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Ulrich Oevermann's Attempt to Reconcile Theory with Practice

Ulrich Oevermann'ın Teori ile Pratiği Uzlaştırma Girişimi

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Abstract: The question of the theory-practice relationship does belong to the most important question of social sciences as well as of theoretical philosophy. While in philosophy this relationship is tried to be answered from an epistemological perspective, in the social sciences this relationship is approached either from the logic of action theory or systems theory. Where this relationship is successful, there is professionalisation. But the discourse on professionalisation is also about the question of how forms of knowledge, communication and action can be objectified in the lifeworld, which is interwoven with dense expectations, made effective, i.e. used in the functional systems of society in a purpose-rational way without endangering the conditions of this order. This paper discusses the theory of professionalization developed by Ulrich Oevermann. It aims to present and critically evaluate Oevermann's theory of professionalisation. Oevermann's approach is recalled to Parsons and Luhmann but still take the distinction between theory and practice as temporally state. After a discourse on Oevermann's understanding of routine/normal and crisis/borderline case, this shall be done in the discussion of his theory of professionalization from its genesis and then linked to three foci of professional action. In this course, Oevermann's focus of theory and therapy as a working alliance will be particularly emphasized. This is followed by a discourse on Oevermann's notions of the need for professionalization and professionalism. Finally, the need for professionalization of the pedagogical and nursing professions will be considered from the perspective of Oevermann himself.

Keywords: professionalization, need for professionalization, theory-practice relationship, action and system theory, working alliance

Öz: Teori-pratik ilişkisi sorusu, teorik felsefenin olduğu kadar sosyal bilimlerin de en önemli konularından biridir. Felsefe bu iletişimi epistemolojik bir perspektiften açıklamaya çalışılırken, sosyal bilimler bu ilişkiye ya eylem ya

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da sistem teorisi mantığından yaklaşmaktadır. Bu ilişkinin başarılı olduğu yerlerde profesyonelleşme söz konusudur. Ancak profesyonelleşme söylemi birde yoğun beklentilerle örülü yaşam dünyasında bilgi, iletişim ve eylem biçimlerinin nasıl nesnelendirilebileceği, etkin hale getirilebileceği, yani toplumun işlevsel sistemlerinde bu düzenin koşullarını tehlikeye atmadan amaca uygun bir şekilde kullanılabilirliği sorusuyla da ilgilidir. Bu makale Ulrich Oevermann tarafından geliştirilen profesyonelleşme teorisini tartışmaktadır. Makalenin amacı, Oevermann'ın profesyonelleşme teorisini sunmak ve eleştirel bir şekilde değerlendirmektir. Oevermann'ın yaklaşımı tartışılırken Parsons'a hatırlatma yapılacak ancak teori ve pratik arasındaki ayrım zamansal bir durum olarak işlenecek. Oevermann'ın rutin/normal ve kriz/sınır vaka anlayışı üzerine söylemden sonra, onun profesyonelleşme teorisinin gelişim süreci tartışılacak ve ardından profesyonel eylemin üç odağıyla ilişkilendirilmesi yapılacaktır. Makalede, Oevermann'ın bir çalışma ittifakı olarak teori ve terapi odağı özellikle vurgulanacaktır. Bunu, Oevermann'ın profesyonelleşme ihtiyacı ve profesyonelleşmişlik kavramları üzerine tartışma izleyecektir. Son olarak, Oevermann'ın kendi perspektifinden hareketle profesyonelleşme ihtiyacı ele alınacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: profesyonelleşme, profesyonelleşme ihtiyacı, teori-uygulama ilişkisi, eylem teorisi, çalışma ittifakı

Introduction

Oevermann's works are well known in German-speaking countries, but these have hardly been recited in Turkey. Oevermann was born on 28 February 1940 in Heilbronn, Germany and died on 11 October 2021 in Bern, Switzerland. He is considered as the founder of the methodology of Objective Hermeneutics. He is also one of the most influential sociologists in the discourse on professionalisation (Maiwald, 2004a and 2004b; Wernet, 2003). This paper will discuss Oevermann's theory of professionalisation. It is true that Oevermann is a theoretician of action. But in developing his theory of professionalisation and the need for professionalisation, he makes references to systems theories such as Talcott Parsons (1951) and Niklas Luhmann (1972).

At the core of this debate is the question of how the types of knowledge, communication and action acquired in the lifeworld can be objectified, made effective, i.e. used rationally for a purpose in the functional systems of society without questioning the terms within of that given order, or without getting into conflicts with the respective actors. This question is answered by systems-theoretical approaches such as those of Parsons (1951 and 1962), Luhmann (1984) Stichweh (1994, 1996 and 1987) and Kurtz (2022) according to whom the conflicts generated in the lifeworld on the basis of normative expectations are transferred into the conflict management modules in the functional systems of society, such as economy, law, education, health, etc., in that the actors do not allow their actions to be regulated by lifeworld norms, by social aspirations for consensus, but by the respective media (money, law, diploma, life) (Luhmann, 1997: 359-396).

The action-theoretical approaches claim exactly the opposite. According to this, first of all, the increase in complexity in the functional systems of society must be separated from the abstraction of validity aspects such as truth, correctness and sincerity (Habermas, 1987 I; :386, 410-427 and 1987 II: 246-257). If done, this difference allows social science to separate the ideologized particular interests from the legitimate, generalizable ideas. On the basis of this differentiation types of action are then designed, placed on a scale in relation to each other and finally placed in a causal relationship with (local, functional, universal, etc.) norms. Consequently, the focus in the action-theoretical approaches lies in the conditions of a mediation of theory (norms) with the facts in the respective functional systems of society (Habermas, 1998; Habermas, 1991: 125-137). The question is, under what conditions does theory enter into a complementary relationship with practice? This question is answered with the profession theory developed by Oevermann.

