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CULEGERE SEMESTRIALĂ DE STUDII ŞTIINŢIFICE ŞI DIDACTICE

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CUPRINS

THE POSTMODERN`S MEN SELF-IMAGE

Anton A. Ilica, PhD
"Aurel Vlaicu" University, Arad
anton.ilica@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The author presents aspects of communicative behaviour in a postmodern era where values no longer have consistency and their selection is made without any criteria. Communicative relations between individuals involve psychical involvement and the gestures, mimicry, voice tone are elements that occur almost unconsciously in the individuals` expressivity. The lack of inhibitions and the assumption of certain "democratic" unconstraint lead to risk waste in hiding the true identity of individuals in communication. Synergologic elements are identified by means of which the real intentions of individuals belonging to different cultures can be observed. They are the consequence of herd mentality and different behavioural remanence.*

Keywords: *postmodernism, communication and psychology, synergology, mentality, culture and civilization*

1. Postmodernity. We do not intend to plunge neither into the problematic nor the history of postmodernism, but we will make some remarks required by the clarification of certain aspects pertaining to contemporary education. The closeness between a concept and a reality can determine serious wonders if the impact brings about the idea of incongruence. Education builds a canonical tradition and the educational systems are among the most rigorously structured and reluctant to changes. Through its aspects of manifestation, postmodernism deconstructs, breaks patterns, and maintains uncertainties and the relativity of values. Two apparently dichotomist situations have come to coexist, to weaken intransigencies and to adjust opinions. Lipovetsky (2002) considers that „*postmodernism is characterized by a loss of benchmarks*". An education without benchmarks, without models and vision has no existential legitimation. What type of education is sustained by a postmodern society, animated by different tendencies despite certain globalizing intensions? The contemporary world has too little moments of constancy. Not only is the future under the threat of "shock" (Toffler, 1973) but so is the present (maybe even the image of the past). The electronic means of communication link voluntarily informational desires in the "global village", determining a transfer of mentalities and behaviours. Communities used to keep traditions thanks to a personality ethos. Nowadays, their identity has the cosmopolite opportunity (maybe even the tendency) to veil its margins, to "escape" the fosterage of identity nucleus. There is a chance –exploited or not – to crave for new mental configurations based on voluntary acceptance of "the Other" through an appeal to ethical cohesion and through a desire to deconstruct hierarchies, until recently intangible. „*Deconstruction,* stated Derrida (1967), followed by Norris (1988), *involves displacement of traditional conceptual hierarchies*". In an educated and change and adaptation oriented world, de-construction can no longer be perceived as a fault, as an act of rebellion against tradition. The need for new construction – determined by "shocks" of high knowledge found in public comfort technology – involves adjustments, destructions, recalibrations. De-construction is necessary in order to build something. Behavioural reshufflings are determined not only by the perspective of the contemporary world but also by its existential dynamism.

Communities discard any inconvenience that would affect and impede adaptation in order to enjoy democratic freedom. From such an inventory, identity ethos and mental sacrifice would never miss. Lack of scruples rises from such an attitude which promotes "disaggregation of any authority" and the relativity of self-value around which the uniqueness and the community`s identity frame have been formed.

The tendency to relativize self-values inflamed the idea of de-canonization, of breaking mental patterns, of replacing labels which until recently were considered intangible. When one "dared" to remove Eminescu from committed enunciations ("national poet", "unpaired poet", "the most important…") the gesture of de-constructors was interpreted as a blasphemy. No intention of overlooking the real virtues of Eminescu`s work could be found in their attitude. The thinkers wanted to develop a new epistemic basis for another type of text analysis. The destruction of "the idol" has a strong ontological explanation in the tendency to reshape and revalue him.

L. Vattimo (1993), theoretician of postmodernism, supports the idea that it is necessary to allow the dissolution of absolute value in order to display individual values. Without authority, "everything is permitted" because facts become contextual. The art itself – as creation phenomenon, a mimesis of divine gestures – is democratized, blending into public existence. It gets out on the streets, dissolves in the mass-media, labels matchboxes, blends into reproductions and cohabits generously in the hypermedia. The art has become a "background event" (Heidegger, 1980) by its des-aristocrization as well as by its weakness for the unpredictable mixture with kitsch.

Therefore, the lack of value authority leads to an ontological transformation of the subjective and objective world "*into a huge site of survivals"* (L. Vattimo, 1993). The struggle to survive is a training for a human being`s duality. On the one hand, the being craves for the agglutination of desires around a "centre", on the other hand, likes democratic savagery, finding in the isotropic closeness between *margins* and *centres* a source of happiness and existential meaning.

This is our postmodern world, a world that we build and comfort with democratic freedoms. Some of its features are: de-canonization of values, decapitation of classical values of authority, decompressing ethics, buckling perception of time and space, humanizing information and technology, oscillation between identity vocation and global aspiration, the aggression of sensual performance, epistemological indecisiveness, and humanizing education.

The above mentioned facts can be summed up in the apothegm "*what`s not forbidden, is permitted".* The present generation is no longer interested in what it was, doesn`t steal a glance at history, they look at themselves. There is no longer time for future plans, because time no longer has three dimensions. It is one-dimensional (the present counts). There is only "*now and here"*, mine, ours, a present that involves only broken reflections of lived and anticipated time. Such flattened and reduced time is balanced by a real and virtual time extension. No earthly distance is impossible; almost no space can hide its mysteries. The cosmic space is claimed, extraterra has become optional space.

The insertion of art in everyday life and the stimulation of sensual, epidermis voluptuousness is another postmodern challenge. The shows on TV with free gestures, colourful scenery, naked breasts and buttocks, VIPs with excessive make-up reveal another image still maintained by the consumers` taste. In all this mixture of lights and sound, appear actors from select theatres, cabaret dancers, successful writers and poets, politicians in search for an image and cat hairdressers, circus performers and athletes. Seriousness seems abandoned in favour of good mood, the entire facility scrolling down with the most insensitive *intellectual innocence.* "The commercial aspect" and its advertising manifestations polarize the interest of artistic manifestations, causing their impregnation with sensitive experiences stimulated by moving shapes, colours, gross gestures and compensatory ethics. Postmodern attitudes can be identified in virtual experiences, too. Pressing a button from one channel to the other, "cultural surfing", soap operas, TV series, informational briefings join the performance offered by the websites; a huge and fascinating universe of artificial but vivid, dynamic and catchy world. Obviously, it is a new type of civilisation with other benchmarks than the modernity; a world where one can live with adjuvants, with imitations in the middle of a crowed excited by music, dynamism and hot, spectacular events.

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Global communication has changed the vision, "has lift up the man`s eyes" to the Others in distance, *and this opening to horizons* means "*the stand-up of the old ancestor*. A new world is being built thanks to communication, in each society, in every inhabited space. Communication is bower for beings, said a philosopher and wise men have developed extremely professionals tools so that information about Others and their deeds to be known by All and immediately.

2. Affective involvement in communication.

Communication is a process, which involves interaction in a ***context.*** Relationship between people is a ***transaction*** of social type ("*one cannot not communicate*", Watzlawick (1972), and the man enters into the communicative relationship accompanied by "contextual" elements like an orchestra. Even if we are referring to the relationship between individuals, ***the same problems hold true for groups, organizations, institutions and/or even self-communication.*** Aspects referring to ***social psychology,*** to a series of determining psychological factors and to specific interlocutors should be reconsidered in order to have an optimal communication act. For example, in the interactive communication process, the person X does not know the hidden intensions of person Y and cannot anticipate the subsidiary interests and motivations of this person.

By reducing the communication process to a plain exchange of information we bring about a distortment in the real value of its manifestation in the relationship between "locutors". It is believed (Abric, 2002 and others) that the communication process is influenced by some factors among which also the ***psychological*** ones. The communication process is motivated by individual needs and tensions, obviously of psychical nature; an individual has "needs", the needs bring about tension, tension generates behaviour necessary to reduce dissatisfaction and eliminate needs. There are both positive and negative desires (needs) that disturb and rebalance the interlocutors` psychical moods. Individual specific affective aspects with their heritage of tendencies and particularities cannot be excluded from the communication process.

