had formed the view that the political system and social guarantees naturally protected the individual from social problems (Leliūgienė et al., 2006, 64), and that it was possible to solve the existing problems by cash benefits <…>. Some social processes were controlled with great difficulty, and some were out of control completely. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

The following period, partly overlapping with the previous one, is considered to be named as 'socialist-collectivist', in terms of Zaviršek (1999), resting on Payne (cited in Večkienė & Bižys, 2003). This period is characterized by the development of new formal and informal organizations, i. e. by constructing a civil society, creating favourable conditions to co-operation and mutual support so that the most oppressed and disadvantaged people can gain more control over their own lives.

A proactive or *social work professionalization* period begins when professional social workers start to enter the labour market and social work practice becomes more strategic, and more attention is paid to the effectiveness of social services (based on Večkienė & Bižys, 2003). The third period is named as 'reflexive-therapeutic' and is based on the promotion and facilitation of personal growth and self-realization of individuals so that people gain power over their own feelings and the way of life. In Lithuania, this has been and still is possible because of the high educational standards which lead to the modern understanding of social work (Ibid.).

One more aspect has to be disclosed here. Many authors (Bagdonas, 2001; Švedaitė & Gvaldaitė, 2005; Žalimienė, 2006; Švedaitė, 2006, 2007; Bagdonas & Lazutka, 2007), analysing the social work profession and social work practice, point out that legislation regulating work of social workers is one of the important factors determining the quality of practice and the nature of the services provided (Varžinskienė, 2009, 124).

In Lithuania, the first legal document to define social work and its competence is the *Conception of Social Support* of 1994 (09-05-1994, No. 360). It states that social workers perform social care. The *Conception* and the first *Law of Social Services* (30-10-1996, No. 104-2367) define the qualification required to social support providers in such a way: individuals from different

professions may work as social workers if they strive to get any theoretical knowledge in higher education institutions that prepare social workers. The new version of the *Law of Social Services* (19-01-2006, No. X-493) lays down that after July 1, 2011, a person can work as a social worker upon acquiring social work or equivalent education. The *Law of Social Services* of 2006 also envisages a periodical attestation of social workers. Considering the stated, together with the increasing number of professional social workers in the labour market, the requirements for social workers are growing, and by law, a person without social work education is not able to occupy the position of a social worker. Social work is considered to be acknowledged not as any assistance for a human being, but as a qualified assistance which can only be provided by adequately qualified professionals.

The *Conception* of 1994 describes clearly distinguished social work activities: social work with individuals and families, social work with groups, and a social worker forming social politics. As Varžinskienė (2009) notes, though the description of social work in the *Conception* is quite general, not exhaustive and not quite clear, this is the first and very important step defining the area of social work practice at the national level. This helps social work to gain the status of a legally accepted profession (Ibid., 125).

Another document which regulates social work practice is *The Catalogue of Social Services* (05-04-2006, No. A1-93). This *Catalogue* classifies, lists and describes social services in Lithuania, the main constitution of their provision, and lists the professionals providing them. According to the *Catalogue*, there is no single service listed in it which would not be provided by social workers. This refers to the growing need of social workers dealing with social problems and the acknowledgement of this need. At the same time, it shows the growing status of professional social work practice, i. e. social work profession is gaining higher importance dealing with problems not only from the point of view of professionals themselves, but its importance is also legally recognized (Varžinskienė, 2009).

One more document regulating social work practice is not so influential, but no less important. It is *The Code of Ethics of Social Workers* (1998). It was adopted at the same time when discussions started about the attestation of social workers and the qualification requirements were adopted. Though the *Code* has no legal status, the *Lithuanian Social Workers Association* ultimately bases its activity on it. However, the *Code* may have

the controlling power only when social workers apply it in practice. The research of Varžinskienė and Ivanauskienė (2006) reveals that 33 percent of social workers with no social work education, who have participated in the research, have never heard about the *Code of Ethics of Social Workers*, and 44 percent of respondents do not use the *Code* in practice or use it rarely (Ivanauskienė & Varžinskienė, 2007). The data show that the presence of the *Code* does not mean that it is used in practice or has any impact on social workers.

Summarizing the chapter, social work as a system is composed of a number of daily activities with a clear repetitive structure, united into a consistent process. Through this process, while solving daily social problems, social work as a profession is constructed and reconstructed many times, every day, during each interaction between a social worker and a client. Thus, everyday social work practice is personally and socially constructive and constitutes a reality for those involved in construing those realities. A micro-level construction appears in the interaction process between a social worker and a client. A macro-level construction discloses in social policy and legislation by defining what social work is, who and what kind of social services can provide.

For professional social work development, it is necessary to define clearly the social work object, subject and field of influence. A legally regulated admittance to the profession and attestation procedures are very important when creating professional identity: separation of professionals and non-professionals, especially regarding social care issues. The strengthening of social work professional identity is also supported by the creation and control of professional standards.

6.   Dynamics of Social Work Academization

The more complex and intellectual professions become by interweaving with each other, the more the centre of gravity gradually moves from the emphasis on the business world to the emphasis on education; meanwhile, the system of professions is substituted by the system of qualifications (Laužackas, 2008). Social work professionalization is impossible without academization of practical activity. In the first meeting of the Baltic-Polish Conference on Social Work Education[3], held in Kaunas, Lithuania, in January 1994, Constable reported that "every practice demands theory as a set of assumptions which explain and predict what the object of practice is, and as a set of principles which underlie professional action" (Constable, 1995, 35).

Laužackas (2008) assumes that all professions typically involve two elements, respectively reflecting two sides of the profession: *objective* and *subjective*. The objective side includes everything what is related to material working conditions and circumstances. The subjective side mirrors a person's knowledge, skills, attitudes and a person's efforts to implement the required goals of the profession. The basic contradiction of the profession is of particular importance as it signifies a constant contradiction between the objective (performance characteristics and requirements) and subjective sides of the profession. This contradiction is largely solved by the person's leaning processes. By upgrading his / her qualification, a person keeps in tune to the changing working conditions and requirements. Therefore, the qualification growth is the primary condition for performing more and more complex activities. In this respect, profession is interrelated with education and training (Ibid., 13).

Disciplinarity of Social Work

A person wishing to become a professional social worker needs particular theoretical and practical knowledge in the field which can be achieved *via*

3   Baltic-Polish Conference on Social Work Education "The Role of Field Instruction in the Social Work Curriculum". January 6-9, 1994. Kaunas, Lithuania. Organized by the Center for Social Welfare Professional Education, Vytautas Magnus University.

both special system of education and training, and long practice. Talking about special education and training involves a discipline issue.

Foucault (1998) used to say that "discipline is a principle which controls the production of discourse. It sets the frames of discourse by using identity's playfulness, which gained the shape of constant actualization of the rules" (Ibid., 24). Discipline trains, individualizes regiments and makes docile and obedient subjects (Macdonell, 1986; cited in MacLure, 2003, 176). Social work is also inextricably linked to the disciplines that regularize and normalize the conduct of those who are brought within the ambit of those institutions. Parton (1999) notices that social work as discipline institutes a regime of power exercised through disciplinary mechanisms and the stipulation of norms for human behaviour (Ibid., 107; see also Cannella, 1999), and leads to a particular way of acting, "to claim resources, to control or to be controlled" (Burr, 1995; cited in Naujanienė, 2007, 26).

The control element in social work is disclosed through a need for a certain competence. Laužackas (2008) suggests that competence likewise qualification (reflecting the level of respective competences necessary for the profession) is a socially created and constructed phenomenon. Both of them depend on the interaction, expression of interests, interpositions of various stakeholders and other participants of the education and business system – employees, employers, vocational training and higher education institutions, state government and public institutions, all members of the society. In addition, the formation of these concepts is a historical process, therefore, they are affected by the evolution of social and public institutions, business and education systems, social relations, economy, culture and mentality (Ibid., 15). Social workers' activities have a direct impact on people's mental, psychological, emotional well-being, development of their personality as well as prevention and correction of its disorders. Therefore, they are supposed to meet extremely high professional competence requirements (Kučinskas & Kučinskienė, 2000). Kavaliauskienė (2010, 161-162), following the views of Parton and O'Byrne (2000), claims that in the perspective of constructivism social work is treated not only as a science but also – perhaps even more so – as an art, and this is more practical-moral rather than rational-technical activity, and leads to such concepts as individual's "ability to act", "knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes, personality traits and values" (Lepaitė, 2003, 6).

Social worker's competence and qualification are entrenched by the systems of attestation and education and training, and the life under the conditions of constant changes requires special preparation.

Education and Training of Social Workers in Lithuania

Professional development goes on with the assistance of formal education. Speaking about social work as a discipline, the concept of studies (*education*) is being applied, speaking about social work as a practical activity, the concept of vocational training (*training*) is being applied (Pivorienė, 2003, 38). Pivorienė (2003; see also Alifanovienė, 2002; Jurkuvienė, 2003; Naujanienė, 2007) generally takes the position that social work in Lithuania formally begins with social work education and training.

Education and training of social workers in Lithuania is of a multi-disciplinary and multi-experience origin. Thus, the Finnish and Lithuanian project *Social Work Education and Training in Lithuania* (1996-1998) resulted in some recommendations for education and training of social workers. Primarily, *social work* necessarily requires a university-type education, while the provision of *social services* requires a college-type education. It means that welfare activities are divided into two parts: social work (organizational and managerial aspects) and social services (providing specific social services at home, in institutions or centres) (Večkienė & Bižys, 2003).

The first social work study programmes were prepared in Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University and Utena Medical School. During 20 years of social work education and training in Lithuania, the number of social work and related study programmes (e. g. social welfare, social education, social management and others) and the number of higher education schools (both universities and colleges) increased rapidly. According to the data provided by *Open Information Counselling and Guidance System* (AIKOS)[4], at the moment there are 36 officially registered study programmes in social work and related study programmes (both graduate and postgraduate levels), which are provided in 17 university- and college-type higher education schools. Furthermore, there are 9 registered

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4   Data published in the official AIKOS website: http://www.aikos.smm.lt/aikos/lang.do?language=lt [16-05-2013].

vocational study programmes, aiming at training social worker's assistants, provided by 6 vocational education institutions.

Scientific knowledge of sociology, education, medicine, psychology and other disciplines, as well as experience in various fields (e. g. special education, management, law) of higher education schools, shape the construction of social work study curricula. The lack of social work knowledge is offset by foreign experience. The support of experts from foreign countries (mainly from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, and Scandinavian countries) is extremely important for Lithuanian higher education schools to developing their educational curricula:

Firstly, the knowledge about the education and training of social workers in Western countries was constructed through international cooperation in academic projects (such as the Tempus project "*Social Educators / Social Workers Interdisciplinary Education and Training*", 1996-1999; Phare, the Netherlands and Norway programme "*Social Work Training programme in Utena Medical School*", 1996-1998; Leonardo da Vinci programme "*The Standard of Social Work Training for Colleges*", 1998-2000); research projects (Finnish and Lithuanian project "*Social Work Education and Training in Lithuania*", 1996-1998); short term academic programmes (such as *Summer Schools* for local social work students, lecturers and practitioners in Social Work Institute, Vytautas Magnus University).

Secondly, further development of social workers' education and training is supported by the mobility of scientific and academic human resources. Foreign academic and scientific staff from different foreign countries facilitated to adopt foreign experience and knowledge in social workers' education. Academic staff, students, professionals' exchange under the Socrates / Erasmus programme, scientific-methodical literature items also contribute to the professionalization of social work. (*Extract from the 3rd article, Appendix 3*)

In such a way the network of social workers' education and training in higher education institutions has been constructed in Lithuania and complemented by the attestation and training institutions. However, these preconditions determine great differences among the social work schools in Lithuania and lead to competition, lack of a systematic dialogue and consensus concerning the social work further constructing strategies.

However, disciplinarity constructs an invisible power, silently creating individuals as bodies to be controlled and evaluated. The need to agree on certain standards for education and training of social workers has already emerged some time ago. There have been unsuccessful attempts to found *The Lithuanian Association of Schools of Social Work* for a possibility to develop and maintain a systematic dialogue. By the finalizing stage of the meta-analysis, *the Association* should have been established.

Further social work professionalization is related to scientific development. Social work as a science involves systematic research in the field of social work, which integrates theory and practice. In order to develop research in the field of social work, various countries have established doctoral studies in the area of social work science. Doctoral studies in social work as independent studies are implemented in many developed countries of the world, including the USA, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Estonia, etc. The PhDs in the area of social work science continue their career in the academic environment, becoming researchers and members of the academic staff, or take the leading and / or expertise positions in the development of social work performance and social policy strategy. However, referring to the *Lithuanian Classification of Scientific Fields* (16-10-2012, No. V-1457), social work is not recognized as a separate field of science. Thus, there is no possibility to provide doctoral studies in the country, and that puts social work at a disadvantage in comparison with other social sciences. First doctors in social work in Lithuania are educated abroad, mainly in Finland (University of Lapland, Finland) and the United States of America (Loyola University of Chicago).

[Nevertheless,] Lithuanian representatives of social work from the very birth of social work are active to ensure a favourable environment for the scientific foundation for social work development: specialized scientific periodicals are published (Mykolas Romeris University publishes *Social Work* (since 2002), Vilnius University – *STEPP: Social Theory, Empirics, Policy and Practice* (since 2001), Vytautas Magnus University – S*ocial Work. Practices and Methods* (since 2008). (*Extract from the 3ʳᵈ article, Appendix 3*)

Social Work Professional Identity

The construction, formation, development and consolidation of professional identity are important in the construction of social work as a profession. Professional identity is constructed, on the one hand, by occupying a clearly identifiable niche of professional activity in the professional field, creating unique methods of work, clearly identifying the objects of professional activity; on the other hand, this process is promoted by defining the field of profession in the official documents.

A significant development in social work professionalization in Lithuania is the formation of social work professional identity in the light of another social profession – social education. There are two positions theorizing the relation between social work and social education, constructing the professional identity of both of them. The first position focuses on the search for differences based on the reflection of human existence in the real world and the system of socio-cultural relations; the position also emphasizes different functions of social work and social education. The opposing position relates with an emphasis on similarities or convergence in the field of scientific cognition and highlights only formal separation of social work and social education professions.

The first position refers to the aim of social work, which covers not only care provision to an individual, but also an educational activity, nurturing socially significant stereotypes. In that case, according to Firsov (1996), "social work is not just a social education: social work at the same time is a social education" (cited in Leliūgienė, 2003, 21). This leads to both, the segregation of social practice and individual development of the knowledge sphere in social work and social education; as well as to a separate phenomenological evolution. The differences are observed in the origins of these professions. According to Leliūgienė (2003, 32), sociology is a background constructing social work. The subject of social work is linked to the one "who requests, wants something", and the object is constructed as "a person, who needs some help in his / her social life", leading to the concept *client* to define the object in social work activity. In that case, a social worker works with a person who has problems which interfere with his / her abilities to participate fully in social life and to live a normal life, and who is not able to handle problems independently, thus needing professional help. A social

worker's activity is considered to be named as intervention, constructing a helping profession in the sphere of social security.

Meanwhile, education is a background constructing social education. A social education subject is *homo educantus* – a learner, in terms of Leliūgienė (2003, 21). A social educator works with a child, who has problems in his / her socialization process, in the education system; that leads to the concept *learner* to define the object in social education activity. A social educator aims to help a learner to overcome barriers of social exclusion, to provide him / her with social and educational assistance in overcoming the consequences of socio-educational – educational separation (Juodaitytė, 2007, 76). In that case, a social educator's activity is considered to be named as prevention (Leliūgienė, 2003; Leliūgienė et al., 2006).

The opposite position refers to the idea that practical areas of activity of social work and social education are closely related to each other in terms of functions, content and methods of work. The construction of social work and social education as similar professions emphasises a close cultural-historical tradition of both professions to perceive a person as the one who requires special care and attention, and leads to the application of the same concepts, such as *mercy, doing good, help* and others in practical activity (Leliūgienė, 2003).

A compromise position is also constructed; currently, this position is observable in Lithuania. This compromise refers to the integrity and complementarity of social work and social education: social education contributes as a recognized science, containing the object and the subject; the contribution of social work is based on valuable professional and practice activity. It is considered as a kind of cease-fire announcement, which allows focusing on the strengthening of both occupations by cooperation (Leliūgienė et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, in addition to the recognised professional significance, recently, in the process of intensive formation of social work applied research area, the positions of social work in the dichotomy of social professions have significantly strengthened. Social work is considered as gaining a much clearer identity as an autonomous profession. Meanwhile, social education is considered to survive the crisis, in terms of Juodaitytė (2007), due to certain stagnation, based on non-conscious or not enough conscious evaluation of major social changes taking place in recent decades.

Another field of the construction of social work professional identity is legislation. A legal entrenchment of the profession among other professions is long-lasting, so the legal system is considered to be very clear. Varžinskienė (2009, 125) emphasizes that this results in the conventional determination of the professional jurisdiction limits and leads to a clear and mostly higher status of the profession. Legislation describes the limits of the profession and prevents any interpretations.

The professional identity of social work is defined by the laws which regulate social work practice (the change in the content of the documents regulating this area is discussed in Chapter 5) and education and training of social workers. Since, according to Varžinskienė (2009), legal documents defining social work in Lithuania are still being developed, the identity of social work respectively features this dynamics as well. With regard to the legislative acts regulating social work, the recent legislative acts reveal attempts to strengthen social work positions by both mandatory education at a higher education level and improved professional regulation, and protection of identity. The most recent legislative act still awaiting for the approval defines social work as a professional activity which promotes social change, problem-solving related to human relationship, empowerment of people to strengthen their well-being, provides opportunities and assistance in improving the quality of life (*The Social Work Study Field Descriptor* [Draft]*, 2012). This definition refers to a wide spectrum of theoretical and practical knowledge and disappearing limits of the concept of social work profession. On the other hand, as it was noted in Chapter 5, the *Law on Social Services* (2006) sets higher requirements for social work. If by the year 2006 social worker's qualification was associated with the acquired knowledge and practice, then after 2006 social worker's qualification was exclusively associated with education. By the *Law on Social Services* (2006), a person without social work education has no right to be a social worker; this leads to the professionalization of social work practice and a much clearer identification of the social work practice field. The identity of social work is yet more strictly formulated in *The Social Work Study Field Descriptor* ([Draft], 2012), which defines the requirements for the study programmes in the field of social work, without providing for the possibility to prepare and implement study programmes in two fields (major and minor), which would lead to the double qualification degree in the

major and minor (branch) fields. According to this document, social work can be studied neither as a major nor as a minor study field (branch) in the study programmes integrating two fields. Much stricter and clearly defined requirements for social work practice and studies express attempts to construct a clear professional identity of social work.

Laužackas (2008) assumes that since objective professional characteristics enter education and training programmes, they determine what a person needs to learn and acquire by obtaining or upgrading their qualification. In Lithuania, there are two types of documents regulating the recognition of scientific and academic level of activities: *Classifications of Areas and Fields of Science* and *Lists of Areas and Fields of Study at Higher Education Institutions*.

The social work study field with five branches[5] of the study field, approved in 2009 (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania "*On the Approval of the List of Areas and Fields of Study at Higher Education Institutions and the List of Qualification Degrees*", 23-12-2009, No. 1749), gives grounds to presume that the level of the university studies in social work achieved over the past 20 years has been evaluated, and that a real opportunity of establishing itself not only in the field of studies but also science has emerged. This requires political will, because the current Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "*On the Approval of the Fields of Science*" (16-10-2012, No. V-1457) does not identify the field of social work within the area of social sciences. The old order remains in effect, yet regulated by the order approved by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania on *Classification of the Branches of Science* (13-12-2007, No. ISAK-2420), under which various areas of social work field (Social changes, Theory of social work; Social problems and welfare, National insurance; Social care and help to handicapped) remain at the level of branches of science, and are attributed to the field of Sociology. This means that social work is recognised as a field of studies, but not as a field of science; therefore, preparation of social work researchers in Lithuania, as mentioned above in this section, has so

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5   *List of branches of study fields,* approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (19-02-2010, No. V-222), Study field: L500 Social Work; branches of Social Work study field: L510 Health and Welfare; L520 Child and Family Welfare; L530 Youth Work; L540 Community Work; L560 Probation / After Care.

far been impossible. This complicates the accreditation of the second-cycle studies of social work, because the requirements for the Master's degree studies state that the programme has to be managed by a professor, doctor in the field of science of social work.

The issue of recognition of social work as a science is related to the dynamics of classification of sciences in Lithuania: the classification of sciences in the country is not well established. This is evidenced by the fact that despite the fact that the most recent Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "*On the Approval of the Fields of Science*" (16-10-2012, No. V-1457) has been effective for less than a year, during the process of meta-analysis preparation, the Ministry of Education and Science organized consultations with the academic community over the changes to the classification.

However, it is very important for social work to find its scientific identity, because social work is not the same as sociology, to which field it is assigned, though social workers apply sociological methods to analyse social problems. Social work involves more than sociology which explains "*what is going on?*"; social work aims at addressing the question "*how to handle that what is going on?*".

In summary, what has so far been identified as a weakness of social work, still obstructing smooth development of social work as a profession, as assumed by Švedaitė (2004), creates the advantage for the social work activity. Nowadays, social work is developing rapidly, supported by a growing and becoming stronger community of professionals. An important assumption is namely a lack of traditional scientific heritage and still dynamic professional identity due to dynamic and still revolutionary education policy, as well as still developing legislation regulating social work as a profession in Lithuania. Legally, the requirements for social workers' qualification growth, behind that the standards for social worker's education and training, seek to construct a much clearer professional identity, as well as professional status of social work.

Internationalization plays a very important role in the process of construction of Lithuanian social work as a profession. This is related to the specific development of social work in the country. For social work education and practice development in the country, it is important to accumulate foreign experience, advancement and innovations to facilitate

the professionalization of social work, as well as to draw the guidelines for the development of field research leading to the formation of social work as a science.

7.   Modelling the Construction of Lithuanian Social Work Professionalization

By this part of the meta-analysis, the factors constructing the social work process have been analysed in an effort to disclose social work professionalization in Lithuania. The entire work carried out is needed for the sake of proposing the theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization.

The concept *professionalization* can express both personal and systemic approaches. From a personal point of view, professionalization defines the mastery of profession, specialization in a particular field, transition to the category of professionals: a non-professional becoming a professional and acquiring the resources needed to integrate into a certain professional group. On the other hand, social support activities and structure get 'professionalized', too (based on Le Boterf, 2008), as it is referred in the Introduction. Thus, looking for a more detailed explanation of the concept of professionalization, I came across the analysis of the phenomenon in the context of education and training of andragogues, introduced by Jatkauskienė and Jatkauskas (2010). Following Bourdoncle's (1991) ideas, the authors write that the concept of professionalization emphasizes the process of construction of two interrelated dimensions. The concept *professionalism* is applied to describe the first – internal process – dimension; whilst the second – external process – dimension named as *professionism,* defines the becoming of the individuals' group a profession. These two dimensions supplement, enrich each other while constructing the professionalization process (see Figure 4).

Professionalism expresses the idea of constructing and development of specific knowledge, competences required for professional activities. Professionalism as an internal process can manifest itself in quite diverse ways: specific mobilisation of professional knowledge, continuing professional training, formalisation of knowledge originating from practice. Professionism discloses the requirement of exceptional social status in the area of settled work distribution. During this process, construction, formation, development and consolidation of professional identity take place (Jatkauskienė & Jatkauskas, 2010, 46).
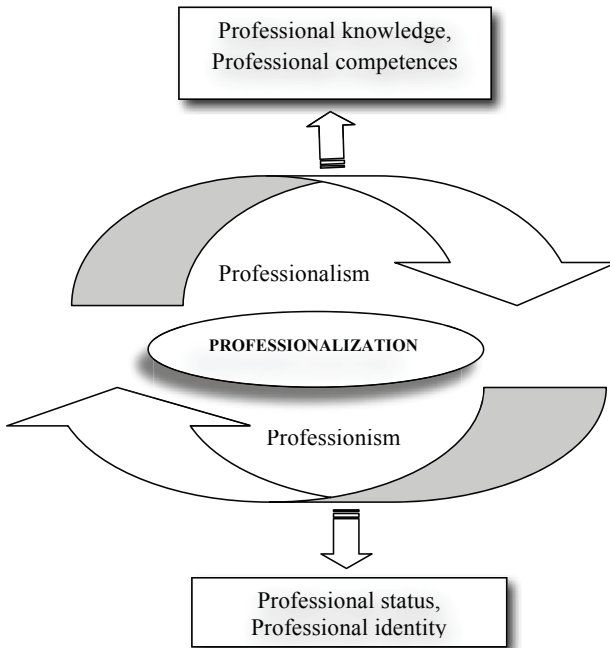
Figure 4. Professionalization process (based on Bourdoncle, 1991; cited in Jatkauskienė & Jatkauskas, 2010).

Both dimensions constructing the professionalization process are not interchangeable, none of them is prioritized, they supplement each other. Social acknowledgement cannot exist without formalisation of practice, whilst formalisation cannot 'economize' for account of implemented strategies of endeavour of the professional status. Even in the initial professional training, rendering of formalized practice participates in the process of professionalization and at the same time of social acknowledgment (Jatkauskienė & Jatkauskas, 2010, 47).

However, this model expresses a very general approach how an activity becomes a socially acknowledged profession. When we talk about a particular case (profession), we have to admit that all these dynamic processes of an activity becoming a profession and further professionalization can have and actually have a particular shape, characteristic to a particular profession. These characteristics are based on the set of agents (domains)

influencing the construction of a socially acknowledged profession. Thus, a profession is socially constructed through the interaction, expression of interests, interpositions of various stakeholders and other participants of the education and business system – employees, employers, vocational training institutions, state government and public institutions, all society members. In addition, the formation and development of the profession is a historical process; therefore, it is affected by the evolution of social and public institutions, business and education systems, social relations, economics, culture and mentality.

Considering the analysis above, the modelling of social work professionalization should first define the causality of the agents (domains) of the process. As I have earlier referred to Naujanienė (2007), in the light of social constructivism perspective, social work can be understood as a discourse which socially constructs subjects of social work. The social work discourse defines what a client is, what a social worker is, and the rules for their interaction. Furthermore, while the social work discourse legitimates and reinforces the existing social work practice, this practice, in turn, also supports and validates the discourse. So, the first domain constructing social work as a profession is named **social work practice**. Another domain refers to Constable's (1995) idea that every practice demands theory, as a set of assumptions which explain and predict what the object of practice is, and as a set of principles which underlie professional action. Thus, social work professionalization is impossible without academization of practical activity. The second domain is defined as **studies**. The third domain in social work professionalization is named **science**, conditioning the production of special knowledge necessary for the maintenance of social work discourse. Special networks of institutions are required to support and promote the development of professional social work practice, studies and science. On the one hand, **the network of educational institutions** supports and promotes social work professionalization from the academic point of view. So, the fourth domain is comprised of universities, colleges, vocational schools. On the other hand, a strongly expressed pluralism in the field of social workers' education and training requires to agree on certain standards for education and training of social workers and to define certain qualifications. Thus, the fifth domain is defined as **the network of professional associations**. The sixth domain is comprised of a formalized

set of institutions and state policies legitimizing and promoting social work functions in a modern society – to help and to control. I define this domain as **social policy**. The seventh domain expresses the state's **education policy** legitimizing and conditioning both social work studies and science. All these seven domains act and interact in a multi-contextual environment filled with historical, cultural heritage, local mentality, Lithuanian political and economic strategies and characteristics; all these characteristics set up a social reality. So, this **social reality** is named as the last – contextual – domain; social work professionalization processes are conditioned by a particular social reality at a certain time.

Social Work Professionalization in Lithuania

The concept of *professionalization* includes all actions, which allow the newly formed activity to acquire the structure of a profession, professional status, acknowledgement in the labour market and society, to occupy a separate professional area, to have standards of activity, as well as professional education and training, and attestation. Regularly occurring events consist of habituated activities. Hence, any activity, before achieving recognition as a profession, is repeated for a while as a non-formal practice.

Social work as a system is composed of a number of daily activities with a clear repetitive structure, united into a consistent process. Through this process, while solving daily social problems, social work as a profession is constructed and reconstructed many times, every day, during each interaction between a social worker and a client, taking place at a certain time and in a certain place. These processes are essentially socially and personally constructive (Parton, O'Byrne, 2000; Paris, Epting, 2004), and thereby constitute a reality for those involved in construing those realities. Everyday practice creates social reality of social work practice existing in a particular society at a particular time that society understands as canon. Those involved in everyday social work interaction create social work practice, naming it and giving it a meaning. That is why social work practice is put as one of the domains in the process of social work professionalization in the meta-analysis. Chapter 5 is devoted to disclose the content of social work practice.

Since the process of professionalization is based on constructing and development of specific knowledge, competences required for professional

activities, social work studies and science are included as the domains in the developed model. The main characteristics of social work studies are internationalization, developed network of social work schools and acknowledged social work studies, making an important impact on the construction and support of social work professional identity and social acknowledgement. The impact of social work studies is manifested "in changing professional language used in everyday social work practice, in policy documents, in legislation, in speech, and so on. Colloquial, often stigmatizing concepts are being changed into concepts carrying positive information about a person or situation, or at least into neutral concepts. New interpellations of social problems constructed by language gradually penetrate and change the post-communist societal mentality", as it is written in the 3rd article (Appendix 3).

The main characteristic of social work as a science is its unacknowledgement as a separate scientific field in social sciences. Nevertheless, a rapid improvement in social work research is observable in the country. The issues concerning social work studies and science are analysed in Chapter 6.