Oevermann's Concept of Mediation between Theory and Practice

Oevermann's approach is a theory-guided proposal for a mediation between practice and theory (Oevermann, 1997; 2001; 2002). In doing so, he distinguishes **first (1)** between a concretely prevailing sphere of the necessity of here and now and a sphere of social reality reflected, constructed and

transcended through language. The distinction is based on Oevermann's conviction that history is constituted by practical openness to the future. According to this, reality cannot be concluded from natural laws, historical necessity, or consciousness, but from actions based on practical decisions. Decisions can be made in one way or another and are insofar determined by contingencies, paradoxes and contradictions. According to Oevermann, decisions are not determined by reality, but the conditions of the actor's action account for only a small proportion compared to case structure factuality (Oevermann, 1997: 71-73). Case structure regularity thereby captures what Max Weber had conceptualized with ideal types (Weber, 1985). However, Oevermann's concept of case structure factuality differs from the ideal type in that it refers to the objectively given parameters of the respective actor. His determinants of action do not consist of the subjectively desired options or options that exist potentially in the social world, but rather options that are concretely available to the actor in the given situation (Oevermann, 1997: 73-74). In this Oevermann also sees the difference of the social sciences from the natural sciences. The object of the former is according to Oevermann given to it in a constitutive, sense-structured way.

"For without this sense-structuredness, a specifically social-humanities and cultural-scientific object of experience would not exist in the first place. In contrast to the tradition of New Kantianism, the theories of action, and the hermeneutics of the humanities, objective hermeneutics, hence its name, does not grasp this sense-structuring in terms of an understandably comprehensible subjective sense, but more fundamentally as a rule-generated objective sense that characterizes practical actions and their objectivizations." (Oevermann, 2001: 29)

Related to this is, **secondly, (2)** the fundamental distinction between participant and observer level that Oevermann discusses under the terms crisis/routine and normal case/borderline case, respectively. If we equate this distinction, at least functionally, with the systems-theoretic loose distinction between first and second levels, we could thus establish from both perspectives that the acting participant (life practice) faces daily challenges that he can only address at all if he regards them as crises on the second level and the conditions of action themselves as normal cases on the first level. From this we can see with Oevermann that the observer reflects the normal case as the problems, borderline cases consequently as the crises, which is why routine/normal case, proven solutions appear to him as atypical practices, which are located precisely on the second level. According to this understanding, crises of the participant on the first level are routines for the observer on the second level.

For while the participant sees in the routines with a backward-looking gaze the crises that have been successfully mastered and transformed into typical patterns of action, the observer analyses the crises with a gaze directed toward the future. For the participant, these crises each represent opportunities for learning for future crises, even if they are completed. The learning effects usually result only if they or because they have failed (even if they still appear to the agent himself as reasons for future action), or if they or because they have been justifiably defined by the observer as having failed, especially since they have been reflected as crises in the everyday life of the participant, at the first level, which is the level of the agent (Oevermann, 1997: 75-76). Although Parsons already drew attention to this tension, Oevermann also proposes a practical measuring instrument for this "contradictory unity of decision compulsion and obligation to justify" with sequence analysis (Parsons, 1951: 228; Oevermann, 1997: 77).

The sequence analysis (2a) is both the observation tool for the social merging of the participant and observer perspectives and for the temporal parallelization of the here and now, as well as it serves to distinguish the methodical understanding of the observer from the practical understanding of the participant himself. Oevermann assumes that the reality of the participant can be reconstructed, but the practice itself, the practical accomplishment itself is not replaced with it. The question now is, how are the perspectives of ego and alter to be brought together?

Oevermann seeks the answer in professional action (2b). Thus, he considers a mediation of theory with practice not in the withdrawal of the scientist, in the *vita contemplativa*, but rather in his practical action itself (Oevermann, 1997: 79). In fact, the presumed tension between theory-practice can only be mediated in the moment of social success. Consequently, Oevermann rightly assumes that the contradictions assumed even with a realist epistemology cannot be abolished, avoided or even eliminated, but can be temporally postponed to the next moment, at the moment of practical success. This postponement has thereby rather the character of an action, as of knowledge. In this context, Oevermann refers to Weber's model of purpose-rational action, in which he sees the merging of action coordinated according to means-purpose-relationship with the knowledge of a discipline imbued with reason and ratio and founded by virtue of better argument, as Habermas would argue (Habermas, 1991). The addressee of Weber's principle of value freedom was (social) science as a profession and not (social) science as discipline - as Stichweh would distinguish it (Stichweh, 1997). Therefore, according to Oevermann, Weber's partisanship of value freedom was meant in terms of action theory, not epistemology. In other words, Oevermann makes the assumption that if the moment of the observing scientist's deferral is accompanied by the moment of a participant's action to manage the crisis, then from the perspective of a currently uninvolved observer this moment can be conceived as the manifest site of professionalization and for the participant as the practical operation of mediating theory with practice (Oevermann, 1997: 79). In this simultaneous rationalization of decision and action, Oevermann sees the basis of professionalization theories that address the issues of mediating theory with practice. These cases raise the question how autonomy is possible in heteronomy, in the words of Oevermann himself, as "in the mediation of theory and practice and in the respect for and restoration of a damaged autonomy of practice in the name of science" (Oevermann, 1997: 80). The epistemic answer of science to this question is seen and re-produced in the professionalization discourse on theory-practice relationship and the corresponding action of practice itself in theory-practice mediation.

