FOR ETHICS IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION.
A STUDENT APPROACH

Elisabeta Margareta Voiculescu
„1st of December 1918" University, Alba Iulia

Abstract
We undertook an action research designed to awaken students from PETSM (ISPEF Project) their role and responsibility as educators and evaluators in the spirit of teaching deontology. The work included familiarization with the concept of deontology, with its content in relation with schoolchildren and preschoolers, drafting essays, working with students having their degree (third year), through courses and seminars, practical activities, discussions with teachers from the applied nursery school, reflection on own school experience.

1. The justification of the teaching approach

Ethics, with its original meaning of moral science or logic, of what should be, of what should be respected, as opposed to ontology - dealing with what exists - has evolved particularly in the exercise of professions and human activities as they have more refined tools and instruments that gave individuals and groups a force of action which involved the regulation of what is / what is not allowed in order to insert the human behavior within moral commandments. It is thus understandable why ethics impose itsfelf especially in professions which are applied directly to human, which involve human interaction of inequality, in which one of the individuals may abuse his position and could violate the inalienable attributes of the human being (freedom, dignity, responsibility, right to self-esteem, to benefit of personal belongings, etc.).

Ethics appears in this context as a professional expression of the moral commandment, in fields as medicine, psychology, psychiatry, pedagogy, sociology, legal professions, the police, in leadership positions (management), public relations of civil servants and politicians etc. Ethical standards were imposed in some areas with such force that they occur largely in laws, regulations, statutes or professional codes, which, by official or unofficial ways, are mandatorily required for exercising the profession.

Teaching ethics is part of fundamental ethical norms which regulate the exercise of professions which aim directly the human subject. The distinctive peculiarity of teaching ethics - hence its special importance – results from the

fact that subjects on whom the teaching profession is exercised are mostly emerging personalities that go through psychophysical development and social and employment dynamics, which do not miss imbalances, stagnations, fragile stages (pre-adolescence - puberty), contradictions and struggle between generations, therefore in this area "professional misconduct" results in "scrap" difficult to correct, profound and lasting effects, often unpredictable and which may mark individuals for life.

In pedagogical, psychological and ethical literature there are currently too few references to the ethics of educator profession, although the National Education Law and the Statute of Teacher Profession include details of the desirable behavior of teachers in general. We believe that too few of these rules of conduct addres directly regulations of teacher's behavior towards students, educator-educated relationship, considering that they are probably self-evident, no doubt known and applied.

Many students say they do not like school, the learning, the teaching process, accusing rigid, outdated, dictatorial attitudes of the teaching staff. Relationships between teachers and sutdens sometimes become tensed, disputes and controversies arising between educators and educated (in which are often involved the parents), in which the binomial factors are accusing each other: some teachers believe that students have become too free, they are not disciplined enough, being only interested in fun, and not in school or learning, that they are only learning by constraint and fear of bad notes, while quite a few students or students believe that teachers have towards them an excessively authoritarian attitude, behave like "masters", they often scold them, "moralizing" too much, criticize and sanction them at the slightest deviation, using notes / ratings as factors of constraining or that they use outdated teaching methods and content which are not of interest to them, force them to memorize information incomprehensible to them. These tensions are more pronounced in schools with outdated material basis, with inadequate facilities, unqualified teachers, with low education, where school leaders are not concerned with modernization and upgrade of work methods.

For these reasons we believe that it is time *to promote ethical standards expressed clearly, succinctly, directly,* to contribute to the initial and continuing training of educators from all levels of education and lead to a relocation, normalization of the educators-educated relationship, of the ethical values and to guide the teaching behavior. In this respect, the undertaken study and the educational program promoted by the Department for Teacher Training (DPPD), together with students from our University have proposed to pave the way for the formation of these rules, to invite to reflection the teachers, to initiate debates within and between schools (universities, colleges, schools, pre school teachers, mentors, students, practitioners, etc..) aimed to develop a *Code of ethics for educators.*

2. Description of the teaching process

Objectives
The fundamental objective of this exercise was *to stimulate the personal reflection of students preparing for the teaching profession on the role of the educator and of personal qualities in relation to students, in courses and seminars.*

Adjacent objectives were:
- motivational adherence and activation of students by new ways of working in course and seminar (similar to those used in the ISPEF model);
- acquisition of ways of working with students;
- effective use of portfolio as tool for continuous evaluation.