These three domains – social work practice, studies and science – are in the axis of social work professionalization model (see Figure 5). Illustration of the arrows turning away from each other indicates their systematic nature: social work practice, studies and science operate first and foremost as separate *self-referential* and *autopoietic* – social work and education – systems or their parts. Each of them is developing by its own pace. However, the overlapping arrows express the simultaneity of the processes, revealing extremely intensive processes of creation of the profession. All the three systems joined together into one overall cycle demonstrate their interdependence. Depending on the internal potential and external opportunities, these systems create preconditions for the one or the other to develop extremely fast: after the restoration of Independence, in the event of external need, social work practice has rapidly developed; its social acknowledgement has required special education and training of specialists; currently, the precondition for further development of social work practice and knowledge is research in social work leading to scientific acknowledgement.
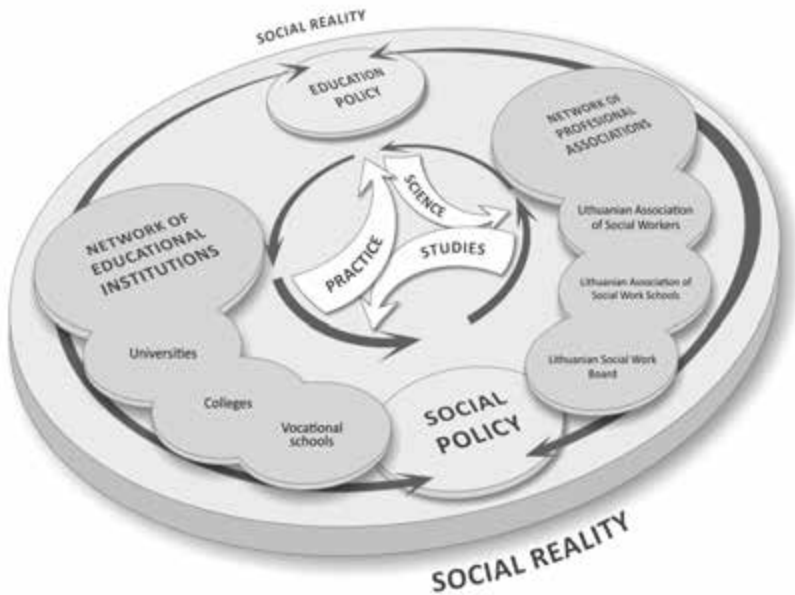
* Lithuanian Association of Social Work Schools will be established in the nearest future.

Figure 5. The model of Lithuanian social work professionalization.

It is characteristic to functional systems to take place in the content-filled environment, and respond to it. Social work professionalization is based on the contexts of social and educational policies, and responds to the changes going on inside them.

As it is written in Chapter 4, social work is the product of its institutional context, continually re-inscribing the conditions of practice (Macdonald, 2006, 5). Social workers work in the system of social care, which is one of the most regulated spheres in the state management. Social care is a part of the state policy defined by a general concept *welfare state* and described in terms of the state social policy, public funding and administrative-bureaucratic apparatus, as well as ideological background and economic behaviour of the society. In the network of welfare institutions, social workers assume social function to help their clients in facing personal challenges and creating a fully functioning life in the society. The lack of stability in the Lithuanian welfare state, predetermined by the lack of experience and

the consequences of post-communist transformation, affects the development of state social policy, which in its turn affects the construction of social work as a profession. The issue is analysed in Chapter 4.

A special role in social work professionalization is played by its position in the Lithuanian education system and education policy. Nowadays, social work is developing rapidly, supported by a growing and becoming stronger community of professionals. Legally, the requirements for social workers' qualification growth, behind that the standards for social worker's education and training, seek to construct a much clearer professional identity, as well as professional identity of social work. However, instability is also characteristic of Lithuanian education policy, which affects the processes in the axis of this model. The domain of education policy is disclosed in Chapter 6.

Considering the stated above, the social work professionalization basement, consisting of social policy and education policy, lacks stability. Power circulates in a capillary fashion around and through these policies, reaching 'into the very grain' of those who are made social work subjects through their involvement in the social work discourse. However, the circulation of power is complicated due to the lack of communication between the main state institutions implementing social and education policies – Ministry of Social Security and Labour and Ministry of Education and Science. That obstacle for power circulation creates the perpedulum / swings effect, and causes the turbulence processes in the axis of the model.

The balancing as well as shaping and creating a more unstable role in the proposed model is attempted to be performed by the networks of educational institutions and professional associations.

For social work to occupy a more secure position in a professional context, a requirement for a mandatory education at a higher education level was developed in order to prepare qualified workers for social work practice. A significant support and promotion of social work professionalization from the academic point of view is performed by universities, colleges, and vocational schools. The network of educational institutions is fairly well developed in Lithuania. Chapter 6 is devoted to disclose the issue.

A strongly expressed pluralism in the field of social workers' education and training requires to agree on certain standards for education and training of social workers and to define certain qualifications (professional

characteristics and requirements) required to perform certain professional functions, as well as to set certain requirements for professional ethics, also leading to social acknowledgement. The network of professional associations is developing in Lithuania. The association of practitioners is presented in Chapter 5; the need for association of social work schools is expressed in Chapter 6. The third association – *Lithuanian Social Work Council* – expresses integration and interdependence of social work practice, education and training of practitioners and political environment, creating favourable as well as unfavourable conditions for the development of the profession. *The Council* was founded in 2011, when the Socionom Forum, the movement engaging social work theorists and practitioners, expressed their concern to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour about the low status of a social worker's profession, regulation of social work practical activity, payment of social workers, education and training of social workers in higher education and vocational institutions. This is an advisory body to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour operating on a voluntary basis, performing expertise functions and consulting on the strategic social work issues. *The Council* engages the representatives from the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, *Lithuanian Association of Social Workers*, non-governmental organizations operating in the field of social work, higher education institutions implementing social work study programmes, and other stakeholders[6].

The last domain – the domain of social reality – in the developed model defines the historical and socio-cultural contextuality of social work professionalization. An important historical and socio-cultural characteristic of the Lithuanian society is post-communism. A distinctive attribute of post-communism in the construction of social work as a profession is a post-communist mentality. A post-communist mentality can be defined by such behavioural and worldview characteristics as passivity, inability and unwillingness to take care of one's own life, alienation, and distrust in general. A social worker, who works with a client, featuring such thinking and behaviour, finds it difficult to empower him / her to solve personal problems. Furthermore, the profession of social work exists in a wider

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6   Based on information from the official website of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. [15-05-2013] Internet access: http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?-1362378256.

cultural context; meanwhile, a social worker is a member and a 'cultural product' of the same society. Therefore, a social worker is always at risk of operationalization of the attitudes already existing in the society, including stereotypical ones, affecting the social risk groups or individuals. This issue is explored in Chapter 3.

On the other hand, Lithuanian social reality cannot be adequately understood if the conceptualization of 'domestic' and 'international' processes and events is separated. Lithuania's membership in the European Union highlights the contours of further development of state policies – mainly social and education policies – together with further development of social work.

Thirdly, the influence of Lithuanian social reality on professional social work development cannot be adequately assessed without paying a respectful attention to economic processes. Economic development both promotes and impedes social work professionalization.

The presented theoretical conceptual model spreads from the micro-system through the meso-system to the macro-system of national social work and includes both favourable and unfavourable characteristics for the construction of the profession within each of the systems. It reflects constructive and systemic approaches to the professionalization process as it includes the characteristics of social work domains connecting them into one model.

Summarizing notes

While writing this meta-analysis and discussing every now and then the issue with other people, I used to receive the following and similar questions "Is there anything new and interesting that can be said or written about social work in Lithuania? So many things have already been written over 20 years of its development!". However, unlike the absolute majority of published research papers on the issue of social work, the meta-analysis looks at this phenomenon by taking an 'external' rather than 'internal' approach, by combining the knowledge of politics, sociology, economics for the cognition and explanation of social work development towards the acknowledged profession. Having in mind my professional and scientific experience, I wanted to disclose the transformation of social work professionalization under the dynamic perspective of time. Thus, I focus on a new aspect in the construction of social work professionalization: I construct the process in the light of society transformation. The code of society transformation becomes an ultimate assumption for modelling the construction of social work professionalization, highlighting its manifestation. In Lithuania, there is a lack of a detailed work, which would sum up the results of twenty years of social work development from micro- through meso- to macro-levels trying to cover the whole multi-complexity of the phenomenon; and there is also a need for a comprehensive theoretical conceptual analysis on the issue of social work professionalization.

Social constructivism as the main theoretical perspective is favourable to modelling the process of social work professionalization. This theoretical framework gives a strict and at the same time worldwide theoretical perspective allowing to disclose the societal and political nature of the profession. On the other hand, the construction of professional social work actively involves individuals, social support activities and the professional social work structure in general. Thus, professionalization is also manifested as a system and as a process. The code of society transformation proposes an idea that the construction of social work professionalization is strongly contextual. The contextuality motivates using the principles of systems theory to support the theoretical analysis.

Finally, based on the constructivist perspective, the idea of social work professionalization evolves to the theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization. The maintenance of the model is validated in the qualitative research presented in the 4th article (Appendix 4). The research also reveals that the chosen approach to construct the process of social work professionalization is appropriate.

The theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization manifests the main domains and dynamics of the process from micro- through meso- to macro-levels and does not include smaller scale agents or processes which are tied to the development of a profession. Thus, it leaves space for additional mechanisms to be integrated into it. I hope that I was able to offer a model which is coherent enough and might attract other investigators or practitioners to use it, to improve it or to create their own models.

Generalisation of the material of the meta-analysis inevitably leads to the question of the research raised in the beginning "*How did Lithuanian social work professionalize?*". The answer requires a detailed consideration.

On the one hand, social work practice, studies and science are in the centre of social work professionalization. In Lithuania, these three social work fields develop simultaneously, leading to their tight interdependence. However, each of them is developing by its own pace. Extremely intensive processes of creation of the profession are revealed causing many contradictions. The contradictions are caused by the lack of stability of the social work professionalization basement, consisting of social policy and education policy.

As I wrote in Chapter 4, social workers work in the system of social care, which is one of the most regulated spheres in the state management. Social care is a part of the state policy defined by a general concept *welfare state* and described in terms of the state social policy, public funding and administrative-bureaucratic apparatus, as well as ideological background and economic behaviour of the society. The lack of stability in the Lithuanian welfare state, predetermined by the lack of experience and the consequences of post-communist transformation, affect the development of state social policy, which in its turn affects the construction of social work as a profession.

On the other hand, the more complex and intellectual professions become, the more the centre of gravity gradually moves to the emphasis on

education. Education and training sectors begin to play an increasingly active and influential role in the creative process of professional standards and qualifications. Nowadays, social work is developing rapidly, supported by a growing and becoming stronger community of professionals. An important assumption is namely a lack of traditional scientific heritage and still dynamic professional identity due to still developing legislation regulating social work as a profession in Lithuania. Legally, the requirements for social workers' qualification growth, behind that the standards for social worker's education, seek to construct a much clearer professional identity, as well as professional status of social work.

The lack of communication between the main state institutions implementing social and education policies creates the perpedulum/ swings effect, and causes the turbulence processes in the centre of social work professionalization.

On the other hand, all these professionalization processes are promoted, supported and maintained as well as interfered by the networks of educational institutions and professional associations. The networks of educational institutions and professional associations attempt to perform the balancing as well as shaping and creating a more unstable role in the processes of social work professionalization.

The construction of such theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization needs to be approved. The first draft of the model was presented in the international scientific conference "*Features and Challenges of Social Work Professionalization*", at Klaipeda University, in April 2013. It had attracted the attention of scholars and social work practitioners, what led me to discuss the model additionally. These discussions with scholars and social work practitioners allowed me to purify and conceptualize the components (agents or domains) of the model. Thus, the idea of the theoretical conceptual model of social work professionalization that I have proposed became quite universal and easily recognisable by both social work practitioners and scientific community. While I illustrate the model functioning in the institutional child care system, it can be applied in other fields of social work, too. This model can also be adapted to theorising the experience of other countries and can also be beneficial for international comparative analysis. Thus, this meta-analysis enabled me to achieve the result which I did not expect. My idea of modelling the construction of

Lithuanian social work professionalization has gained a more universal result. Such a result was gained mainly due to approaching the process from the 'outside' perspective.

This meta-analysis leaves several implications for further studies of social work professionalization. First of all, I conclude the meta-analysis by proposing some theoretical ideas about the process of Lithuanian social work professionalization, which could be further studied, developed and concluded in a new theoretical perspective.

Secondly, my knowledge, experience and opportunities outlined the guidelines for this meta-analysis – to focus on the societal aspect of social work professionalization, approaching the process from the 'outside' perspective. Research of social work professionalization from the 'internal' perspective would create an absolutely different image of ongoing processes and would add new colours to the cognition of the studied object.

Another insight for further research in social work professionalization is associated with a more detailed exploration of the internal and external processes of the phenomenon, and their manifestation. This would allow a retrospective insight to the micro-processes, the change of professionalization strategies and measures.

Furthermore, there are two social professions in Lithuania, whose fields of activities, powers, similarities and differences, it seems, have been agreed upon, identifying them as separate professions developing and acting in parallel to each other and complimenting each other. Since *The Social Work Study Field Descriptor* ([Draft], 2012) clearly formulated the identity of social work as a profession, the social work professionalization issue is worth exploring in relation to another social profession – social education.

My choice to prepare a doctoral dissertation in the form of meta-analysis of scientific articles is rather symbolic and correlates with the theme of the work: exploration of the establishment of a practical activity as a socially acknowledged profession also reveals the 'professionalization' of a researcher – growth of a person-scientist.

I have started the meta-analysis with the words of one famous writer of the 20th century – Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900-1944). This metaphor became my guiding star in determining my relationship to the researched phenomenon, and took me along the long-winding road of social work cognition and research. I would always hear it sounding in my ears when

trying to understand the uniqueness of a social work profession: it cannot be squeezed into the framework of instruments and instructions, because it is not merely a craft, but rather an art, as I have read in one of the many sources collected when working on this meta-analysis. Social work professionalism is demonstrated not by authentic and standardized methods of operation but by flexibility and ability to act in a client's environment, adapting a particular methodological operation to each client's case – to act and solve 'here and now', rather than in accordance with a pre-established plan or a method suitable to everyone. For the social work profession to unfold, not only precise methods are needed but also such a freedom, which can be seen only beyond the horizons of the sea.

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Appendices

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Appendix 1:

Sonata Mačiulskytė, Indrė Dirgėlienė (2010) "Interaction of Social Worker and Client in Social Work Process: Lithuanian Case" – *Mokslas ir edukaciniai procesai (Science and Processes of Education)*, No. 2 (12), Vol. I, p. 21-38.

Appendix 2:

Sonata Mačiulskytė (2011) "The Role of Changes of Social Processes in Manifestation of Social Work in Lithuania" – *Tiltai (Bridges)*, No. 2 (55), p. 17-34.

Appendix 3:

Sonata Mačiulskytė (2012) "Professionalization of Social Work in Lithuania from Social Construction Perspective" – *Tiltai (Bridges)*, No. 4 (61), p. 13-34.

Appendix 4:

Sonata Mačiulskytė (2013) "The Problem of Transformation of Professional Competence: Aspect of Institutional Care" – *Tiltai (Bridges)*, No. 2 (63), p. 51-80.

INTERACTION OF SOCIAL WORKER AND CLIENT IN SOCIAL WORK PROCESS: LITHUANIAN CASE

SOCIALINIO DARBUOTOJO IR KLIENTO SĄVEIKA SOCIALINIO DARBO PROCESE: LIETUVOS PATIRTIS

SONATA MAČIULSKYTĖ

Klaipeda Business School
Klaipeda University
INDRĖ DIRGĖLIENĖ

Klaipeda University

Abstract

The article analyses the problem of the complexity of social work as the profession, applying interaction model. The core of the interaction model in social work is such – there are three components of social work process important for the interaction of social worker and client. These components are (1) social worker, (2) client, and (3) the social context of interaction. The model enables to foresee factors, determining social worker's activities and his/her professional experience. The interaction model confirms that social work as an activity is not a temporal, onetime reaction, and interaction process proceeds under intensively changing social conditions.

Key works: *social work process, interaction model in social work, social worker, client, changing social conditions.*

Anotacija

Taikant sąveikos modelį, straipsnyje analizuojamas socialinio darbo kaip profesijos sudėtingumas. Sąveikos modelio esmė socialiniame darbe yra tokia: socialinio darbuotojo ir kliento sąveikai yra svarbūs trys socialinio darbo proceso komponentai: (1) socialinis darbuotojas; (2) klientas ir (3) kontekstas, kuriame vyksta ši sąveika. Šis modelis leidžia numatyti veiksnius, sąlygojančius socialinių darbuotojų veiklą ir jų profesinę patirtį. Sąveikos modelis patvirtina, kad socialinis darbas, kaip veikla, – ne trumpalaikė vienkartinė reakcija, o sąveikos procesas, vykstantis intensyviai kintančios aplinkos sąlygomis.

Raktiniai žodžiai: *socialinio darbo procesas, sąveikos modelis socialiniame darbe, socialinis darbuotojas, klientas, kintanti socialinė aplinka.*

Introduction

Social work in Lithuania is a new, developing profession of social assisting; its becoming coincides with intensive transformations in the society. It is the profession, distinguishing for its wideness and poli-functionalism, its aim is to empower a person

and family to self- relieve dealing with social problems and to strive for personal self-sufficiency, focussing on individual's inner and outer resources (Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė 2006:1). Social work stimulates social changes and enables people and communities to participate actively solving with their social problems (Kvieskienė, Indrašienė 2008:5).

The professional and scientific identity of social work is in the process of intensive formation (Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė et al 2009, Dirgėlienė, Večkienė 2009). And there appears a new form of professional assistance – supervision (consulting in the field of professional relations) – creating possibility to reflect professional experience, identifying cooperation barriers. It is a unique situation enabling to operate in a creative manner, moving through all experiential learning stages in the process of correlation (Kolb 1975, Schon 1987).

The authors of the article refer to A. Bagdonas (2001) interaction model to analyse social work process. The core of the interaction model in social work is such – there are three components of the social work process, which are important in the interaction of social worker and client. These components are (1) social worker (with his/her knowledge, skills, and values), (2) client (with his/her social problems), and (3) the social context of interaction. The model enables to foresee factors, determining social worker's actions and his/her professional experience.

The **object** of this article is the social work process in the context of Lithuanian experience.

The **aim** of this article is to analyse the interaction of social worker and client in the social work process.

The **tasks** of this article are

1. To analyse the components of interaction model theoretically.

2. To refer to the results of two researches to validate theoretical assumptions. The employed researches in the article are (1) *Construction of model of supervision application while developing professional competences of a social worker,* and (2) *Policy Responses Overcoming Factors in the Intergenerational Transmission of Inequalities: PROFIT.*

Research methods employed in the article are literature analysis, quantitative research, and qualitative research.

1. Social work process based on interaction

A. Bagdonas (2001) proposes the interaction model to describing social work process (names the process stages – summing-up, planning, problem solving, assessment, and review of the results (according Sutton 1999, Johnson 2001), where he marks the main components of social work: social worker (with his/her knowledge, skills, and values), client system, and social conditions (see Picture 1).

The interaction model confirms that social work as an activity is not a temporal, onetime reaction, and interaction process proceeds under intensively changing social conditions. Though all these components conspire in reality, we will try to separate them and analyse each of the components of interaction model (social worker – conditions – client) separately in order to understand the social work process.

Social worker. Social worker integrates whole system of social worker's competencies – knowledge, values, and skills -, as one of interaction model components.

Knowledge is one of the elements in the system of social worker's professional competencies. According L. C. Johnson (2001), social worker's actions have to be based on theoretical knowledge; social worker is supposed to be able to assess his/her knowledge; he/she has to have ability to chose and apply the knowledge in specific situations (ibid:54). It is indicated in *The Standard for Social Workers' Training* (2000) that social worker is supposed to be able to understand the functioning of society, to understand how client acts in society; he/she is supposed to have adequate knowledge concerning human being, his/her environment, relations, and factors, determining client's relations with the environment.
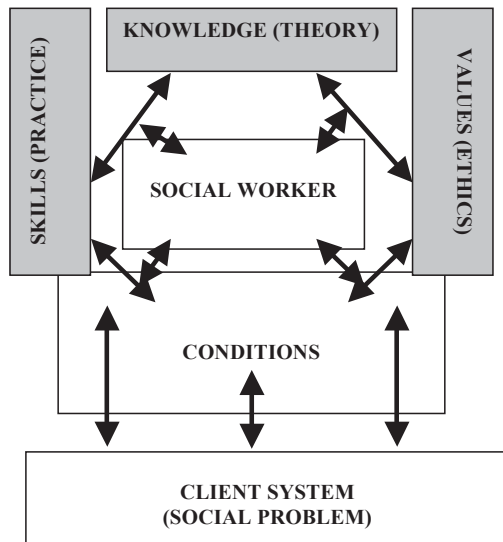
Picture 1. The main components of social work. (Bagdonas 2001)

The essential feature in social work is the relation between theory and practice. There is set a permanent reflection between theory and practice, also between personal and professional identity in the social work process; the knowledge, skills, and ethical attitudes are integrated (Dirgėlienė 2009). Reflective model in the process of social workers' training provides opportunity to acknowledge these interactions in the study process already. This model replaces the idea of „banking" studying, which has promoted stagnation, and stimulates changes in personal structures and professional activities. The idea to apply knowledge in practice is revealed in legal acts, regulating social worker's professional actions (Socialinio darbo studijų krypties reglamentas 2009).

Values are the second element in the system of social worker's professional competencies; they open in the context of social work conditions. The law, regulating the ethics of social worker, is *The Social Worker's Ethic Code* (1998). The aspects, which are marked in *The Code* are ethical liability to clients, ethical relations with colleagues and other professionals, social worker's relation to his/her profession, and social worker's ethical liability to society. The principle of confidence is one of the most relevant aspects in *The Code*, because it emphasizes particularity of social work activity.

We can distinguish *ideal* and *real* levels of attitudes to the social worker's ethics: the *ideal* one is not embodied in practice, and is considered as declarative; the *real* one is reflected in actions. The opening of ethical attitudes and assuming identity are a long process where society makes very special influence on it. Social worker with his/her attitudes usually overpasses the social attitudes and dominating stereotypes. Otherwise, social worker is a member and „a result" of the same society. He/she also may absorb the dominating stereotypes, stigmatizing attitudes concerning risk groups and individuals.

Skills are also a part of social worker's competencies; they are studied in the social work process, consisting of demands' testing, planning, implementation, monitoring, and review of the results, assessment, and foresight for further prospects. C. Sutton (1999:7) introduces the social work process as ASPIRE, i.e. the social work process is understood as sequence or circle of actions where all four stages interact permanently: AS – *Assesment*; P – *Planning*; I – *Implementation*; RE – *Review and Evaluation*.

Social worker requires various skills to rendering of social support and assistance: Gnostic (information search, perception and selection); planning (setting of aims and goals, foreseeing); designing (selection and harmonization of content, methods and measures); organisation (setting of conditions to promote purposeful and natural change of client's situation); communication (communication, development of interpersonal relations); expertise and assessment (perception and critical analysis of process); reflecting (self-assessment of personal competency and communication) (Leliūgienė 2002:389).

According Jucevičienė (2001:197–198), G. Kvieskienė and V. Indrašienė (2008, P.5), modern social work acts both to deal with client's problem and to empower indi-

vidual change in his/her actions. Personal, social, and professional competencies of social worker show up in various stages of the social work process. Both social worker and client acquire experience to dealing with a social problem in action; that experience helps to overcome other interferences of social functioning.

Symbolic – interactive paradigm is relevant in the interaction model (social worker – conditions – client). It brings communication up-to-date by involving others to the process of cooperation.

Client is one of the components in the interaction model. Demographic processes, ethno-cultural, moral, economic, political, legal, religious, and organizational relations determine the fields of social tensions in Lithuania (Grigas 1998:11), and promote appearance of social risk groups. Social and value transformations highlight old and new social risk groups (Praspaliauskienė 2000).

Social worker participates in the process of client empowerment, influences the one's socialization, acts under the conditions of crisis intervention on purpose reducing the situation of social exclusion. The history of each client is unique and inimitable. It is reliable that an individual may become a victim of unfavourable environment (Kvieskienė 2005). For example, experiences and trials in childhood imprint due to crucial influence of the closest environment. According A. Mudrik (2000), „imprints" from the closest environment remain through all individual's life.

Childhood studies of homeless people confirm these characteristics (Kanopkienė, Mikulionienė 2004:47–63). In other words, it is a big probability to inherit negative behaviour and life style intergenerationally, if a child's socialisation has been in unfavourable social environment. That issue belongs to the field of social stratification in sociology, and is studied as a question of social mobility.

The „inheritance" of negative model of social behaviour may be named as an intergeneration inheritance of inequality (Mačiulskytė 2006, Juraitė, Mačiulskytė, Mikutavičienė 2007). Inequality is defined as uneven distribution of possibilities, material rewards, privileges, power, prestige, and authority among individuals and groups. When social inequality is transmitted intergenerationally, it marks the decline of mobility index; particular individuals and groups become marginal and are excluded frequently from generally acknowledged and valuable goods and services, generally accepted living standard, advantages, and life chances.

Traditionally, the processes of intergenerational transmission of inequality are analysed referring to theoretical and methodological provisions of social mobility. The social mobility is perceived here as moving of individuals and social groups up-and-down within social structure or stratification system. Previous studies suggest that intergenerational transmission of inequality is typical to all European societies, though it differs in mobility degree and intensity (Health 1981, Dearden et al 1997, Atkinson 1998, Golthorpe 2000). Factors, generating transmission of inequality, diverge consid-

ering to social-economic-cultural context; it may determine a variety of intergenerational transmission of inequality models.

It is possible to classify all factors of intergenerational transmission of inequality to those which belong to *inner* factor group and those which belong to *outer* factor group.

P. Blau and O.D. Duncan'as (1967) attribute nature, inheritance, genetic development, social environment, and social nets etc. to the *inner* factors of the social mobility, i.e. to those which are more related to individual natural and acquired characteristics. Father's background and profession at child's 16, also mother's social characteristics, motivation, aspirations, and expectations belong to the group of relevant social status factors, and participate in the process of intergenerational inheritance of inequality (Dargytė 1999:87). D. Featherman (1972) notices that social origin may indirectly influence primary labour and material orientations and subjective assessment of achievements of child.

Outer factors of social mobility reveal systemic preconditions of intergenerational inheritance of inequality. These factors will be reviewed under the analysis of the third component in the social work process.

Every risk group is distinguished for its different characteristics and circumstances, influencing the scale of problem. There are applied various theoretical models, and the complexity of problems challenge for adequate professional, personal, and social competencies of social worker (LeCroy 1992). Social worker is under the process of socialization too; hence social interaction is under the process. L. Van Weezel's and K. Waaldijk's (2004) (according Gvaldaitė, Švedaitė 2005) proposition becomes meaningful. According them, the basis of social worker's methodical action is made of three important activities: being with client, purposeful influence, and permanent self-monitoring (ibid:25).

Conditions. Gvaldaitė and B. Švedaitė (2005:11–21), referring to Galuke (2002), mark social work dependence of the state social policy, public funding and administration – bureaucracy – as those ones of five specific features of social work as profession. It means that individuals may receive only these social services which are legally regulated, and these services are the state funded ones. That responds essentially not only to the actions of social workers, but to social work methods too. Though it is clearly defined the organization of social assistance in legislations, reality is always more complicated then it is foreseen in legal acts and systems (ibid:17). That subordination is characteristic not only in Lithuanian context. I. Julkunen (2002), F. Williams, J. Popay (1999) and others write about the subordination mentioned above too. The tradition of theoretical and empirical social policy analysis is notably amplified in Scandinavian countries; the concept of social welfare defines the tradition (Julkunen 2002:34). The tradition is based on E. Allardt's (1976) three dimensions of social welfare: *having, loving,* and *being* (according Julkunen 2002:34). The space of social work involves all

three dimensions of social welfare: provision of social services (*having*), formation and maintenance of social skills (*being*), and support/assistance provided to the client who resolves to deal with his/her problems (*loving*). Also E. Allardt (1976) marks, that the concept of social welfare covers such aspects as personal behaviour, values, and life style (according Julkunen 2002:34). Social worker strives to change exactly these objects of his/her professional actions during the empowerment process of client.

It is purposeful to analyse social work as profession in the context of social policy for several reasons. One of them is that the Lithuanian social welfare state develops as a result of fundamental political, economic, and social transformations. Social problems are more severe in the country due to many reasons, including specific post-soviet mental heritage and the lack of social skills necessary to come through the conditions of free market (Mačiulskytė 2002, Mačiulskytė 2006, Juraitė, Mačiulskytė, Mikutavičienė 2007). Let us to review twenty years of Lithuanian social policy development.

Social policy, as any other field of the state policy, consists of the administration of the complex of social programmes, immediately related to parallel fields of the state policy (economic, finance, education, health care ones, etc.). Traditionally, the state's role in social, economic, and political spheres are realised through the system of legal regulation and bureaucracy. The aim of the article is to analyse the interaction of social worker and client in the social work process, so we are going to present a selective analysis of Lithuanian social policy regulations, to our judgement, directly influencing social worker's actions and activities.

Background for social policy formation is the development of adequate mechanism of (political) means, softening social contradictions, which are determined by appearance of market economy. Social policy, as institutional net of social care measures, functions smoothly when it meats special social needs of particular society, and promotes conditions – political, social, and economic – to maintain and generate traditional social net, because it is related to dominating ideas and values in the society. Furthermore, social policy, as embodiment of social values and vision of high level of social welfare, promotes conditions to develop competitive socio-economic behaviour of the state residents. It's necessary to notice that a significant part of Lithuanian residents experience adaptation difficulties because of their post-soviet inheritance.