On the other hand, each individual, group, institution has a certain ***type of culture.*** We interact with the Other by means of a cultural identity or with the intention to find an emotional equilibrium; affective subtleties and the interlocutors` hidden objectives are linked to a certain situational psychology. After all, every individual is the bearer and representative of a culture and – by extension- the communication of individuals is a form of relationship between cultures and mentalities.

3. Cultural mentality and civilization. *a. Culture*. A definition provided by a dictionary of neologisms (1997) considers culture as a „*wholeness of material and spiritual values created by the mankind, by the society"*. The definition induces confusion determined by the usage in the same context of "material values" and "spiritual values". A Dictionary of Philosophy maintains the confusion by including in the concept "material and spiritual products" and „*conscious transformation of the natural and social environment".* These inaccuracies led to the identification of almost 300 intentions of defining the concept. The ***Larousse*** Dictionary (1996) defines **culture** as „*social and intellectual formation of the individual*" (deriving the notion from „cult"), and Lucian Blaga determines culture in relationship with artistic values. Regardless of the multiple meanings that determine such an easy concept up to the moment of its **definition**, we will consider cultural products only those which are the result of a spiritual creativity process. Culture is connected to art genesis and intellectuality, to creative virtues of sciences, to proliferation of texts about culture. An educated man possesses intelligence, wisdom and creative impulses, being able to generate creations and to appreciate axiological products

resulted from cultural gestures. We put into concept literary works, aesthetic, musical, plastic creations, product design and any other consequence of artistic aesthetics. Concretely, culture includes ***Faustus*** and ***Mioriţa***, ***The Hanging Gardens*** and ***Versailles***, ***David*** and ***Laocoon***, ***The Last Supper*** and ***Ox Cart***, ***Romanian Rhapsody*** and ***Bolero***, ***Endless Column*** and ***The Eiffel Tower***, ***Ferarri*** and ***Pentium VI***, but also ***Aircraft carrier, the Submarine*** or ***Cosmic Missile.*** Culture, as concept has artistic, functional, institutional, scientific and technological definitions.
The man is a creator of culture, assigning meaning, content and configuration to his entire activity in an supreme and creative form. Generating culture, the man is ordained in divine deeds, perpetuating the myth of creation by Faustian and also Sisyphean repetition of his becoming. Man is ***synthetic consequence of a community culture.***

b. Civilization, another concept difficult to define, has a lot of dictionary entries. It comes from the Latin word ***„civis”*** („*citizen*”), i.e. inhabitant of a city, of a settlement in the community (as opposed to the isolated, the hermit, the Grobian). To be tolerated by the community as a citizen requires compliance with the rules of coexistence which the individual had to assimilate in behaviour and conduct. These rules are related to hygiene, communication, mutual respect, tolerance, decency, but mostly attachment to social values like traditions, customs, and rules of good coexistence. Finally, civilization involves proper social relations gathered around good manners and politeness.

The concept has evolved, having other connotations, by keeping and adding semantic tones. Some refer to including in “civilization” means by which man changes and organizes the environment; others refer to insurance of comfort and life aesthetics. Therefore, a consequence of the mankind`s effort to improve its habitat in the “citadel” in what can be meant by “home” (house, village, city, region, country, continent) is synthetized in the concept of “civilization”. Specifically, *civilization* involves elements linked to comfort, material and utility needs, such as housing, food, clothes, behaviour, communication technology, mobility, economic-administrative activities, legal, political and civic organization. They reach the dimension of a community`s lifestyle and help configuring a civilization. Civilization entities have been set and it is said that they are the source of conflicts („*Humanity is divided into subgroups-tribes, nations, wider cultural entities normally called civilizations*” (**The Clash of Civilizations**). Huntington (1993) considers that in a civilized world there are seven civilizations that can start a conflict at any time due to different norms and cohabitation styles. Without insisting on division (A. Toynbee, 1956, identifies 21 civilizations), or on clogs that hinder communication between them, we will show that confusion is maintained in establishing a coherent relationship between “culture” and “civilization”.

c. The effects of culture are expressed in ***acts of culture,*** converted into ***products of civilization.*** The level of culture configures the level of civilization. Therefore, civilization is understood as an echo of culture, a material representation of the spirit of cultural creation. Only a superior culture will be able to build/generate a higher civilization. Without technical and scientific culture it is impossible to imagine socialization of information and communication techniques. Household equipment, public television, personal computers, cars, etc. are the consequence of progress in culture. When culture is in jeopardy of becoming history, civilization saves its opportunities. Therefore, between culture and civilization there is a mutual relationship of inseparability. Leading a civilized life, the man places himself in the echo of culture, just like when creating he improves his existential comfort: “***Intercultural communities*** *are cultural, ethnical, religious groups that live in the same space, have relationships of open interaction, exchange and mutual recognition showing respect for values, traditions and each other`s lifestyles.*” (Cozma, Seghedin, 2001).

4. Intercultural communicative style. Cultures and civilizations belong to an existential style. When the culture of a community is strongly influenced by religion, language, history, customs, values, symbols, behaviours – elements that assign uniqueness – civilization is unitary. The volume "*Ten thousand culture, one civilization"*, says M. Malita would be a sketch of the geomodernity in the 21st century. Cultures can coexist in one plenary civilization based on science, technology, administration, economy and lifestyle. When citizens (all of them) benefit from the advantages of a civilization that would satisfy their needs for a comfortable life, then they would withstand cultural diversity.

We can communicate and live in "interculturality" only to a certain standard of civilization. It is wrong to believe that we have the right (or request) to dance on a dance floor with a woman with dirty fingernails or to sit at the same table with someone with a shirt with torn elbows. Communication between people of different cultures tries to find ways of coexistence, of assuming civilized behaviour, of promoting equal dialogue. Culture encourages the individualism tendencies of communities, such as belonging to a race, nation, religion, geographic area, social or historical areal, etc. A civilized community (intercultural") becomes real and effective only if it removes blockages caused by the belonging to a community style, to a strongly individualized mentality. Coexisting means accepting the other" as s/he is, only when he is above a certain standard of civilization. Accepting the other involves the triggering of emotional faculties that would exclude racial, social, national, ethnical, religious differences.

To achieve communication in intercultural environments one needs to trigger relationships that would diminish uncertainties towards the "other" belonging to coexisting cultures (*The Other* is in the same "space", but is "another" due to cultural differences). These uncertainties are related to his cultural identity: language, ethical group, nationality, religion, habitat, social and economic status, authority. *Knowledge* about the other, *interest* for interaction, *ability* of involvement and transfer *skills* are required to remove these uncertainties (T. Cozma, 2001).

An important aspect of intercultural relating is about identifying *"sense shared by both sides",* namely negotiating understanding to diminish **uncertainty** (cognitive representation of the other) and **anxiety (**affective representation of the other**).** The above mentioned plead for the necessity of *intercultural competence*, defines as *"the ability to negotiate cultural significations and to perform adequate and effective communication behaviours that recognize different identities of interlocutors in a specific environment"* or *"the ability to use knowledge, action methods, affective experiences, positive attitudes in solving cultural interaction situations".*

Interaction requires certain abilities such as: tolerance for uncertainty, development of new relating categories, others besides the reference "mine", empathy, adapting communication, refrain from asserting prejudices, handling interaction. The balance of intercultural communication calls for the concept of *democracy,* through which the will of the majority does not impose authority and common good, becomes supreme humanity value. Democracy generates variable geometry in cultural interactions, where each has the right to identity (respect for values, traditions, and ways of living) without harming the Other.