"Professionalized action is essentially the social site of the mediation of theory and practice under conditions of scientific rationality, that is, under conditions of problem solving in practice to be scientifically justified." (Oevermann, 1997: 80)

The genesis of professionalization

Historically, according to Oevermann himself the rationalization of knowledge has shown itself in the mystical withdrawal, which was systematized and ethically monopolized on the theme of the fall of man and the expulsion from paradise, from the magic garden in the creation myth of ancient Judaism. The theory-practice relationship is reflected here in the dualism of worldly rule and ethical prophecy, which then turns with the transition to modernity into the distinction of political-entrepreneurial, routine-executing rule and the intellectual-professionalized, crisis-managing action (Oevermann, 1997: 81)

"On a second level of derivation, then, we reckon *professionalized* action and its historical antecedents -together with political, entrepreneurial, and intellectual action, to the complex of *systematic renewal through crisis management*." (Oevermann, 1997: 82)

This dualism is reflected today in the distinction between an immediately practical crisis management through practical decision-making on the first level and the intrinsic logic of reconstructive processing of questions of validity on the second level (Oevermann, 1997: 82-87). The first stage, or first level, would be about practical decision-making and its enforcement, which was historically reflected in the practice of administrative power. It was legitimized "in order to be able to operate and decide the common good and a legitimizing principle of justice bound crisis management with practical consequences." (Oevermann, 1997: 83) It is reproduced in the society-oriented action of the intellectual, the entrepreneur and the artist. The second level is about the reflection of the decision. Here social practice is approached under certain norms of validity without seeking a reference to practical crisis management (84). Innovations emerge from both phases. In both cases, Oevermann expects the processing of validity claims to become independent of practice, which he considers the guide to professional action. It is primarily not the rationalization of the life-world, but *either the knowledge*, or perception dimension of intellectual penetration and imagination, the ideas of a philosopher withdrawn

in his cage, or it is the interests of the entrepreneur. Oevermann sees the driving force of professionalization in the "inherent logic of the power of the mind," in the arguments of the community-oriented intellectual, the ethical prophets effective unfolding moments (Oevermann, 1997: 85).

"On a third level of derivation, then, professions and is the logic of professionalized action are attributable to this independent function of dealing with questions of validity and, in this independence through methodological explicitness, are withdrawn from personal charismatization or the charismatization of the personnel. An immediate charismatized performance of professionalized practice ('demigod in white' in the case of physicians) would already be a deviation from the ideal-typical habitus¹." (Oevermann, 1997: 86)

The question, however, is how they are now transformed from this ubiquitous origin to one that is handed down through institutionalized training, yet not technically routinized (Oevermann, 1997: 86; cf. Parsons, 1951: 228)? Oevermann seeks the most important prerequisite for this in the intellectual-reflexive and practical attempt to cope with crises, which, as a result of the increase in complexity of the structures of action, increasingly requires forward-looking action. As soon as questions of validity become "sufficiently stable detached" (87) from the concrete incumbent, his status, prestige and personal interests under an abstract, socially supported principle, then the transition is initiated from the questions of practical good decisions forced by coincidences of life to the phase of "doubtless justifiability and reasonableness" (87) of the abstract ideas themselves (Oevermann, 1997: 87).

Three foci of professional action

On this theoretical-genealogical basis, Oevermann identifies three functional foci for a design of professional action (88-95). These are the constitution of the concrete social order (a), the design of its subsystems for the integration of individuals for the purpose of their psycho-social integrity (b), and (c) concepts for the "methodologically explicit verification of validity questions and claims under the regulative idea of truth." (Oevermann, 1997: 88) While the former, according to Oevermann, are in a repulsive tension with each other, they are mediated with each other in the third foci, from which professional action sui generis also emerges, as Durkheim would put it (Durkheim, 1976: 109).

Constitution of Order (1): In the first foci there is, on the one hand, the critique of existing (civic) order and, on the other hand, its overcoming and stabilization through contractual solidarity as a new type of solidarity (90). Once the phase is reached, a new constellation of critique-stabilization and its rationalization under new conditions occurs. Otherwise, anomalies arise and social processing takes the form of coping, for example, through revolutions.

The stabilization and/or coping with the crises is stylized on the personality level, the law of case structure, either by constituting a special role such as invalidity and deviance, or is redeemed preventively in the structures of social solidarity (91-92). The dialectic of detachment and rationalization of practical crisis management from questions of validity, already addressed in the dualism of secular rule and ethical prophethood, finds with the modern era a universalistic form of its organization in the universities. Universities are the places, the enclosure, scientific-methodical discourses, which are free from the constraint of practice in terms of content. In them, the question of the relationship of theory-practice could be determined as the object of empirical science, reproduced with its methods, and handed down to the next generation through the corresponding discourses, as well as de-charismatized in the habitus formation of the professor (Oevermann, 1997: 92-94, 123-33). In the final result, according to Oevermann, there is a differentiation between activities specialized in social control and therapy procurement on the one hand and their justification on the other, from which then precisely the

¹ Original text reads: *Auf einer dritten Ableitungsstufe sind also Professionen und ist die Logik professionalisierten Handelns dieser verselbständigen Funktion der Bearbeitung von Geltungsfragen zuzurechnen und in dieser Verselbständigung durch methodische Expliztheit der personalen Charismatisierung bzw. der Charismatisierung des Personals entzogen. Eine unmittelbare charismatisierte Durchführung von professionalisierter Praxis (Halbgott in Weiss' bei Ärzten) wäre schon eine Abweichung vom idealtypischen Habitus.*

precursors of the classical professions (lawyers, theologians, and medical doctors) emerge (Oevermann, 1997: 94).