It is relevant to notice that premise for social policy development isn't related only to deal with social problems. The important function of social policy is to generate and ensure functioning of preventive social mechanisms through complete or partial compensation of lost income, and ensuring and development of equal possibilities to generate personal welfare. Also one of social policy functions is to develop and organize the net of social services effectively. Social risk prevention in Lithuania is based on social insurance, social assistance, and the administration of labour exchange schemes. These schemes are included in Lithuanian social care system.

The interaction of social worker and client occurs when social services are provided. *The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania,* legal acts and other legislations regulate this process. The legislations ensure the implementation of social services and confirm their legality (Išoraitė 2007:43). M. Išoraitė (2007) brings legislations regulating social services administration under 10 spheres:

1) legislations, regulating social services, their classification, organisation, and provision;

2) social services to promote employment;

3) family social assistance;

4) infrastructure of social services;

5) social services in the field of health care;

6) regulation of children rights' care;

7) social integration of ex-convicts;

8) social integration of handicaps;

9) social policy;

10) social care (ibid:45-47).

The list above confirms that the social care is one of the most regulated spheres in the state management. On the one part, it seems to be a positive thing, having in mind the level which has reached the development of the modern state: widely developed legislation allows supposing that the social care system covers a wide range of social issues. On the other part, social services are the state funded, so the state regulates who receives, when, and what kind of assistance is provided. Social workers are the implementers of the state provided and funded social services, not the developers (Gvaldaitė, Švedaitė 2005:18). For that reason social worker becomes „a system hostage" very often due to the functions he/she fulfils which are hardly comparable: a) social control, and b) personal assistance. That contradiction is called „*double mandate" dilemma* in professional literature on social work (according Galuke 2002). The dilemma becomes more severe when it is perceived that the special organization of society and the state usually cause many personal living problems, but not an individual personally (Gvaldaitė, Švedaitė 2005:19-20).

Now it's relevant to return to the review of social mobility factors. *Outer* factors of social mobility reduce systemic premises of intergenerational transmission of inequality. Overall facilities and limits of social mobility arise from economic ideological political (socio-economic-cultural) context. In this case, R. Erikson's and J.H. Goldthorpe's (1992) social mobility studies in Western countries in the 2nd part of the 20th century were noteworthy because two remarks were discovered: at first, mobility was a multi-dimensional process, depending not only on the hierarchy of social classes but also on market and differences among economic sectors. Second, countries differ in

their unique processes of social mobility and the uniqueness of these processes is influenced by the state policy (Hout, Hauser 1992:239). The level of economic development, demographic situation, characteristics of education and welfare systems, accessibility to health services, values and norms, which tolerate/reject transmission of inequality cause structural and cultural premises to fluent/limited social mobility of individuals and groups. J. Ruškus (2002) emphasizes, that structural interpersonal contacts aren't inherent to the societies which are under social cataclysms, changing values, economic transformations, and political instability. Social groups experience organizational changes, shake-up, shift of social norms, common values and ideals (ibid:45). Lithuania has been experiencing all these transformations during last twenty years. So the social work process proceeds under complex circumstances: it is expected that social workers are highly professional when becoming of profession coincide with intensive changes in the society.

2. Research methodology and methods

The authors employ the results of two researches to validate theoretical assumptions. That enables us to base our research problem on methodical and socio-political perspectives:

1) We refer to the research report *Construction of model of supervision application while developing professional competences of a social worker.* The research was funded by Lithuanian State Science and Studies Foundation. Researchers: N. Večkienė, J. Ruškus, I. Dirgėlienė, A. Kiaunytė, V. Kanišauskaitė (2007).

The research was performed in June – August, 2007, at institutions providing social services. Applying typical sampling method 81 institutions participated in the research. Data on institutions rendering social services (list of institutions, addresses and phone numbers) and the number of social employees working at such institutions were submitted by Social Services and Social Work Division of the Department of Equal Treatment and Integration of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania. Totally 585 questionnaires were sent. 433 questionnaires were returned; 35 of them were filled partially. The return of questionnaires was 74 per cent. The research was executed applying quantitative data collection and processing methods. Inquiry in writing was applied for data collection. In order to construct the questionnaire the research object was deconstructed, following the conceptions of social work, stress, assistance and support and supervision (Harkness, 1997; Kadushin, Harkness 2002, Tsui 2005, Van Kessel, Haan 1993).

Since the characteristics of a client group determine the nature of interaction of social worker and client, where have been singled out the groups of clients by the problems, asking „*What kind of clients you work with? How do you succeed to work?"* : health problems – „*addicts", „keepers of communicable diseases", „keepers of un-*

treatable diseases"; disability; violence – *„victims", „violators", „suicidal behaviour"*; delinquency – *„ex-convicts", „convicts"*; bereavement – *„people experienced bereavement"* (death of family member, divorce, etc.); social exclusion – *„poor people"*; minorities – *„representatives of national minorities", „representatives of sexual minorities"*; human trafficking and prostitution – *„victims of human trafficking and prostitution"*; unemployment; homeless; problem families and children – *„social risk families"*; problems of age ranges – *„childhood, adolescence, juvenility, and age".*

2) Also we refer to the results of the survey carried as a part of the project[1], called *Policy Responses Overcoming Factors in the Intergenerational Transmission of Inequalities: PROFIT* under 6th Framework Priority, Priority 7. In this article we refer to the results of qualitative survey of politicians' and experts' opinion. The fieldwork was carried in the period from January to March, 2005. The sample was 15 respondents: Parliament and Government members, NGO and trade unions' representatives, working in the fields of social affairs, labour market, and education.

The politicians' and experts' opinion survey reveals the peculiarities of social conditions where social problems appear and maintain, and the social work process goes on. The characteristics of social conditions also determine the nature of the interaction of social worker and client, where have been singled out the groups of conditions by their influence. Asking the question - *„Who is responsible for the problem of intergeneration inheritance of inequality in recent Lithuania?"* – the researchers singled out such groups of conditions: post-soviet inheritance – *„lack of personal responsibility", „disability to take personal care"*; validity of political decisions – *„politically determined appearance of socially excluded groups"*; regionalism – *„province", „smaller towns", „village"*; characteristics of life quality – *„education accessibility", „IT literacy"*; social environment – *„community".*

3. The research results and interpretation

The results of research *Construction of model of supervision application while developing professional competences of a social worker* name a wide spectrum of social groups social workers work with. The biggest part of respondents work with disabled (75 per cent), elderly (39 per cent), poor people (34 per cent), and addicts (34 per cent). There already exist traditional methods to work with these social groups, there is accumulated professional experience, and is searching for new, innovative methods (*Naujovės socialiniame darbe,* 2003).

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[1] The main goal of the PROFIT project was to find out the relevance of intergenerational transmission of inequalities and possible solutions of this problem on different levels: national, local and community. The project partners were 8 universities and research centres form Estonia, Germany, Finland, Lithuania, Italy, Bulgaria, Great Britain, and Poland. The project coordinator was University of Lodz (Poland). The Project was implemented in 2004–2007.

The least number of the respondents meet representatives of sexual minorities (7 per cent), victims of human trafficking and prostitution (8 per cent), representatives of national minorities (11 per cent), keepers of communicalbe diseases (12 per cent), violators (17 per cent), and ex-convicts (18 per cent) in their work.

Special methods are required to assist these risk groups; these methods are under formation yet. Non-governmental organizations usually deal with the empowerment problems of these groups, and their work is considered to be very effective. The empowerment process is complicated due to negative public opinion; the problems of inter-official and inter-institutional communication appear. The same opinion is reflected by the respondents when they talk about the level of challenge they experience fulfilling their functions (see Picture 2).

The respondents noticed that the most complicated was to work with these risk groups which recently became the objects of resocialisation and there were no developed effective assistance methods yet. These risk groups are keepers of communicable diseases (AIDS, etc.), violators, sexual minorities, victims of prostitution and human trafficking, addicts, victims, and ex-convicts. Public opinion about these risk groups has been always under discussion in the society. Probably the public opinion to these risk groups puzzles the value

Picture 2. Self-evaluation of professional success.

system of social worker too. Social worker, who works with these groups, experiences tension between his/her opinion and societal or closer social environment one. According the results, social workers, working with untreatable diseases keepers, representatives of sexual minorities, victims of human trafficking and prostitution, are among those who are in a big risk to experience a „blow-out syndrome". It seems likely those social workers who work with addicts, keepers of communicable diseases, and representatives of social minorities are under big „blow-out syndrome" risk too, because they relate theory and practice least. According the results, the respondents who relate theory and practice distinguish for better self-control skills. Those respondents, who

work with addicts, violators, people who have experienced bereavement, persons apt to suicide, notice that it is really hard to put the axe on all stages of social work process: assessment, planning, implementation, and the review of results.

Structural factors, the same as subjective ones, determine the interaction of social worker and client (we refer to the results of the survey carried as a part of the project, called *Policy Responses Overcoming Factors in the Intergenerational Transmission of Inequalities: PROFIT)*. This qualitative survey of politicians and experts was designed to analyse social problems, essentially focusing on the aspect of low social status inheritance, but it revealed perfectly macro environment, where the social work process had been going on. Appreciating the subjective factor – client -, we're focusing on the factors of Lithuanian social policy, what influence the interaction process too. The success to deal with social problems – to assist risk groups effectively – depends on political will though. From one side, the Government, representing legislative and executive authorities, considers to be the one having competency to coordinate, cooperate, and harmonize actions of social partners – NGOs, Church, business, etc. However it is acknowledged the Government lacks political will to adopt resolutions stimulating evident progress reducing social problems.

Politicians noticed inadequate *state policy* as the dominant factor for fluent social work process. There was formed an opinion that Lithuanian social policy had tendency to increase social problems, not to decrease. The gap between authority and man, and appeasement of own interests influence the formation of policy pointed to the property differentiation. *„It's the policy oriented towards increasing of property differentiation. <...> Sometimes property differentiation increased up by hundred per cent comparing to the last Soviet years <…> that is what affect people, so inequality between poor and rich is colossal. Sometimes even hardly comprehensible. So, the policy, oriented to so called free market, free economy, must be regulated somehow"* (PL, I3). Some noted that *„all authorities pursued liberalistic ideology, not any other for 15 years. It was desirable to represent freedom, but practically state's responsibility for socially naked people went aside. I think that authority gained most in freedom, that was declared"* (PL, I4). *„New social exclusions appear <...> when the state policy intervenes. Sometimes political means can stimulate negative incentives; give incentives to wait for something, to do nothing".*(NGOL, I15).

Slow political resolutions, political priorities based on clientelist relations, flourished bureaucracy inflame generation and implementation of effective means to solve social problems. Some respondents stated that policy priorities and actions depended personally on politicians. *„There is a problem that in the Government there are no spiritual and humanist people. And the point is, that everywhere follows old nomenclature, which has been used to take everything on its way"* (PL, I2).

Causality of post-soviet transformation has been dominating in Lithuanian scientific, political, practical, and public discourse for a long time, but recently it steps back.

The respondents noticed some rudiments of post-soviet mentality, determining restrictive abilities to adapt in changing social economic conditions, characteristic to some part of society. Some politicians emphasized, that recently we had results of 50 years of Soviet occupation which formed specific public attitudes. *"First of all behavioural poverty settled down. It brought social economic poverty, because a person had certain stereotypes, lost caste through the behavioural poverty, besides there was collective property system, a person was poorly educated (if talking about those who are 40-50 years old now), he grew up in the environment of duplicate behaviour"* (PL, I9). It was a totalitarian state, and people used feel no personal responsibility at home and work, so the Soviet way of thinking impeded different processes of progress in the state, economic development, and on the individual level – adaptability to changes – and that was stimulating development of social disjuncture. *"Social-economic-political processes are different, people can't adapt, because of their mentality"* (PL, I9). *"Not only generations must change, but the way of thinking, viewpoint to life too."* (PL, I1)

We can assign the switch from planned to market economy as one of the peculiarities of post-soviet state development. It was mentioned, that privatization had been implemented in non-democratic way and this effected social differentiation as well as formation of social inequality. *"In my opinion we don't create the model of social state, we are on a liberal way, with economic things ahead, to reach welfare for the state and not personal one. A strong differentiation has appeared because of this. And this was the main reason, why we turned to free market under hard conditions, where the stronger could take everything, and the rest must be content with very little."* (PL, I8)

So the social worker meets various obstacles to empowering client, because the client distinguishes for specific post-soviet way of thinking and behaviour.

Lithuanian regionalisation is evident. That also increases generation of specific social problems. The respondents noticed *"village, province"* (PL, I2), *"little towns far from economic centres"* (NGOL, I12). Uneven economic and social development of geographical regions backgrounds complexity of social problems therefore determines their specific character and makes unfavourable conditions for the social work process.

Talking about the characteristics of Lithuanian *province*, the respondents mentioned the factors increasing social exclusion. According to the respondents, this is determined by high level of economic and value poverty in these regions, village environment (accessibility of new technologies, general economic level of the region), some of them emphasize worse education quality in rural schools and specific dominant valuables like alcohol dependence. *"In gloomy village <...> it's a murder, because there are no other valuables than a bottle... In the village where father chases mother with an axe in his hands, where children are yelling in the corner, I don't know how it is possible to allow such children to have their own children. As you've noticed, it repeats from generation to generation."* (PL, I2)

Every second respondents stated, that *„low educational level was the main (factor) while passing from generation to generation"* (PL, I), because *„<...> background, had gained in the family, formed human demands and other things"* (PL, I3). *„Education is important for individual to get out from his topical environment."* (NGOL, I15) However *„the absence of financial abilities and lack of particular values may block the way to gain even secondary education".* (PL, I2)

The community, where social work process goes on, is a very important intensifying factor both in positive and negative senses. The respondents agreed, that *„environment had one of the deciding impacts on individual: what was surrounding him/her, whom he/she had been communicating with <...>"* (PL, I1). They noticed, that development of social inequality depended on *„conditions, genetics, environment in which you lived, eventually on your everyday life, way of thinking, focusing"* (PL, I12). The community with strong moral control plays an important role in the social work process. Sometimes the community weighs the role of state with its formal anonymous control mechanisms. *„Sometimes political means can stimulate negative incentives; give incentives to wait for something, to do nothing. In general, any social assistance provokes inactivity and the status of dependency. And if this support is provided in the community, where people know each other, where own leaders are, the influence is made on motivation, and particular individual feels some obligations, he feels ashamed to do nothing. And what shame is to go and claim for social assistance? It becomes anonymous when it becomes a part of the state policy. It becomes anonymous and disrupts personal motivation."* (NGOL, I15)

Conclusions

1. The essence of the interaction model in social work is related to three social work process components making influence on the interaction of social worker and client: (1) social worker (with his/her knowledge, skills, and values); (2) client (with his/her social problems), and (3) social conditions. The model enables to foresee factors, determining social worker's actions and his/her professional experience. Social worker integrates, reflects knowledge, skills, and values in the interaction process. The tension between personal and professional identity appears; personal, professional, and social experiences of social worker interact with each other.

So social worker strives to empower client during the interaction process. Client is active subject too in the interaction process, he/she has individual needs and original world and lives in particular social environment and conditions.

The social work process goes on in the space full of various factors and is influenced by specific conditions: social environment (legislation, cultural traditions, socioeconomic context), client's characteristics (biological, psychological, behavioural, and

adaptation ones), social worker's characteristics (professional competence, age, gender, background, economic status, attitudes to social risk individuals).

2. The authors refer to the results of two researches to validate theoretical assumptions: (1) *Construction of model of supervision application while developing professional competences of a social worker,* and (2) *Policy Responses Overcoming Factors in the Intergenerational Transmission of Inequalities: PROFIT.* The role of the interaction model componens (components of client and conditions) is revealed under the analysis of confidence preservation problem and complex analysis of intergeneration inheritance of low social status. The researches' results confirm our theoretical assumtions.

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SOCIALINIO DARBUOTOJO IR KLIENTO SĄVEIKA SOCIALINIO DARBO PROCESE: LIETUVOS PATIRTIS

Sonata Mačiulskytė

Indrė Dirgėlienė

Santrauka

Taikant sąveikos modelį, straipsnyje analizuojamas socialinio darbo kaip profesijos sudėtingumas. Sąveikos modelio esmė socialiniame darbe yra tokia: socialinio darbuotojo ir kliento sąveikai yra svarbūs trys socialinio darbo proceso komponentai: (1) socialinis darbuotojas; (2) klientas ir (3) kontekstas, kuriame vyksta ši sąveika. Šis modelis leidžia numatyti veiksnius, sąlygojančius socialinių darbuotojų veiklą ir jų profesinę patirtį. Sąveikos modelis patvirtina, kad socialinis darbas, kaip veikla, – ne trumpalaikė vienkartinė reakcija, o sąveikos procesas, vykstantis intensyviai kintančios aplinkos sąlygomis.

Socialinis darbuotojas sąveikos su klientu procese integruoja, reflektuoja žinias, įgūdžius ir vertybes. Šiame procese kyla įtampa tarp asmeninio ir profesinio identiteto, sąveikauja asmeninė, profesinė, socialinė patirtis.

Taigi sąveikos su klientu procese socialinis darbuotojas siekia kliento įgalinimo. Įgalinimo procese aktyvus ir klientas, turintis savitus poreikius bei savitą pasaulį, gyvenantis tam tikroje socialinėje aplinkoje bei aplinkybėse.

Socialinio darbo procesas vyksta ne šiaip tuščioje erdvėje, bet kupinoje įvairių veiksnių aplinkoje, jį sąlygoja tam tikros aplinkybės: išorinės aplinkybės (teisinė bazė, kultūros tradicijos, socioekonominė situacija), kliento savybės (biologiniai, psichologiniai, elgesio ir prisitaikymo ypatumai), socialinio darbuotojo savybės (profesinė kompetencija, amžius, lytis, išsimokslinimas, ekonominis statusas, nuostatos socialinės rizikos asmenų atžvilgiu).

Empirinės dalies išvadoms pagrįsti straipsnyje naudojami tyrimų (1) *„Supervizijos taikymo, plėtojant socialinių darbuotojų profesines kompetencijas, modelio parengimas"* ir (2) *„Politiniai sprendimai įveikiant iš kartos į kartą perteikiamas socialinę nelygybę skatinančias priežastis PROFIT"* duomenys. Socialinio darbuotojo ir kliento sąveikos modelio komponentų – kliento ir išorinės aplinkos – vaidmuo socialinio darbo procese atskleidžiamas per konfidencialumo išsaugojimo problemos analizę bei kompleksinę žemo socialinio statuso paveldėjimo makrolygmens priežasčių analizę. Tyrimo duomenys patvirtina teorines prielaidas.

SOCIALINIŲ PROCESŲ KAITOS VAIDMUO SOCIALINIO DARBO RAIŠKAI LIETUVOJE

Sonata Mačiulskytė
Klaipėdos universitetas

Anotacija

Socialinio darbo raida Lietuvoje susijusi su būtinybe suvaldyti pokomunistinės socialinės kaitos „įsiūbuotą" visuomenę: daugybė įvairaus amžiaus žmonių tapo šių procesų aukomis. Socialinis darbas pasiūlė perspektyvesnį požiūrį į žmogų, įtakos lauką išplėsdamas gerokai už institucionalizuotos praktinės veiklos ribų. Socialinį darbą Lietuvoje įvairiais aspektais tyrinėja nemažai Lietuvos ir užsienio autorių, tačiau autorių, kurie tyrinėdami socialinį darbą plėtotų Lietuvos visuomenės socialinės raidos aspektą, nėra daug. Ir nors pokomunistinės transformacijos priežastingumas, ilgą laiką dominavęs Lietuvos moksliniame, politiniame, praktiniame ir viešajame diskurse, pamažu mažėja, vis dar išlieka aktualus. Turint tai omenyje natūraliai kyla klausimas, kokia ta pokomunistinė transformacija ir kokią įtaką daro jos raidai Lietuvoje? Siekiant adekvačiai įvertinti socialinio darbo vietą šiuolaikinėje Lietuvos visuomenėje, straipsnyje išryškinami esminiai gerovės valstybės bruožai, kurių kontekste ir formuojasi socialinis darbas Lietuvoje. Kartu apžvelgiamos diskusijos, kilusios socialinių profesijų – socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos – profesionalizacijos laikotarpiu.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: pokomunistinė transformacija, socialinės gerovės valstybė, socialinės problemos, socialinis darbas.

Abstract

Social work development in Lithuania is related to manage society in postcommunist transition. The transition from the state to the market economy caused unexpected social problems (poverty, unemployment, accommodation deficit, disbalance of equal opportunities, etc.). That had a direct effect on the most vulnerable social groups (the old and elderly, the disabled, large families, and children in risk families). Furthermore, these problems were made even more acute under the conditions of increasing crime rates, corruption, addictions, prostitution, and violation of children's rights. Social work extended its influence well beyond the field of institutionalized practices and offered more perspective approach to a human being. A large group of Lithuanian and foreign authors explore various aspects of social work in Lithuania; however there are not so many of them, who expand their social work studies in the context of social changes which the country experienced in postcommunist transition. Though a postcommunist transformation causality, which has long dominated in Lithuanian scientific, practical, political, and public discourse, is slowly shrinking, it is still relevant aspect to study. Having that in mind it becomes necessary to find out what the postcommunist transformation is, and what influence it makes on social work evolution and development in Lithuania. In order to evaluate adequately social work stand in a contemporary Lithuanian society, the article highlights the key features of the welfare state, where the Lithuanian social work develops. Herewith the article reviews the debates on social professions – social work and social pedagogy – in the period of their professionalization.

KEY WORDS: postcommunist transformation, social welfare state, social problems, social work.

Įvadas

Problemos aktualumas. Po Nepriklausomybės atkūrimo, nulėmusio strateginių pokyčių gausą ekonominėje, politinėje ir socialinėje srityse, socialinių problemų ne tik nesumažėjo, bet vis kyla naujų ir sudėtingesnių: pradedant socialiniu susisluoksniavimu, socialine poliarizacija ir nuskurdimu (Mačiulskytė, 2003), tęsiant prekyba žmonėmis, vaikų prostitucija, tėvų išvykimu į užsienį, kai vaikai paliekami be priežiūros ir kt. (Jonutytė, 2007). Tie patys politiniai, ekonominiai, socialiniai pokyčiai atskleidė

Sonata Mačiulskytė

paveldėtos komunistinės (socialinės) pagalbos neįgalumą spręsti sparčiai besiplečiantį socialinių problemų spektrą. Siaurą, fragmentuotą požiūrį į asmens problemų sprendimą pakeitė *holistinė* socialinių problemų samprata. Tai reiškia, kad asmens problema pradėta suvokti kaip daugybės subjektyvių ir objektyvių aplinkybių išdava, o veiksmingas jos sprendimas galimas tada, kai bandoma ne taisyti padarinius, bet šalinti priežastis. Senoji [socialinės] pagalbos praktika nebepajėgi susidoroti su laikmečio nulemtais iššūkiais; atsirado naujų socialinių profesijų, taip pat ir socialinio darbo, poreikis.

Literatūroje socialinis darbas tyrinėjamas trimis aspektais – kaip praktika, studijos ir mokslas (Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, Ruškus, Večkienė, 2010, p. 39). Lietuvoje jo profesinis ir mokslinis tapatumas šiuo metu intensyviai formuojasi (Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė ir kt., 2009; Dirgėlienė, Večkienė, 2009). Tai nauja sparčiai besiplėtojanti pagalbos žmogui profesija, kurios tapsmas sutampa su intensyviais pokyčiais visuomenėje, o jo misija – skatinti socialinius pokyčius ir leisti patiems žmonėms ir bendruomenėms dalyvauti sprendžiant jų socialines problemas (Kvieskienė, Indrašienė, 2008, p. 5). Socialinio darbo raida Lietuvoje susijusi su būtinybe suvaldyti pokomunistinės socialinės kaitos „įsiūbuotą" visuomenę: daugybė įvairaus amžiaus žmonių tapo šių procesų aukomis. Socialinis darbas pasiūlė perspektyvesnį požiūrį į žmogų, įtakos lauką išplėsdamas gerokai už institucionalizuotos praktinės veiklos srities ribų.

Mokslinė problema. Socialinį darbą Lietuvoje įvairiais aspektais tyrinėja nemažai Lietuvos ir užsienio autorių. Socialinio darbo raidos klausimais yra rašę: A. Bagdonas (2001), V. Kavaliauskienė (2005), A. Vareikytė (2010) ir kt. P. Jusevičienė (2001) siekė atskleisti sudėtingą socialinio darbo, kuris nulemtas besiformuojančios žinių visuomenės, esmę ir ieškojo šią esmę pagrindžiančios teorijos. Socialinio darbo indėlį kuriant žmogaus gerovę, atskleidė L. Gvaldaitė (2007). Yra daug kitų autorių, nagrinėjusių „lietuviško" socialinio darbo ypatumus, tačiau gilindamiesi į socialinį darbą, kaip naują reiškinį Lietuvos visuomenėje, autoriai socialinį kontekstą su jo istorine, politine ir kita patirtimi priima kaip savaime suprantamą dalyką. Autorių, plėtojančių Lietuvos visuomenės socialinės raidos aspektą tyrinėjant socialinį darbą, nėra daug. Pirmojoje knygoje apie socialinį darbą Lietuvoje I. Lukoševičienė (1996) rašo, kad kartu su Nepriklausomybės atkūrimu iškilo ir esminių socialinių problemų, kurioms spręsti reikėjo ieškoti poreikį atitinkančios profesionalios pagalbos (pgl. Naujanienė, 2007, p. 9). R. Jurkuvienė (2003) savo daktaro disertacijoje aptaria socialinio darbo profesijos atsiradimą ir vystymąsi, kaip atsaką į poreikį, ir nagrinėja transformacijos laikotarpio ypatybes Lietuvos socialiniame kontekste. B. Jordan, tyrinėjęs socialinio darbo raidą Vidurio ir Rytų Europoje pirmąjį pokomunistinės transformacijos dešimtmetį, teigia, kad „Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose Vidurio ir Rytų Europos valstybėse, socialinis darbas yra tam tikro krizės periodo, t. y. transformacijos iš komunizmo į kapitalizmą, produktas" (Jordan, 2001, p. 1642). Taikydama socialinių sistemų teoriją, B. Švedaitė (2004) atskleidžia socialinio darbo sistemos bruožus visuomenės kaitos, taip pat ir pokomunistinės transformacijos, kontekste.

Tyrimo problema. W. Weigand (2010), kalbėdamas apie supervizijos šiuolaikiškumą visuomenėje, pabrėžia būtinybę įvertinti visuomenės istorinę patirtį.

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Perfrazuojant autorių, buvusioje totalitarinėje visuomenėje, kurioje supervizijai, kartu ir socialiniam darbui, dar toli iki Vakarų šalių praktikos lygio, reikia kelti visai kitus klausimus nei pastarosiose šalyse, kur profesionalus socialinis darbas evoliucionuoja jau beveik pusantro šimto metų (Švedaitė, 2004, p. 47). Lietuvoje ši profesija ir praktinė veikla (šiuolaikiniu požiūriu) tik baigia antrąjį savo kūrimosi ir vystymosi dešimtmetį, o jos raida yra labai sparti. Tuo tarpu supervizijos, kartu ir socialinio darbo raidai nuolat darė įtaką visuomeninis ir profesinis poreikis, teikęs impulsus teoriniams ir konceptualiems klausimams (Weigand, 2010, p. 15). Ir nors pokomunistinės transformacijos priežastingumas, ilgą laiką dominavęs Lietuvos moksliniame, politiniame praktiniame ir viešajame diskurse, pamažu mažėja, vis dar išlieka aktualus. Turint tai omenyje natūraliai kyla klausimas, kokia ta pokomunistinė transformacija ir kokią įtaką ji daro socialinio darbo kūrimuisi ir plėtrai Lietuvoje? Kad būtų galima adekvačiai įvertinti socialinio darbo vietą šiuolaikinėje Lietuvos visuomenėje, būtina išryškinti esminius gerovės valstybės bruožus, kurių kontekste ir formuojasi socialinis darbas Lietuvoje.

Tyrimo objektas – pokomunistinės transformacijos Lietuvoje ypatumai, kurių kontekste formuojasi socialinis darbas.

Tyrimo tikslas – atskleisti intensyvios pokomunistinės transformacijos Lietuvoje ypatumus, kurių kontekste formuojasi socialinis darbas.

Tyrimo uždaviniai:
- apžvelgti transformacijos laikotarpį Lietuvoje;
- apibūdinti esminius Lietuvos socialinės politikos bruožus, kurie nulemia socialinio darbo pobūdį;
- apibūdinti aplinkybes, kurių kontekste formuojasi socialinis darbas kaip profesija, studijos ir mokslas.

Metodai: literatūros šaltinių teorinė analizė.

1. Socialinio darbo formavimasis intensyvios pokomunistinės transformacijos sąlygomis

Antrojo pasaulinio karo baigtis nulėmė ir socialinio darbo raidos padalijimą: (1) iki Antrojo pasaulinio karo; (2) okupacinis komunistinis laikotarpis; (3) pokomunistinis laikotarpis – socialinio darbo atgimimas Lietuvoje. Iki Antrojo pasaulinio karo pabaigos socialinis darbas Lietuvoje evoliucionavo taip pat, kaip ir kitose Vakarų civilizacijos šalyse: ta pati socialinio darbo kilmė, tie patys socialiniai, kultūriniai ir vertybiniai ištekliai labdaringai veiklai formalizuotis ir įgyti šiuolaikinio socialinio darbo pavidalą. Okupaciniu komunistiniu laikotarpiu Lietuvoje, kaip ir daugelyje autoritarinių planinės ekonomikos valstybių, laikytasi nuostatos, kad politinė sistema ir jos teikiamos socialinės garantijos jau savaime apsaugo žmogų nuo socialinių problemų (Leliūgienė, Giedraitienė, Rupšienė, 2006, p. 64). Todėl socialinių profesijų iš viso nereikėjo. Šiame straipsnyje didžiausias dėmesys skiriamas socialinio darbo raidos aplinkybėms šalyje po Nepriklausomybės atkūrimo aptarti, nes plėtojama kokybiškai nauja socialinio darbo samprata ir turinys: negrįžta į laikotarpį iki Antrojo pasaulinio karo, kur tarpukario Lietuvos socialinio darbo raida ir „sustojo"; po 50

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metų Lietuvoje taikoma socialinio darbo praktika su ta pažanga ir naujovėmis, kurios sukurtos ir taikomos pasaulyje šiandien.