5. Synergology as behaviour. Hamlet, Shakespeare`s character tells his troupe: "*Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand thus, but use all gently; for in thevery torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness"***. "***Nor do not saw the air too much with your hands"* refers to the gesture accompanying the saying. The hand is the extension of the thought, the voice and the feeling. The gesture becomes "the soul" of the message, its sentimental side, and the carnation of dry, rough idea. It is the emotional breath of rational thought as it can be the "equilibrium" of a wild, passionate saying. Verbal and extra verbal communication (paraverbal and nonverbal) coexist, are displayed simultaneously and not only do they not exclude but they imply each other. ***Paraverbal communication*** is represented by elements that accompany speech, such as *"voice and pronunciation characteristics, intensity of pronunciation (saying), rhythm and flow of* *speech, intonation, pause, etc*" (C. Postelnicu, 2000). One can notice that paraverbal communication involves auditory, voiced commitment, determining a certain displayed affection. Paraverbal act can be found only in oral communication, being accompanied by intonation, accent, volume. This paraverbal "suite" that accompanies oral communication was called "meta-communication "phenomenon that fully exploits "*the "hollow" of significations of the uttered word"*(C. Postelnicu, 2000).

The role of paraverbal communication is to determine the interlocutors` state of emotion and affective involvement. The tone of the voice is also linked to a certain education, to an art of speaking, to affective involvement in what is being said. Paraverbal communication expresses not only the attachment to what is said but also their rejection. Paraverbal communication is connected to a certain education in communication, to emotional engagement and involvement more than other types of communication. Affective speeches, modular by tone, attitude revealed by the quality of the voice are related to paraverbal communication.

One of Slavici`s characters used to sit on the bench in front of his house from Şiria for a long time. The author justifies his decision: „*He enjoyed observing faces".* The ability to observe the others, to scan their behaviour, to analyse their "faces" means knowledge in reading people`s thoughts by decoding their gestures and looks. A specialist in non-verbal communication, university professor Allan Pease confesses to having heard of "body language" only in 1971 at a seminar where it has been said that *"through gestures, attitude, position of the body and distance keeping a greater amount of interhuman communication is fulfilled than through any other means of communication*"(A. Pease, 2002). Later, A. Mahrebian, based on specific research stated that out of the multitude of signs and signals of interhuman communication 7 % are verbal, 38 % are paraverbal (voice tones addressed to the hearing) and 55% are nonverbal messages. Ph. Turchet, French actor and director developed a body language reading method which helps reading partly the Other`s thoughts, called *synergology*.

Thanks to its components the human body has a language through the manifestations that it highlights. The body "*says loudly what the voice thinks quietly*", says Turchet. A synergologist knows how to read the signs of hands, legs, body movement, palms, fingers, face, eyebrows, eyes, mouth even hair. All confess honesty. Gestures, mimicry and body position are instinctual expressions more powerful in manifestations than ration and language can hide. The last two parts of Ph. Turchet`s volume (2005) are named after a linguistic concept: *The lexis of face* and *The body lexis*, which shows an identification of signs emitted by face, body and *words.*

What does the synergologist "read"? Ph. Turchet justifies his synergologic option starting from the man`s existential hypocrisy (one might say that man is defined as being capable of lies unlike animals): „*In each man, two profiles fight for harmony: a rough, instinctive, pulsating, sensual face which harmonizes or decomposes according to what the individual likes and a second face, educated, refined, conditioned. The man grants himself with one hand freedoms which he censors with the other. He wants to say he loves but he hides it. He secretly hates while he utters civilized and comforting words… The man says one and thinks the other… His mouth speaks the wisdom of the group while from the bottom of his body, an inner voice determines him to act in contradiction with the voice of seriousness and civilization*".(Ph. Turchet, 2005)

„*So the body says loudly what the voice thinks* ***quietly****".* Through words, the man communicates rationalized, thought and common sense controlled messages while the forms of nonverbal messages (the body) transmit affective, honest, spontaneous, natural messages. Some individuals are even frustrated and face dissatisfaction because they are unable to control their communicative behaviour completely. Therefore, communication has almost always two measures for the quality of the message: any message has an internal appearance (psychologically spontaneous and intuitive, but mostly sincere) but also an external appearance (elaborated and agreed by the partner). When you tell someone "*I would like to invite you to a* *cup of coffee"* the uttered text has (in the man`s intention) several meanings: „*I would like to drink a cup of coffee with you*", his eyes say: „*if she accepts, she likes me*", the warm and welcoming voice advances friendship, and the face expression betrays his true intention: „*I would like to make love to you*". In the receiver`s mind, the invitation anticipates all these. Reading the face mimicry and the warm tone, the woman can say „*I don`t usually drink coffee*", which would imply an absolute rejection, but decent at the same time. When answering „*I don`t drink coffee but I will accompany you for a cup of tea*", the woman has decoded the final significance of his intention and answers proactive by raising her eyebrows in surprise, she can as well throw harsh glances; beyond words the rejection of a potential friendship increases and is firmly manifested.

Never too simple, a dialogue develops a series of tones and suppositions because the interlocutors have hidden intentions and relating duplicity. Words hide an attitude betrayed by the body. The man`s misfortune is that he cannot assure a congruency between his forms of communicative manifestation, that honesty is given to be free but words project him in the sphere of lies: „*the man is the only species on Earth that integrated lies in his everyday life needs and who is able to lie "naturally", whenever necessary. He forges reality when his little weaknesses impede him to resemble the image of the perfect man that he himself created .....Lying appears like a necessary certainty.* (Ph. Turchet).

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People still have a lot of innocence and spontaneity having a (social) interest in not being completely honest. Reason calls for objectivity and honesty in social relations and the heart has its reasons to be suspicious of a thinking mind**.** The first impression about an interlocutor includes feelings – and not a reason-based judgement. When you meet a girl for the first time, the first impression could be extremely subjective and fake: „*She is too elegant to be honest*" or „*She has no charm*", „*She is too beautiful to be smart*" etc. These are innocent cheatings that mark the moment and influence the status of a relationship. Communication with the other has its own deceitfulness derived from the duality of the reason-affection, thought-feeling relationship. Reasonable thinking tends to ensure decent, real, sincere, honest communication and the gestures are of genuine honesty revealing a Faustian contradiction. When you tell a woman that she is beautiful looking at her askance, you grin unconsciously. The truth can be read in nonverbal communication, in body language which certify the truth of what is being said. J. J. Rousseau supports the above mentioned by stating that „*reason created man but feelings lead him*".

The synergologist is like a wizard because he reads the truth in the man`s soul as it is projected by his gestures. In his own way, any individual has synergologic talent. Reading the gestures, he senses the real conflict between words and deeds and discovers that words almost always speak lies. He „sees" what people hide, asking the "mirror of reversed eyes" to identify the transparency of the soul and to reveal the interlocutor`s true feelings placed in communicative relationship. He infiltrates in the privacy, in the hidden parts of the soul through gestures, body language, instinctive and honest body movements.

Certain basic gestures are familiar to everyone. A glum man is san and angry while a happy man laughs. A "yes" involves vertical body movement while "no" a horizontal one. The smile is a gesture of acceptance and frowning one of rejection. Shrugging shoulders means "I don`t know", and shaking the forefinger is a warning, etc. Gestures have their significance in the context in which they occur and have their random quantity. We could read the people`s gestures, starting from the position of the body, of hands and legs and continuing with the movement of the eyebrows, eyes and facial muscles (soul is placed in the eyes; there is social, relational, passionate, metaphorical look, as well as their opposites). („I don`t see what you want to say"). In other words, the means people have at their disposal as members of the same community and with the same mentality are *vocal and body language.*

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The conclusion of these considerations synthesizes the relationship between individuals in a postmodern society in which – as stated in the beginning- values are masked by a certain type of relating in an artificial context. People do not communicate, but their psychic relates, engaged in a competition of finding the real truth, innocently disguised in the complex personality of each individual. A postmodern man–like we are-adorns his existence according to the communicative events he is engaged in or is motivated to be a involved actor. *In fact, a communicative situation leaves the individual space of expression for Ego and a new Self-image.*

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PASS THROUGH EXEMPLES OF INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN - II

Dorin Herlo, PhD
"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad
Faculty of Science of Education, Psychology and Social Work
dorinherlo@gmail.com

Abstract: *An essential act of teachers' profession is the design of curriculum and learning experiences. The paper, following the first part published in previous issue, presents different examples of instructional design models, applied by teachers into the learning process.*

Keywords: *Backward design model, Dick&Carey model, instructional design*

Backward design model

As we know, an essential act of teachers' profession is the design of curriculum and learning experiences to meet specified purposes. They are also designers of assessments to diagnose student needs to guide their teaching and to enable them and others (parents and administrators) to determine whether the learning outcomes have been achieved. Like other design professions, such as architecture, engineering, or graphic arts, designers in education must focused on their end users, and are strongly client centered.