The universities sharpen the respective tensions between the method of experience with revelation and authority (96), discipline with profession, natural science with empirical science (95-109). In the Humboldtian universities, however, the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences are united in their differences in the philosophical faculties (97). Here, Oevermann sees the difference mainly in the fact that in old faculties of theology, medicine and jurisprudence and corresponding professions, the focus was not on disciplinary research, but on professional action (97). Oevermann suggest that these professions were not professionalized because of their subject matter, but they owed their profession to their engagement, their reflexive scientific discourse about themselves, which they may attach to their subject matter. According to this, it was not the object itself, but the reflection on it that led to the profession. Oevermann elaborates this thesis on the one hand on the "ineluctable categorical difference of science and practice" and on the other hand on the difference between the need for professionalization of the discourse of experiential science and their professionalization (Oevermann, 1997: 98, cf. 135-140). According to this thesis, the great difference between theory and practice is that the scientific-theoretical discourse is guided by universalities oriented to knowledge, which is why it had to refrain from concrete, particular and specialized practice itself.

"Scientific discourse constitutes itself as paradoxical impractical practice. It is obvious that this abstraction from practice does not entail any major methodological consequential problems for the natural sciences, because their subject matter is itself set apart from practice. But in the humanities and cultural studies, or in the human sciences, the problem to be methodologically clarified is how an empirical science abstracted from its indelible factual foundation in practice can take practice as its object of research and thereby maintain this abstraction and impartiality, in other words, the methodological distance from the object." (Oevermann, 1997: 99)

The difference between methodological criticism based on argumentation-logical coherence, logical consistency and practical questioning of the existing order and its principles of sense-making is also based on this epistemologically founded difference. At the same time, the logic of the better argument enters into a union with the scientific discourse established in the scientific community on the forms of exchange among equals (100, 103). In its problematization and constitution, scientific discourse is professionalized in that it is guided under its own ethical universalist principles, controlled by its own bodies, and consummated in its autonomy from practice. This discourse is not guided by the interests that preserve order, but by the regulative idea of truth and counterfactual norms of validity (102 f). In it, science constitutes itself "as impractical practice" (Oevermann, 1997: 105).

The Focus Therapy (2): One of these practices is called therapy. To specify it, Oevermann also operates with the attributes "diffuse" and "specific" borrowed from Parsons, but instead of contrasting them in the interaction between patients and clients, Oevermann defines therapy as the contradictory unity of diffuse and at the same time specific patterns of interaction (Oevermann, 1997: 109-134). Therapists are neither expected to act in permanently specific roles alone, nor to assume social control in the sense of re-socialization into society. Instead of assuming that the therapist codes all actions as either "diffuse" or "specific", Oevermann expects reflection on contradictory expectations; firstly, in therapy there is the expectation of a structurally predetermined role action. According to this, the therapist acts according to the guidelines of the profession. This action is characterized by specificity and professionalism as well as simultaneous and, in many cases, equally effective no-role action. Disappointment appears here as the other side of professionalism. This also addresses the second expectation. Where disappointment is systematically registered, there is a diffuseness regarding role action, which illustrates the need for professionalisation of action. The most important reason for this shift seems to be that Oevermann sees therapy as a highly specific action. This is re-socialisation, which can hardly be specific, especially since the person as a whole is involved here. Therefore, unambiguity can hardly be expected here. The place of re-socialization and diffuseness are the structures of a participation in society where the adolescents as well as the adults meet in contradictory patterns of interaction. Re-socialisation thus does not take place in therapy with a professional. Rather, therapy "in

the practical participation in the structure of familial socialisational interaction in the structural legality of the oedipal triad", which Oevermann analyses in three different dyads, namely (a) generic relationship, (b) mother-child relationship and (c) father-child relationship (c) (Oevermann, 1997: 110, cf. Demir, 2022). Oevermann considers these as "the only known prototypes" of diffuse interactions.

Oevermann excludes diffuse social relations from specific role action and assumes non-role conformity for the latter case. Accordingly, diffusivity and role conformity are mutually exclusive. Oeverman understands role as an idealized social construct, but not as a passive bearer of socially institutionalized expectations (Oevermann, 1997: 110). With this understanding, the goal is first of all to determine the oedipal triads according to the understanding of diffuse social relations instead of according to the category of specific role form, especially since everything remains thematizable in it at any time (111-112). The goal itself is achieved when modes of action of an elementary, role-free sociality according to the pattern of a diffuse relation are assigned to the human being, and not to the marginal, the deviant. Specifically, Oeverman expects a therapist to act in conformity with the role, but therefore not also to act without contradiction in his action and/or expectations, always specific and purged of diffuseness. Conversely, in contrast to Parsons the client does not symbolize diffusivity, role-inadequate, deviant action, nor the absence of specificity. Diffusivity is action independent of the role (ascribed and/or acquired) and peculiar to the person. It can disappear only in the absence of social relations. In other words, being a father, a daughter, a mother, a wife and a husband remain social roles even if everything is thematized in the family and this-everything-is-thematization is a defining feature of the family, that is, it is considered normal. Because of a definition according to which they are not roles, their social constitution does not disappear. But the question is whether they have to conform to the institutional expectations of a society. Oevermann answers this question in its negation by withdrawing the category of roles from the social structure of a society. Therefore, the oedipal triad assume the function of role conformity within the family alone, which also punishes deviations, exerts a social control, but in the best case transforms the role inconsistencies into contradictory unity of diffuse social relations without pathologizing them. Rather, the deviations are cast in a lifeworld language, such as taboo (sexuality) and/or jealousy (Oevermann, 1997: 113)

The practical question is how autonomy is generated in these three different dyads? Oevermann sees the characteristic of them in exclusivity and its factual opposite. According to this, the child (a) must share the father with the mother. The child (b) is exposed to the interactions of the mother and the father, as well as to the interactions between them. Finally, the child (c) must have the same qualitative type of relationship with both the father and the mother, unless he or she is subjected to the jealousy of one or both of them at the same time. Although there are at least three different patterns of interaction, the result is the same in each case, jealousy. Max Weber would put at least here the total unity (*Einigkeit/Innigkeit*) as contrast to the jealousy. In any case, it already logically needs the other side of jealousy, which Oevermann seeks in reciprocal sexuality between in father-mother relationship and in incestuous sexual taboo among the children and/or child-parents (113). The respective crises in the oedipal triads are occasions for becoming autonomous. The child must detach itself from the symbiosis with the mother and enter into a contradictory, increasingly reciprocal interaction with mother and father, which in the best case ends with the attainment of its own autonomy, whereby Oevermann sets this autonomy to an analogy with the myth of the expulsion of man from paradise (Oevermann, 1997: 114-115).