Evaluation periods
Results were assessed *ongoing,* continuous and by two final evaluations: 1) in February (essays, ckeck-lists); 2) in May-June, by *writting and displaying of codes of conduct by groups of students* and a selection at the DPPD panel (followed by a final report in June).

Activity schedule
Temporal resources

October 1st – 31st Initiating the program and knowledge of objectives	November 1st – 30th Activities and making personal portfolios	December 1st – 21st Preparing the essays
January 6th – 20th Composition of essays, finalizing portfolios	January 20th – February 20th Examination of portfolios. Direct raport	March 5th – June 10th Continuarea programului în grupe, verificare, difuzare

Evaluation criteria
The quality of the results was analyzed in team and the criteria were established through negotiation with all participants. Student essays were evaluated with a maximum of 1 credit, final reports and codes of conduct were prepared by groups of students, of which a selection was made. The other parts of the portfolio have been credited (1 credit, maximum).

The student assessment criteria were:
- Clarity of the rule (rule);

- Original contribution to the subject;
- Teamwork.

- Assessment of the team and of the coordinator was made by self evaluation, having as criteria: originality, efficiency, clarity of objectives, quality of the project report etc.
- Evaluation of the results of the work by students (self evaluation);
- Evaluation in team of trainers;
- An assessment report was made and will be published. The work was continued in the second semester, by compiling the code displayed on the notice board of the Department.

Action plan

In *courses* were included elements of professional ethics with topics such as:

- Introductive notions: subject of pedagogy (exercises to develop personal human values, underlining those needed by an educator) - individual sheet;

- The functions of education (teacher's responsibilities in achieving each function);

- Debate: Multiple Intelligences - after identifying the dominantes of every student (team work);

- Sides of education: identifying the educational role and components/manifestations in each component and aspect (team work);

- The composition of the list of needs and resources for the learning ability;

- Education in personality development (pedagogical optimism) - the expression of optimistic attitude in the educator-educated relationship (essay);

- Mental and moral development stages: identification of optimal ethical rules and methods applicable to primary and pre-school cycle (Gordon method 6/6);

- Aims of education:

  - The role of the teacher in achieving the educational ideal (brainstorm);
  - Ethical rules regarding categories of objectives: cognitive, affective, psychomotor (3 groups of debates).

The theme of reflection for students (permanent): educational counterexamples (manifestations of citizens who violate the unwritten rules of conduct); educational measures.

The seminars included exercises of information processing, regarding:
- educational work highlights;

- individualizing teaching - ways of working with: children with high performance level, children with special educational needs, mediocre students, students with behavior issues, children from broken families, with gaps in education, children in need (poverty) – group work;
- the role of the teacher in educational work (counseling);
- components of moral education (collective discussion, brainstorming);
- specific methods for every school age (small, medium, large), according with L. Kohlberg model - group work;
- principles of moral education (normativity and regulation of educational activity);
- develop operational objectives by categories and teacher behavior towards their achievement (individual and group work);
- drafting an essay on the topic: ethic rules in evaluation for teachers (individual work);
- developing themes for counseling sessions (centered on the relationship teacher-educators), by groups of 5 students.

Material basis
- Lecture and seminar spaces of the University;
- Teaching materials and sheets made of trainers;
- Flipcharts, posters made by students.

Expected results
- Democratic mentality, aiming to professor-pupil/student relationship for students, teachers, pupils in the application;
- Increase bilateral information on expectations / collective reality;
- Drawing up a scale of values / taxonomy of requirements for teacher behavior;
- Echoes from the academic / student team who are preparing to become teachers that will contribute to the democratization of education relations in University, but also in the schools where the graduates will teach.

Disseminating the results was performed by using:
- Project and report submitted at the end of the project;
- Exchange of experience;
- Published research report.

Annex 1
RESPECTING THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS
As have been identified by C.Cucoş [1]

- The right not to be always paying attention;
- The Right to his inner forum;
- The right to learn not only what has meaning and purpose;
- The right not to be submissive and obedient 6/8 hours per day;
- The right to move;
- The right not to take all the promises;
- The Right not to love school and to declare it;
- The right to choose who he wants to work with;
- The right to exist as a person;

Other rights:
- The right to be respected by teachers, adults;
- The right to play, to have free time;
- The right to have personal opinions, and to affirm and support them;
- The right to contradict the teacher, the manual, the renowned authors (with arguments);
- The right to sometimes miss classes;
- The right to associate with colleagues to support them when they are in trouble;
- The right to dress, comb, according to their taste (not to that of the adult generation), but respecting certain limits of decency;
- The right to assert themselves as independent persons, autonomous, self-contained;
- The right to believe that the teacher can be wrong;
- The right to criticize, to accuse when having evidence, to expose shortcomings, injustice, wrongdoing of adults (parents, teachers, educators) etc.