Clearly, students are teachers' subjects and teachers' concern in whole student centered learning, given that the effectiveness of curriculum, assessment and instructional designs is ultimately determined by their achievement of desired learnings. One of the instructional design models, used often in education for accomplish the desired results of learning is *Backward Design Model*.

If we want to find out the meaning of the „backward design" we can see the significance in Oxford English Dictionary as follow:
Backward - begin with the end in mind; develop a clear understanding of where you want to go; map out the steps to get you there.
Design - to have purposes and intentions; to plan and execute.

From this point, we can say that *Backward Design Model,* an instructional design originates from Wiggins & McTighe[1], suggests that learning situations, learning experiences, should start with the end of the process and be planned with the final assessment in mind, thus as the desired results to be in front of whole teaching, learning and evaluation process. In other words backward design is a process that focuses on assessment first and instructional activities last. It shifts teacher perspectives. In this situation the teachers, designers of entire educational process, will be able to avoid problem of planning forward from sequence to sequence of learning until final assessment of them, because they will look at the big picture with the end in mind.
The desire results, set up as objectives, goals, capacities, standards, competences must be taken into account for the entire curriculum design which will draw the way of teaching and learning

[1] Grant Wiggins, Jay McTighe, (2005), *Understanding by Design*, Expanded 2nd edition, Published by Pearson Education and the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development

process, determining the evidence of learning by students performances, proved into assessment stage. In the mean time, the desire results causes teachers' teaching needs to equip students to perform not only for the final assessment but also for everyday life.

In backward design teachers set the vision or the essential understanding of their curriculum, decide how students will provide evidence of their learning, and finally design instructional activities to help youngsters learn what is needed to be successful.

Therefore will be three stages to backward design:

Stage 1: *Identify Desired Results*; in this stage could be raised the following questions:

- What "enduring" understandings are desired?
- Enduring understandings:
- ➢ Backward design begins a vision of what all students should achieve.
- ✓ Set the vision.
- ✓ Focus on the big ideas.
- ✓ Create a shared vision.
- ➢ Core concepts, principles, theories, and processes that anchor curriculum.
- ➢ This is what we want students to remember.
- ➢ Students will actually understand and be able to use this long after they leave the school.
- What should students know, understand, and be able to do?
- What is worth understanding?

Stage 2: *Determine Acceptable Evidence of Learning*;

- How will we know if students have achieved the desired results and met the objectives, goals, capacities, standards, competences?
- ➢ Determine how students demonstrate their knowledge, how demonstrate understanding throughout the sequences/modules, not just at the end.
- ➢ Focus on assessment before designing the learning activities.
- ✓ Criteria and performance objectives, goals, capacities, standards, competences are clearly stated and understood by all.
- ✓ Assessment answers the following questions:
- How much did they learn?
- How well did they learn it?
- How well did we teach it?
- ✓ Assessment helps teachers evaluate their own work, success of their curriculum design.
- What will we accept as evidence of student understanding and proficiency?
- ➢ Expand the assessment continuum.

Stage 3: *Design Learning Experiences & Instruction*.

- Plan instructional activities.
- Define the essence of what students will learn. What prior knowledge do students need in order to be successful?
- Organize and focus learning. What instructional strategies are needed to lead the student to mastery?
- Learning is spiraled. Students revise and reconsider ideas and skills.
- Share best practice.
- Build in collaboration.
- Ensure success for all learners.
- ➢ Incorporate a variety of sources, more than a textbook.
- ➢ Cannot be answered in one sentence.
- ➢ Have no easy answers and can be examined from multiple perspectives.
- ➢ Allow students to think deeply.

- Allows students to be assessed in multiple ways.
- Are students friendly and easily accessible, publicly displayed?

The first and most important aspect of backwards design is to become familiar with the specific competences for the grade level and curriculum area being taught.

The next step, after the specific competences and benchmarks have been selected, is to design an assessment that will measure the students' understanding of them. We will need to decide how we are going to measure student understanding (test or quiz, self-assessment, performance, product) of the selected specific competences. Bloom's Taxonomy (*knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation*) is a nice tool to use to help design assessments or we can utilize the many „performance verbs" offered by Wiggins and McTighe (1999) under the following categories: *explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and self-knowledge.*

Once we have selected the specific competences and determined the acceptable evidence that will demonstrate student achievement, then you can develop a lesson plan that will provide students with the opportunity to reach the desired objectives. In 1999 Wiggins and McTighe have proposed „WHERE" approach in this stage of the process.

W stands for students knowing Where they are heading, Why they are heading there, What they know, Where they might go wrong in the process, and What is required of them.
H stands for Hooking the students on the topic of study.
E stands for students Exploring and Experiencing ideas and being Equipped with the necessary understanding to master the standard being taught.
R stands for providing opportunities for students to Rehearse, Revise, and Refine their work.
E stands for student Evaluation.

The rewarding part of the process comes next with the implemation of the lesson plan in the classroom. Any necessary changes or additions can be incorporated into teacher's modified lesson plan.

After students have had the opportunity to learn the selected goals, the students will need to be assessed to determine if they have successfully reached the desired goal. The student assessment can also be used to modify the original lesson plan.

One criticism of this approach is that is appears to promote „teaching to the test". Yet despite the negative connotation that comes along with that phrase, argueable teaching to the test is exactly what the role of the educator should be. This does not mean teaching the test itself, of course. But if a known final test or assessment is required, then backward design can be a useful way to prepare learners to perform well on the final assessment.

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Dick & Carey model

Walter Dick, Lou and James Carey made a significant contribution to the instructional design field by championing a systems view of instruction as opposed to viewing instruction as a sum of isolated parts. The model addresses instruction as an entire system, focusing on the interrelationship between *context, content, learning and instruction.* According to Dick and Carey „Components such as the instructor, learners, materials, instructional activities, delivery system, and learning and performance environments interact with each other and work together to bring about the desired student learning outcomes".[2]

Their work is based on the behaviorist view that there is a predictable link between a stimulus and the response it produces in a learner. It is the designer's responsability to determine the sub-skills a student must master in order for the behavior to be learned and choose the stimulus and strategy for instruction in order to assemble the sub-skills.