Therapy as a working alliance (3): Characteristic of the diffuse and at the same time specific interactions, relational practice in therapy is the voluntary working alliance to mitigate and/or eliminate the bodily and/or psychosocial damage of the client. Oevermann lists six structural elements of this working alliance (Oevermann, 1997: 115-122). Working alliance is constituted with the patient's insightful decision (1) to recover his damaged autonomy with therapy. Working alliance is based on the basic rule (2), according to which the patient, in accordance with the structure of diffusivity, should tell everything that goes through his mind, even if that what is told seems so trivial to himself. For the physician, the same basic rule is that he should bring up feelings necessary for the patient's healing, he

should stage them according to the diffusivity assumption for his healing (Oevermann, 1997: 116). The therapist should only stage feelings in the sense of a counter-transference (3) insofar as he does not actually express them. For this, the patient must overcome "the inhibition threshold to diffuseness" (117). The patient has the role only in the lesson, while the doctor reciprocally is not a role bearer outside the lesson (Oevermann, 1997: 118). Both are in a latent symmetrical relationship (4) insofar as both are in a diffuse and at the same time specific working alliance. Manifestly, the relationship is asymmetrical, since doctor defines the framework of therapy for the benefit of the patient, for which the patient with his healthy parts pays the lines of the doctor, so that this asymmetry autonomously recognizes. In the table below is reflected diagram of symmetry and asymmetry in the contradictory unity of specificity and diffusivity in therapeutic working alliance (Oevermann, 1997: 119).²

Table 1: Working alliance according to Oevermann

Structure of the working alliance	Physician	Patient
Specific relationship	Abstinence rule	X
Diffuse relationship	Y	Basic rule

What is pathological about transference (5) is that it is expressed in the life world at conflict situations and the actors fail to adhere to intended rules in the respective situations, because they do not differentiate between this situation and the previous case and re-enact the old at the new situation (Oevermann, 1997: 119). The relationship between doctor and patient is pathological when this transference takes the form of the therapist analysing his problems and not those of the patient (120). On the other hand, if the professional allows countertransference feelings as a moment of reflection, he can put himself into the patient's position in the world (Oevermann, 1997: 120). Even if this succeeds, not only the goal of (complete) understanding of the patient, but also of his (complete) healing remains a counterfactual idealization (6). Instead of a total recovery, the end of therapy is accompanied by a pragmatic, risk-weighting decision. It is not a contractual relationship between equals. While both can end the alliance, the therapist is also obligated to do so without any worsening consequence to the patient, while the patient's termination of the working alliance may also be associated with escape behaviour.

The other side of this attribution of competence to the working alliance is Oevermann's mirror image to them presented obligations of the professionals to standards, which they have to acquire in the context of a training. To it first of all scientific-methodical qualifications and the appropriate action authority belong, thus ability for the well-being of the patient to intervene. It is precisely in these practices that theory and practice are interlinked. This ability is not to be acquired by theoretical indoctrination, acquisition of book knowledge, but "only by practical training in an art doctrine and practice of action" (123). Consequently, during training "primarily not knowledge acquisition but habitus formation" is pursued (Oevermann, 1997: 123). The therapist, as a representative of his profession, is given the responsibility of the ability of a professionalized action in the case that his action is based on knowledge and skills acquired through scientific knowledge and methods

The need for professionalization and professionalism

Oevermann sees an essential characteristic of professions in the fact that they are neither controlled by the market nor by the administration, but are supervised by colleagues, i.e. by associations, which are guided by the idea of ethical self-regulation. Second, profession is not expertise and professionalization is not expertization, especially since "'technocratic' expertization can amount to deprofessionalization." (Oevermann, 1997: 70) Rather, Oevermann sees the tendencies toward deprofessionalization in the disconnection and encapsulation from society. Wherever theory deviates

² Legend: X = self-evident qua patient role (= layperson; everyday practical sphere); Y= self-evident qua therapist role.

from its claims to validity in the name of and/or for practice and/or, just the opposite, practice decouples from society, tendencies toward deprofessionalization arise (Oevermann, 1997: 106-109).

Oevermann's idea of a mediation of theory with practice is also connected to this distinction. Thereby, even in the social and human sciences, the problems of practice can only be made accessible to theory through an abstraction from real-existing practice. In this respect, there is generally the "insurmountable," "fundamental, inescapable categorical difference" between theory and practice (138). But the technically and engineeringly oriented natural sciences can calculate and predict the consequences of the application of their products and minimize the risks through new, better products without first having to theorize their theory and methods. "The theoretical language of the natural sciences cannot conceptualize the practical problems from the outset; it can only articulate their technological reduction." (Oevermann, 1997: 138) In contrast, the social and human sciences are forced to solve the "products" achieved through their concepts, offers, appropriation processes, which are reflected, for example, in a decision making proses, not vicariously for the subject who has this product. On the contrary, exactly there they begin to separate from natural science, because exactly then also their type of taking responsibility begins (Oevermann, 1997: 139).

Along this insight, Oevermann also draws the line between the need for professionalization and professionalization on the one hand and semi-professions and professions on the other (135-140). According to this, all technical and engineering professions are professionalized on the level of practice, but not on the level of theory. They are in need of professionalization in terms of their theories because they need a theory to theories of practice.