Socialinis darbas formuojasi kartu su Lietuvos socialinės raidos procesais ir yra jų veikiamas. Socialinė raida yra visų visuomenių istorinio vystymosi bruožas, tačiau Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose pokomunistinėse Rytų ir Vidurio Europos valstybėse, socialinei raidai būdinga tai, kad vyksta du iš esmės prieštaringi procesai.

Viena vertus, Lietuvoje vis dar jaučiamos pokomunistinės socialinės kaitos pasekmės, nors daugelio Lietuvos politikos analitikų (Norkus, 2008, 2010; Gudžinskas, 2009) vertinimu, valstybė yra „sėkmingai perėjusi į kapitalizmą" (Norkus, 2010, p. 8) ir toliau vystosi evoliuciniu, pasak M. P. Šaulausko (2000), keliu. Kita vertus, pokyčiai, išgyvenami pokomunistinėse šalyse pastaruosius dvidešimt metų, yra bendrų procesų, vykstančių visame pasaulyje (ryškėjantys skirtumai ir vis labiau pasireiškianti įvairovė), dalis. Šiems civilizacinės raidos įvykiams apibūdinti vartojama *transformacijos* sąvoka, atskleidžianti esminius gyvenimo būdo pokyčius. Tai svarbus socialinis pokomunistinės kaitos apibrėžimo konceptas, kurį reikia paaiškinti.

Transformacija, kaip socialinis reiškinys, yra svarbi visuomenėje. Visuomenę B. Melnikas (2002) apibūdina kaip bendromis socialinio pobūdžio savybėmis ir požymiais apibūdintų žmonių bei jų grupių visumą, akumuliuojančią ir išreiškiančią tas pačias ar panašias vertybes dėl bendrų interesų ir tikslų įgyvendinimo. Visuomenė, kaip sistema, pasižymi erdviniu daugiapakopiškumu, daugiapakopiu socialinės prigimties integravimu ir vystymosi dinamika (Melnikas, 2002, p. 71). Šios sudėtingos visuomenės savybės tarpusavyje susijusios ir sudaro kompleksinį prieštaringų vidinių ryšių tinklą. Visuomenę vertinant kaip socialinę sistemą, jai būdingus pokyčius galima išskaidyti pagal esmines transformacijos sritis, išsiskiriančias savo prigimtiniais ypatumais:

- politinė;
- socialinė;
- ekonominė;
- technologijų.

Transformacijos sritis B. Melnikas skiria kaip nusakančias prigimtinius transformacijos požymius (2002, p. 76–77). Šių požymių visuma ir jos pažinimas leidžia įvairiapusiškai apibūdinti visuomenės pokyčių esmę. Tokią analizės schemą galima taikyti ir tiriant pokomunistinę transformaciją, tačiau pokyčiai šiose šalyse turi ir esminių skirtumų – papildomų kaitos savybių.

Pokyčiai Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalyse, suteikė *transformacijos* sąvokai naują prasmę. Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalių atveju tai ne vien tik konceptas, kuris apibūdina evoliucinės kaitos procesus, laipsniškai, be didelių struktūrinių sukrėtimų keičia visuomenes. Transformaciniai procesai, būdingi pokomunistinėms šalims, išreiškia esminius pokyčius visose visuomenės gyvenimo srityse: politikos, socialinės srities, ekonomikos, technologijų raidos. Be to, transformacija Vidurio ir Rytų Europoje sudėtinga dar todėl, kad rodo ne tik smarkiai kintančias, bet ir gana prieštaringas tendencijas.

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Pirmąjį pokomunistinės transformacijos dešimtmetį vienas dažniausiai naudotų konceptų šiems pokyčiams įvardyti buvo *trigubo perėjimo* konceptas. Juo stengtasi išreikšti esminės pokomunistinės transformacijos momentą: politinės, socialinės, ekonominės, technologinės ir kitų labai prieštaringų transformacijų sutapimą laiko ir erdvės požiūriu. Tai sukėlė asinchroniškumo efektą, kuris prisidėjo prie vidinių įtampų visuomenėje palaikymo, kas nulėmė visuomenės struktūrinius prieštaravimus.

J. Elster, C. Offe, U. K. Preuss (1998), taip pat L. Gudžinskas (2009) pirmajam pokomunistinės politinės ir ekonominės transformacijų dešimtmečiui apibrėžti vartoja *laivo perstatymo atviroje jūroje* metaforą. Šios transformacijos iš tiesų reiškė net keletą esminių iššūkių ir nemažai tyrėjų iš pradžių abejojo, ar apskritai įmanoma visus juos vienodai sėkmingai įveikti. *Pirma*, pokomunistinėms šalims teko ne tik demokratizuoti politinę sistemą, bet ir vykdyti radikalią ekonominę pertvarką, o tai savaime didino politinio, svarbiausia, socialinio nestabilumo riziką. *Antra*, jos turėjo sukurti (arba perkurti) pačią valstybę, t. y. institucinį aparatą, kuris teisėtomis priemonėmis galėtų užtikrinti esminių politinių ir ekonominių reformų įgyvendinimą. *Trečia*, šioms iš naujo sukurtoms valstybėms reikėjo kuo sklandžiau integruotis į tarptautinę politinę ir ekonominę erdvę (Gudžinskas, 2009, p. 129). M. P. Šaulausko (2000, p. 25) pastebėjimu, laisvosios rinkos ekonomikos formavimasis pokomunistinės transformacijos sąlygomis buvo neįmanomas be demokratijos sklaidos ir kartu su ja nesuderinamas.

Išlaikant transformacijos analizės sisteminį požiūrį, esminiai šio proceso požymiai ir dėsningumai apžvelgiami politinėje, socialinės srities bei ekonominėje transformacijose. Pagrindiniais politinės transformacijos pokyčiais ir dėsningumais, kurie turi įtakos Lietuvos visuomenės raidos ypatumams, galima laikyti šiuos požymius ir dėsningumus:

Pirma, politinės sistemos pasikeitimas Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalyse, reiškė kokybiškai naujų visuomenės bendrabūvio formų sklaidą. Šalies mokslininkai (pvz., Norkus, 2010), vertindami išėjimą iš komunistinio autoritarizmo iš dvidešimties metų perspektyvos, įvardija tai kaip sėkmingos pokomunistinės transformacijos pavyzdį. Šalis, pasirinkusi tarpinį būdą tarp reformos ir revoliucijos demokratizavimo, kuris literatūroje vadinamas G. Ash (1989) pasiūlytu terminu *refoliucija*, per pirmuosius dešimt metų pavyko sėkmingai atsikratyti komunistinio autoritarizmo (Norkus, 2010, p. 16–20). Šio laimėjimo kaina, ypač socialinė, buvo labai didelė. Laikotarpį po 1991 m. mokslininkai vadina įvairiai: *šoko terapijos*, *laisvojo kritimo*, *nekūrybiško griovimo* ir pan. Esmė ta, kad nesvarbu, kas buvo valdžioje, – konservatoriai ar ekskomunistai, kaip juos vadina Z. Norkus (2010) ir kt., pokomunistiniu laikotarpiu dominavo aiški radikali pozicija: „išmontuoti“ arba „sutraukyti“ buvusias valstybės struktūras (Norkus, 2010, p. 38) ir kurti kapitalizmą. Valdančiojo elito perdėtas pasitikėjimas savo kokybiniu ir kiekybiniu potencialu vykdyti precedento neturinčias pokomunistines reformas bei radikalus antikomunizmas dominuojančio *homo sovieticus* mentaliteto kontekste sugriovė tradicines nuostatas dėl politinės, ekonominės ir socialinės struktūrų (Mačiulskytė, 2003, p. 35). Lietuvoje susiklostė situacija, literatūroje apibūdinama kaip politinis ir socialinis nestabilumas, visuomenės susvetimėjimas, augantis socialinis deficitas ir socioekonominė poliarizacija.

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Antra, kai kurios pastarojo meto Lietuvos raidos tendencijos – narystė NATO ir Europos Sąjungoje (ES) – išryškino valstybės tolesnės raidos kontūrus. Europos integracija Vidurio ir Rytų Europos visuomenėms reiškė naują jų valstybių raidos etapą su naujais iššūkiais, kurie toli gražu ne ką mažiau sudėtingi nei ankstesnieji (Gudžinskas, 2009, p. 128). Autoriaus teigimu, šių valstybių raidos procesas tapo dar sudėtingesnis, nes Europos integracija keičia pačią valstybę ir jos santykius su visuomene. Pagrindiniai naujosioms ES šalims narėms kylantys iššūkiai socialinėje srityje – visuomenės solidarumo issaugojimas nedarbo, skurdo, besiplečiančių socialinių patologijų sąlygomis (Ten pat, p. 133).

Pagrindiniams socialinės srities pokyčiams priskiriami šie pokyčiai ir dėsningumai:

Pirma, po 1991 m. Lietuvos visuomenė išgyveno įvairių socialinių kataklizmų, keitėsi vertybės, ekonominiai ryšiai, atsirado politinis nestabilumas (Ruškaus, 2002). Pokomunistiniu laikotarpiu stebimi intensyvūs vertybių kaitos procesai. Teritorinis, tarpšakinis ir užimamų pareigų vertybiniai kriterijai pakeisti nuosavybės, turto ir pajamų, profesinio prestižo ir valdžios kriterijais. Ryškūs dinaminiai procesai vyko vertinant išsilavinimo ir užimtumo (profesijos) kriterijus.

Kita vertus, radikalių politinės ir ekonominės transformacijų akivaizdoje, kai socialiniai vykdomų reformų padariniai nevertinti ir apskritai vargiai ar apie juos kas nors galvojo, Lietuvos visuomenė puoselėjo „kantrybės kultūrą", kai gyventojai buvo linkę iškentėti drastiškas ekonomines reformas, užuot atvirai protestavę ir siekę nuversti išrinktą valdžią (Gudžinskas, 2009, p. 130). Tik gerokai vėliau, baigiantis pirmajam ir prasidedant antrajam postkomunistinės transformacijos dešimtmečiui, pradėjo ryškėti „protesto kultūros" kontūrai. (Daugiau šiuo klausimu yra rašę R. Riekašius [2001], S. Mačiulskytė [2003; 2006]).

Antra, bendri pasaulyje stebimi globalizacijos procesai, ypač intensyvūs Europoje, Lietuvoje taip pat sparčiai vyksta ir nulemia tam tikras tendencijas. Iš jų norėtųsi išskirti pastaruoju metu ypač reikšmingus socialinius padarinius nulemiančius integracijos ir globalizacijos procesus. Ne visiems visuomenės nariams globalizacija reiškia tą patį – naujų veiklos, darbo ir kt. mobilumo galimybių atsivėrimą. Daliai visuomenės tai reiškia galutinę lokalizaciją. Būti „lokaliam" globalizuotame pasaulyje yra socialinio atskirtumo ir nuosmukio ženklas (Bauman, 2002, p. 9). Tai nebūtinai reiškia tam tikrų socialinių vienetų teritorinę izoliaciją. Darbo migracija, dėl kurios Lietuvoje mažėjo bedarbystė ir per pastarąjį dešimtmetį prarasta iki 400 000 šalies gyventojų, keičia visuomenės struktūrą ir lemia naujas socialines problemas, formuoja naujas socialinio darbo klientų grupes.

Kaip esminius ekonominės transformacijos požymius ir dėsningumus galima traktuoti žemiau aptariamus požymius ir dėsningumus:

Pirma, privatizacija, kaip ekonominių santykių adaptacijos laisvosios rinkos mechanizmams sąlyga, nepateisino jos inicijavimą skatinusių tikslų. Pirmojo privatizacijos etapo ydingumas – čekinė privatizacijos forma. Siekiant visiems garantuoti vienodas starto pozicijas labai pakenkta tolesnių socialinių ir ekonominių reformų eigai. Ekonomiškai nepagrįstas privatizavimo čekių paketo dydis vienam šalies gyventojui ir individualių gebėjimų veikti rinkos sąlygomis – priimti konkurencingus sprendimus – stoka suformavo prielaidas privatizuoti tik smulkų asmeninio naudojimo

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nekilnojamąjį turtą. Lėtesnis ir sudėtingesnis gamybos priemonių privatizavimo procesas nesudarė sąlygų santykinai greitai pasiekti ekonominio efektyvumo besiformuojančiame privačiame sektoriuje, kad jis taptų prevencine priemone socialinio audinio irimo procesui. Galinga privatizacija suveikė kaip turto perskirstymo mechanizmas ir viena iš visuomenės turtinės diferenciacijos, net poliarizacijos, priežasčių. Šiose turto dalybose didžia dalimi pralaimėjo tie patys 82 proc. šalies gyventojų (Šabajevaitė, 1999, p. 72), kuriems privatizacija galėjo tapti svarbiu momentu stiprinant ir stabilizuojant individualią socialinę padėtį – tai pensininkai, darbininkai, kultūros, švietimo, žemės ūkio darbuotojai ir kt. Realiai nekontroliuojama privatizacijos eiga lėmė ne stabilios Lietuvos visuomenės socialinės struktūros formavimąsi su stipriu ir finansiškai pajėgiu savininkų socialiniu sluoksniu – viduriniąja klase, o socialinę poliarizaciją su besiformuojančia „dviejų visuomenių" valstybe su skirtingomis kultūrinio (vertybinio) elgesio normomis. Z. Norkus (2008), analizuodamas pokomunistinio kapitalizmo tipologinius skirtumus, „atrado", kad lietuviškas pokomunistinis kapitalizmas reprezentuoja liberalųjį kapitalizmą (Ten pat, p. 75). Tokių ideologinių vertybių ir politinės bei ekonominės praktikos sąlygomis formuojasi socialinės gerovės valstybė ir socialinis darbas Lietuvoje.

Antra, socialinė poliarizacija ir iškreiptos socialinės struktūros formavimasis yra ne vienintelė ekonomikos liberalizavimo išdava. Nuosavybės formų pliuralizmas, trapios kuriamos socialinės gerovės valstybės pozicijos neužtikrina socialinių garantijų dirbantiesiems. Realiai sumažėjus valstybės vaidmeniui reguliuojant darbo santykius, darbuotojų padėtis santykiuose su darbdaviais nedaug tepasikeitė: vyraujantį valstybės vaidmenį pakeitė vyraujantis darbdavių vaidmuo. Darbo santykių liberalizavimas lyg ir įteisino ne pakankamų, bet minimalių socialinių garantijų didžiajai daliai darbo rinkoje dalyvaujančių žmonių priėmimą ir susitaikymą kaip su savaime suprantamu reiškiniu: norma tampa praktika, kai minimalią mėnesinę algą gaunantys dirbantieji naudojasi socialinės paramos schemomis, didina bedarbių gretas ir tampa ilgalaikiais darbo biržų klientais arba emigruoja iš Lietuvos. Darbo jėgos perteklius verčia dirbančiuosius priimti neretai neteisingas darbdavio keliamas sąlygas – nelegalų darbą, dvigubą apskaitą ir atlyginimą, neapmokamus viršvalandžius, etc., o tai paprastai gerokai riboja darbuotojų socialines teises ir didina jų socialinę riziką.

2. Esminiai Lietuvos socialinės politikos bruožai, lemiantys socialinio darbo pobūdį

Socialinis darbas – toks, koks jis yra tam tikroje šalyje, nulemtas socialinės politikos, o pastaroji – visuomenės istorinės patirties ir dominuojančių socialinių vertybių kontekste puoselėjamų socialinių institucijų, ekonominių sąlygų ir ideologijos, t. y. kuriamos (puoselėjamos) socialinės gerovės valstybės. Socialinę gerovę W. Friedlander (1980) apibrėžia kaip „organizuotą socialinių paslaugų ir institucijų sistemą, kuri padeda individams ir jų grupėms gauti pagalbą, galinčią sukurti juos tenkinančius gyvenimo ir sveikatos apsaugos standartus, kurie leidžia piliečiams išsiugdyti gebėjimus, kurie padėtų suderinti visuomenės gerovę ir poreikius bendruomenėje bei šeimoje" (Friedlander, 1980, p. 4). L. Gvaldaitė ir B. Švedaitė

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(2005, p. 11–21), remdamosi M. Galuke (2002), tarp penkių socialinio darbo, kaip profesijos, bruožų mini socialinio darbo priklausomybę nuo valstybės socialinės politikos, viešojo finansavimo ir administracinio-biurokratinio aparato. Turima galvoje tai, kad šiuolaikinėje visuomenėje asmenims teikiama tik tokia socialinė pagalba, kuri numatyta įstatymų ir teisės aktų, ir tik ši pagalba yra valstybės finansuojama. Tai iš esmės paveikia ne tik socialinių darbuotojų veiklą, bet ir socialinio darbo metodus.

Ši priklausomybė nebūdinga tik lietuviškam kontekstui. Socialinis darbas – tai profesija, kuri formavosi kartu su gerovės valstybės raida. Kiekviena šalis pasižymi savita istorine patirtimi, ekonomikos ir technologijų išsivystymo lygiu, ideologija, vertybine orientacija ir kultūra (Jurkuvienė, 2003). Apie socialinės politikos vaidmenį socialinio darbo raidoje kalba ir užsienio autoriai. I. Julkunen (2002), F. Williams, J. Popay (1999) ir kt. nuomone, Skandinavijos šalyse ypač išplėtota socialinės politikos teorinės ir empirinės analizės tradicija, jai apibrėžti taikomas socialinės gerovės konceptas (Julkunen, 2002, p. 34). Šios tradicijos pagrindas – E. Allardt (1976) įvardytos trys socialinės gerovės dimensijos: turėjimas (angl. *having*), mylėjimas (angl. *loving*), buvimas (angl. *being*) (pgl. Julkunen, 2002, p. 34). Socialinio darbo veiklos laukas apima visas tris socialinės gerovės dimensijas: socialinių paslaugų teikimą (*turėjimas*), socialinių įgūdžių ugdymą ir palaikymą (*buvimas*) ir paramą savo problemas pasiryžusiam spręsti klientui (*mylėjimas*). Be to, E. Allardt (1976) pabrėžia, kad socialinės gerovės samprata apima asmens elgesio, vertybių ir gyvenimo stiliaus aspektus (pgl. Julkunen, 2002, p. 34). Tai socialinio darbo objektai, kuriuos pirmiausia ir stengiasi paveikti socialinis darbuotojas kliento įgalinimo procese.

Socialinio darbo, kaip profesijos, analizę socialinės politikos kontekste tikslinga atlikti dėl to, kad Lietuvoje socialinės gerovės valstybės kūrimasis vyksta fundamentalių politinių, ekonominių ir socialinių pokyčių sąlygomis ir jų išdavoje. Socialinės problemos šalyje taip pat yra gerokai aštresnės dėl daugelio priežasčių, taip pat ir dėl būdingo pokomunistinio mentaliteto bei socialinių įgūdžių, kurių reikia norint išgyventi laisvosios rinkos sąlygomis, trūkumo (Mačiulskytė, 2003, 2006; Juraitė, Mačiulskytė, Mikutavičienė, 2007). Apžvelgsime Lietuvos socialinės politikos formavimosi dvidešimtmetį.

Pradėsime nuo to, kad socialinės politikos formavimo(si) prielaida – adekvataus (politinių) priemonių mechanizmo, kompensuojančio rinkos ekonomikos nulemtus socialinius prieštaravimus, kūrimas(-is). Socialinė politika, kaip institucinis socialinės apsaugos priemonių tinklas, gerai funkcionuoja tik tada, kai ji tenkina konkrečios visuomenės specifinius socialinius poreikius bei pati, būdama tiesiogiai susijusi su visuomenėje dominuojančiomis idėjomis ir vertybėmis, sukuria sąlygas – politines, socialines, ekonomines, kurios leidžia palaikyti ir generuoti tradicinį socialinį tinklą. Kartu socialinė politika – socialinių vertybių ir aukšto visuomenės gerovės lygio vizijos įkūnijimas – sudaro sąlygas formuotis pačių valstybės gyventojų konkurencingam socioekonominiam elgesiui.

Lietuvos socialinės politikos raidos dinamiką galima būtų taip periodizuoti: 1) iki 1990 m. – komunistinė ekspansyvi socialinė politika; 2) 1990–1993 m. – revoliucinis kaitos periodas, kai socialinėje srityje valstybė atliko minimalų vaidmenį ir buvo negrįžtamai sugriautas komunistinis socialinės apsaugos mechanizmas; 3) nuo 1994

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m. kuriama gerovės valstybė. Norėdami apibūdinti šiandieninę gerovės valstybę Lietuvoje, turime įvertinti, ant kokio socialinio ir vertybinio pamato „statome naują pastatą".

Gerovės valstybė nepriklausomoje Lietuvoje kuriama sugriovus valstybės monopolį visose socialinio gyvenimo srityse. Kaip tas valstybės monopolis pasireiškė? Vakarų analitikai (Standing, 1996) skiria penkis valstybės monopolio nulemtus valstybės vaidmens iškraipymus:

1. Socialinė gerovė ir socialinės paslaugos plėtotos neatsižvelgiant į tuometinius socialinės realybės poreikius.
2. Socialinė gerovė buvo neatsiejamai susieta su darbo vieta.
3. Darbo jėgos mobilumas buvo griežtai apribotas.
4. Visos socialinės grupės tarnavo masinei gamybai: vienodai vyrai ir moterys.
5. Pensininkai ir neįgalieji galėjo gauti dvigubas pensijas, t. y. tiek invalidumo, tiek senatvės (pgl. Jurkuvienė, 2003, p. 19–20).

Autoritarinė vyriausybė visiškai valdė rinką. Centralizuotas biurokratinis aparatas atliko rinkos funkcijas: dalyvavo perskirstant pajamas ir išteklius, o gerovė buvo kuriama vykdant platus masto universalias socialines programas ir teikiant paslaugas (Jurkuvienė, 2003).

Kaip rašo A. Vareikytė (2010), Sovietų Sąjungos išskirtinė pozicija socialinėje srityje – socialinių problemų neigimas, todėl nebuvo nei socialinių darbuotojų, nei bendros tikslinės socialinės paramos sistemos. Socialinę paramą teikė profsąjungos, medicinos įstaigos, vykdomieji komitetai, darboviečių socialiniai skyriai, partiniai komitetai ir kitos organizacijos (Vareikytė, 2010, p. 24).

Tuo metu, kai Vakarų pasaulyje buvo kuriami žmonėms tinkami socialinių paslaugų organizavimo ir teikimo modeliai, atitinkantys vietos gyventojų poreikius ir užtikrinantys jų socialinį saugumą, Lietuvoje apie socialinį darbą, socialinį darbuotoją ir socialines paslaugas nežinota. Šalis turėjo tik institucinių stacionarių paslaugų teikimo patirties, kuri tuo laikotarpiu buvo pagrindinė ir vyraujanti. Pagrindinis dėmesys skirtas didelėms centralizuotoms institucijoms – internatams, kuriuose gyvendavo 300 ir daugiau globotinių, o pagrindinis tuometinių internatų uždavinys buvo užtikrinti medicininį ir materialinį globotinių aprūpinimą (Vareikytė, 2010).

Po 1990 m. radikalios politinės ir ekonominės kaitos, kai didžiausias dėmesys kreiptas šioms reformoms, nepaisant jų padarinių žmogui, socialinės grupės dezorganizavosi, restruktūrizavosi, keitėsi socialinės normos, bendrosios vertybės, idealai (Ruškus, 2002, p. 45). Pokomunistinės vyriausybės, stipriai orientuotos į kapitalistines vertybes, vykdė politines ir ekonomines reformas, mažai rūpinosi sparčia socialine diferenciacija, net poliarizacija, nemažos visuomenės dalies nuskurdimu. Pasak R. Grigo (2001, p. 13), visuomenė, kaip socialinė sistema, pateko į dinaminės nedarnos būvį, kuriam būdingas struktūrinis ir funkcinis neapibrėžtumas, iš esmės pažeidžiantis sistemos stabilumą ir tęstinumą.

Socialinė politika, kuri formavosi šalyje tuo laikotarpiu, nesiskyrė nuo kitų Vidurio ir Rytų Europos valstybių. J. Aidukaitės (2004, p. 82–83) nuomone, Baltijos šalių socialinės apsaugos sistemos yra tarpiniai variantai tarp G. Esping-Andersen (2000)

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išskirto liberalaus likutinio ir konservatyvaus gerovės režimų. Kurdama gerovės valstybės modelį Lietuvoje, autorė (Aidukaitė, 2010) pastebi, kad Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose naujosiose pokomunistinėse Europos Sąjungos šalyse, remiamasi ES teisės aktais, tačiau Europos šalių praktika tik iš dalies, o Lietuvą ji vadina pokomunistine gerovės valstybe: jos socialinio draudimo programos yra gana didelės aprėpties, bet žemo lygio. Pensininkai gauna mažas pensijas, menkos ir kitos socialinės išmokos, tačiau kiekvienam prieinama sveikatos apsauga ir vidurinis išsilavinimas. Dar 1999 m. J. Paluckienė, nagrinėdama gerovės valstybių ypatumus Baltijos šalyse, pabrėžė, kad socialinės garantijos šiose šalyse yra gana menkos, o gerovės valstybės modelio kūrimuisi ji nubrėžė liberalizmo nulemtą „likutinę" anglosaksišką perspektyvą. D. Bernotas ir A. Guogis (2006) randa socialinės apsaugos sistemos panašumų su Pietų Europos šalių modeliu ir tikina, kad socialinės apsaugos sistema Lietuvoje iki šiol (ypač pasaulinio ekonominio nuosmukio sąlygomis – *aut.*) yra panašesnė į klientelistinį korporatyvinį gerovės modelį, būdingą Pietų Europos regionui.

Lietuvoje nesusidaręs aiškus gerovės valstybės modelis turi įtakos ir socialinio darbo vystymuisi šalyje.

3. Profesinės aplinkybės, kurių kontekste formuojasi socialinio darbo profesija

Socialinis darbas Lietuvoje – nauja, besiplėtojanti pagalbos žmogui profesija, kurios tapsmas sutampa su intensyviais pokyčiais visuomenėje. Tai profesija, pasižyminti polifunkcionalumu, jos tikslas – paskatinti asmenį ir šeimą padėti sau sprendžiant iškilusias socialines problemas ir siekti žmogaus savarankiškumo, sutelkiant jo vidinius ir išorinius išteklius (Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, 2008, p. 1). Socialinis darbas skatina socialinius pokyčius visuomenėje ir leidžia patiems žmonėms, bendruomenėms dalyvauti sprendžiant jų socialines problemas (Kvieskienė, Indrašienė, 2008, p. 5).

Ypač aktualus socialinių profesijų kūrimo ir plėtros poreikis Lietuvoje atsirado kaip atsakas į pokomunistinės transformacijos nulemtų socialinių ir ekonominių problemų sklaidą. Šioje socioekonominėje situacijoje šalis pasirinko strategiją – panaudoti tuos socialinių problemų sprendimo būdus, kurie pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais taikyti daugelyje modernių socialinės gerovės valstybių, t. y. kurti stabilią socialinės apsaugos sistemą (socialinę gerovę) ir profesionaliai teikti socialines paslaugas, „amortizuojant" socialinių problemų poveikį bei kuriant socialinių problemų prevencijos modelius (Leliūgienė, Giedraitienė, Rupšienė, 2006, p. 64). I. Leliūgienės, E. Giedraitienės ir L. Rupšienės teigimu, taip mestas iššūkis aukštojo mokslo sistemai: ieškoti modelio, kaip parengti kvalifikuotus socialinių profesijų specialistus, kurie atitiktų besikeičiančios, į piliečių aktyvumą nukreiptos visuomenės poreikius (Ten pat).

Įžengus į trečiąjį Nepriklausomybės dešimtmetį galima skirti socialinio darbo, kaip profesijos vystymosi, periodus. A. Bagdonas (2001) Lietuvos socialinį darbą periodizuoja taip:

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1. 1990–1991 m. – tai socialinio darbo sąvokos priėmimo laikotarpis: tuo metu vyksta socialinės apsaugos sistemos reforma, išryškėja socialinio darbo poreikis.
2. 1992–2002 m. – socialinio darbo profesionalizacija, kai beveik visuose Lietuvos universitetuose, aukštesniosiose mokyklose ir kolegijose kuriamos socialinio darbo programos, teisinė bazė, kuri leidžia stiprėti socialinių paslaugų sektoriui, didėja tarptautinės paramos įtaka studijų programų turiniui, vyksta pirminė socialinių darbuotojų atestacija.
3. Nuo 2002 m. iki dabar – profesionalaus socialinio darbo ir pilietinio sektoriaus stiprėjimas, socialinio darbo tyrimų, mokslo ir taikomosios erdvės plėtra bei socialinė integracija į ES socialines struktūras, kurios užtikrina socialinių garantijų ir socialinių paslaugų internacionalizaciją atitinkamos socialinio darbo kokybės kontekste.

Pradėsime tuo, kad socialinio darbo idėja ir praktika į Lietuvą atėjo iš Vakarų, atkūrus Nepriklausomybę. Tačiau socialinio darbo „daigas" išdyko ne plynamе socialinės pagalbos lauke. Socialinė pedagogika „užkariauti" socialinio reguliavimo nišą Lietuvos visuomenėje pradėjo šiek tiek anksčiau. Jos siekis – padėti paskiriems asmenims ar jų grupėms įveikti socialinės atskirties barjerus, suteikti jiems socialinę-edukacinę pagalbą įveikiant socialinio-edukacinio – edukacinio atsiskyrimo padarinius (Juodaitytė 2007, p. 76). Bendrąja prasme socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos veiklos tikslai iš dalies dubliuojasi.