They developed the components of the Systems Approach Model, also known as the Dick and Carey Model, even since 1978 being a comprehensive and detailed instructional design model composed of nine (1996) and finaly ten (2011) components as shown below:

1. *Identify Instructional Goals* – Based on needs assessment and the learners requirements, describe what the learners are expected to do or perform at the end of the instruction.
2. *Conduct Instructional Analysis* – This step consists in analysing skills, knowledge and attitudes of the learners that are required to show them at the beginning of instruction not the entry behaviors. By the other hand, identify the steps the learner must be able to perform in order to accomplish the tasks that lead to the desired performance. This step identifies the exact performance gap between the present performance and the desired performance. Basically, a performance gap is the difference between the actual or present performance and the optimal or future performance.
3. *Identify Entry Behaviors and Learner Characteristics* – In this step learners' prior skills, preferences and attitudes are determined. In other words, identify the general characteristics of the learners, including skills, experience, motivation levels, and basic demographics which relate to the skills and topics that will be taught. The information should have enough detail to allow teacher to identify the correct starting point of the instruction so that they do not waste time reviewing material they already know and does not omit content they need to know.
4. *Write Performance Objectives* - Performance objectives consist of a description of the task or skills to be learned, the criteria for performance and the conditions that the task must be performed.
5. *Develop Assessment Instruments* based on criterion - Tests and evaluations are created that will:

   a) ensure the learners meet the necessary prerequisites for learning the new skills and knowledge,

   b) check the learner's progress in meeting the performance objectives during the learning process, and

   c) evaluate the learning process itself to ensure it is structurally sound.
6. *Develop Instructional Strategy* – Instructional strategy should cover pre-instructional activities, presentation of information, practice and feedback, testing and follow through activities. Instructional strategy must be developed taking in consideration the *current learning theories* (latest research) and *the interrelationship between content to be taught*, *learners'*

[2] Walter Dick, Lou Carey, James O. Carey, (2011), *The Systematic Design of Instruction*, Seventh Edition, Pearson Publisher

characteristics and the environment to which the instruction will be delivered. It is necessary to create a blueprint of the learning activities that will transfer, develop and reinforce the skills and knowledge formulated in the performance objectives and in the order that will provide the best learning environment.

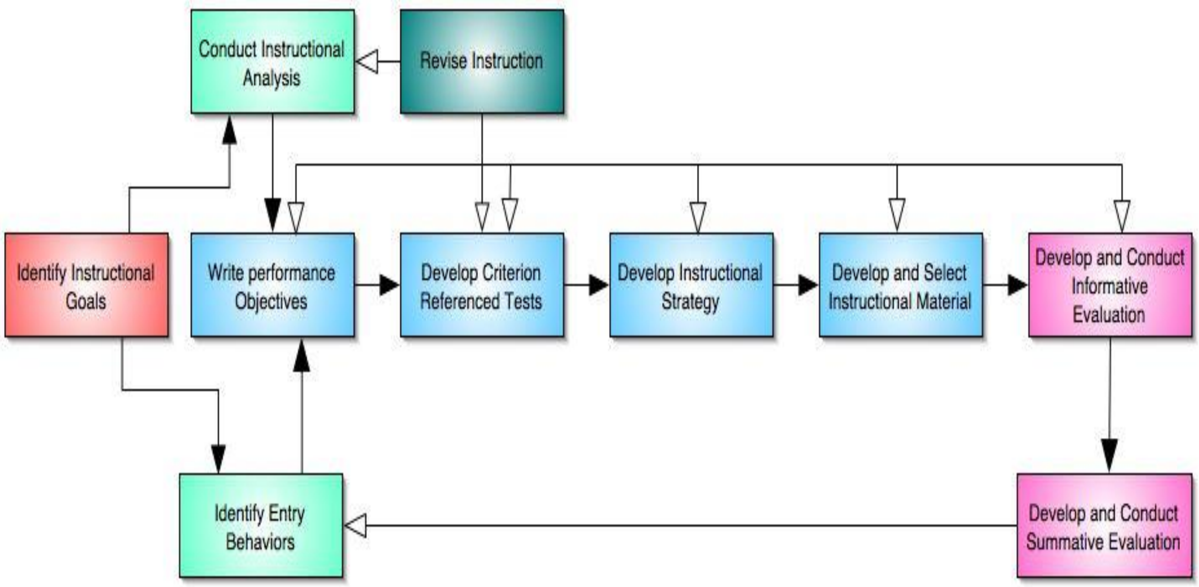
7. *Develop and Select Instructional Materials* - Using the blueprint in the previous step, fully development the instructional content and activities. Original materials should be created based on the content be taught while reuse existing material whenever possible as well as other materials.

8. *Design and Conduct Formative Evaluation* - Using one to one evaluation, small group evaluation, field evaluation, trials, instruction, and/or interviews with prospective learners, so as to collect data for identify areas in the instructional material that need improvement.

9. *Design and Conduct Summative Evaluation* - Judge the worthiness of the program after all activities and the first classroom iterations with the focus being on the outcome: Did it work as intended? Did we achieve the desire results? Continue the evaluation after each class or training activity.

10. *Revise Instruction*: Use the data from the two types of evaluations to examine the validity of the instructional strategy and revise as needed. Assumptions about entry behaviours and learner profile are validated again or must be refined whole or part of instructional design.

We can see, in the map bellow, all this components of Dick&Carey model:



Dick and Carey Instructional Design Model

Source: http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/history_isd/carey.html

On the other hand, we can find an other approach about the stages of Dick & Carey model:

Stage 1. Instructional Goals

- Instructional Goal: Desirable state of affairs by instruction
- Needs Analysis: Analysis of a discrepancy between an instructional goal and the present state of affairs or a personal perception of needs.

Stage 2. Instructional Analysis

- Purpose: To determine the skills involved in reaching a goal
- Task Analysis (procedural analysis): about the product of which would be a list of steps and the skills used at each step in the procedure

- Information-Processing Analysis: about the mental operations used by a person who has learned a complex skills
- Learning-Task Analysis: about the objectives of instruction that involve intellectual skills

Stage 3. Entry Behaviors and Learner Characteristics

- Purpose: To determine which of the required enabling skills the learners bring to the learning task
- Intellectual skills
- Abilities such as verbal comprehension and spatial orientation
- Traits of personality

Stage 4. Performance Objectives

- Purpose: To translate the needs and goals into specific and detailed objectives
- Functions:
  - ✓ Determining whether the instruction related to its goals.
  - ✓ Focusing the lesson planning upon appropriate conditions of learning
  - ✓ Guiding the development of measures of learner performance
  - ✓ Assisting learners in their study efforts.

Stage 5. Criterion-Referenced Test Items

- To diagnose an individual possessions of the necessary prerequisites for learning new skills
- To check the results of student learning during the process of a lesson
- To provide document of students progress for parents or administrators
- Useful in evaluating the instructional system itself (Formative/ Summative evaluation)
- Early determination of performance measures before development of lesson plan and instructional materials

Stage 6. Instructional Strategy

- Purpose: To outline how instructional activities will relate to the accomplishment of the objectives
- The best lesson design: Demonstrating knowledge about the learners, tasks reflected in the objectives, and effectiveness of teaching strategies, e.g. Choice of delivering system. Teacher-led, Group-paced vs. Learner-centered, Learner-paced

Stage 7. Instructional Meterials

- Purpose: To select printed or other media intended to convey events of instruction.
- Use of existing materials when it is possible
- Need for development of new materials, otherwise
- Role of teacher: It depends on the choice of delivery system

Stage 8. Formative Evaluation

- Purpose: To provide data for revising and improving instructional materials
- To revise the instruction so as to make it as effective as possible for larger number of students
- One on One: One evaluator sitting with one learner to interview
- Small Group
- Field Trial

Stage 9. Summative Evaluation

- Purpose: To study the effectiveness of system as a whole
- Conducted after the system has passed through its formative stage
- Small scale/ Large Scale
- Short period/ Long period

Dick and Carey (1996) pointed out the systematic characteristics of their model:

1. Goal-directed: all the components in the system work together toward a defined goal

2. Interdependencies: all the components in the system depend on each other for input and output.
3. Feedback mechanism: the entire system uses feedback to determine whether the goal is met.
4. Self-regulating: The system will be modified until the desired goal is reached.