"It's need for professionalization is exhausted, so to speak, in the professionalization of scientific discourse as such. Beyond that, it no longer exists. Therefore, even outside the introduction into the scientific discourse as such, these semi-professions do not need any further professional ethical ties and institutionalizations as professional associations. Where these exist, they are, from a professionalization-theoretical point of view, superfluous beyond a mere representation of interests and point to the fact that here, in fact, mere professional prestige and decor are to be generated." (Oevermann, 1997: 139)

In the case of the social and human sciences, the need for professionalization exists in the practice of their theories, which are guided by a very specific image of man or by a certain aspect of validity, which is reflected in the way of working with the client. Since this transfer of theories requires explanation, the practice remains in need of professionalization. On the other hand, the need for professionalization of the technical-engineering professions does not go to their practice, to their products in reality, in which this transformation has (not) succeeded, but to the theoretically necessary discourses in the life-world, which can also only be redeemed in a language of theories. In the social and human sciences, these discourses are related to aspects of validity, such as justice, which is objectified in the cooperation with clients. The technical-engineering professions, as well as the semi-professions, if they do not merely perform technical routines, as is the case in the crafts, require a theoretical justification in the scientific discourse, and not in the practical application itself.

The need for professionalization of pedagogical professions

First, pedagogical action differs from education in the parental home, kinship and settlement community by its explicit role specialization, which is why pedagogical action requires justification, teaching and professionalism (Oevermann, 1997: 141-145). The parents themselves declare the pedagogical institutions responsible for certain educational goals and functions (142). They hand over their omni-responsibility with regard to certain functions to professions. A parallel between therapy and pedagogy lies in the fact that both withdraw their actions from naturalistic practice. In both cases, the objective of a person's psychosocial integrity is attempted to be achieved under legitimate validity aspects according to scientifically reproducible methods. In both cases there is a need for a justification of the practical, own, autonomously directed arts and their mediation with theory. In contrast to the family and other forms of socialization such as that in religion, according to Oevermann the most

important function of pedagogy lies in the transmission of knowledge, such as the transmission of experiential knowledge, traditional knowledge and cultural techniques. Even though he assumes the primacy of knowledge transmission, pedagogy also holds the function of norm transmission (Oevermann, 1997: 145).

Second, pedagogy as a practical art acquires a therapeutic dimension through the fact that students are usually in an adolescent crisis that affects the whole person of the student and for which reason whatsoever it goes beyond the transmission of knowledge and norms (146-151). This pedagogical therapy differs from the therapeutic working alliance because it does not represent a contradictory unity of diffuse and specific social relations. Rather, it is based on an asymmetry between the student and teacher, since the student as a whole person has to learn role-acting from the teacher for the first time. To put it bluntly, the student has not yet learned the structure of diffuse and specific and the teacher in his relationship to the student does not need it at all. In this respect, therapy refers to potency, to the possibility of role-shaped action (Oevermann, 1997: 148-159).

Third, since a working alliance has to be based on symmetry, Oevermann's theory of professionalization raises the question of what structural logic such cooperation is based on (152-156). Oevermann finds the answer in the necessity of 'helping people to help themselves,' after which pedagogy answers the question of Kant on how autonomy is possible despite heteronomy. In contrast to therapy, in which the patient engages in a contract with the therapist by virtue of the healthy, autonomous part of his or her personality, pedagogy is concerned with developing the student's autonomy for the first time. Pedagogy, in 'helping the student to help himself', does not draw on the healthy part of the patient, as in therapy, but on relative autonomy of the student, on the one hand, through the expectation of the student's own performance communicated during his socialization on the other hand, and through institutionalized cooperation with the parents (Oevermann, 1997: 152).

Fourthly, for Oevermann the question arises here, what kind of equivalent of the patient's suffering pressure is there for the student in pedagogy. In therapy, the patient voluntarily surrenders to the logic of needing help under the expectation of an acknowledgement of his suffering (153). An equivalent implies a necessity for heteronomy on one's own and a gain from this structural logic at the same time.

"The only possibility that arises is the child's curiosity and thirst for knowledge. Similar to the patient's recognition of his sick parts in his pressure of suffering with his healthy parts, the curious and knowledge-thirsty child declares himself, on the foil of what he already knows about the world, as a subject who does not yet know much of what he wants to know and should know, and in this recognition categorically commits himself as a subject who should strive to close this gap between developed and not yet developed parts of his person. *In this construction, this obligation then constitutes the social role of the schoolboy as one in need of instruction, analogous to his social role of the patient as one in need of healing.*" (Oevermann, 1997: 153)

Analogous to therapy, the relationship is diffuse because the student entrusts himself to the teacher in his totality as a non-knowing, the teacher acknowledges the student's deficiency in this totality with the aim of accompanying the student to his autonomy according to a certain poison-counterpoison model. The relationship between them is at the same time specific, because the teacher has to take the same role for all pupils, to respond to their individual specific curiosity in their being a pupil, by justifying this personal attention objectively with the knowledge certainty. The interaction is assigned in roles of instructing and learning.

"The lack of professionalization of pedagogical action now shows itself under the internal aspect of daily practice above all in the fact that teachers cannot maintain this contradictory unity of diffusivity and specificity, but allow it to disintegrate either into the aloof 'childishness' of the student or into technological, knowledge and administrative expertism." (Oevermann, 1997: 155)

A counterpart to therapeutic transference in pedagogy results from three types of knowledge and value appropriation, which Oevermann imagines as building on each other. It is about how the subject appropriates the world, which simplifications, abbreviations and foreshortenings (in the sense of a failure, even pathology) are made, why and how. In its ideal type, this transference is found in maieutic, a kind of Socratic pedagogy or funnel pedagogy (Oevermann, 1997: 156-162).