Annex 2
TEACHER'S QUALITIES RELATED TO TEACHING COMMUNICATION
Collected from students' essays

Succint Enunciation	Frequency of occurance >1
• To be communicative	5
• To have a pleasant way to teach	4
• To capture the attention by moments of relaxation	4
• To make the classes attractive by talking with students (brackets)	3
• To explain until the students understand	3
• To use a natural, unpretentious language	3
• To have persuasion	3
• To make the students responsive	3
• Consistency in speech	2
• When dictating to make pauses, give examples	1

• To understant the students and talk to them on various topics	1
• To answer students'questions	1
• To give examples in order to be understood	1
• To know how to communicate with students	1
• To have the patience to explain	1
• To tell jokes	1
• To be sure of what he/she says	1
• To speak nicely	1
• To combine teaching methods to capture student's attention	1
• To discuss, to see if students understood	1
• It is more important to be understood, than to be „academic"	1
• To use teaching material, the black-board	1

Annex 3
TEACHER'S QUALITIES IN RELATION WITH STUDENTS
Collected from students'essays

Succint Enunciation	Frequency of Occurance>1
• To be sympatethic with students	10
• To support them, encourage them, help them in times of difficulty	6
• To have patience with students	6
• To listen to what students have to say	5
• To respect the students	5
• To demonstrate closeness and involvement	4
• To advise the students	4
• To guide the students	3
• To work with all students	3
• To build studens'personality	3
• To teach them to trust their own forces	3
• To closely know every student	3
• To determine them to learn easily, with passion	2
• To stimulate their creativity and imagination	2
• To be open to revelations	2
• To organize their trips and free time	2
• To be their friend	2
• To pay attention to all students	2
• To be responsive to students'problems	2
• To be an example, a model	2
• To adapt the teaching style to the particularities of students	1
• To combine appropriate teaching styles: authoritative, permissive, cooperation, encouragement	1

• To love the students	1
• To cultivate the spirit of fair competition	1
• To form a beneficial intellectual and moral conduct	1
• To be the third parent that helps to set goals and achieve them	1
• To lead to high limits by wisdom and study	1
• To gain students' trust	1
• To be a teacher in class and a friend in everyday life	1
• Close relations with students, in order to know their skills	1
• To be a mentor	1
• To be authoritarian, but close to students	1
• To be relatively demanding	1
• To have the same attitude towards all students	1
• To have a warm relationship with students	1
• To resolve small conflicts	1
• To stimulate students' learning	1
• To help them make decisions, solve problems	1
• To give them confidence	1
• To know how to negotiate with students	1
• To help them discover their intellectual abilities	1
• To gain admiration, sympathy and confidence of students	1
• Respect must be earned, not forced, to also resist after the end of school relation	1
• To respect the student, given that he is a person with own ideas and opinions to be heard	1
• To have a certain degree of severity	1
• To have mutual trust	1
• To be available to students when needed	1
• To be honest	1
• To support the student	1
• To be involved in students' project	1
• To make students more active in class	1

Anexa 4
COMPETENŢE ŞI ÎNSUŞIRI PERSONALE DEZIRABILE LA UN PROFESOR
culese din eseurile studenţilor

Succint Enunciation	Frequency of Occurance>1
• Proficiency in the specialty taught	4
• Sense of humor	4
• Well trained	3
• Good knowledge of the specialty	3
• Intelligence	3
• Well cared	3

• Rich general education	2
• Decent/pleasant attire	2
• To be involved in various professional activities	2
• Sociability	2
• Justice	1
• Kindness	1
• To adapt quickly	1
• Dynamism	1
• To combine business with pleasure	1
• Good organizer of the educational field	1
• To competently lead and guide the activity in and outside the school	1
• To get good results with the students	1
• To make students curious	1
• Theoretical and practical reasearch	1
• Interest in students' knowledge	1
• To smile	1
• To forget personal problems when entering the classroom	1
• To be relaxed	1
• To be pleasant in class	1
• Good morality	1
• Good example for students	1
• Spirit of observation	1
• Kind look	1
• Calm	1
• Warm	1
• Good teacher	1
• Honesty	1
• Parental attitude	1
• Punctuality	1
• Good organizer	1
• Seriousness	1
• Emphasis on practice, not on theory	1