Dėl abiejų šių socialinių profesijų – socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos – poreikio ir profesinio rengimo daug diskutuota, ypač apie XX a. dešimtojo dešimtmečio vidurį, pradėjus kurti pirmąsias socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos studijų programas. Tuo laikotarpiu kilo daug klausimų, kuriuos sprendė tuometiniai mokslininkai, stovėję prie šių socialinių profesijų profesionalizacijos ištakų. Vienas tokių klausimų – socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos profesijų integralumo problema.

Kaip pastebi I. Leliūgienė, E. Giedraitienė ir L. Rupšienė (2006, p. 66), pasitelkta ir kitų šalių patirties, nes šių socialinių profesijų praktinio, akademinio ir mokslinio segmentų analizės nepavyko išvengti ir kitų šalių mokslininkams bei praktikams. Autorės remiasi I. Leliūgienės, L. Majauskienės ir V. Baršauskienės (2004) studija, kurioje apibendrintos ir suformuluotos tuo metu šalies aukštųjų mokyklų „ištransliuotos" problemos sprendimo alternatyvos. Vienos laikėsi formalizuotos socialinio darbuotojo ir socialinio pedagogo profesijų atskyrimo pozicijos ir teigė, kad socialiniai pedagogai – tai socialiniai darbuotojai, dirbantys su vaikais mokykloje, globos ir kitose ugdymo bei švietimo institucijose. Kitos laikėsi funkcionalios socialinio pedagogo ir socialinio darbuotojo profesijų atskyrimo pozicijos ir šias profesijas skirstė atsižvelgiant į jų atliekamas funkcijas: socialinių pedagogų vaidmenį įžvelgė socialinių problemų prevencijoje, o socialinių darbuotojų – intervencijoje (pgl. Leliūgienė, Giedraitienė, Rupščienė, 2006, p. 66).

Tuo metu, 2006 metais, I. Leliūgienė, E. Giedraitienė ir L. Rupšienė konstatavo, kad socialinis darbuotojas ir socialinė pedagogika yra integralios ir viena kitą papildančios profesijos: socialinė pedagogika „įneša" savo, kaip pripažinto mokslo, turinčio objektą ir dalyką, indėlį, o socialinis darbas vertingas profesine ir praktine

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veikla. Vis dėlto šalia pripažintos profesinės reikšmės pastaruoju metu intensyviai formuojantis socialinio darbo tyrimų mokslinei taikomajai erdvei, socialinio darbo pozicijos socialinių profesijų dichotomijoje gerokai sustiprėjo – daugiausia socialinės pedagogikos sąskaita. Socialinis darbas įgyja vis aiškesnį tapatumą kaip savarankiškas mokslas, studijos ir praktika. Lietuvoje pamažu ryškėja socialinio darbo diskurso kontūrai. Jam apibrėžti reiki papildomų studijų.

Išvados

1. Socialinis darbas formuojasi kartu su Lietuvos socialinės raidos procesais ir yra jų veikiamas. Socialinė raida yra visų visuomenių istorinio vystymosi bruožas, tačiau Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose pokomunistinėse Rytų ir Vidurio Europos valstybėse, socialinei raidai būdinga tai, kad vyksta du iš esmės prieštaringi procesai. Viena vertus, Lietuvoje vis dar jaučiami pokomunistinės socialinės kaitos padariniai. Kita vertus, pokyčiai, išgyvenami pokomunistinėse šalyse pastaruosius dvidešimtį metų, yra bendrų procesų, vykstančių visame pasaulyje (ryškėjantys skirtumai ir vis labiau pasireiškianti įvairovė), dalis. Šiems civilizacinės raidos įvykiams apibūdinti vartojama *transformacijos* sąvoka, atskleidžianti esminius gyvenimo būdo pokyčius. Pokyčiai Lietuvoje, kaip ir kitose Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalyse, vykstantiems procesams apibūdinti suteikė *transformacijos* konceptui naują prasmę. Transformaciniai procesai, būdingi pokomunistinėms šalims, apima esminius pokyčius visose visuomenės srityse: politinėje, socialinėje, ekonominėje bei technologijų. Be to, transformacija Vidurio ir Rytų Europoje yra sudėtingas procesas dar todėl, kad rodo ne tik smarkiai kintančias, bet ir gana prieštaringas tendencijas. Strateginių pokyčių gausa valstybės ekonominėje, politinėje ir socialinėje srityse socialinių problemų ne tik nesumažino, bet iškelia vis naujų ir sudėtingesnių, pradedant socialiniu susisluoksniavimu, socialine poliarizacija ir nuskurdimu, tęsiant prekyba žmonėmis, vaikų prostitucija, tėvų išvykimu į užsienį, kai vaikai paliekami be priežiūros ir kt. Ypač aktualus socialinio darbo kūrimo ir plėtros poreikis Lietuvoje atsirado kaip atsakas į pokomunistinės transformacijos nulemtų socialinių ir ekonominių problemų sklaidą.

2. Socialinis darbas nulemtas socialinės politikos, o pastaroji – visuomenės istorinės patirties ir dominuojančių socialinių vertybių kontekste puoselėjamų socialinių institucijų, ekonominių sąlygų ir ideologijos, t. y. kuriamos (puoselėjamos) socialinės gerovės valstybės. Socialinės politikos formavimo(si) prielaida – adekvataus (politinių) priemonių mechanizmo, kompensuojančio rinkos ekonomikos nulemtus socialinius prieštaravimus, kūrimas(-is). Socialinė politika, kaip institucinis socialinės apsaugos priemonių tinklas, gerai funkcionuoja tik tada, kai ji tenkina konkrečios visuomenės specialius socialinius poreikius. Kartu socialinė politika – socialinių vertybių ir aukšto visuomenės gerovės lygio vizijos įkūnijimas – sudaro sąlygas formuotis pačių valstybės gyventojų konkurencingam

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socioekonominiam elgesiui. Gerovės valstybė nepriklausomoje Lietuvoje kuriama sugriovus valstybės monopolį visose socialinio gyvenimo srityse. Šalyje, kaip ir kitose Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalyse, kuriasi savotiškas pokomunistinės gerovės valstybės modelis su gana didelės aprėpties, bet žemo lygio socialinio draudimo programomis. Šis modelis implikuoja liberalaus likutinio ir konservatyvaus gerovės modelio atmainos, labiau praktikuojamos Pietų Europoje, bruožus, bet vis dar nėra įgavęs aiškaus pavidalo. Nesusiformavęs aiškus gerovės valstybės modelis Lietuvoje turi įtakos ir socialinio darbo vystymuisi.

3. Pokomunistinės transformacijos nulemtoje socioekonominėje situacijoje Lietuva pasirinko strategiją – taikyti tuos socialinių problemų sprendimo būdus, kurie pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais taikyti daugelyje modernių socialinės gerovės valstybių, kitaip tariant, kurti stabilią socialinės apsaugos sistemą (socialinę gerovę) ir profesionaliai teikti socialinės paslaugas. Mestas iššūkis aukštojo mokslo sistemai – ieškoti modelio, kaip parengti kvalifikuotus socialinių profesijų specialistus, kurie atitiktų besikeičiančios visuomenės poreikius. Nemažai diskutuota dėl Lietuvoje besiskleidžiančių socialinių profesijų – socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos – poreikio ir profesinio rengimo, ypač kai pradėtos kurti pirmosios socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos studijų programos. Tuo laikotarpiu kilo daugybė klausimų. Vienas jų – socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos profesijų integralumo problema. Yra nemažai šalių, kuriose socialinis darbas ir socialinė pedagogika yra dvi tos pačios monetos pusės – reikia tų pačių profesinių kompetencijų, tik rengiamasi dirbti su skirtingomis klientų grupėmis, akcentuojant skirtingus darbo metodus ir keliant skirtingus tikslus. Kai kuriose šalyse yra tik socialinis darbas – socialinės pedagogikos iš viso nėra. Lietuvoje plėtojamos abi šios profesijos, tačiau nepaisant gana dažnai lietuviškoje mokslinėje literatūroje pasitaikančių bandymų ignoruoti esminius ideologinius (vertybinius) skirtumus, ryškėja takoskyra tarp socialinio darbo ir socialinės pedagogikos profesijų socialinėje politikoje ir praktikoje.

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THE ROLE OF CHANGES OF SOCIAL PROCESSES
IN MANIFESTATION OF SOCIAL WORK IN LITHUANIA

Sonata Mačiulskytė

Summary

The transition from the state to the market economy caused unexpected social problems (poverty, unemployment, accommodation deficit, disbalance of equal opportunities, etc.). That had a direct effect on the most vulnerable social groups (the old and elderly, the disabled, large families, and children in risk families). Furthermore, these problems were made even more acute under the conditions of increasing crime rates, corruption, addictions, prostitution, and violation of children's rights. The same political, economic, and social changes revealed the disability of inherited communist (social) assistance mechanism to deal with extremely growing number and diversity of social problems. A *holist* conception of social problems changed former narrow fragmentary approach to a dealing with personal problems. The former (social) assistance practice was bankrupt in dealing with contemporary challenges; a need for new social professions, including social work, in Lithuania became evident. Social work extended its influence well beyond the field of institutionalized practices and offered more perspective approach to a human being.

A social work is studies in three aspects in scientific literature – as a practice, as studies, and as a science (Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, Ruškus, Večkienė, 2010, p. 39). The professional and scientific identity of social work is in the process of intensive formation (Gudliauskaitė-Godvadė et al 2009; Dirgėlienė, Večkienė 2009). Social work in Lithuania is a new, developing profession of social assisting. It is the profession, distinguishing for its wideness and poli-functionalism, its aim is to empower a person

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and family to self- relieve dealing with social problems and to strive for personal self-sufficiency, focussing on individual's inner and outer resources (Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė 2008, p. 1). Social work stimulates social changes and enables people and communities to participate actively solving with their social problems (Kvieskienė, Indrašienė 2008, p. 5).

A large group of Lithuanian and foreign authors explore various aspects of social work in Lithuania. A. Bagdonas (2001), V. Kavaliauskienė (2005), A. Vareikytė (2010) and other studied different aspects in social work development. P. Jusevičienė (2001) tried to reveal the complex essence of social work, influenced by a knowledge society, which was under intensive formation, and searched for a theory explaining the essence of social work. L. Gvaldaitė (2007) revealed a social work input to a human well being creation. However there are not so many of them, who expand their social work studies in the context of social changes which the country experienced in postcommunist transition. In the first book in Lithuania about social work, I. Lukoševičienė (1996) writes that, along with the state independence, essential social problems emerged along with the need for corresponding professional help (in Naujaniene, 2007, p. 9). R. Jurkuvienė (2003) also names that social work as a profession has uprisen and develops as a respond to a need (p. 18). B. Jordan (2001), who studied social work development in Central and Eastern Europe during the first decade of postcommunist transition, predicated that „social work in Lithuania as well as in other Central and Eastern countries was the product of a certain crisis period, i.e. transformation from communism to capitalism" (p. 1642). By appying theory of social systems, B. Švedaitė (2004) reveals the systemic attributes of social work in the context of public change, as well as postcommunist transformation.

W. Wiegand (2010), talking about supervision's up-to-date status in a society, stresses the necessity to assess its historical experience. Paraphrasing the author, it is necessary to upraise absolutely different tasks to supervision and social work in post-totalitarian societies, which are far from their development level in Western countries. Meanwhile, a public and professional demand always influenced the development of supervision and social work (Weigand, 2010, p. 15). Though a postcommunist transformation causality, which has long dominated in Lithuanian scientific, practical, political, and public discourse, is slowly shrinking, it is still relevant aspect to study. Having that in mind it becomes necessary to find out what the postcommunist transformation is, and what influence it makes on social work evolution and development in Lithuania. In order to evaluate adequately social work stand in a contemporary Lithuanian society, the article highlights the key features of the welfare state, where the Lithuanian social work develops. Herewith the article reviews the debates on social professions - social work and social pedagogy – in the period of their professionalization.

The object of the article is the peculiarities of postcommunist transformation, which influence social work development in Lithuania.

The aim of the article is to reveal the peculiarities of extreme postcommunist transformation, which influence social work development in Lithuania.

The tasks of the article:

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1) to overview shortly a transformational period in Lithuania;
2) to characterize essential of social welfare state, determining social work nature in Lithuania;
3) to describe conditions, under which social work profession develops in the country.

Used methods: theoretical analysis of literature.

Social work develops in Lithuania along with social changes and these processes make influence on its development. Social change is the essential attribute of all societies, however two contradictory processes are characteristic to the social change in Lithuania and other postcommunist Central and Eastern European countries. On the one hand, societies in these countries still experience the consequences of postcommunist transition. On the other hand, the postcommunist countries experience also global changes. The concept of *transformation* is used to describe both processes.

However, changes in Lithuania and other postcommunist Central and Eastern European countries extended the meaning of *transformation*. Transformational processes, characteristic to postcommunist countries, embodied essential changes in public spheres: political, social, economic, and technological processes. In addition, the transformation in Central and Eastern Europe is complex and, therefore, that reflects both significant changes and controversial trends. Strategic changes in abundance of Lithuanian economic, political and social spheres have led to complex social problems: social stratification, social polarization, impoverishment, trafficking, children prostitution, and labour emigration, etc.

Having in mind the fact that social professions in other countries performed such important functions as the restoration of impaired capacities, provision of individual and social resources, and prevention of social dysfunction of people, the need for a new type of a professional – a social worker – in Lithuania became evident.

Social work is a profession resulted from the state social policy. Social policy is closely related to the state historical experience, economic and technological development, ideology, value orientation, and culture.

A precondition for social policy development is establishment of corresponding political measures to offset social contradictions caused by the market economy. Social policy as an institutional means of social security network functions well only if it meets the specific public needs. At the same time social policy – the embodiment of social values and high level of public prosperity – creates the conditions to develop population's competitive socioeconomic behaviour.

A particular postcommunist welfare state builds up in Lithuania and other Central and Eastern European countries with wide enough, but low level social insurance programmes. The pattern implicates the features of liberal and conservative welfare models, but still has no a more explicit form.

Lithuania lacks an explicit welfare state model, what influences the development of social work in the country.

In that socioeconomic situation resulted from the postcommunist transformation, Lithuania adopted a strategy to use the social problem-solving techniques that have

been developed in most of the modern welfare states during recent decades: to create a stable social security system (social welfare) and to provide professional social services. It was a challenge for Lithuanian higher education system: to find particular models to train qualified professionals.

With regard to the need for new social professions and training, there have been many discussions, especially when there were first started to design study programmes in social work and social pedagogy. During this period, many questions arose. One of these questions was the problem of social work and social pedagogy professional integrity.

There are many countries where social work and social pedagogy are two sides of the same coin – share the same professional competence, but are trained to work with different client groups, and emphasize different methods and pose different goals. In some countries, there is only social work; social pedagogy is exercised only within social worker's roles. Both professions are developing in Lithuania; however, the ridge is emerging between social work and social pedagogy professions in social policy and practice.

PROFESSIONALIZATION OF SOCIAL WORK IN LITHUANIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

Sonata Mačiulskytė
Klaipėda University

Abstract

Today we have a set of results, showing the entrenchment of social work in the country: social work as a profession is included into Lithuanian Classification of Occupations, we have created a network of institutions, legal basis, developed a network of social works education institutions, clear system of qualification development, the mechanism of professional support is being developed, etc. It seems that we could support A. Bagdonas (2001) statement, that creation of social work as profession in Lithuania has been finished already. So what else can one say about the nature of social work's birth and development in Lithuania what has not already been said? The questions how the ideas, that guide professional practices in social work, come into being in Lithuania and how they acquire power; and what contradictions are displayed within discursive formation of Lithuanian social work development in different sets of sources, are discussed in this article. Trying to find the answers I base on constructivist perspective, which allows spotlighting the creating process of knowledge in social work.
KEY WORDS: social work, professionalization, social construction, discourse analysis method.

Anotacija

Šiandien turime rezultatų, kurie byloja apie socialinio darbo įsitvirtinimą šalyje: socialinis darbas, kaip profesija, įtrauktas į Lietuvos profesijų klasifikatorių, sukurtas institucijų tinklas, teisinė bazė, išplėtotas socialinių darbuotojų rengimo tinklas, aiški kvalifikacijos kėlimo sistema, kuriasi profesinės paramos mechanizmas ir kt. Atrodytų, kad socialinio darbo, kaip profesijos, kūrimasis Lietuvoje jau yra pasibaigęs. Taigi, ką dar būtų galima pasakyti apie socialinio darbo atsiradimo ir vystymosi prigimtį Lietuvoje, kas dar nepasakyta ar neparašyta? Straipsnyje keliami klausimai, kaip gimsta idėjos, kurios formuoja socialinį darbą, kaip profesiją, Lietuvoje, kaip jos įsitvirtina, kokie lietuviško socialinio darbo diskurso formavimosi prieštaravimai slypi įvairiuose šaltiniuose? Ieškodama atsakymų remiuosi konstruktyvistine perspektyva, kuri leidžia išryškinti žinių kūrimosi socialiniame darbe procesą.
PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: socialinis darbas, profesionalizacija, socialinis konstravimas, diskurso analizės metodas.

Introduction

The world practice reveals that social work profession develops as a response to the need (Jurkuvienė, 2003, p. 18). A. S. Chambon and other (1999) argue in the Introduction of *Reading Foucault for Social Work* that the social work profession is being challenged today to adapt to changing socio-cultural circumstances and to carve out a new societal niche. The cultural and economic effects of those changes cause the reformulation of the welfare states. Because the modern identity of social work has been tied closely to the various welfare systems, it is bound to respond to all forthcoming changes.

After the restitution of Independence, which inspired a lot of changes in economic, political and social spheres, the social problems instead of decreasing increased as new ones and even more complicated: from appearance of social layers, social polarisation and poverty (Mačiulskytė, 2003), to human trafficking, child prostitution, parents' emigration and left children, etc. (Jonutytė, 2007).

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The old (social) support practice became unable to cope with time conditioned challenges. These changes revealed the non-ability of inherited communist (social) support to solve rapidly increasing social problems. Personal problem started to be treated as the result of plenty of objective and subjective circumstances and it could be effectively solved only when you tried not to improve the consequences, but to remove the causes. The professionalization problem of solving social problems appeared. Let's analyse the process of social work becoming as profession in Lithuania.

L. Gvaldaitė (2007), presenting the report in conference dedicated to professional holiday of social workers, introduced the question – changing status of social work's profession. Basing on etymological meaning of the verb "profession" (*profiteri* in Latin) she formulates the following definition of professional worker: "this is such a worker, who shows, that he is properly prepared to perform a certain activity and is competent in performing it" (ibid, p. 144). Social work as profession started to take shape in 1990 in Lithuania after the restitution of Independence (Kavaliauskienė, 2005, p. 230). In the first book in Lithuania about social work I. Lukoševičienė (1996) wrote that, along with the state independence, essential social problems emerged along with the need for corresponding professional help (cited in Naujaniene, 2007, p. 9). B. Jordan (2001) studied the development of social work in Middle and East Europe during the first decade of post-communistic transformations. According to him, in Lithuania as in other countries of Middle and East Europe, „social work is the product of a certain crisis period that is the period of transformation from communism to capitalism". J. Pivorienė (2003) stated, that social work in Lithuania formally began from social work training. It is necessary to note that from the beginning of Independence two types of social professions were developed in Lithuania: social pedagogy and social work. The rapid development of social work professionalization was noticed during the last decade, at the same time as far as social pedagogy was concerned – it's influence reduced and development slowed down. Social work, with the accompanying requirements for professional skills, fills the gaps in professional skills that are characteristic of social pedagogy (as for example V. Indrašienė, G. Kvieskienė, O. Merfeldaitė [2007] indicate the lack of team work in social educational help). The educational aspect is important in social work as well, although not as important as in social pedagogy; it is analyzed by I. Dirgėlienė (2010). She states that social work practice integrates those educational elements which contribute to the client's empowerment, and together with the psychological and social work elements creates effective integrated support methods. Meanwhile, social pedagogy, according to A. Juodaitytė (2007), survives the crisis, caused by a certain stagnation, which the author describes as non-conscious or not enough conscious evaluation of major social changes, taking place in recent decades.

When the third decade of Independence started, we can state that we have a number of results that show the entrenchment of social work in the country: social work as a profession is included in *The Lithuanian Classification of Occupations*, the network of institutions and legal framework are developed, the social workers training network is developed, clear training system, professional support mechanism are in the stage of development, etc. If we narrow the concept of profession as a

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phenomenon to the identification of just mentioned elements, it is possible to maintain A. Bagdonas (2001) statement that creation of social work as the profession in Lithuania has already finished and nothing more can be said here. This periodization of social work in Lithuania, made by A. Bagdonas (2001), is supported by a number of Lithuanian scientists: V. Kavaliauskienė (2005), I. Leliūgienė, E. Giedraitienė, L. Rupšienė (2006), R. Naujaniene (2007), A. Vareikytė (2010) and others.

So, rephrasing L. Epstein (1999), what can one say about the nature of social work's birth and development in Lithuania what has not already been said? L. Epstein (1999, p. 7), declaring loyalty to Foucauldian approach in her research, argues that something much more meaningful needs to be understood about social work because it is a large and impressive social institution that has spread its influence widely, but still everybody understands it vaguely.

Foreign scientists who worked in Lithuania during the first decade of Independence and contributed to the development of social work in the country (Ritchie, 2003; Tunney, Kulys, 2004 and others), evaluated this process from the perspective of their experience. If we base on foreign authors, to them the question of social work as profession is not answered even after one hundred years of discussions (if the starting point was the question raised by A. Flexner in 1915 whether social work was a profession). Extremely intense debate concerning social work professionalization issues in the West was going on in the 20th century (6th – 8th decades) (Greenwood, 1957; Bartlett, 1970, cited in Kavaliauskienė, 2005; Baird, 1972), but even in the turn of the centuries L. C. Johnson (2001) wrote about the ongoing debate in social work as profession subject, naming the absence of "clear and comprehensive definition" as the main reason of this debate (cited in Kavaliauskienė, 2005, p. 231).

J. C. Baird (1972) formulated the concept of social work, and he named the choice of occupational criteria as the key measure when making the decision concerning naming this activity the profession or just the semi-profession. In this article I keep to the statement formulated by W. Lorenz (cited in Shardlow & Doel, 2002, p. 11), that the nature of professional activity in each country is based on the historical and cultural context of the country and is conveyed through its political, economic and social system, i.e. constructed and reconstructed when all these conditions are changing, then, there is a process, but not the result, and not the phenomenon, and I analyze the elements constructing the profession, which help to reveal the social work professionalization in Lithuania.

I refer to constructivist perspective in this research, what allows me to reveal the creating process of knowledge in social work. Self-questioning is not new to the profession (Chambon & Irving, 1999), especially to the intellectual wing based on Foucauldian approach. Foucault's fundamental suspiciousness to taken-for-granted realities had affected a number of social work scholars in Western countries, who developed a Foulcaudian approach in social work research. A. Irving (1999, p. 26) warns that "things are not simply as they are, they come to be; we come to be as we are along with them". On purpose to unravel the origins of various social work practice ideas they create what they call 'histories of the present', ignoring the dominant position of historians in creating and interpreting History. Within a historical perspective, H. Specht and

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M. E. Courtney (1994) challenged social work to reclaim its historical roots. Within a Foucauldian perspective, V. E. Cree (1995) examined how administrative requirements intrinsically shaped the daily practice of social workers. She studied British agency's archives. H. Goldstein (1996) examined the archives of children's institution in order to reveal a connection between personal testimony and institutional history. There are a number of published collections, where are selected the works of the most famous representatives of the approach: for example, A. S. Chambon, A. Irving (1994), A. S. Chambon, A. Irving, L. Epstein (1999). R. Jurkuvienė (2003), R. Naujanienė (2007), N. P. Večkienė (2007) and others apply the constructivist approach in Lithuanian social work research; however there is not much research.

The aim of the article is to reveal the construction of social work as profession in Lithuania.

I raise specific research questions to reveal the construction of social work in Lithuania:

1) How the ideas that guide professional practices in social work come into being in Lithuania, and how they acquire power?
2) What contradictions are displayed within discursive formation of Lithuanian social work development in different sets of sources?

The object of this article is the construction of social work as profession in Lithuania.

Research methods: literature analysis, discourse analysis method is applied to reveal the construction of social work as profession in Lithuania.

1. Social work as a social construct

The main theoretical assumption in this research is that social work as a profession is socially constructed; social work practice does not exist as the phenomenon, but is created via an interaction process between the parties involved in it. It's interesting, that postmodernism and social construction perspectives were started to be applied in social work practice researches only in the last decade of 20th century (see, for example, Howe, 1994; Parton, 1994, 2002; Hall, 1997; Leonard, 1997; Meinert et al., 1998; Chambon et al., 1999; Jokinen et al., 1999; Pease & Fook, 1999; Fawcett et al., 2000; Healy, 2000; Parton & O'Byrne, 2000; Taylor & White, 2000). Overall, the turning point in relation to social work, took place around 1980, moving from positivism (searching for one correct answer) to constructivism (not trying to seek for the monopoly of truth) (Pivorienė, 2003, p. 38). In addition, the development of social construction theoretical perspectives in global social work researches is essentially the same and is caused by global social changes and increased diversified – personal, social, professional – feeling of insecurity. This theoretical perspective quickly took root in Lithuanian social work research. R. Naujanienė (2010) wrotes, that social construction perspective offered a critical look at the person as a free and independent person, paying attention to the social, cultural, political, economic, environmental influences on human functioning (Ibid., p. 66). A number of other social work

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researchers in Lithuania links the appearance and the development of social work profession with the response to the social needs, characteristic to the most recent country-specific historical development phase (see Lukoševičienė, 1996; Bagdonas, 2001; Jurkuvienė, 2003; Naujaniene, 2007; Večkienė, 2007, etc.).

The main idea of social construction is that the reality, which people describe in words, is socially constructed. P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann (1999) argue that reality is socially constructed, so it becomes relatively subjective. R. Naujanienė (2010) suggests that though subjectivity as well as subject is defined in many ways, this is the basic idea of social construction. Every social problem thus consists of *objective condition* and *subjective definition*. The objective condition is a verifiable situation which can be checked as to existence and magnitude by impartial and trained observers. The subjective definition is the awareness of certain individuals that the condition is a threat to certain cherished values (Fuller & Meyers, 1941, p. 320). B. Cooper (2001, p. 91) argues that subjective definitions are the different *takes* that different people bring to social situations. A range of different contexts and cultures available at any one time and place set different *takes* to social situation what suppose a plethora of different meanings, knowledge and truths available, and many experiences and self-identity. Ethnomethodology, which conceptual heritage has contributed to the development of social construction perspective, emphasizes, that the reality is constructed by reflectively using language and interaction.

The processes involved in the social construction of reality happen through networks of relationships. These networks are made of individual people where each individual embodies a complex set of unique perspectives (Cooper, 2008), and through interactions with other individuals construct ways to understand the world, as well as categories and concepts about it (Naujaniene, 2007). Global experience is understood as composed of the meanings that are given to things. From the social construction perspective the meanings are created by the context (Gubrium, Holstein, 1999; cited in Naujanienė, 2010, p. 67). G. H. Mead's (1962) conceptual position played an important role in the development of social construction perspective; according to him, people respond to social stimuli not mechanically, but using their inner mental world and subjective experience, reflect on what a particular social environment of the stimulus means for them, in this way assigning meanings to those stimuli. Assigning meanings to stimuli people subjectively modulate the behaviour that they think is suitable for particular situation. This assumption of symbolic interactionism helps to explain the relatedness of social relations and cultural environment (Layder, 1994). R. Naujanienė (2010) developing the question of context, bases on a number of authors (Burr, 1995; Gubrium, Holstein, 1999) and formulates the idea that socially constructed reality depends on the time and the place, where the reality is manifested, and the ways, in which people get the knowledge about the world together, have historical and cultural specificity.

Historical and cultural specificity can be developed at various levels. Macro-level analysis highlights the past Lithuania's historical stage of development the direct witnesses of which are we ourselves and which is rich with social context that constitutes the opportunity to observe the birth of new social institution and

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development. Meso-and micro-level observations allow us to recognize the historical and cultural features of the profession birth and of a subjective personal relationship with the social environment.

N. P. Večkienė (2007), applying the theory of the social reality construction for social work research, uses D. Bell's (2003) idea, which states that the society seeks to determine the system of meanings through which people relate to the world and largely human character and the model of his social relations is determined by the type of work performed by him. Through the social work's perspective, the interconnection with the world is revealed through the elements of individual social work processes, such as the relation of social worker and the client. The meanings, significance, importance, implications, and values, that a social worker places upon a client and surrounding social circumstances, make a social worker's own world-view of his (her) role in relationship with the client. In other words, the processes of assessment are themselves increasingly recognised as constituting an intervention. Furthermore, B. Cooper (2008, p. 91) argues, "it is almost an interpersonal impossibility for there not to be changes". These processes are essentially socially and personally constructive (Parton, O'Byrne, 2000; Paris, Epting, 2004), and thereby constitute a reality for those involved in construing those realities. Everyday practice creates social reality of social work practice existing in particular society at particular time that society understands as canon. Regularly occurring events consist of habituated activities. In such a way social work can be perceived as an agreed set of understandings about the world that is an accepted and stable social reality (Berger, Luckmann, 1971, cited in Payne 2006, p. 139).