Fifth, Oevermann finds one of the most essential tensions in the unity of pedagogy in the structurally given expectation in a working alliance between school in the address of the teacher and pupil as the subject accompanying to autonomy, whereby the parents are in fact in a working alliance with the pupils through the legally binding compulsory school attendance (162-171). Theoretically, compulsory schooling counteracts the assumption that the student first has to gain autonomy and that consequently, during the appropriation period, compulsory schooling represents the formal solution to the transitional phase. In fact, this gap-filling function is supported by the founding logic of therapy, according to which the adult patient enters into a working alliance with the treating physician in his limited autonomy but for full autonomy. On the other hand, the student cannot be granted autonomy at all during the phase of "therapy" already because of his minor status. "The compulsion of compulsory schooling - quite logical in itself - as a heteronomous determination of the child replaces his lack of autonomy." (Oevermann, 1997: 170)

From the model of a professional theory, autonomy through heteronomy, Oevermann raises the question of how students can be enabled to achieve autonomy through the transmission of knowledge and norms without having pushed them into the state of a hopeless attempt to achieve autonomy despite *de facto* coercion. Put simply, the question is, should the student's autonomy aspirations or the coercion of legally established compulsory education be taken as the starting point of a pedagogy as therapy? Oevermann's answer is that both are exactly the same in the end result. Instead of this either/or logic and instead of a logic of lacking autonomy in factual heteronomy, he proposes the construct of a pedagogical working alliance, according to which the student concedes a factual, momentary, spatially, thematically, and temporally limited autonomy restriction in favour of a future autonomy (170).

"Now one sees immediately that this trial action is structurally supported from two sides: on the one hand, by the pedagogical working alliance itself, for which the school as an institution establishes and secures the protective and sparing space; on the other hand, however, also by the duty of care of the parents, in which the pupil is placed until the conclusion of the adolescent crisis and which is renewed again and again even later in crises, thus remaining latent throughout life." (Oevermann, 1997: 171)

Consequently, Oevermann argues for the abolition of compulsory schooling, for which he gives two types of reasons (163). According to his genetic argument, compulsory schooling is based on the assumption, which has not been empirically tested under modern conditions, that students naturally tend not to be motivated to learn, which is why they have to be motivated externally to cooperate with the school system during their education in that very school system (169-170). Oevermann sees in this argumentation the tendency of a total institution, which is also mendacious, especially since it attributes its reasons for existence to the external motivation of its objects. Legal compulsory education prevents the emergence of the moment of autonomous action in favour of a pedagogical working alliance with the school and the parents. On the other hand, the need for professionalization of pedagogical action goes back to the legally prescribed compulsory schooling (Oevermann, 1997: 161-163).

Here, professionalization emerges on the one hand as a reason for its necessity and on the other hand as a consequence of its existence. Professionalisation need and professionalism are intended to serve these as two pools of a single entity. But then the question arises, what is the need for a value-rational abstraction, if not otherwise as a foil for a critique and execution of one's own position, which in this case does nothing but describe. Facts, however, cannot serve the facts as a source of criticism. A is A and B is B. If A is neither cause nor consequence of B, they are two different entities. If, on the

other hand, they stand in a causality, they can be taken as reasons of their existence, which, after all, are not discovered from their nature, but are due to our own attribution itself.

"If this legal obligation to attend school were to be abolished, then the structural logic of pedagogical action would have changed abruptly. Then there would no longer be a problem of discipline in principle, then the 'tamer' syndrome would cease to exist, then there would no longer be any pedagogical 'zampanos'³ in the teachers' room in terms of skill in dealing with the problem of discipline. Then the teacher, supported collegially by others in the same position, would be much more likely to address himself and the school in cases of impending failure and to investigate factually rather than locating the problem with the student, be it negatively in the attribution of laziness, laziness, impudence, or neglect by the home, or positively in the attribution of 'giftedness,' 'brilliance,' 'above average,' 'exceptional,' 'critical faculties,' and similar pedagogical 'stigmatizations.' Then the student would become attached to the teacher as his Socratic partner on the basis of trust, goodwill, and appropriateness of subject matter, instead of senselessly 'investing' energies in a structurally wrong resistance. Then the class association would also be a completely different one: not characterized by individual competition and grade envy, by mere negative association and negative peer-group solidarity in resistance to the school as an institution, but by insight into variants of a structurally similar situation, by exemplary learning from the problems of the neighbour." (Oevermann, 1997: 168)

Now parents step into the working alliance for their children because of their lack of autonomy and current compulsory schooling (171-176). Here, Oevermann distinguishes between parents who act in the sense of their children's autonomy and those who cannot, insofar representing a special case. In the second case, the legal obligation of schooling would turn the special case into the normal case (172). This constellation gives rise to deviations and perversions that can be avoided by abolishing compulsory schooling (Oevermann, 1997: 176).

3. Review

Although, according to the author himself, the essay is a sketch, an outline to a theory, and not an elaborated theory itself, it is precisely with this sketch that Oevermann presents the most important arguments for a mediation of theory with practice. Professions, according to this understanding, are the solution of the tension between theory and practice. According to this, something normal is theorized because it generates certain dissonances without a rationale. From the logic of the distinction between normal case/routine/continuity and borderline case/crisis/discontinuity, professionalization can then be understood as an attempt at an equilibrium between these two levels. It is then no longer a matter of the equilibrium between social control and deviance, as in Parsons, but a reflection on the fact that continuity is in a structural relationship with decay and discontinuity. From the same logic can be derived the need for professionalization of social scientific theory in the attempt to establish an equilibrium with practice and need for professionalization of natural scientific practice in the attempt to establish an equilibrium with theory.