Annex 5
TEACHER'S QUALITIES WHICH ARE MANIFESTED IN EVALUATION/APPRAISAL
Collected from students'essays

Succint Enunciation	Frequency of Occurance>1
• To be fair, just, impartial when grading	6
• To consider al pupils equal	3
• To admonish students when necessary	1
• To require students to learn	1

•	When given a bad grade, to show that it may turn	1
•	To be severe in compliance with school	1
•	Periodic (continuous) evaluation	1
•	Authoritarian, but not terrorist	1
•	Impartial	1
•	Continous evaluation, the average grade is noted in the Register	1
•	Honesty and fairness	1
•	To understand the student as more that he is in the classroom	1
•	To focus on personal opinion, not literally on the courses	1
•	Not to frustrate the students	1
•	To assess as often as possible	1
•	To formulate such topics in exams, so that the student can not copy	1
•	To avoid grid-tests, they facilitate copying	1

Annex 6
WEAKNESSES OF TEACHER IN TEACHING COMMUNICATION
Students' essay

- Monotony;
- Engaging in „dictation";
- Not to finish a sentence, when starting, but saying it in two different ways;
- Too quiet or too talkative;
- To yell or threaten;
- Have vulgar language;
- Insult students;
- Use offensive words (bad, untrustworthy etc.);
- Doesn't accept debates on topics chosen by students.

Annex 7
FAULTS OF THE TEACHER IN RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS
2nd year students'essay

Fault		Frequency of Occurance >1
•	To be indifferent to students' needs	7
•	To laugh at students when they say something wrong	4
•	To offend students	3
•	Cold and distant attitude	2
•	Pride, „the mother of all sins"	1
•	To be severe (because the student will only learn from fear)	1
•	To marginalize some students	1
•	To treat students with superficiality or superiority	1
•	To abuse his position	1

• To neglect the courses out of too much tolerance or simply indiference	1
• To deprive the student from self-confidence	1
• Lack of respect	1
• Not knowing the student at true value	1
• Lack of interest regarding students' capacity	1
• To act as a dictator, as a master of students	1
• To accept „small gifts" from students	1
• To reflect his anger on students	1
• To offend the students, even if they are wrong	1
• To allow students disrespect, rudeness, callousness	1
• To patronize, to be overly severe	1
• To conduct the classes according to his mood	1

Annex 8
TEACHER'S PERSONAL FLAWS AND VICES PROFESORULUI
From students' essay

- Boredom when exercising the profession (3 students);
- Conservatism;
- Vanity;
- Hitting the students;
- Irritated, nervous;
- Throwing objects (chalk, etc.);
- Superficiality;
- Refractorism;
- Improper attire;
- Traditionalism;
- Letting students to learn for other objects (in class);

Annex 9
WEAKNESSES IN EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' PERSONALITY
Cadastre students' essay

Fault	Frequency of occurance >1
• To distinguish (discriminate) between students	18
• To use offensive words	12
• To adopt corporal punishment (violence, fight)	7
• Lack of objectivity	4
• Excesive authoritarianism (very demanding)	4
• To grade based on performance, not on the fact that the student is good or not	2
• To be tough and try to intimidate	2
• To comment on how students dress, do their hair, their nails (this is the duty of parents)	1

• To psychological abuse students	1
• To terrorize students	1
• To grade randomly, not on merit	1
• To grade according to preferences	1
• To favour some students	1
• To patronize students	1
• To disregard students	1
• To be too demanding, to hard	1
• To be a „terrorist"	1
• To label the student based on a mistake or an incorrect answer	1
• To neglect non-diligent students	1
• To distinguish between students at exams	1
• To take revenge on students when nervous	1
• To abuse his position	1
• To be tough, rough, tyrannical with students	1
• To question the intellectual abilities of students	1
• To take into account the social position of parents	1
• To make fun of mistakes	1
• To forget to get rid of personal problems	1
• To disregard other views than those dictated by him	1
• Condescension	1
• Curricular exclusivity	1
• To believe that his class is the most important	1
• To amend grades given by him (8 from 3)	1
• To dismiss students from class	1
• To move students at exams	1
• To give unanounced tests	1

References:

[1] Cucoş, C. (1997), *Lying, counterfeiting, simulation,* Polirom Publishing, Iaşi, p. 63-66.