Social work is created by defining it; those involved in everyday social work interaction create social work practice naming it and giving it a meaning. Thus, the social construction takes place through human interaction under language assistance. We are sustained, or constructed, as individuals in our roles and relationships through *talk*. Furthermore, B. Cooper (2008, p. 91) argues that *talk* helps us to locate, negotiate, and maintain ourselves and our relationships within a reality that is *social*. Language is one of the main sites in which our social identities are negotiated (Humphries, 2008). So communication and negotiation in social work practice are very important assumptions, actuating change. A focus on patterns in language in use, as B. Humphries (2008, p. 122) emphasizes, reveals "the set or family of terms that are related to particular topics or activities, and the ways meanings are created or eroded as part of on-going social change. It describes this as the employment of 'interpretive repertoires' and is interested in social and cultural contexts rather than particular interactions. (...) lengthy utterances, phrases, clauses or even single words are used methodically in everyday interaction to achieve particular ends".

"Language is not innocent", as would M. MacLure (2003) state in her work. Language is not a neutral medium or vehicle for providing access to the world, or to thought (ibid, p. 180-181). B. Cooper (2008, p. 93) points out that language is the very one which makes up the foundation, builds blocks and complex structures and processes of social work. The author refers to M. Gregory and M. Holloway (2005) argument that language helps to 'shape' general sense of professional identity, and influence general understanding of what it is done when is 'done' social work: "It is

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what is said; why it is said; and when and to whom, that conveys the message and the meaning of social work relationships and agreements." Looking at particular conversation we can understand how a particular life (or lives) is constructed by what is said (Shotter, 1993). Language is not just a verbal representation of reality, as R. Naujanienė (2010) notices, basing on J. Wetheller and M. Potter (1987), it affects the functioning of the human (ibid., p. 68). A number of authors (Layder, 1994; Cooper, 2008; Naujanienė, 2010) propose to use language and other symbolic forms for the analysis of professional experience.

Active construction of meanings through language and other symbolic measures and multidimensional reality creates the assumptions to talk about deconstruction. This is the approach presented by J. Derrida in the middle of 7th decade of the 20th century. One of the most important propositions of deconstruction is that our dealings with/in the world are *unrelievedly textual* (MacLure, 2003, p. 179). However the textuality, in deconstructive sense, is not just a linguistic phenomenon or just a game of words. It carries an ethical and a political charge, since, as M. MacLure (2003) comments on M. Shapiro's (2001) position, that deconstruction has the power to show how every social order rests on a forgetting of the exclusion practices through which one set of meanings has been institutionalised and various other possibilities have been marginalised. Deconstruction as text analysis method allows revealing internal contradictions and antagonism, in what is said or written (Naujanienė, 2010, p. 69).

Deconstruction is only one element within broad intellectual landscape of post-structuralism. M. Foucault's works provide multiple sites from which to view the impersonal forces that play roles in construction of what a client is, what a social worker is, the rules for their interaction and how their interaction is defined. This problematization uses Foucauldian holism and poststructuralists' views (Dreyfus & Rabonow, 1983) as multiple sights of possibility; one perspective or possibility is not viewed as more advanced, accurate, or sophisticated than the other as would be expected in a linear construction of truth oriented theory (Cannella, 1999, p. 37–38).

Language helps to create discourses, and this is Foucault's contribution to the intellectual development of post-structuralism. Discourses facilitate and limit, enable and constrain what can be said, by whom, where and when. They may be defined as sets of statements that construct objects and array of subject positions (Parker, 1992). These constructions, in turn, make available certain ways of seeing the world and certain ways of being in the world. N. Parton (2002, p. 241) states that discourses are structures of knowledge claims and practices through which we understand, explain and decide things. In constituting agents, they also define obligations and determine the distribution of responsibilities and authorities for different categories of person, such as social workers, their clients, other officials and so on. A. S. Chambon (1999, p. 52–53) maintains that clients do not exist outside the historical activity of social work; they are the result of that activity. The starting point is not inside the client but inside social work. Discourses offer subject positions which, when taken up, have implications for subjectivity and experience (Willig, 2004, p. 171). B. Humphries (2008, p. 124–125) reminds us a Foucauldian approach, according which discourses give events meaning, i.e. subjects exist meaningfully within the discourses about

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them. Moreover these discourses are historically and culturally specific, produced, regulated by the disciplinary techniques of particular societies and times. For M. Foucault (2005), discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which we speak, and he argues that we are difference, that our reason is the difference of discourses, our history the difference of times, ourselves the difference of masks.

L. Epstein (1999) notices that M. Foucault's works are of importance to the practice professions because there are studied only ideas as they exist in actual practice, and there are studied practices as they have been played out and as they created the ideas associated with the practices. "By playing around with these ideas, we get hold of a framework for considering the nature of the social sciences, the nature of the helping disciplines, and the nature of their practices", as she used to say (Ibid., p. 13).

Moreover M. Foucault has brought together into a single fold the two poles of the social work profession that are traditionally kept apart, the micro- and macrolevels of the person and the environment. A. S. Chambon (1999, p. 56) points out that M. Foucault has made visible the linkages between person and society: how industrial practices generate social identities. It opens new ways of understanding. Further the author continues the analysis of the Foucault's ideas' application in social work research by pointing out that Foucault's works are characterized by their close examination of practices and unearthing of daily details, what is highly compatible with social work (Ibid., p. 60). By examining concrete practices in their most details, social workers question institutional mechanisms and gain a new understanding. A. S. Chambon (1999) refers to M. Richmond's (1917) ideas and states that detailed documentation is necessary to build a case. Social workers do more than inquire in their everyday practice. They sift through evidence in clients' lives. They assess, weigh, and discard sets of information. As they collect data, they simultaneously draw inferences and interpret their findings.

From the social constructivism perspective, social work can be understood as a discourse which socially constructs subjects of social work. The social work discourse defines what a client is, what a social worker is, and the rules for their interaction (Naujaniene, 2007, p. 25). In *Archaeology of Knowledge* (2005), M. Foucault proposes that most discourses are governed by rules and principles of exclusion that include prohibition, power, ritual, the privileged right to speak, the appeal to reason, and the will to truth. Rephrasing G. S. Cannella (1999, p. 38), we know that in a social work community we are not free to say just anything; some ideas and practices have been excluded. Professional competence in social work has been shaping within the assumptions that have grounded social work discourse, to name a few:

1) A client and a social worker are the main agents in a social work setting.
2) A need for a certain competence.
3) Help in facing personal challenges and creating fully functioning life in society.
4) Multi-faced activity (nature of social work).
5) Belief in the ability to empower a person to deal with personal problems.
6) Performance analysis (reflection).

2. Research methodology

I reveal social work's professionalization by analyzing elements constructing the profession: the historical social context (due to the limited scope the article does not develops this aspect; more widely this aspect is analyzed in my previous articles: Mačiulskytė, Dirgėlienė, 2010; Mačiulskytė, 2011), social work practice, scientific research, training of social workers and professional language.

There is presented a research in the article which is based on Foucauldian discourse analysis method. As I. Parker (2003) describes, discourse analysis treats the social world as a text, or rather as a system of texts which can be systematically 'read' by a researcher to lay open the social process that lie within them. Starting point of discourse analysis method is acknowledgement of the diversity of meaning; the different, sometimes contradictory ways of speaking that govern what we do (and who we can be). Meaning is continually changing (it is dynamic), and language is composed of many 'languages' or discourses (Ibid., p. 92–93).

Foucauldian discourse analysis method captures a historical perspective and explores the ways in which 'languages' or discourses have been changing over time, and how this may have been shaping historical subjectivities (Willig, 2004). However, applied historical perspective is not understood from any linear chronological narration of dates and personalities, books written, organisations started, and cultural influences noted. That history has to be discovered, narrated, and interpreted. The origins need to be understood because the myths have made important events and thoughts vanish from consideration (Epstein, 1999, p. 15).

Discourse analysis method doesn't aim to account for every aspect of a phenomenon but purposefully chooses to trace selective patterns and collects only those sets of features associated with them:

There can be no question here of writing the history of the different disciplinary institutions with all their individual differences. I simply intend to map on a series of examples some of the essential techniques that most easily spread from one to another (Foucault, 1995; cited in Chambon, 1999, p. 60).

The method pays attention to the relationship between discourses and institutions. Here, *languages* or discourses are not conceptualized simply as ways of speaking or writing, as C. Willig (2004, p. 171) notices. They are bound with institutional practices, i.e. with ways of organising, regulating and administering social life. Discourse analysis method is suitable for detailed practice analysing; M. Foucault himself has focused his studies and analysis on the details of practices. He has made no conventional distinctions between the theory and practice of the helping disciplines, as L. Epstein (1999) likes to call all disciplines, which purpose – to help people, including social work, – rolling the two into one. Foucault applied the discourse analysis method to examine instead practices and local circumstances: not institutions, but institutional practices; not ideology but statements; not the "subject" but the embodied subject (Chambon, 1999, p. 56). Thus, while discourses legitimate and reinforce existing social and institutional practices, these practices, in turn, also support and validate the discourses. For example, being positioned as 'the client'

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within a social care discourse means that one's living conditions, and life in general, become objects of legitimate interest to social workers, that they may be studied, tested, and invaded in the process of social services' provision which forms part of the practice of social work and its institutions (see also Willig, 2004, p. 172).

Discourse analysis is concerned with language and language use; however its interest in language takes it beyond the immediate contexts within which language may be used by speaking subjects. Usually the method applies questions about the relationship between discourses and how people think or feel (subjectively), what they may do (practices) and the material conditions within which such experiences may take place.

All these aspects of discourse analysis method are highly comparible with close examination of social work professionalization.

Performing the research I based on the provision formed by Lithuanian and foreign authors that modern social work didn't exist up to 1990 in Lithuania. The appearance of social work in Lithuania is associated with the early independence period of 1990–1992 (Ritchie, 2003; Jurkuvienė, 2003; Tunney, Kulys, 2004).

Since life is *text-sutured*, as A. Luke (1995) likes to say, every waking moment is caught up in engagement with text of some kind: from children's story to political speech, I have referred to *texts* when carrying out my research: policy documents, legislation, speeches, scientific articles, working papers, and so on. The documents, chosen for analysis in this research, covering the period from the first act related to social work in Lithuania, which came into force in 1992, till 2012, when *The Social Work Studies Field Description* was announced. The scientific output – articles, books, project material – which deals with the problem of social work in Lithuania and which was issued during that period is also analyzed. These sources reveal the social work profession's birth and development. Those 'texts' reveal Lithuanian social work discourse represented in circumscriptions what it is possible to say, know and do, but also establishments what kind of person one is entitled (obliged) to *be* in order to operate those *texts*. The point here is that words accumulate different resonances according to the institutions and discourses from which they emanate, and the institutional and social location of those who are making or critiquing them (MacLure, 2003, p. 16). As M. Bakhtin (1981) puts it, "all words have the "taste" of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life" (cited in MacLure, 2003).

3. Social work and the development of social regulation

Social work's role in the welfare state is a special one. As N. Parton (1999, p. 112) notices, social work mainly provides an important but ambiguous strategy to enable "government at a distance" or indirect methods of social regulation, to take place. Developed welfare state creates and maintains the social work to solve all unusual cases (differing from accepted norm). In this respect, social workers perform the function of social control normalization, because they have to restore the client's ability to live according to usual norms of society (Gvaldaitė, Švedaitė, 2005, p. 19–

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20). "Government at a distance" creates the image of maintaining autonomous free individual who is governed at the same time. This is a normal social regulation tool in a developed welfare state.

To talk about *govermentality* and institutionalization it always involves a power issue. Power in the discourse of social work can't be pinpointed, and thus separated and isolated from public welfare institutions, such as social agencies, common lodging-houses, foster homes, also schools, hospitals, prisons, and it is ubiquitous as a productive factor (Andersen, 2003, p. 3). However, power, in the Foucauldian sense, is not something that one person or powerful group 'has' and wealds against weaker opponents. Power is diffuse, circulating in a capillary fashion around and through institutions, reaching "into the very grain" of those who are made subjects through their involvement in discourse – social workers, clients, therapists, claimants, and so on (MacLure, 2003, p. 176). N. A. Andersen (2003, p. 3) adds that, for example, criminality and illness are discursive positions, which are established with the intent to control.

The growth of social work in Lithuania is interrelated with the development of social interventions, associated with the establishment of the welfare state. Both the one and the other is developing consistently creating and improving its instruments in historical and cultural context. Major Lithuanian socio-cultural context feature is obviously post-communism. Post-communist mentality in the early stage of the welfare state development manifested in passive labor policies; by the provision of social services at home for usual for Communist times client groups; monetary contribution-based social support; shabby social services package. Social care quality for a long time was measured only by technical parameters (square meters given per person, the number of bed clothing sets given per year and so on). Personal satisfaction with an emphasis on the quality of life was forgotten (Social Report 2007–2008, 2008).

Post-communist mentality gives priority to direct power use. That responds essentially not only to the actions of social workers, but to social work methods too. Solving the problem of families at risk as a social phenomenon the discourse of exclusion was prevailing for a long time: risk families were included in "black" list of social services, often limiting parents' right to children; children were given to custodian care, more than every third child was taken to institutional custody. Thus, within a relatively short period of time the number of social risk families rose to 18,672 with 42,820 children growing in them. Institutionalized care created the conditions to flourish old social problems and for emergence of new ones (Social Report 2000, 2001). One half of the problems were associated with the child and with social risk family: the work with the child starts when a child enters care institution. Care institutions in official discourse for some time are seen as educational institutions where teachers apply intensive educational measures to correct the socialization *mistakes* of the care institution inhabitants. Educational discourse sends the message that strict education measures and discipline must help the child to reintegrate into the society and to ensure its continued positive social development. It is believed that education should help to solve other social problems of the child. Meanwhile, the main source of problems appearing in social risk families did not receive the attention

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they deserved: parents and foster parents were punished by limiting their parental rights, but in general nobody worked with them.

A mature (developed) social work practice was hardly possible. People working in the social sphere – former teachers, engineers, technologists, chemists, etc. – had to deal with new social problems here and now, on the basis of personal qualities and life experience, which they gained nowhere else but in the Communist political system. The lack of professional social workers, the first steps approaching to the creation of the welfare state, accompanied by an inherited post-communist mentality, which had formed the view that the political system and social guarantees itself protected the individual from social problems (Leliūgienė et al., 2006, p. 64), and that it was possible to solve the existing problems by cash benefits, did not allow the social work to be able *to govern at a distance*. Some social processes were controlled with great difficulty, and some – out of control completely.

In a Foucauldian approach, meanings of social work practice are produced by power/knowledge configurations, as these are embedded in and constructed of different social institutions. Besides, power is invested with knowledge. *Governance at a distance* approach started to be noticed when professional social workers started to enter the labor market: the variety of social services expanded, the spectrum of social groups, entering the social work field, also expanded. For example, in probation system the opportunities are expanded for persons, who have convicted offenses against society, not only to be punished by restricting their freedom, but the alternative forms of punishment are also considered. Of course, the element of punishment remains; but the alternative measures to imprisonment start being applied. The attitudes and working methods with social risk families start to change: beginning to work in an integrated way, focusing the means of intervention to the work with the whole family, trying to keep children in biological families. Since 2002 when the NGO child day care centers' programme was started till 2010 the number of social risk families has decreased by 42 percent, and the number of children growing in them decreased by 40 percent (Social Report 2010–2011, 2011). This decline is caused by a significant extension of the range and the volume of social services in the municipalities, by child day care centers' activities and by changing the very concept of social risk family. The expansion of non-steady-state social services development has economic and social regulation effect. As N. Parton (1999) would say, referring to N. Rose and P. Miller (1992), the growth and strengthening of welfare state reflects a particular form of government through which a variety of political forces seek to secure social and economic objectives by linking up a plethora of networks with aspirations to know, programme and transform the social field (Ibid., p. 113).

Has the post-communism disappeared from Lithuanian social work in 2012? No, it still exists in social work practice, but people learned to hide it, as they understand that the post-communist practice is contrary to the official discourse. It is still noticed by foreigners and the people, who are outside the social work practice. Especially post-communist discourse is viable in continuing social work institutions (e.g. various custody homes).

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Professional knowledge is the diffuse power what creates visible through social agencies and invisible but tight enough net to regulate particular groups' behaviour. Social and governmental effect expands the field of professional domination. Particular forms of knowledge, characteristic to a particular profession, are more sophisticated, more informed, not appropriate for those who are outside it. The knowledge of particular groups/persons are excluded and labelled inferior to others, whether because of being viewed as having less experience or dependent, less well read, new to a field, and on and on.

4. Disciplinarity of social work

For social work to operate quietly and in an uncontested way, it requires a supportive social mandate and an internal professional confidence and coherence (Parton, 1999). B. Pease and J. Fook (1999, p. 14) specify that social work practice confines social workers to a particular knowledge base. That knowledge base can be achieved both *via* special system of training and long practice. To talk about special training involves a discipline issue.

Discipline trains, individualizes regiments and makes docile and obedient subjects (Macdonell, 1986; cited in MacLure, 2003, p. 176). M. Foucault (1998) used to say, that "discipline is a principle which controls the production of discourse. It sets the frames of discourse by using identity's playfulness, which gained the shape of constant actualization of the rules" (Ibid., p. 24). N. Parton (1999) notices that social work as discipline institutes a regime of power exercised through disciplinary mechanisms and the stipulation of norms for human behaviour (Ibid., p. 107; see also G. S. Cannella [1999], she writes about disciplinary technologies in education). Social work is also inextricably linked to the disciplines that regularize and normalize the conduct of those who are brought within the ambit of those institutions. This leads to particular way for acting, "to claim resources, to control or to be controlled" (Burr, 1995; cited in Naujaniene, 2007, p. 26). The control element in social work is revealed through *a need for a certain competence*, entrenched by the systems of licensing and training, and the life under the conditions of constant changes requires special preparation.

Professional development goes on with the assistance of formal education. Speaking about social work as a discipline the studies (*education*) is being emphasized, speaking about social work as the profession and practical activity vocational training (*training*) is being emphasized (Pivorienė, 2003, p. 38). Pivorienė (2003; see also Alifanovienė, 2002; Jurkuvienė, 2003; Naujaniene, 2007; etc.) generally takes the position that social work in Lithuania formally began with social work training. V. Kavaliauskienė (2005) states that aspirations to professionalize social work is a natural process of a liberal market economy, and this process is greatly influenced by people, who are interested in working in the field of social work and make their living from this activity.

Education of social workers in Lithuania was intensively studied for a decade since the launch of the first re-training programme at Vytautas Magnus University. The emergence and formation of a new discipline in Lithuania caused a lot of discussions:

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What is social work? What knowledge, skills and character qualities are necessary for future social worker? How to train a professional social worker? it is obvious that if we lack the experience in this field we shall take it, but from whom? Which country's experience is the most effective in Lithuanian context? And, in general, is there a need to train people for such activities, if the social worker is essentially providing the same assistance in solving everyday social problems, which naturally provides family members, neighbours, religious community or random people who do not have special education and do that free of charge (Švedaitė, 2004)? On the other hand the post-communist inheritance and the uncertainty resulting from it were still annoying: in 7th - 8th decades of the 20th century there appeared people organizing children's after-school activities, adult's after-work activities, people working in the spheres of culture, health, law enforcement, trade unions; all this was done by people of different occupations (Alifanovienė, 2002), so was there a need for a separate profession after all when these functions could be performed by anyone, and what could be seen at that time in the country's social welfare system?

The need to find the answers to these questions encouraged Lithuanian education institutions of different levels to join into networks, to initiate international projects (such as, for example, the Tempus project "Social Educators / Social Workers Interdisciplinary Education and Training", 1996–1999; Leonardo da Vinci programme "The Standard of Social Work Training for Colleges", 1998–2000; Phare, the Netherlands and Norway programme" Social Work Training programme in Utena Medical School", 1996–1998; etc.), and that allowed to "investigate" the experience of various Western countries, mainly of Western Europe in social work *education* and *training* field. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour invited foreign experts who helped to investigate the field of social work in Lithuania (Helsinki and Lapland Universities funded project "Training of Social Workers in Lithuania", 1996–1998). A lot of scientists from abroad, especially from the United States, used to work in Vytautas Magnus University during the first decade of social workers' education; in addition to regular studies Social Work Institute organized *Summer School* for local social work students, lecturers and practitioners. Students, teachers, professionals exchange under the Socrates / Erasmus programme, scientific-methodical literature items also contributed to the professionalization of social work process. In such a way the network of social workers training in higher education institutions has been developed in Lithuania and complemented by the licensing and training institutions, but still there are great differences among the schools that are teaching social work. On one hand higher schools prepared and implemented the programmes of social work training having experience in various fields (e.g., special education, management, law) (Pivorienė, 2003; Leliūgienė et al., 2006). At the beginning social work lecturers were and student research projects evaluated the specialists of various social sciences, not social work professionals. Scientific knowledge of sociology, education, medicine, psychology and other disciplines have been shaping social work professional identity. On the other hand, this is related with the situation that social work conceptual positions, content, and practice is imported, i.e. social work schools in different higher schools have developed their educational curricula with the support of experts from

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different countries: mainly from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, The Netherlands, and Scandinavian countries. However, disciplinarity constructs invisible power, silently creating individuals as bodies to be controlled and evaluated. The need to agree on certain standards for training of social workers emerged. However, *The Lithuanian Association of Schools of Social Work* still is not founded for possibility to maintain systematic dialog.

Another question which caused a lot of discussions concerning the education of social workers during first decade was related to competition of two social care professions for recognition. The seed of social work in Lithuania grew up not in empty social assistance field. The discipline of social pedagogy started the conquest of social regulation niche in Lithuania somewhat earlier. Its goal is to help individuals and groups to overcome barriers of social exclusion, to provide them with social and educational assistance in overcoming the consequences of socio-educational – educational separation (Juodaitytė, 2007, p. 76). In the most general sense, the goals of social work and social pedagogy activity substantially overlap. It is hard for social work to compete only having the basis of more practical activity, while social pedagogy uses the results of education science (Leliūgienė et al., 2006). However, nowadays social work developes rapidly, supported by the growing and becoming stronger community of professionals. Important assumption is namely the lack of traditional scientific heritage. Social pedagogy constrained by traditional scientific heritage lacks flexibility and its development has slowed down or even stopped.

Scientific substantiation is perceived as a key element in social work education, thus Lithuanian representatives of social work from the very birth of social work are active to ensure a favorable environment for the scientific foundation for social work development: specialized scientific periodicals are published (Mykolas Romeris University publishes *Social Work* (since 2002), Vilnius University – *STEPP: social theory, empiricy, policy and practice* (since 2001), Vytautas Magnus University – S*ocial Work. Practices and Methods* (since 2008). To tell the truth, the representatives of social work still fail to achieve that social work to be recognized as a separate research field in Lithuanian scientific disciplines and fields classification: this question is being temporarily solved when training social work field doctors abroad (University of Lapland, Finland).

The efforts to maintain the social work and social pedagogy as separate support providing occupations reflected in the preparation of individual specialists' training standards (*Social Worker Training Standard* (2000, 2008), *The Social Work Study Field Description* (2012), *Social Educator Training Standards* (2002, 2008)); individual qualification requirements (*Social Educator's Job Description* [Project] (2001), *Social Workers and Social Workers' Assistants Qualification Requirements* (2006). There were long discussions about social work and social pedagogy identity and perspectives, and finally I. Leliūgienė et al. (2006, p. 71) stated that "the provision that the social worker and social educator are integral and complementing each other professions established itself in specialists training". It was a kind of cease-fire announcement, which allowed at that time to focus on social assistance occupations strengthening by cooperation.

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D. Schon (1991) emphasizes that in order to achieve good professional results it is necessary to have, continuous practice renewal and deep reflection of practice (cited in Naujanienė, 2010, p. 65). The tradition of social work professionalization through strengthening the internal capacity of the profession came to Lithuania from abroad. Supervision as the method of professional consulting has become an important element for ensuring the quality of social work, and helping to construct a clearly recognizable identity of the social work profession.

5. Social work professionalization and language

Discourse analysis study draws attention to the language. The language is seen as constructive – as actually creating, negotiating and changing meaning. In general, discourse is understood as a configuration of language that produces certain outcomes (Humphries, 2008, p. 120–121). N. Parton (2002) argues that because there is a range of different contexts, cultures and discourses available at any time and place, there is also a plethora of different meanings, knowledge and truths available and many experiences and interpretations of self and identity. The language does not simply reflect or mirror objects, events and categories existing in the social and natural world – it actively *constructs* those things. Words do not simply describe things; they *do* things and thus have social and political meaning (Ibid., p. 241). Lengthy utterances, phrases, clauses or even single words are used methodologically in everyday interaction to achieve particular ends (Humphries, 2008).

The development of social work as a profession, discipline, and science is reflected in changing professional language used in everyday social work practice, in policy documents, in legislation, in speech, and so on. Colloquial, often stigmatizing concepts are being changed into concepts carrying positive information about a person or situation, or at least into neutral concepts. New interpellations of social problems constructed by language gradually penetrate and change post-communist societal mentality. The official ideology denied the existence of social phenomenon – poverty, unemployment, disability, addiction, infectious diseases, and others phenomena – in Communist totalitarian state: the homeless and the unemployed were punished, the disabled and people with addiction, infectious diseases were institutionalized, isolated, and forcibly treated. However, the applied measures did not and could not be effective because only the drawbacks were seen as the objects of these measures. The official, as well as the colloquial speech was full of expressions such as *tramp, prisoner, alcoholic, cripple, druggy, phthysisist, anti-social, dysfunctional family,* and so on. The political systems are changing faster than the stable value systems such as mentality. During the first decade of the Independence, as well as of social work in Lithuania there were a lot of such concepts in interpersonal communication, in social work services' provision, in policy documents, in legislation, in speeches, everywhere.

The changes start running up after 2000: the attitude towards the *other* changes significantly together with the language and vice versa. Gradually the term "cripple" is changed into "disabled" in professional social work language, later – in the official language and finally public language. The new version of *Social Integration of*

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Persons with Disabilities Law, which was approved in 2004, had only changed the title of the document, changing the concept of "cripple" into "disabled". Having realized, according to P. Jucevičienė (2001), G. Kvieskienė and V. Indrašienė (2008) that contemporary social work must not only solve the client's problem, but also enable the person to modify his activity effectively, social worker started to look for client's personal powers, which, woken up by social worker, can cause positive changes. Disabled people started to get not the level of disability, but the level of reduction in capability. *Dysfunctional family* gradually became *problematic family* and now the concept of *social risk family* is being used; *prisoners* and *ex-prisoners* became *persons, who are imprisoned* or *who came back from imprisonment*; *alcoholics, drug addicts* became *people, who have addiction problems*. These changes reveal the efforts to believe in human-being's inborn personal power to improve or solve his personal problems.

In M. Foucault tradition it is related to looking for *truth* and entrenching it, maintained through repeated discursive work that ensure that application of social work paradigm to solve today's social problems in Lithuania is seen as acceptable or even preeminent in comparison with other support providing professions. M. Foucault (1980, p. 31) defines *truth* as the one which „includes regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics of truth': that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures according value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true". The key question, rephrasing S. Mills (1997), is not what *truth* is or what statement is more effective, but how the truth and authority of one is continuously produced (cited in MacLure, 2003, p. 178). That points the other general principle of Foucauldian analysis, that of 'an exteriority': conditions of social work practice existence, appearance and regularity.

The truth is what is practiced and supported: the desire of social work representatives to fight their place under the sun, together with the older support providing professions, encourages to unite and to build a strong profession from "the inside". Professional language reflects the maturity of professional ethics. Ethics – is the system of moral behaviour standards which are followed by the society. In social work, ethics is related to the observance of the rules, accepted in social work practice. Practitioners themselves are interested to behave ethically in their professional sphere, because, otherwise, it could ruin their careers, raising doubts about the effectiveness and legality of their activity. This is why even at the beginning of social work in Lithuania (1994) *Lithuanian Association of Social Workers* was founded, which in 1997 prepared and approved the *Lithuanian Social Worker's Code of Ethics*, which is in force until now.

Analyzing the sources of 20 years period it is possible to reveal different rates and different *vision* of social work as practical activity, academic subject and science development. Political, formal, declarative discourse based on statistical indicators dominates in *Social Reports*, what are (non)formal annual reports of the activity of

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Ministry of Social Security and Labor: "556 working places for social workers to work with social risk families were established in the municipalities in 2007" (Social Report 2007–2008, 2008) and so on. The impression is that social work as a practical activity in Lithuania is developing very rapidly and shows impressive results. Since these are activity reports, the information is provided, trying to demonstrate the progress using "before – after" principle: (1) the rise of professional field coverage: "Until 2000 the help-at-home services were provided mainly for old, elderly and disabled people, living alone. Analyzing the clients of this service in 2000, (...) this service has begun to be provided for disabled children from families with social problems, for people from risk groups and their family members, and so on." (Social Report 2000, 2001); (2) attention to the quality criterion in various spheres of social work activity: "In Lithuania, as [post-communist – auth.] country, the quality of social care for a long period of time was measured only on technical parameters (...) Person's satisfaction, emphasizing the quality of his life, has been forgotten" (Social Report 2007–2008, 2008) and so on. Official, declarative discourse is built on faith and trust in the power of legislation to resolve the unsatisfactory situation and by formal procedures "in order to facilitate the situation of social workers without proper education and of former children's social care home educators and to ensure that they are entitled to perform the function of social worker after 1st of July 2011, the retraining process of the workers mentioned started in May 2010 (…)" (Social Report 2010–2011, 2011). The social care institutions licensing process which started in the end of 2010 revealed that the results of the retraining process *of social workers without proper education and of former children's social care home educator* are not as optimistic as they were promised to be in official sources: formally the retraining was done, the workers retained their jobs, but the values, which largely contribute to social care quality criteria, were affected just a little.