References:

Walter Dick, Lou Carey, James O. Carey, (2011), *The Systematic Design of Instruction*, Seventh Edition, Pearson Publisher

http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/history_isd/carey.html

http://www.umich.edu/~ed626/Dick_Carey/dc.html

THE IMPROVEMENT OF INITIAL TRAINING OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES THROUGH STUDENTS` PRACTICE PROGRAMME „CHILD PROTECTION DROM THEORY TO PRACTICE”

Alina Roman, PhD.
“Aurel Vlaicu” University, Arad
romanalinafelicia@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The article approaches the problematic of the development of students` professional competences providing an example of using theory in practice in the field of child care services. it subject is approached by elaborating a curriculum, tools and resources required in practice stages that take place in specialized institutions. The results of the project and the impact of activities on students and potential employers as well as ways to assure sustainability are presented throughout this study.*

Keywords: *professional competences, practice stages, work tools, academic commitment and fulfilment.*

1. Introduction

Increasing the quality of educational systems and of professional training, openness to the social, economic and cultural environment, to the society as a whole represents a strategic direction in educational policies on European level. Competitiveness and professional dynamics increase the employers` expectations who consider that the students` practical training does not meet actual needs and requirements of specialized institutions. In this framework, the objectives of the project entitled *Practice programme for students “child care services – from theory to practice”,* promoted under the acronym *PractiPASS*, project financed from The Social European Fund, Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013, met the requirements of initial professional training; the Development and implementation of common tools for professional training; Sharing learning experiences through exchange of good practices and dissemination mechanisms of knowledge and expertise; Active involvement of social partners and all actors engaged in professional training.

The project developed and strengthened inter-regional partnership between University of Oradea, University of Bucharest and „Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad on the one hand and of local partnerships between universities and public and private institutions, potential employers of undergraduates on the other. 600 students enrolled in Bachelor and Master Programmes (Social work, Psychology, Sociology and Special Psychopedagogy) of three national universities were granted access to practice in public and private institutions. Their activity was supervised by a practice supervisor from the university and guided by tutors from hosting organizations. They were specially trained to work with students by specialists from our country and from abroad. Along with practice stages, students benefited from a comprehensive career counselling and orientation programme, developed in order to familiarize students with the rigours and conditions offered by potential employers.

2. Students` commitment and participation

Practical activities which involved students facilitated an integrated approach of knowledge in child protection services and the development of transversal and specific competences in agreement with the demands and needs of field, government and non-government institutions and with the dynamics of the society.

This approach of training future specialists’ benefits from an integrative vision not only on curricular level but it also offers the opportunity to multiply and disseminate good practices between all partners involved in the project. The aim of these partnerships is to develop valuable methodological tools with high impact on specialists` training in the field of child care services.

The analysis of student questionnaires applied in the three stages of inquiry which contained three commitment items and participation in their own training, revealed that average results at the level of each university are stable in time. The highest variation registered between stages is of 10 percentage points. The students of the University of Bucharest state more frequently than students of the other universities that they often have a participative (active) behaviour in practical activities, lectures and seminars. 84% students of the University of Bucharest state that they often respond to teachers`/tutors` questions, 62% students of the University of Oradea and 78% students of the University of Arad has given the same answer. Moreover, students of these three universities are determined by an intrinsic motivation when they are involved in student activities (for example in the third stage, 85% students of the University of Bucharest, 82% students of the University of Arad and 78% students of the University of Oradea state that they study often and with desire to learn more; the average weight of those who stated that they often fulfilled optional tasks proposed by tutors is of 80% at University of Bucharest, 75% at University of Arad and 75% at University of Oradea). The intrinsic motivations are diminished but of similar size in all universities (they took part in the practice stages to obtain higher grades: always 40% and often 32%, while the percentage for the University of Arad is 35%). We can conclude that the transfer between theoretical and practical knowledge maintains students` interest, their active involvement and intrinsic motivation. The cooperation with tutors from partnership institutions determined the re-evaluation of curriculum and practice activities by integrating new themes, methodologies, work tools and employers` demands.

Fig 1. Comparative data on students` commitment and students` participation, stage I

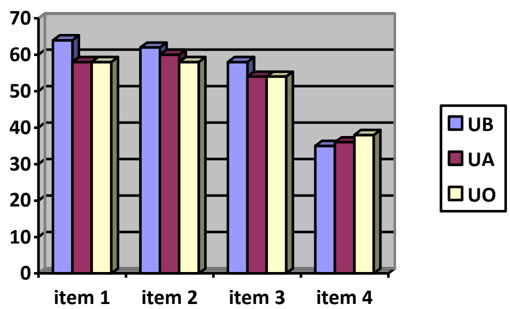


Fig 2. Comparative data on students` commitment and students` participation, stage II

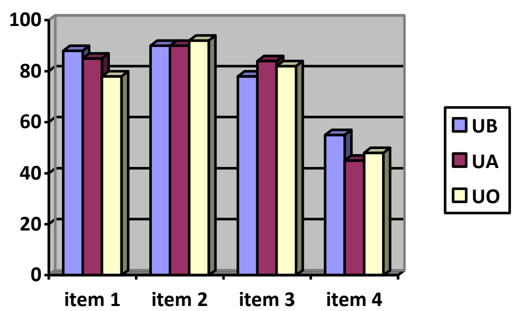
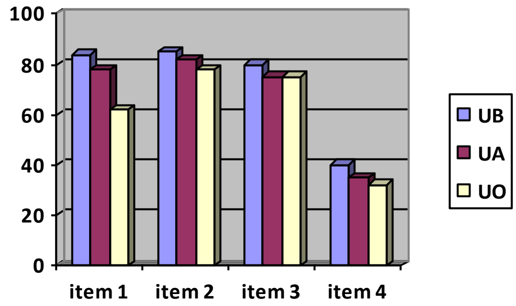


Fig 3. Comparative data on students` commitment and students` participation, stage III



3. Recommendations for the improvement of practice tools

All practice tools have been developed by experts from universities by consulting specialists from the institutions where students attended practice stages. Tutor training has focused on the development of a unitary vision on learning experiences which would involve students. The aim of this vision is to develop professional competences in the field of child protection services and to solve the tasks from their practice notebook according to the course syllabus. Students, tutor supervisors, tutors and the practice responsible have made the following observations regarding practice organization and the efficiency of working tools developed and applied in the three practice stages:

The clarity of tasks from the practice notebook and of the explanations from the practice guide;

The possibility of practical application of course contents;

Students` active involvement in content selection according to their needs and interests;

The development of transversal competencies centred on problem solving and decision making in child protection services;

High interest for field work, which enabled direct contact with the beneficiary;

The flexibility of practice schedule;

Wide access to information and communication sources;

The Practice Notebook:

Reassessment and adjustment of tasks from the practice notebook to the study programme curriculum to avoid the lacks of synchronization that we have noticed.

The usage of practice notebook starting with the 2nd semester of the 1st year of study to increase the degree of correlation between theoretical concepts and practice.

We consider that in the 1st semester, students could use *The Practice Journal* as working material because it help them to structure information and to get used to the requirements of practice and the institutional environment.

Reorganization of space given to each theme and offering students the possibility to fill in the Practice Notebook in an electronic format. A tool for tutors` assessment made by students could be designed to complete the Practice Notebook and offer feedback to tutors.

An assessment in terms of quality that would identify the elements of critical rationality is the SWAT analysis. Students could express their opinion about the strong and weak points of the practice stage.

Practice Guide:

It is concise and explicit, offering the students and tutors the possibility meet the expectations of practice in child protection services and it can be adjusted to each field of study according to its structure.

In terms of student grading procedures, we consider that a peer assessment and self-assessment questionnaire could be applied. Motivation is linked to noticing the degree of students` involvement in the practice stages. Co-participation in this process is important because they accustomed to teamwork irrespective of their field of study.

Institution observation grid is advisable to be designed based on the tutor`s or tutors` coordinator`s presentation of the institution. To avoid redundancy, students should only fill in the service or department presentation where s/he attends practice, if the institution is the same as in the previous practice stage.