The practice of social scientific theory is in need of professionalization because it is practice, but needs to be theorized constantly. On the other hand, the practice of the natural sciences is not in need of theory, but their theory is in need of practice: if we were to take the theory-practice relationship in the social sciences as a model, it turns out that it is not their practice, but the absence of theories about their theories, or more precisely the problematizing of theories through a language of theory, that constitutes their neediness. Natural sciences escape the neediness of theories with a new product. In Oebermann's language itself; their neediness for professionalization is exhausted in the professionalization of praxiological discourse as such. This marks the difference to natural sciences as well as to theory and at the same time indicates the distinguishing feature of praxis, which is neither theory, research, nor science, even if it has components of all of these.

³ Man who wants to impress by exaggerated, boastful behavior or gives the impression of being able to make the impossible possible.

With the concept of case structure legality and the methodology sequence analysis connected with it, the orientation to Max Weber's ideal type can also be seen, from which professionalization can then be understood as the place of value freedom. Oevermann incorporates Weber's distinction between value and purpose rationality and the associated personality based on reputation (charisma) and influence into his model. On this basis, he proposes, on the one hand, a differentiation in the organizational unit of the professionalized and/or professionalizable action type and, with "abolish compulsory education", an action instruction in which a mediation of theory-practice in practical action can be achieved.

Oevermann's concept of the need for professionalization, however, still builds on Parsons' model of psychotherapy. In contrast to Parsons, Oevermann does not consider illness as a deviation, but as a questioning of a whole person, since its non-treatment would result in the loss of autonomy of the person concerned. In fact, Parsons focus from the beginning on the deviation from normal, which is why his view is directed backwards to restoration to the old (Parsons, 1951). Not the deviation, but the attainment or preservation, the optimization or even the improvement of the normal can just as well be defined as the goal of medicine, of the health care system. In these cases, the meaning of therapeutic treatment would be the restoration of autonomy, for which the doctor enters into an interaction with the patient on the basis of a doctrine of art acquired according to scientific methods. Since the whole person of the patient is involved in the interaction, the relationship of the doctor to the client cannot be other than that of a mediation of contradictory expectations; "Primary to professionalized action is thus the simultaneously diffuse and specific relationship to the client, whose bodily and/or psychosocial damage is to be eliminated or alleviated. I call this relational practice the working alliance." (Oevermann (1997). 115) By working alliance is meant this simultaneity of a contradictory and mutually at least latently coordinated relationship orientation. In this respect, the success of professional action depends on the institutionalization of certain practices of action of the respective profession, which consolidate the autonomy of the patient and the professionalization of the professions and at the same time restrain forms of deprofessionalization.

However, Oevermann's idea of a Socratic pedagogy, which means acting at eye level, is not approached by the interactions in a school class between pupil and the teacher, but in a counselling situation with the school social workers. In school social work, the idea prevails that adults, children, and even the immature adult bind themselves to a law because of their ability to reach a consensus, which society attests to them. While in the case of mature persons the communication with society is established directly, in the case of children and immature adults the path to autonomy is prolonged insofar as it presupposes a double confirmation, that of the representatives of the person and that of society. This is also the closeness to the therapy, as well as to the consultation with a lawyer and with the school social work; while the confirmation to a heteronomy for the purpose of an autonomy with the mature adults occurs directly with the consent of the person, it is fetched with immature people by means of their representatives.

In all cases, although an appeal is made to the insight of the subjects, their fundamental freedom of choice is taken from the structures of society. From this perspective, then, deviance can continue to be considered the other side of social control, but the agents of social control are neither morality, nor professions, nor concrete professionals, but the legal norms elaborated, legitimated and put into force in common, which may be supported by moral principles of society as well as by abstract-universal legal norms. Thus, we can also make a distinction between compulsion and duty; duties, obligations go back to the discourses conducted in the public on the consensus, which is not based on compulsion, on force and other contingent moments of the unconditionality structures, but on the insight and knowledge. Thus, the coercive, the forced, the tolerated can be legitimately rejected, while consent based on consent can be legitimately demanded. Now we can see that not only can the adult patient be held accountable, but he holds himself accountable as a participant in the discourse. Practically, the distinction between obligation and coercion also prevents the circumstance that in therapy and/or counselling, professionals neither phatalogize, pedagogize, therapize, nor moralize, but simply distinguish, differentiate. Now the question arises, is school attendance a compulsion or a duty? Oevermann uses both terms. According to

the tendency, Oevermann sees school attendance as a compulsion, for which, however, he does not give any reasons.

For a proper analysis, a conceptual distinction is needed between compulsory school attendance and the duty for a school attendance by law. In any case, the abolition of compulsory schooling in its present form would not confirm Oevermann's thesis of the working alliance, unless with the abolition of compulsory schooling the asymmetry between adults and children, knowers and non-knowers, teachers and learners, etc. were levelled. That this is not and would not be the case, we can also see from the fact that this asymmetry is presupposed in every professional interaction with the assumption that it ultimately regulates a central human need with the necessary accumulation and monopolization of that knowledge and skills. Whoever controls rare resources is in an asymmetrical interaction even if the body in question is society-oriented. Moreover, the idea of professions seems to be based on the very idea that people in certain justified cases like for their own good, for their own autonomy are able to commit themselves against their will. This is true especially if they are consenting adults. The contract theorists, among them above all J.J. Rousseau, have basically demanded exactly that. Freedom and autonomy are complementary when it comes to human beings who, out of their own insight, as Rousseau and Kant would say, bind themselves to a law which, for Habermas, is supposed to be compatible with the perspective of all those who might be affected (Habermas, 1991). But this insight is usually assumed by a small minority of people. For the majority of people, this assumption is a counterfactual. In other words, with obligations comes no reason to assume a lack of autonomy. The question is, because children are minors and autonomy is to be imputed to them for the first time, does compulsory education conflict with the autonomy assumption. But this is a philosophical rather than a professional sociological question.

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