The analysis of working academic and scientific sources revealed significantly slower development of social work as the discipline and as science. In 2001 A. Bagdonas writes that although "the concept of social work and social workers became common, and not unusual, [but] (...) it is too early to talk about Lithuanian social work" (Ibid, p. 10). The Lithuanian scientific publications on social work topics only start appearing much more often during this period. Until 2005–2006 scientific publications dealt only with just conceptual issues in social work (A. Bagdonas "Practical and Academic aspects of social work development in Lithuania" [2001]; P. Jucevičienė "Integrated view on theory and practice of social work – an answer to the human challenge of the 21st century" [2001]; D. Alifanovienė "Technological process of social work" [2002]; J. Pivorienė "Social work and research: search for definition" [2003], "From early philanthrophy to professional social work" [2004]; V. Kavaliauskienė "Aspects of the development of social work as a helping profession" [2005] and so on). By 2003–2004 there were still attempts to defend in a way social work positions among other social professions (R. Jurkuvienė "Social Work Schools as social innovations in Lithuania" [2003]). Two major projects (the preparation of social work field doctoral dissertations at the University of Lapland (Finland) and supervisions studies, initiated by the Academy of Münster (Germany)),

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which were started to be implemented in 2004, extended the Lithuanian scientific research in social work field. The problem field of scientific social work research is expanding; we find more and more scientific publications on a variety of social work practice issues: social work methods, a variety of features of social work client groups, professional relationship counseling (supervision) and other issues.

Answering the questions

Having started this research, I raised two questions. It is time to summarize the answers.

The first question was initiated by the rapid development of social work as profession in Lithuania and by the fact that social services policies appeared to establish a new discursive regime. I wanted to describe this regime and it's shaping; I was not interested in criticising it from a normative position. That's what I realised: social work ideas are embedded in Lithuanian social, cultural, political, economic environment and maintained by the public ability to accumulate and multiply them. Primary ideas about modern social work are *imported*; along with the development of social work schools' network, the generation of the ideas have been started, and acquire power in the welfare state: more the welfare state is developed and more important role plays in the state's ability *to govern at a distance*, the faster they spread and are more supported by the public.

Second, social work develops as practice, discipline and science. Analysing various sets of sources about social work in Lithuania (official documents, working academic papers, research papers, and scientific sources), the contradictions in assessing and interpreting social work's development pace, scale, quality and authenticity become apparent. Official, political discourse, reflected in legislation, official notices and reports relies more on quantitative parameters, stuffed into a "before – after" frames, declares the rapid development of social work practice. Social work as a discipline has moved to the qualitative development phase, when the net of social work schools enlarged and when social work was included in the classification of basic professions. Meanwhile, the scientific discourse reveals a much smaller and slower progress of Lithuanian social work.

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THE PROBLEM OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE TRANSFORMATION: ASPECT OF INSTITUTIONAL CARE

Sonata Mačiulskytė
Klaipėdos universitetas

Abstract

Transformation of professional competence is relevant in various areas of social work practice, but the disclosure of this problem in the institutional care system is a new and extremely sensitive issue; the problem itself is also rather *fresh.* The problem is *fresh* because we talk about the period from 2006 to 2011. The issue is sensitive because the persons, engaged in practicing traditional methods of working with children for many years, keep following the outdated concept of working with children. These are people who needed to adapt to the new requirements, which was extremely challenging or even impossible for a large part of them. Today, the staff of child care homes, who work with children, are social workers. Some of them came to work for the institution with the required qualification, others had to get retrained, still others had to leave the system. This article reveals the nature of professional competence construction in social work, based on accounts by social workers in child care homes about their relation to the profession.
KEY WORDS: social work, institutional care, professional competence.

Anotacija

Profesinių kompetencijų virsmas būdingas įvairioms socialinio darbo sritims, tačiau institucinės globos sistemoje šis klausimas yra naujas ir ypač subtilus, nauja yra ir pati problema, nes apima 2006–2011 metų laikotarpį. Klausimas subtilus, nes tai viena iš sovietinio laikotarpio paveldėtų socialinio darbo sričių, kurioje ilgus metus dirbę asmenys praktikavo tradicinius darbo su vaikais metodus ir vadovavosi atgyvenusia darbo su vaikais samprata. Tai žmonės, kuriems reikėjo prisitaikyti prie naujų reikalavimų, o didelei daliai jų tai buvo labai sunku ar net neįmanoma. Šiandien globos namų darbuotojai, dirbantys su vaikais, yra socialiniai darbuotojai. Vieni jų atėjo dirbti į instituciją jau turėdami atitinkamą išsilavinimą, kitiems teko persikvalifikuoti, dar kitiems – palikti šią sistemą. Straipsnyje atskleidžiamas profesinių kompetencijų ugdymas socialiniame darbe, remiantis tuo, kaip vaikų globos namų darbuotojai apibūdina savo santykį su profesija.
PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: socialinis darbas, institucinė globa, profesinė kompetencija.

> *After all, isn't it best to judge about the society in terms of how*
> *it treats the most vulnerable beings of the society – children?*
> *Vibeke von Sperling (2011)*

Introduction

Institutional care is one of the characteristic attributes of the communist system: people with physical and / or mental disabilities, children left without parental care, juvenile delinquents and other individuals, who failed to meet strict standards of the created *communist society*, were isolated in different types of institutions – boarding-schools, boarding-houses, children's homes, etc. The residents of such institutions were subject to a narrow scope of impact resulting from the staff's em-

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phatically homogeneous professional qualification, depending on the institutional subordination. A similar fragmented approach was shown when handling the problems of the warded (supervised) persons.

A holistic concept of a person's problem as a *social problem* occurred in Lithuania along with the rudiments of democratic values in the National Revival Period. After the Restoration of Independence, which inspirited abundance of strategic changes in the economic, political and social spheres, the number of social problems not only failed to reduce, but rather led to new and more complex problems: starting with the social stratification, social polarization and impoverishment (Mačiulskytė, 2003), followed by human trafficking, children prostitution, emigration of parents leaving their children behind, etc. (Jonutytė, 2007). The old (social) support practice became incapable of coping with the challenges of the time. Such changes revealed the disability of the inherited communist (social) support when dealing with a rapidly expanding spectrum of social problems. A problem of a person started being perceived as an outcome of many objective and subjective circumstances, and its effective solution is possible when attempts are made not to repair the damages but to eliminate the causes. A problem of professional competence of specialists working in the field of social care becomes acute.

In the context of constant change, rapid development of science and technologies, competence is of major importance to the quality of work performed by a professional as well as to the compliance with the requirements (Autukevičienė, 2007).

After the Restoration of Independence, starting to develop the management institutions' structure of the Republic of Lithuania, the subordination of the stationary social care institutions was transferred from the Ministry of Education and Science to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Nevertheless, the post-communist legacy traditionally associated children as a group of clients exclusively to the educational process. For a long time children care institutions were seen as educational institutions, where educators applied intensive training methods to correct the children's socialization *errors*. Meanwhile, educational discourse sends a message that strict educational measures and discipline have to help a child socially reintegrate and ensure his / her positive continued social development. It is believed that education naturally solves other social problems of a child. Commonly, the understanding that the main method of work with a client-child-ward is education means that teachers have sufficient knowledge, skills and values to deal with the socialization issues of the residents of children care institutions.

Meanwhile, children that lost parental care on a temporary or permanent basis are especially vulnerable. C. Sutton (1999, p. 185), following S. Millham, R. Bullock, K. Hosie and M. Little (1986), describes the children who have entered the welfare and social care system as "drifting", meanwhile the situation increases the risk of loosing contacts with the family. Therefore, their subsequent psychological and physical development highly depends on the ability of people that pro-

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vide care to the child to create positive environment and relations, which could ensure the welfare of the child, namely: physical and psychological safety, care and love, possibilities for self-expression, nurture and development of proper social skills and competencies. A modern approach emphasizes the development of child's abilities to adapt to the environment, renewal of the contacts with the society, comprehensive integration into the society, and complex social and psychosocial functioning, psychological adaptation, through analysis of child's sexual behaviour, as well as his emotional disorders and addictions, support in managing the effects of traumas by correcting emotional and behavioural disorders. While working with such children, the educational aspect remains of great importance, however, the educational methods cannot ensure the formation of comprehensive social skills[1].

Generally, it is not easy to demonstrate the professionalism of social work. Professions in modern society identify their professionalism by demonstrating the methods of operation – the more authentic methods there are and the more they are standardized, the higher the value the profession gains. However, the methods of social work are different, unlike the common understanding of the society. The otherness is determined by the specifics of a social worker's profession and its clients. But at the same time the social worker's activity has particularly complex requirements – they need to achieve the client's internal change, because only then it is possible to solve their problems. In addition, a social worker is usually acting in the client's environment and adapts their methodological operation to each client's specific case – acts and solves "here and now", rather than in accordance with a pre-established plan or a method suitable to everyone (Gvalaitė and Švedaitė, 2005, p. 10–16).

Social work research in Lithuania is intensively developing. A number of Lithuanian authors have analysed the issues discussed in this article. The complexity of social work as a profession and the variety of methods were disclosed by L. Gvaldaitė and B. Švedaitė (2005). A. Bagdonas (2001) highlighted the interaction model of social work process as the main factor of the social worker's performance complexity, and actualized the problem of quality of social work practice organization. P. Jucevičienė (2001) revealed the need for reflective practice in developing the relationship between theory and practice in the process of social workers' training and professional activities in order to empower clients to act individually. The issues of development of the relationship between theory and practice in the process of social workers' training were analysed by V. Ivanauskienė and T. N. Liobikienė (2005); in addition, T. N. Liobikienė (2006) highlighted the

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[1] *Report on Children's Rights Situation in the Residential Care and Education Institutions in Lithuania*. P. 37. Internet access: http://www.hrmi.lt/uploaded/PDF%20dokai/TYRIMAI/Vaiko_teisiu_padetis.pdf [06-02-2012]

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significance of reflected professional experience in a crisis intervention situation, actualizing the links between personal, professional and social experience. I. Dirgėlienė and A. Kiaunytė (2005, 2006) presented the reflective practice and its organization system in training social workers. V. Kavaliauskienė (2005, 2010) analysed the issues of social worker's professional mission, professional competence structure, complexity of social work profession.

Recently, I have focused my research interests on the processes of Lithuanian social work development. The main theoretical assumption I ground my ideas on is constructivism, what allows me to reveal the creating process of knowledge in social work. The main theoretical assumption in this research is that social work as a profession is socially constructed; social work practice does not exist as a phenomenon, but is created via an interaction process between the parties involved in it. (Due to a limited scope of the article and the need to present other important research-based issues, this article will not expand on the theoretical justification of the research. In my article in 2012 (Mačiulskytė, 2012) I give a rather detailed analysis of social work as a social construct, and since this research is also based on the same theoretical assumption, I invite you to get acquainted with my interpretation of social work as a social construct in the aforementioned article.) *Former educators of children's social care home and social workers without necessary education*, who had retraining, also contribute to the development of social work in Lithuania. (Statistical date reveals that in the period from 2006 to 2008, 31 per cent of children's social care home workers retrained to social workers.) Transformation of professional competence is relevant in various areas of social work practice, but the disclosure of this problem in the institutional care system is a new and extremely sensitive issue; the problem itself is also rather *fresh.* And although the process of reorganization of social care institutions in the area of children's institutional care has gained momentum, which will result in reorganisation of institutional children care system by the year 2015. Approaching the situation from the perspective of constructivism, I am interested in the specialists working in children's care institutions and the contribution they make to the social work development in the country.

The a i m of this study is to reveal the nature of professional competence construction in social work, based on accounts by social workers in child care homes about their relation with the profession.

To achieve the purpose, the following t w o t a s k s have been addressed:
1) to define the social worker's professional competence system;
2) to conduct research on professional competence transformation in institutional child care.

Self-questioning is not new to the profession (Chambon and Irving, 1999), especially to the intellectual wing based on Foucauldian approach. M. Foucault's fundamental suspiciousness to taken-for-granted realities had affected a number of social work scholars in Western countries, who developed a Foulcaudian approach

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in social work research. R. Jurkuvienė (2003), R. Naujanienė (2007), N.P. Večkienė (2007) and others apply the constructivist approach in Lithuanian social work research; however there is not much research.

The object of this article is the transformation of professional competence in institutional care.

Research methods: literature analysis, interview, discourse analysis method is applied to reveal the problem of professional competence transformation in the institutional child care.

1. The system of social workers' professional competence

It is rather risky to speak about competence in the context of today's academic and professional discourses. Such concepts used in parallel as "competency", "competence", "professional skills", "qualification" are gathering a number of supporters around themselves, who argue in favour of usage of one or another concept with respect to other concepts. The concept of qualification describes suitability of a person, readiness for a particular job. R. Laužackas, E. Stasiūnaitienė, M. Teresevičienė (2005), analysing the differences between the concepts of competence and qualification, emphasise that the concept of qualification is appropriate when dealing with the understanding of what a person is preparing to acquire or acquires in the learning system (cited in Dirgėlienė, 2010, p. 32). Foreign literature explores the concepts of *competence* and *competency*. The content of both of the concepts contains certain differences: *competence* is associated to the holistic approach to a personal potential and opportunities to apply the variable and purposeful skills based on knowledge, experience, values; *competency* expresses the ability to perform professional work (Elkin, 1990; Sanghi, 2010). Nevertheless, the article does not aim at analysing the peculiarities of the concept "competence / competency"; I support the observations of R. Laužackas (2008), who assumes that the differences between the concepts are not that significant as to influence their daily usage. I am interested in the capacity of the concept to express the professionalism of a social worker. Social workers are supposed to meet extremely high professional competence requirements, because their activities have a direct impact on people's mental, psychological, emotional well-being, development of their personality as well as prevention and correction of its disorders (Kučinskas and Kučinskienė, 2000). V. Kavaliauskienė (2010, p. 161–162), following the views of N. Parton and P. O'Byrne (2000), claims that in the perspective of constructivist philosophy social work is treated not only as a science but also – perhaps even more so – as art, and this is more a practical moral rather than rational technical activity. Meanwhile, the humanistic approach to a social worker reveals him / her not as a representative of a simple profession, not as a person aiming at learning to use the methodology of professional technologies, but as a person, who has chosen social profession before listening attentively to his / her inner voice,

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and willing to grow, develop and get involved into this process naturally by the whole lifestyle. Therefore, I intuitively rely on the concept of competence used by D. Lepaitė (2003, p. 6), where she highlights an individual's "ability to act", determined by the individual's "knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes, personality traits and values". P. Jucevičienė (2007, p. 138) also adds that all the components of competence as listed by D. Lepaitė (2003) "lie inside the individual and manifest in successful results of an individual's specific area of activity".

The interaction model describing the process of social work as presented in scientific literature (Bagdonas, 2001), the stages of this process (Sutton, 1999; Johnson, 2001), highlight the main social work components and factors leading to the social worker's activities and professionalism. The same sources reveal the social worker's professional competence system which comprises knowledge, values and skills.

Knowledge is one of the elements of the social worker's professional competence system. L.C. Johnson (2001) assumes that a social worker has to base practice on theoretical knowledge, to be able to assess the gained knowledge, to have a right of choice to apply knowledge in certain specific situations (ibid, p. 54). Knowledge in social work is based on specific methods and theory one can actually grasp and apply in practice. I. Dirgėlienė (2008, p. 94) maintains that the need for general professional knowledge is of particular relevance for social workers who work with addicts, carriers of communicable diseases, victims of human trafficking, the ones engaged in prostitution, those confronting perpetrators or those having returned from prisons, and deal with their problems. *The Standard for Social Worker Training* (2008) contains the idea that a social worker has to understand how a society functions, what role and how a client acts in it; the necessity of knowledge about a human, their environment, relations and factors that determine a client's relationship with the environment.

V. Kavaliauskienė (2010) writes that social work is a wide, multidimensional, complex, emotionally intense activity. This profession is associated with dedication, service to another, the essence of life, mission (ibid., p. 164). O.V. Okunišnikova (2007), writing about the importance of social worker's professional competence, emphasises that probably "social work cannot be handled by people who do not care about the fates of others, who feel uncomfortable analysing other people's problems" (ibid., p. 158). Since social workers deal with the most vulnerable members of society, V. Ivanauskienė and L. Valžinskienė (2007), I. Dirgėlienė (2010) view values as one of the most important areas of social worker's professional competence. V. Ivanauskienė and L. Valžinskienė (2007, p. 77) argue that the core values are those that have something in common with a human value and dignity. Moreover, the authors refer to B.R. Compton and B. Galaway (1999) to describe the values; the values for these authors are unproven and, perhaps impossible to prove, beliefs about human nature. These beliefs indicate the direction of social work practitioner's daily work.

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In 2006 V. Ivanauskienė and L. Valžinskienė (2007) conducted a quantitative descriptive study where they examined the peculiarities of professional competence of social work practitioners and social workers' professional values. The conducted research revealed that social work practitioners' work is based on values; social work values are adopted and recognized as valuable and important to the social work practice and the client support process. Among the social work professional values the following values were named as the most important ones: confidentiality, acceptance, empowerment, professional responsibility, controlled emotional involvement, social justice, knowledge sharing, client rights, individualization. Among the personal values used in professional activities, the following values were most frequently named: understanding, tolerance, patience, respect, acceptance, empathy, ability to listen and hear, good-will, sincerity, openness; as well as love to a human, humanity; consideration, cooperation, communication, sensitivity, responsibility, activeness, work with all one's heart, etc. (ibid., p. 79–80).

I. Dirgėlienė (2010), exploring the issue of confidentiality in social work, points out that opening of values and their becoming one's inseparable part is a long process, which is particularly influenced by a society. The attitudes of a social worker are often far ahead the public attitudes and the prevailing stereotypes. Professional values, however, are not unique. The profession of social work exists in a wider cultural context; meanwhile a social worker is a member and a "cultural product" of this same society. Therefore, social work is always at a risk of operationalization of the attitudes already existing in the society, including stereotypical ones, affecting the social risk groups or individuals. The author is often referring to the world's practice while speaking about the inborn values and the values acquired by social workers. As an example – at the University of Manchester (United Kingdom) values are given a particular role – admission to the social work studies is determined not by the average grade, but by a test on values (to analyse a candidate's values the admission system applies several types of tests) (Dirgėlienė, 2010, p. 33). It is likely that a social worker, who has chosen this profession as a mission, will manage to establish and maintain their primary resolution to work in this area, will acquire an opportunity "to live a valuable life", to fulfil their human mission and to develop their creative skills (Kavaliauskienė, 2010, p. 164).

Why are values so important for a social worker's professional competence? Because, if your work with people who have social problems is not guided by values, you may cause damage instead of providing help (Ivanauskienė and Valžinskienė, 2007). Therefore, social work is a profession which promotes changes and intervention in the human interaction (Kiaunytė and Puidokienė, 2011). Because the meanings, significance, importance, implications, and values, that a social worker places upon a client and surrounding social circumstances, make a social worker's own world-view of his (her) role in relationship with a client. In other words, processes of the assessment of client situation are themselves increasingly

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recognised as constituting an intervention. These processes are essentially socially and personally constructive (Parton and O'Byrne, 2000; Paris and Epting, 2004), and thereby constitute a reality for those involved in construing those realities. It is indicated in the international definition of social work that „the social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work. "[2].

The real social work professional practice is dominated by "difficulties", "problems", which raise disturbance, are unpleasant, complicated, which are difficult to learn to live with, to solve or overcome. In order to overcome them a social worker needs good professional preparation, skills, a wide range of knowledge, creativity and imagination (Kavaliauskienė, 2010, p. 164). Skills – an integral part of social worker's competence. This is a component of practice, connecting knowledge and values, as well as converting them into actions, a response to a concern or need (Johnson, 2001). Skills are analysed in the social work process, which is characterized by the following stages – identification of needs, planning, implementation, monitoring, review of results, assessment, prediction of future prospects. C. Sutton (1999, p. 7) presents the social work process as ASPIRE, i.e. a sequence or cycle of actions, where all four stages are in constant interaction: AS – *Assessment*; P – *Planning*; I – *Implementation*; RE – *Review and Evaluation*. Assessment is based on information, collected from the individuals who are participating in the process or are closely related with them. Often people who have control of the information are not particularly inclined to share it; therefore, in this situation a social worker has to demonstrate huge professional skills to extract it. L. Gvaldaitė and B. Švedaitė (2005, p. 25) note that peculiarities of social work clients require that the used intervention methods, which require high level competence, were as close to the daily round as possible, understandable and non-shocking. The authors use the model of methodological operation, as developed by L. Van Weezel and K. Waaldijk (2004), which incorporates the making of purposeful impact through simple daily activities. This model consists of three activities: (1) being with a client, (2) a purposeful impact, and (3) constant self-reflection.

A change occurs as a result of skills intervention, by applying an appropriate social work method and using it effectively.

The ability to reflect – to link theory and practice, to give meaning to and reconsider the values and skills rooted in practice, which were formed on the basis

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[2] Definition of Social Work, IFSW International Federation of Social Work (Montreal, Canada, July 2000). Internet access: http://ifsw.org/policies/definition-of-social-work/ [16-11-2012].

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of acquired knowledge – in everyday working life, is one of the most significant features of social worker's professionalism (Jucevičienė, 2001; Gvaldaitė, Švedaitė, 2005; Dirgėlienė, Kiaunytė, 2005, 2006; Dirgėlienė, 2008, 2010; Kavaliauskienė, 2010, etc.). To actualize the role of reflection in the social work professional life means to seek for alternative methods of activity, which help to overcome difficulties and problems, taking into consideration the processes of changes taking place in the contemporary world, unforeseen, unexpected challenges, as faced by people in their life. Reflection helps to form a specialist's self-knowledge, comprehension, it adds to the professional development (*Career Counselling. Constructivist Approaches*, 2006; cited in Kavaliauskienė, 2010. p. 160-162). This is especially true in terms of the learning society, when people of all ages and education get retrained so that to gain a social worker's profession. The strength of adults is their life experience, but therein also lies a danger – the values formed in the course of life do not always respond to the social worker's ethics, the defensive mechanisms show up under the crisis intervention (Dirgėlienė, 2008).

The idea of knowledge application in practice is also highlighted in documents which regulate the social worker's professional activities (*Description of the Social Work Study Field*. A Project, 2012).

In addition to reflection, in the process of social care and support provision, a social worker needs a variety of skills: gnostic (search for information, understanding and selection); projecting (setting goals and tasks, forecasting); design (selection and adjustment of content, methods and tools); organization (setting conditions, stimulating a purposeful and natural change of clients' situation); communication (communication skills, socialization, development of relationships); expertise or evaluation (comprehension and critical process analysis) (Leliūgienė, 2002, p. 389).

P. Jucevičienė (2001), G. Kvieskienė and V. Indrašienė (2008) claim that modern social work aims not only at solving a client's problem, but also at enabling a person to effectively modify their activities. By participating in the problem-solving process not only a social worker, but also a client acquire problem-solving skills, which help to overcome other obstacles of social functioning.

2. Preconditions for the construction of the research instrument of the professional competence transformation in the institutional child care

While collecting material for the research, I came across the *Report on Children's Rights Situation in the Residential Care and Education Institutions in Lithuania*[3], carried out in 2005–2006. Along with the other documents and sources,

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[3] Šalaševičiūtė R., et. al. (2006). *Report on Children's Rights Situation in the Residential Care and Education Institutions in Lithuania.* Internet access:

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this *Report* has become a great starting point, allowing the possibility to see and assess the qualitative *change* in the institutional care system over the period from 2006 until 2013, all the more so because this period allows to observe an extremely intense dynamics of objective conditions (legal regulation, qualification requirements, structural changes), hypothetically having to force the inevitable changes in the above mentioned system, as well as the changes in professional competence. The following are short excerpts form the *Report*[4], which have contributed to the construction of the research presented in this article.

   The researchers had observed a number of instances of ill-treatment of children in the actions taken by the workers of child care homes (e.g., severe punishments, etc.). The *Report* also uses the interview with the Children's Rights Ombudsman, given in February 2005, to *Lithuanian radio* coverage, where the facts of physical and psychological abuse used against children in a particular foster home were confirmed. In addition, it has found that the employees take the food home, it is very cold in the inside the foster home, and there is a shortage of the most necessary medicine (Children Wronged in the Foster Homes. Lithuanian radio, 02-02-2005; cited in the Report, 2006). Inadequate behaviour of the employees with children is often related to the lack of competency. When staff members do not have appropriate skills for the successful management of misbehaviour in children, they use "traditional" disciplinary measures. Night shift staff often has no special education, as lower requirements are set for the candidates.

   The *Report* draws a conclusion that the daily work practice of care homes is still subject to a number of methods applied in the Soviet times. One of the main reasons supporting the old system operation and principles of work, and at the same time slowing down the processes of modernization, – employees working in the child care system for years, who practice traditional methods of work with the child according to obsolete child care approach is one of the main reasons behind the prevalence of operation and work principles of old (soviet) system. The main negative feature of such team of specialists is obsolete and often unacceptable methods of working with children and the disregard of children's rights. Since staff turnover in the abovementioned institutions is minimal (most of the employees have been working there for 20-30 years), there is an apparent lack of the renewal and dynamism of the staff in these institutions.

   Although most of the administration representatives of the foregoing institutions stated that the staff does undergo in-service training and other courses, in practice, staff of some of the institutions seems to lack the knowledge in the field. It occurred that explicitly sexual behavior of youngsters in some of the institutions

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http://www.old.gip-vilnius.lt/leidiniai/children_rights_situation_report.pdf   [13-02-2011].
[4] Information provided in this chapter refers to *Report on Children's Rights Situation in the Residential Care and Education Institutions in Lithuania*.

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was interpreted incorrectly and the reaction/actions of staff were inappropriate. There is also a lack of knowledge on managing the aggressive behavior among children, solving conflict situations, etc. Work methods, which were acceptable in the Soviet system are hard to get rid of and can not change on their own.

Additionally to the *Report*, presented above, the research construction is based on the Part 4 of Article 20 and Part 1 of Article 37 of the *Law on Social Services*, as of 1 July 2006, (2006-01-19, No. X-493), which lays down that after 1 July 2011, a person can work as a social worker upon acquiring social work or equivalent education. The aforesaid law provides that if within 5 years from the date when the law came into force (1 June 2006), a person does not acquire the required education, he / she loses the right to perform social worker's duties.

It is written in *Social Report 2010–2011* (2011), that in order to facilitate the situation of social workers without proper education and of former children's social care home educators and to ensure that they are entitled to perform the function of social worker after 1st of July 2011, the retraining process of the workers mentioned started in May 2010.

However, the results of the retraining process of *social workers without necessary education and former educators of children's social care homes* are far from what was expected: formally, the retraining was implemented, the employees retained their workplaces, but the level of the professional competences necessary for social workers, which largely help to achieve the social care quality criteria, was rather low. A Danish journalist Vibeke von Sperling, who returned to Lithuania after 20 years, in August 2011, visited the children's home in one of the Lithuanian districts, and described her impressions in the interview with a journalist of the Lithuanian daily "Lietuvos rytas":

"I was shocked by the children's home I have visited in one of the Lithuanian districts as well as the interviews with the children and educators. <...> there have I felt the heritage of the Soviet system most vividly. <...> This is a truly viable cell of the Soviet system, which has successfully survived and was transplanted into a new European organism. What is shocking there is the mental apathy, coldness, indifference underlying this system. <...> I realized that a lot needs to be reconsidered inside the European Union <...>. It seemed so much had been done, so much funding was provided to reform suchlike institutions; however, it appears that the mentality of people and attitudes are stronger and more durable than any money."[5]

This section presents the sources that serve as the basis for constructing the research instrument presented in the article, and planning the research itself.

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[5] Davoliūtė, V. (2011). A Danish journalist V. von Sperling, who has returned to Lithuania 20 years later: "Shocking Stay at Children's Care Home – Breeze of Soviet Heritage Frost". Internet access: 30-08-2011]

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3. Research methodology

The research was carried out in January 2013 in Klaipėda city and district. The research involved 10 employees of children's homes in the area. These were social workers, social educators and administrative staff, working in the children's care system from 1 to 30 years. The main criteria for the selection of respondents were as follows:

a)   a respondent has to obtain the professional qualification of a social worker inspired by personal motivation;

b)   or has to be retrained on the basis of Part 4 of Article 20 and Part 1 of Article 37 of the *Law on Social Services*, as of 1 July 2006, (19-01-2006, No. X-493), which lays down that after 1 July 2011, a person can work as a social worker upon acquiring social work or equivalent education;

c)   or, under the provision of Part 3 of Article 37 of the same Law, which lays down that if from the entry into force of the Law hereof no more than 7 years are remaining to the retirement age, did not get retrained.

Efforts have been made to maintain the proportion of respondents' line-up under the aforementioned criteria. The research involved only those employees of the children's homes, who agreed to participate. Prior to the research, the administration of the children's care institutions in Klaipėda was addressed, asking for permission to conduct the research in respective care institutions. Making first contact was not very smooth, possibly because the end of the year was approaching and intensive festivities were taking place; moreover, by the end of the calendar year, specific administrative work is typically carried out; furthermore, employees often plan their holidays for that time. Repeated contact with the representatives of the administration of the children's care homes, the consent to conduct the research was obtained.

The interview process itself went smoothly, but not without minor problems. Respondents were asked for permission for an interview audio recording; two respondents refused to give permission. Two more respondents, who initially refused to make an audio recording, eventually agreed with the recording when the interview had started. Sometimes a few respondents found it difficult to formulate answers to questions related to the results of the respondent and client interaction. A lack of respective professional competence can be seen as the cause; moreover, the interaction with a client is mainly based on intuition; in addition, there is a lack of deeper reflection intervention in the success and failure cases.

Eight interviews were conducted in the workplace of the respondents – children care institutions -, during the working hours and having agreed about the time for the interview in advance. Two of the interviews were conducted outside the workplaces.