The Student`s Observation and Assessment Sheet performed by the tutor is of formative type and tries to grasp different relevant aspects of practical activity from the perspective of knowledge, competences, abilities but also regarding behaviour, punctuality, perseverance, initiative, communication and responsible involvement in practice tasks. We believe that this sheet can be adjusted for the practical assessment of students` activity from other fields of study.

The Career Guide is a useful tool used by the students in counselling activities for personal development and the development of interpersonal competences required for a successful insertion on the labour market. UAV students suggest the improvement of the guide by adding self-knowledge tools of one`s interests and abilities for career development. Group counselling activities were appreciated by UAV students that rank as necessary the activity of the career counselling centre.

4. Sustainability

The closed partnerships, the methodology and practice tools developed and validated during the practice stages provide a stable framework for the organizational development of the faculty and for the initial training of professional and transdisciplinary competences of students studying social work and psychology. The assumption is made based on the following considerations:

- The transdisciplinary approach of practice is a model that could be generalized because it provides a global approach of a subject which is interesting both for students and for their field of study. It set them in real situation, like the one found in their professional life.
- The methodology of practice organization and unrolling, proposed and validated throughout the project, offers a generous framework for long term practice organization. It is based on collaboration between the university and other institutions, NGOs, private sector.
- The identification of students` training needs in accordance to employers` demands was achieved by consulting the representatives of different institutions during a debate. We consider that this type of interaction would be very useful to adjust the curriculum to de dynamics of professional training.
- The improvement of communication and human resources development through interactive methods and simulation of key-situations.
- The training of practice tutors should be continued and their experience should be used to train other groups of students.
- The improvement of collaboration between partner institutions and the continuation of students` voluntary work will increase their changes of employment.
- The improvement of curriculum quality, of study programmes in social work and psychology by taking into account the employers` suggestions and the conditions on the labour market.
- The project results are curricular resources available and accessible to all teachers that will coordinate practice stages.
- Organizational development through the opportunity to access the PractiPass project`s webpage for the promotion of activities and services, through the development of new joint partnerships and access of resources and through examples of good practices developed during the project`s implementation period.
- Finding more practice locations, access to a higher number of institutions, the involvement of more tutors is a useful exercise in the practice preparation. The students that took

part in study tours in other EU member states should revalue their experience. The study tours allowed them to be aware of the way in which similar institutions from abroad function. (Belgium, Hungary)

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IMPROVING TEACHERS` PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Gabriela Kelemen, Ph.D.
Aurel Vlaicu University from Arad
Faculty of Science of Education, Psychology and Social Work
gabrielakelemenuav@gmail.com

Abstract: *The study focuses on aspects regarding the development of students` abilities in acquiring knowledge, professional abilities and skills necessary for the didactic career. Filed-related literature presents different ways of training future teachers with impact on the relationship between theoretical learning and practice. It brings to our attention the variety of tendencies in the future teachers` professional training stressing the importance of reforms both in classroom approaches and in approaching the educational process as a whole. The three subsystems: teachers, pupils and learning activities coexist and interact in different ways and with different intensity influencing the learning results. A good theoretical and practical training of future teachers through initial training is therefore a goal of all faculties. Our faculty is specialized in training teachers for preschool and primary school and pays particular attention to the improvement of training strategies for future teachers, so as to make them true professionals in their field. Below, we will point out some directions for quality improvement in students` training for the didactic career.*

Keywords: *learning quality, didactic profession, educational process, reform, orientation in learning, the development of professional competences*

Introduction

Although it can be noticed that the didactic profession is no longer so attractive for the youth (Moore Johnson 2004; Mulvey and Cooper 2009; OECD 2005; Strong 2009), we consider that this profession is absolutely necessary and at the same time it is a vocational profession that not anyone can profess. High quality training is required to achieve competence in a formal environment. The competence is divided into the following components:

- Knowledge of child development, knowledge of cultural diversity, knowledge of human learning;
- Knowledge of the learning process and of the process that links theory to practice;
- Knowledge about different subjects and ways in which they can be learnt by the pupils;
- Elements of pedagogy and didactics and ways in which different didactic methods and techniques contribute to a successful learning;
- Knowledge of authentic assessment and self-assessment.

Beside the above mentioned knowledge, good teacher`s training requires a proper attitude, namely passion for the didactic profession, professionalism and love of children. Being a teacher requires certain inborn abilities: sociability, empathy, ability to change and openness for novelty along with quality professional training.

Training is a set of social and intellectual structures through which the teacher relates to students and all together they relate to the contents of the educational process to produce knowledge. The major objectives of the academic educational process are the improvement of learning activities, the increase of the didactic act`s quality, efficient students` learning. The literature in the field of education reveals many ways and strategies of improving the didactic act with the aim of training specialist in education. In reality though, the results are not the desired ones. We legitimately ask

ourselves the question what is deficient in the process of future teachers` initial training. Some specialists in the universal field related literature (Hanushek, 2005; Sykes, 1996). Borko (2004), D. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), and Timperley and Alton-Lee (2008) argue in their research that the primary deficiency is connected to the way students put into practice the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom. In reality, they cannot link the theoretical information with concrete situations found in the pragmatic real life. Teaching and learning as parts of the educational process represent two extremely important sides of learning which require situational contextualization. The more the theoretical learning is connected to practice, the more rigorous and optimal will be the students` training for the didactic profession. Practice accompanied by studies in the filed literature shows us many times that the future teachers` training is carried out through emphasis on conceptualization, on disciplines and in a fractionate manner. Moreover, some subjects contain redundant information without bringing about professional development. It is necessary to stress out these tendencies that lead to the development of students` professional characteristics. Learning involves various mechanisms and variables that teachers need to be aware of. These are biological, normative, institutional, historical, etc. variables. They are differently combined at each person, in different proportions, with different emphasis in different circumstances. Hence, there are different ways to accede to learning. In this context, misunderstanding the nature of human learning in its complexity can lead to problems regarding the focus on certain contexts that don`t see the pupil as an individual.
We ask ourselves how can the future teachers` training be improved, through what methods and ways can we contribute to a better psychopedagogic training, to the increase of training quality from a personal, social and emotional point of view. As future teachers, their training has to be considered as a whole and in the complexity of the profession which is closely linked to the classroom, school community and local community where the school is placed.

Theoretical training

Though there is criticism brought to the excess of students` theoretical training, we consider that it is absolutely necessary to acquire a set of general and field-related theoretical knowledge in order to become a good teacher. This is an endeavour which encourages students to acquire theoretical knowledge in the field of pedagogy, psychology and didactics through:

- participation at lectures and seminars in their field of study;
- thorough individual study outside the classes: in libraries, at home, on the internet.

Knowledge of psychology is absolutely necessary; without knowledge of human personality, proper education cannot be done. A good teacher has to know the subtleties of a child`s individuality, what motivates and stimulates his learning, what is interesting for him at different ages, which are the most adequate methods of learning at different learning stages: Prescholl, early schooling, adolescence.
Knowledge of pedagogy is absolutely necessary for a teacher to understand the historical evolution of pedagogic approaches, to be up-to-date with research in the field of pedagogy, didactics, to use the most adequate learning strategies and to use the proper ones in a concrete learning situation.

Practical training

Specialists have always drawn the attention on the necessity to link theory with practice, because purely theoretical knowledge has no value if not put into practice. Therefore, in the future teacher`s training emphasis is laid on teaching practice. The curriculum contains observation classes and application practice. We believe however that the curriculum hours are not enough for adequate training; therefore we insist and propose our students a voluntary teaching practice system in kindergartens and schools for a week in order to understand the preschool and school educational system. Activating as volunteers in schools they will closely follow and understand

the preschool pupils/pupils behaviour at different times of the day, will understand better the components of the educational process: teaching, learning, assessment. This experience offers the student, future teachers opportunities for reflection, for understanding the level he places himself at a certain point, he is aware of his strong and weak points and can apply theoretical knowledge in practice.
The latest research in the field come to emphasize the role of several features related to the improvement of future teachers` training.