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Children's care homes[6], where the respondents worked, include municipal budgetary institutions, the purpose of which is to provide care (welfare), education and short-term (long-term) social care for Klaipėda city and district children left without parental care, under temporary or permanent care (welfare). Lithuanian practice of creating children's care homes is rather typical – children's care homes in the country began to emerge after 1990, reorganizing boarding-schools. The story of Klaipėda city and district children's care homes is not an exception. Klaipėda city and district institutions currently host from 30 to almost 80 children from 1 to 18 years old; if a child studies according to the general education programme or according to the formal professional training programme, he or she can live in the children's care home until the age of 21. Children live in families of 8 – 12 children. Typically brothers and sisters live together in one family. Each family has 1 large room, 5–6 bedrooms, a shower, toilet. Two social workers and 1–2 social worker's assistants work with a family.

The wards attend Klaipėda city and district pre-school educational institutions, study at general education schools, gymnasiums, as well as in specialized schools of Klaipėda city and district, which correspond to their special needs; there are wards who study in vocational training schools.

The children's care homes allow children to express themselves, practise working activity, develop children's intellectual abilities. Much attention is paid to the children's leisure organization. The wards attend different activities and clubs, both organized in the children's care homes and the city – football, phytodesign, art therapy, boxing, drama, information technologies, dancing, etc.

The research data are analysed by applying the Foucauldian discourse analysis method. As I. Parker (2003) describes, discourse analysis treats the social world as a text, or rather as a system of texts which can be systematically 'read' by a researcher to lay open the social process that lie within them. Starting point of discourse analysis method is acknowledgement of the diversity of meaning, the different, sometimes contradictory ways of speaking that govern what we do (and who we can be). Meaning is continually changing (it is dynamic), and language is composed of many 'languages' or discourses (ibid., p. 92–93).

Discourse analysis method doesn't aim to account for every aspect of a phenomenon but purposefully chooses to trace selective patterns and collects only those sets of features associated with them.

The method pays attention to the relationship between discourses and institutions. Here, *languages* or discourses are not conceptualized simply as ways of speaking or writing, as C. Willig (2004, p. 171) notices. They are bound with insti-

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[6] Information about children's care homes, where the research participants work, is based on the material presented on the institutions' websites. Some of the care homes do not have their websites; therefore, the data obtained through the interview was used.

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tutional practices, i.e. with ways of organising, regulating and administering social life. Discourse analysis method is suitable for detailed practice analyzing; Foucault himself has focused his studies and analysis on the details of practices. He has made no conventional distinctions between the theory and practice of the helping disciplines, as L. Epstein (1999) likes to call all disciplines, which purpose – to help people, including social work, – rolling the two into one. M. Foucault applied the discourse analysis method to examine instead practices and local circumstances: not institutions, but institutional practices; not ideology but statements; not the "subject" but the embodied subject (Chambon, 1999, p. 56). Thus, while discourses legitimate and reinforce existing social and institutional practices, these practices, in turn, also support and validate the discourses. For example, being positioned as 'the client' within a social care discourse means that one's living conditions, and life in general, become objects of legitimate interest to social workers, that they may be studied, tested, and invaded in the process of social services' provision which forms part of the practice of social work and its institutions (see also Willig, 2004, p. 172).

The decision to use discourse analysis for the data analysis required a significant amount of time and effort in understanding how to perform the analysis technically. On the basis of R. Naujanienė's (2007) experience which she shares in her doctoral dissertation, I have chosen Foucauldian discourse analysis method as more suitable in social work research. I apply the procedural guidelines for the analysis of discourse that C. Willig (2004) had developed. Her way of analysis reveals the role of language in compiling the social and psychological lives of subjects involved in discourse (Naujanienė, 2007, p. 67).

4. Research Data Analysis

The carried out research covered different aspects of professional competence transformation in the institutional child care. This article presents the analysis focusing on the following questions of the research:

a) how the change of qualification requirements was welcomed by the workers themselves?

b) how workers themselves define and explain the competence of a social worker of children's homes?

The process of data analysis was started by transcribing speech from interviews, and then reading the transcripts and segmenting the texts according to thematic analysis. After several readings of transcripts there were selected all pieces of text that refer to the object of the study; here I refer to R. Naujaniene's (2007) experience to applying discourse analysis method. I also continued to read the transcripts further and looked for the cases or parts of text which could be best used to demonstrate findings (according Flick, 1998; cited in Naujaniene, 2007, p.

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63). My aim was to answer the specific research questions of the study, what U. Flick (1998) had called "presentational sampling" (Naujaniene, 2007, p. 63).

Response to the Change in the Qualification Requirements

In response to the first question of the research, I analyse an excerpt from an interview with Elena[7], one of the child care home employees participating in the research, who had retrained on the basis of the new requirements. In addition, she works in the administration of the child care home; therefore, the analyses of the excerpts from the interview with Elena help me to present all the three discursive formations, which I was able to identify after reviewing many times the results of all the interviews. I will present the episode, where we discuss with Elena the impact of the Law on Social Services of 2006 on the staff of the child care homes, including her personal professional career, and a response to these changes. Analysing this episode, I have disclosed how the discursive formations describing the changes in the qualification requirements are intertwined with each other. I distinguish between the following discursive formations: *change in working conditions, change in the duties, change in the attitude to work*.

I can identify the change in working conditions as one of the discursive formations describing the change in the qualification requirements. In the analysed excerpt, this change in working conditions is identified as "a lower salary" (line 98), "36-days' holiday has been left out of 56" (line 99), "harder work" (line 101), "earlier we did not ever have children with disabilities, both mental and physical" (line 82–83), "and we have also received such children" (line 82). Such references construct the change in the qualification requirements as the *change in working conditions*: economic criterion (line 98), working conditions criterion (line 77, 99, 101), working with clients criterion (line 82–83).

In the excerpt introduced above, I also associate the change in the qualification requirements with the "loss of qualification" (line 40), "removal of management categories" (line 40-41) and "standing again on the zero" (line 41). This means that "we are no longer pedagogues, but social workers" (line 44), "nannies, see – social workers' assistants" (line 45), "because, in fact, who were they earlier? Cleaners" (line 46). The change in the duties for the pedagogues, who had a specific career model, meant that the "categories were removed from the educators" (line 98), it was necessary "to start everything from scratch" (lines 102). These references construct the change in the qualification requirements as *the change in the duties*.

In addition, the analysed excerpt from the interview about the change in the qualification requirements also highlights the need "to change attitudes" (line 9) for both the institution itself, because of the given instruction "to quit here writing poems, it was necessary to start providing services, and to work" (line 19–20),

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[7] In order to preserve the confidentiality of respondents, their names have been changed.

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and the staff, because "a pedagogue, he still works in a little bit different manner, he plans his time differently, though it seems that the work he performs is the same, but still his thinking is different" (line 21–22), because "step by step different children started coming, including the disabled" (line 24–25), therefore, "to do everything what you have been used to doing was not possible" (line 29–30). Meanwhile, the "nannies" (line 45), who "became a social worker's assistant from a cleaner – are the ones who needs to get retraining" (line 47), without the change in the attitude to work the adaptation was impossible. All these references present the change in the qualification requirements also as the *change in the attitude to work.*

A closer examination of the discursive contexts containing different discursive formations about the change in the qualification requirements provides additional insights. The text excerpt where the change in the qualification requirements is constructed as the change in working conditions develops from Elena's story about the response to these changes by the child care home and its staff: the experienced "shock of the first year" (line 30), accompanied by the feverish search for information - "we read a lot, showed great interest, visited other child care homes a lot, as well as other social care institutions, communicated with the elderly homes" (line 31–32), and even had thoughts "to quit" (line 38). The same discursive formation is repeatedly addressed in the analysed text excerpt when Elena speaks about the arrival of new wards with various disabilities to the care home, which marked the change in the qualification requirements, because "earlier we did not ever have children with disabilities, both mental and physical. We used to have all of them normal, healthy children" (line 82–83). We faced fears "how the team will accept this social work" (line 89–90), "won't our children be exposed to their anger" (line 90). The anxiety was reasoned, because "all of us, who had been working earlier, all of us, faced the changes for the worse rather than for the better, with respect to the working conditions, work payment, holidays" (line 91–92). Moreover, in both, the first and second instances, this discursive formation was accompanied by another reform which took place at the same time, when the child care homes were transferred from the county-controlled supervision to the municipal control, what is named as an even more compounding circumstance: "the biggest challenge in this our path was" (line 73) "that there was a transition from the county to the municipality" (line 74), "we faced two such transformations at the same moment: our new authority, plus everything was new here inside" (line 75), this is identified as turning a "double somersault" (line 76).

When I put a question to Elena about the effect of the change in the qualification requirements on Elena herself, other employees of the care home and the institution itself, the response first of all started developing from the change in the attitude to work. This discursive formation develops in three levels: personal level – as an employee who herself had to change not only her qualification but also the attitude ("for me, social work was something completely new, because I had

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been worked as a pedagogue all my life" (line 11)); collective level, presenting the peculiarities of pedagogical work in the care home, which had to be changed: earlier – "we had more festivals, perhaps more of those discussions, more afternoon meetings" (line 23), "like at school" (line 24), and now – "you feel you don't want to give up on everything" (line 28–29), "but to do everything what you have been used to doing was not possible" (line 29–30), because the wards were changing – more children with various disabilities started arriving to the care home. The third level – institutional, because of Elena's work in the child care home administration, there was "a need to change the overall attitude of the institution" (line 9). The analysed excerpt features the overlap of all the three levels, often the boundaries among the personal, collective and institutional levels disappear completely.

The discursive formations identified in the analysed text are constructed in the context of Elena's repetitive questions: "social work – what's this?" (line 14), "how and what do you have to do?", "what should be changing in this institution?" (line 15). These questions are followed by the change in the qualification requirements as the discursive formation of the change in the attitude to work. The discursive formation of the change in working conditions is also constructed in the text after a sequence of questions raised by Elena: "how shall we work?", "what shall we do?" (line 87), "how the team will accept this social work?" (line 89), "won't everyone flee?", "won't our children be exposed to their anger?" (line 90). Discursive contexts of these produced formations suggest that the change in the qualification requirements was seen by the respondent as an extreme breaking-point both professionally and psychologically. In addition, such abundance of questions raised by Elena herself, on the basis of which she constructs both fear and uncertainty, also demonstrate curiosity, willingness to find answers to these questions; perhaps this cannot be taken for optimism, but at least reveals the determination to fight for the workplace, and for the survival of the institution.

Within the discursive formation of change in the qualification requirements as the change in working conditions, the subject constructed as *manager* is presented serially. This emerged from the interview excerpt. At first the subject is named as the one who "read a lot, showed great interest, visited other child care homes a lot, as well as other social care institutions, communicated with the elderly homes" (line 30–32). Then, the text clearly features the subject – "we as managers" (line 35), who "put a lot of efforts, really put efforts, by, well, convincing ourselves that we can do this, that we will reorient ourselves" (line 42–43), because "it was necessary anyway to manage this whole team" (line 89) and "to figure out how to say that, see, it's not that bad, we will move forward anyway" (line 96). In the analysed text excerpt, the subject often identifies herself with the whole institution, straightforwardly stating this – "we as the institution" (line 37), which "celebrates this year its twentieth anniversary" (line 100). Later, this same identity unfolds when speaking about "own employees" (line 44), "our nannies" (line 45),

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"our children" (line 90). These references have positioned the manager as *responsible* for others.

Furthermore, where the subject is constructed as staff, such people are named as "no longer pedagogues, but social workers" (line 44), "nannies, see – social workers' assistants" (line 45), "none of our workers fled, though a lot of them, of course, were about to, many things happened" (line 51). The subject is constructed as an active person who can be positioned as a *co-worker* who works together in the institution. Thus, a co-worker is presented as the other with respect to the manager. Then, speaking about losses associated with the change in the qualification requirements, the manager identifies herself and expresses solidarity with the co-workers, because "all of us, who had been working earlier, all of us, faced the changes for the worse rather than for the better, with respect to the working conditions, work payment, holidays" (line 91–92). These references suggest that both subjects can be positioned *equal* to the change in the qualification requirements.

Within the discursive formation of the change in the qualification requirements as the change in the attitude to work, the subject is also constructed as an *agency* – "social institution" (line 10), which has to provide "services" (line 16, 17) to the "clients" (line 16), which is supposed to quit "writing poems" (line 19–20) and "start providing services, and to work" (line 20). It "was very hard" (line 20) for the agency, "such a shock" (line 27), that there were consideration to "quit" (line 38). These references have positioned the agency as *having survived a major crisis*.

What discursive practices could be defined (marked) in various positions of the subjects? Positioning a manager as responsible allude to the actions in order to preserve the institution and employees, and assisting the latter to adapt the changed requirements. An employee positioned as a co-worker unfolds the practice applied over many years of work in the child care home, based on educational measures, which, as also confirmed by other respondents of the research, was transferred to the new employees, as self-evident and unquestionable. The discursive context of the discursive formation, the change in the attitude to work, expressed as nostalgia of the past suggest a reluctance to accept the changing situation. And even the system of naming positions so far unchanged in the daily informal use – social workers are further referred to as "educators", social worker's assistants – "nannies", – also expresses the nostalgia of the past days. Elena herself speaks with nostalgia and pride about the "many festivals, many discussions, many afternoon meetings" (line 23) organized as an expression of the "traditions" (line 29), formed in the long run of the care home existence, as about a well understood and obviously meaningful activity. Meanwhile, new social work practice is described with a hint of irony, it seemed "extremely funny at first, then, no longer funny, we have started to analyse how these services will be provided" (line 16–17). Positioning a manager and an employee as equal implies that the change in

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the qualification requirements had equally affected the staff of all levels of care institutions, and all of them had to make a decision – to respond to the changes or to quit the job. This suggests that namely the situation of "sitting in the same boat" resulted in a rather sensitive evaluation of the situation and empathy to the employees, since the managers themselves did not know "how to require from them, and how much can be required" (line 49). The agency positioned as having survived a major crisis forms the assumption that the transition from an educational institution to a social institution has been completed, however, this transfer was very painful, and required huge efforts of the entire team and trust in each other. Elena speaks about the transition period with great pain, but at the same time she is proud of the care home staff, because "none of our workers fled, though a lot of them, of course, were about to" (line 51). She assigns a number of merits for retaining the staff to the managers, who "put a lot of efforts, really put efforts" (line 42). And, in fact, in the care home where Elena works, the change in the qualification requirements was not a cause for any of the staff members to leave the job, except for those who refused to get retrained due to the retirement age and retired on a pension. The situation in other care homes, which participated in the research, varies.

In the final stage of the analysis, I present a potentially possible subjective experience of the subject – what could have been felt, thought, experienced -, being in different positions. The subject positioned as a manager had to suffer frustration – tossing between what is usual, understandable, based on traditions, but can no longer be practiced in the usual form, and this what the institution needs to become in response to the contemporary requirements. As a manager, the subject feels responsible for the institution and employees, their fate, therefore, has to make every effort, helping the latter to adapt the changed requirements. The most painful experience, which is named, and felt throughout the entire text of the analysed excerpt is "uncertainty" (line 39, 106, 114, 116) for the future of the individual as well as the whole institution. On the one hand, this experience is understood as the engine of changes, encouraging the subject to adapt and, thus, remain in the institutional care. On the other hand, it is understood as an obstacle which is still an excuse to transfer the elements of experience formed over many years in today's social work practice, because the future is uncertain "when only the municipality funding is available" (line 115), "neither we nor anyone else knows" (line 124).

The subject positioned as an employee felt a big disappointment, because "all of us, who had been working earlier, all of us, faced the changes for the worse rather than for the better, with respect to the working conditions, work payment, holidays" (line 91–92). A hostile attitude against the new requirements was determined by the unclear procedure of retraining: "visitors from the Ministry arrived, we received letters, which said that educators, who had been working for so many years, really do not need any training, maybe some refresher courses only, we will

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get a different qualification and that's it, and we'll continue working as we've done before. And what happened? Like that, that if not the funding from the European Union, we might have lost our jobs. We were told that this was your problem, you have been warned, and you had to study" (line 118–122). The change in qualification requirements, and at the same time the change in the duties, is perceived as the underestimation of hard work and efforts – "the more you tried, worked, the more, it seems, it was on the contrary – the bigger the reduction" (line 110–111) – and again you have to start everything "from scratch" (line 102). The determination of the subject positioned as an employee to get retrained or to choose to leave the child care system was significantly influenced by the overall institutional strategy: the experience of an open institution allowed the subject to be more open to the changes.

What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the interview excerpt? Three discursive formations of the changes in the qualification requirements placed into professional social work discourse display three different discourses. First of all, the discursive formation of the change in the duties highlight the political discourse, reflected in Part 4 of Article 20 and Part 1 of Article 37 of the *Law on Social Services*, as of 1 July 2006, (2006-01-19, No. X-493).

In addition, the construction of discursive formation as the change in working conditions resonates with the economic discourse. The economic discourse dominates in terms of the changes in salary, working conditions, the scope of work; finally, discussing the staff's decision whether to get retrained or not, and to leave the institution, as well as discussing the costs of retraining, job loss "during the crisis" (line 112–113).

The psychological discourse is apparent in the construction of discursive formation as a change in the attitude to work. Social work in Lithuania is a young profession, whose image formation is still in process: an attitude to social work as equal to other professions is slow in formation both in the society and among the people who due to political decisions unexpectedly fell into the field of social work. The teaching profession held especially strong social positions in the country during the Soviet period. Teachers are very reluctant to easily give away the professional status positions once held, especially to new "undistinguished" professions, such as social work.

The Competences of a Social Worker of the Child Care Home

In search of an answer to the second question, I analyse the interview excerpt with the child care home worker Jurgita. Jurgita came to work at the care home with the social work educational background, acquired by working in other social support areas, and having planned her career in the field of social work. The most detailed description of social worker's competences was articulated by the respondents with the social work educational background. The analysis of the interview with Jurgita helps me to present all the four discursive formations, which I was able to identify after reviewing many times the results of all the interviews. I

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have picked several episodes for the analysis from the interview with Jurgita, which in one or another way help to answer the question. I analyse the episodes where we discuss with Jurgita the qualities needed for a social worker, employed in child care homes, which would respond to the needs of the residents of the homes. The analysis of these episodes helped me to reveal how the various discursive formations describing social worker's competences are intertwined with each other. I distinguish between the following discursive formations: *personal characteristics, professionalism, intuition-based actions,* and *institutional boundaries.*

One interview episode constructs social worker's competence by integrating values and abilities. Patience, tolerance, submissiveness (line 40–45), strictness, openness (line 49–51) are identified as qualities which construct the competence of a social worker, employed in child care homes. Moreover, it is very important for a social worker to manage to set certain limits and to prevent trespassing on them (line 11), "manage to forgive" (line 43), to be "more understanding" (line 49), "to show more initiative to act, to do, to travel, to communicate, to speak openly" (line 50–51), as well as "not to be limited" (line 68). All of these qualities construct a social worker as a personality, but also contribute to the formation of a person as a professional: developed personal qualities criterion (line 40–51), working with a client criterion (line 50–51, 68).

I identify one of the discursive formations describing the social worker's competence as intuition-based actions. This discursive formation is closely related with the discursive formation of social worker's personal characteristics. In the analysed extract, it is constructed by the model and values of the family, where a social worker was brought up (line 165–174), a hereditary inclination to help people (line 178–180). This is more an irrational criterion, formed by hardly identifiable and measurable qualities, however, it serves as an extremely valuable foundation on top of which social worker's competences are constructed and strengthened.

All the analysed episodes feature references, linking the social worker's competence to professional development, by acquiring more and "more knowledge so that to make appropriate decisions" (line 46), studies and "required education" (line 180), confirmed by the "diploma" (line 181) in a respective area. These references express the knowledge criterion in the social worker's competence, thus constructing the picture of a social worker as a professional. I identify the discursive formation itself as professionalism.

The analysed excerpts highlight the role of a care institution, where a social worker functions, in the formation of the social worker's competence. The rules used by the institution for a long time, the range of measures taken, the organizational culture (line 23–25) construct the institutional boundaries as the discursive formation in this excerpt. Finally, new workers are acquainted with their duties by the senior colleagues, who are trying to keep to the traditions of the institution, which "perhaps effectively and conveniently ensure a smooth activity of the institution" (line 27–28). Some employees take this for granted, as a norm, meanwhile,

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others, however, see this as "incompatible with their personal philosophy" (line 30).

A closer examination of the discursive contexts containing different discursive formations about social worker's competences provides additional insights. The text excerpt, where the social worker's competence is constructed as personal characteristics develops after my question, what a social worker needs in order to respond to a child's, living in the care home, needs. This question caused difficulties for Jurgita (likewise for many other respondents participating in the research), and this was what I didn't expected to happen when I was preparing the research instrument. During the discussion we had to postpone this question for a later time, because Jurgita saw it as "very difficult to answer" (line 7), and I returned to the same question later at the end of the interview. This discursive formation was developed not only by Jurgita's description what a social worker should be like, but also what a social worker should not be like. In the analysed text excerpt, it is emphasized that there "are a lot of limitations" (line 152), which "shouldn't be present" (line 168). "The limitations of educators" (line 168) are revealed by several Jurgita's examples from the daily care home routine: limitation is avoidance to discuss the topics with a child related to their sexual maturation, the changes taking place in their bodies, and new needs emerging (line 153–156). Another example, illustrating Jurgita's opinion that the educators are too limited is related to their inability to distinguish between a child as a person and his / h(uncultured) behaviour (line 157–167): instead of trying to figure out the causes of the child's inclination to publicly "release gas" (line 158) and to repeatedly misbehave, he is instantly identified as an outcast – giving him such titles as "a fool, moron" (line 167).

The discursive formation of personal characteristics is intertwined with the discursive formation of intuition-based actions. The discursive formation identified in the analysed part of the text is constructed by Jurgita's constantly given example of her colleague, who is characterised as having a mission to work in the child care home even without the social work educational background: children call her "mummy" (line 142–146), she is able to find this mystical balance between "strictness and leniency" (line 191–195). In one of the analysed episodes, Jurgita constructs this discursive formation looking for such personal mission in her family model, parental behaviour, which she observed while growing up, applying this difficult-to-define experience in her work (line 173–180).

The articulation of professionalism as discursive formation is very fragmentary in the analysed part of the text, but it was possible to discern it in Jurgita's behaviour during the interview: it unfolded in those episodes of the interview, where she spoke about specific cases from her professional daily routine. The efforts to ensure confidentiality, knowledge of professional ethics and the ability to apply it, the ability to timely perceive and professionally select the supportive measures (line 46–51), the ability to identify the "burnout syndrome" and to wilfully take

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preventive measures (line 96–102) were obvious both in Jurgita's speech and her behaviour during the interview.

Institutional boundaries as the discursive formation constructing social worker's competence is developed in the analyzed excerpt, first of all, from the discursive formation of intuition-based actions, when Jurgita contemplates loudly, why she takes one or another decision in her work (line 23–26). Repeatedly, this discursive formation occurs after my question how Jurgita shows children that they misbehave (line 34). The institutional boundaries for Jurgita – this was "an already developed model, when I came to work here" (line 36), which "is incompatible with my real life philosophy" (line 38), but "perhaps effective, probably it is convenient for them" (line 39) as a set of measures, "facilitating the work" (line 36).

In the context of discursive formations of the social worker's personal characteristics and intuition-based actions, the subject constructed as a *parent* is presented serially. This emerged from the interview excerpt. At first the subject is named as the one who has to "find a personal relationship with a child" (line 5–6), has "to be strict, strict as a mother" (line 7), to whom the care home children are "her children, and she does not spare them anything" (line 12). Later in the text it is apparently demonstrated that this subject position is not somewhat exclusive in the social work practice of child care home; speaking about her colleague, she reveals that this subject position is formed not only by the worker of the care home, by imagining their relationship with a child, but the children notice this and reflect upon: "the way children call her "mummy", you know this, she is mummy all 100 percent" (line 143–144). These references have positioned a parent as *emotionally responsible* for children.

Within the discursive formations of professionalism and institutional boundaries, the subject is also constructed as a *professional,* "feeling a great responsibility" (line 6), being "a good organizer" (line 7), managing to "keep a distance" (line 7), for the care home children – their clients, being far more forgiving than for their biological children, but at the same time clearly formulating the boundaries that cannot be trespassed (line 9–11). These references have positioned the professional as *professionally responsible to meeting a client's needs*.

What discursive practices could be defined (marked) in various subject positions? Positioning a parent as emotionally responsible presupposes the actions in the efforts to make personal, individual contacts with a child, thus creating a relationship as close and as natural as possible, and, most importantly, as normal as would be a typical relationship with the biological family. In this case, a child care resident is taken as a child, not as a client, for whom most important are the relationships which develop security, stability, trust, mutual respect. A professional positioned as a specialist, able to consciously organize their work, reveals a conscious, purposeful professional activity, whose performance requires not only universal values and personal traits, but also specific knowledge and skills that help to act purposefully.

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The subject positioned as a parent, wishing to respond to the needs of care home residents, first of all, certainly has to simply love children, because it is especially important to compensate for the emotional relationship of these children, which they lacked in their biological family. Therefore, such a Christian value as love of neighbor – becomes the most important value; protective feelings become relevant. In this case, personal maternity / parental experience are useful, meanwhile, developing the relationships close to a family model – of children and parents, the proportion between the age of a social worker and a child serves well. While constructing the emotion-based relationship, the connection is built, which passes across the boundaries of the care home and is capable of lasting for a long time: a social worker, likewise a father or mother, cares about the fate of the child, who has retired from the (care) home.

The subject positioned as a professional, managing to consciously organize their work, by responding to the client's needs, feels responsible for the work entrusted to him or her, understands that the care home resident is not only a child entrusted to their care, but also a social worker's client, whose needs have to be responded, but at the same time to respect the child as a social work client, even taking such decisions as "calling the police, writing of service letters" (line 101), "writing of statements to the police" (line 107), because "why to wait until the documents compile" (line 110). All this is done for "the smaller ones to see that something is being done, that some measures are taken" (line 109–110).

What answer could be formulated to the question from the analysis of the interview excerpts? Four social worker's competence discursive formations placed into professional social work discourse display four different discourses. Let us start with the fact that the discursive formations of professionalism and institutional boundaries highlight the political discourse, reflected in Part 4 of Article 20 and Part 1 of Article 37 of the *Law on Social Services* (2006-01-19, No. X-493).

The personal competence discourse – social worker's personal characteristics, their inner resources – dominate the speech of the employer herself. This is completely understandable, after all, as Dirgėlienė (2010) observes, the situation is confusing, the becoming of profession coincides with the intensive changes going on in society, whereupon the person's inner resources absorb the asynchronous dynamics of the two processes. Speaking with Jurgita and other respondents, I have noticed the regularity: the answers to the question about the social worker's knowledge, values and abilities typically started with the description of the social worker's personality, their inner resources.

The professional discourse was not clearly articulated in the analysed excerpt, but it was possible to discern it in Jurgita's behaviour during the interview, it was revealed in those parts of the interview, where she spoke about specific cases from her professional daily practice. Confidentiality, knowledge and the ability to apply professional ethics, the ability to timely perceive and professionally select the supportive measures, the ability to identify the features of the "burnout syndrome",

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and the ability to wilfully take preventive measures dominate the behaviour, reasoning of decision-making of the employees with the basic social work educational background. This discourse very clearly divided respondents into social work professionals and non-professionals.

The institutional discourse emerges as the aspect restricting a full-range unfolding of social worker's competences, but at the same time as the formative aspect. The institution, where a social worker comes to work has its own rules, the range of working measures, the organizational culture, finally, a new worker is acquainted with their duties by the senior colleagues, who are trying to keep to the traditions of the institution. Some workers take this for granted, as a norm, others see this as a factor restricting their opportunities.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the latter question was equally challenging for both types of respondents – with and without the social work educational background.

Conclusion

Social worker's competence in all fields of social work involves social worker's ability to act, determined by his knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes, personality traits and values. All these components lie inside social worker and manifest in successful results of his professional activity. The social worker's competence system is clearly depicted in the interaction model by Bagdonas (2001). The model reveals the social worker's professional competence system which comprises knowledge, values and skills. Knowledge in social work is based on specific methods and theory one can actually grasp and apply in practice. The set of certain values is one of the most important elements constructing social worker's professional competence. Skills are the third component, constructing social worker's competence system. This is a component of practice, connecting knowledge and values, as well as converting them into actions, a response to a concern or need. The ability to reflect, i.e. to link theory and practice, to give meaning to and reconsider the values and skills rooted in practice, which were formed on the basis of acquired knowledge, is one of the most significant features constructing social worker's competence. Today, various reflective techniques are applied; one of them is professional counselling (supervision). All these elements construct a coherent system of social worker's competences.

As far as the aim of this study was to reveal the nature of professional competence construction in social work based on accounts by social workers in child care homes about their relation to the profession, 10 employees of Klaipėda city and district children's homes were interviewed. These were social workers, social educators and administrative staff, working in the children's care system from 1 to 30 years. The carried out research covered different aspects of professional competence transformation in the institutional child care, but due to a

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limited scope of the article only two questions have been addressed. The analysed questions can be summarized as follows: transformation of professional competence is a long and painful process in the Lithuanian institutional child care system. An attitude to social work as equal to other professions is slow in formation both in the society and among the people who due to political decisions unexpectedly fell into the field of social work. The teaching profession held especially strong social positions in the country during the Soviet period. Teachers are very reluctant to easily give away the professional status position once held, especially to new "undistinguished" professions, such as social work. The institution, where a social worker comes to work has its own rules, the range of working measures, the organizational culture, finally, a new worker is acquainted with their duties by the senior colleagues, who are trying to keep to the traditions of the institution. What kind of institutions are child care homes? These are the institutions with a long history of Soviet tradition, where the persons engaged in practicing traditional methods of working with children for many years find it difficult to change them, and keep following the outdated concept of working with children. These are people who needed to adapt to the new requirements, which was extremely challenging or even impossible for the major part of them.

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