Active learning
Creating opportunities for students` engagement in learning contributes to increasing the efficiency of their professional training. Seminars where students are actively involved in their learning are more useful to them than lectures given by brilliant professors. Interaction within such activities helps defining some concepts, to the development of critical attitude towards the student`s training, revising and reforming learning skills, the development of a behaviour for open-dialogue.

Methodology
Our concerns for the improvement of teacher`s professional training contained a correlational study regarding:

- the development of didactic competences through field-related programmes;
- the development of didactic competences through the psychopedagogical module;
- the development of didactic competences through postgraduate studies;
- the development of didactic competences through projects.

The study comprised a number of 100 students, with 4 test samples of 25 students which are enroled in a form of psychopedagogic training. The study was carried out on a span of two years, 2010-2012. each of the above mentioned study programmes contain the same disciplines of psychopedagogic training with the same number of credits.
These students were recorded and observed through a span of two years and their progress was registered by assessment. Theoretical and practical results were observed, as well as the grades obtained at the assessment of theoretical and practical competences.

Results

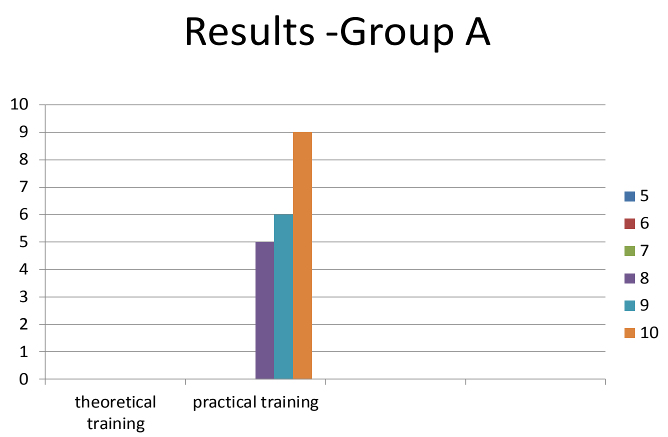

Fig.1.Bar chart with the results of theoretical and practical training of students enrolled in initial training

Observing the assessment results of students enrolled in initial training programmes we notice that they obtained grades between 6 and 10, the highest weight being grade 8 at theoretical training. For practical training, the grades were between 8 and 10.

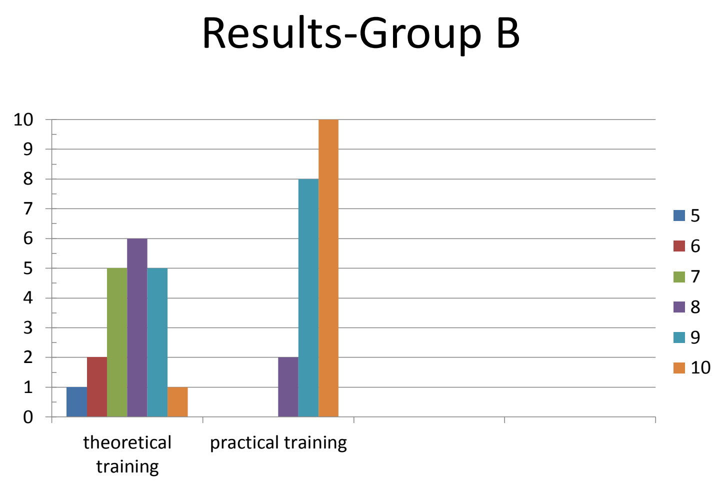

Fig.no2. Bar chart with the results of theoretical and practical training of students from the psychopedagogical module

The students from the psychopedagogical module obtained grades between 5 and 10, the highest weight being grade 8 at the assessment of theoretical knowledge and grades between 8 and 10, the highest weight being grades 9 and 10 at practical assessment.

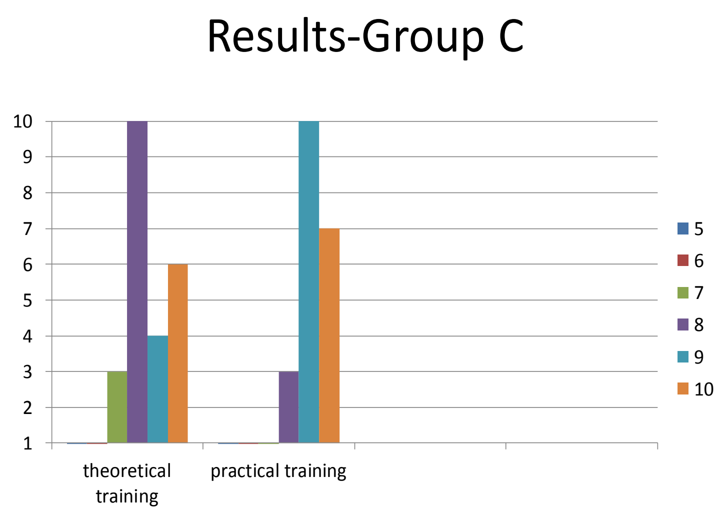

Fig.no3.Bar chart with the result of theoretical and practical training of students from postgraduate studies in psychopedagogical training

The group from postgraduate studies obtained grades between 7 and 10 at theoretical training and grades between 8 and 10 at practice the highest weight being grade 9.

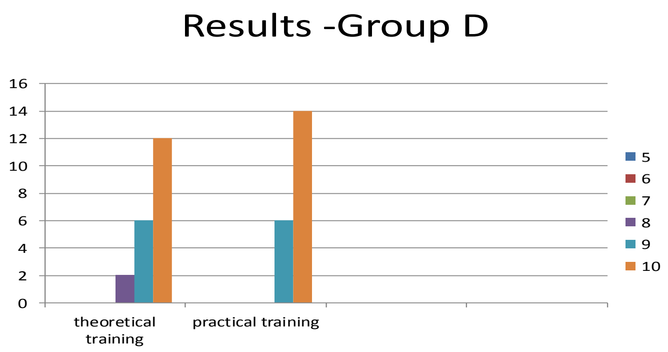

Fig.no.4.Bar chart with the results of theoretical and practical training of students from the psychopedagogical training project

Group D obtained results between 8 and 10 at theoretical exams and grades between 9 and 10 at practical exams, the highest weight being grade 10 in both exams.

Table no1. Centralized situation of sums obtained by students from all four training forms

DESCRIPTORS	***A***	***B***	***C***	***D***
Mean	**3,13**	**4,53**	**3,53**	**4,07**
Standard Error	0,11	0,08	0,09	0,11
Median	3	5	3	4
Mode	3	5	3	5
Standard Deviation	**1,00**	**0,77**	**0,85**	**0,99**
Sample Variance	0,99	0,59	0,73	0,97
Kurtosis	0,00	1,73	-0,70	-1,43
Skewness	-0,19	-1,57	0,85	-0,37
Range	4	3	3	3
Minimum	1	2	2	2
Maximum	5	5	5	5
Sum	266	385	300	346
Count	85	85	85	85

Table no 2. Hierarchical situation with results obtained by students from all four training forms

	A	B	C	D
1	87	90	76	94
2	65	84	104	100
3	70	90	99	116
4	67	67	96	129
5	68	96	88	123
6	77	95	85	124
7	89	91	81	135
Total	523	613	629	821

We observe significant differences in the psychopedagogical training of future teachers from all four study programmes. The results have an ascending trend from initial training, to the module, postgraduate studies and the project, the lowest results being registered at students from the faculty and the highest at students from the project. We can interpret these differences by the students` lack of experience.

Conclusion

We consider that high quality training of future teachers is a desideratum and a necessity that requires our full attention. The development of didactic competences implies a long process which involves biological, social, emotional and institutional factors that have to be reconsidered in the training of future teachers. A strong connection with practice, interaction between the contents of learning in the lecture room and the real situation in the classroom is required to improve the training of future teachers.

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STYLES OF FACILITATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL

Carmen Maria Ţîru, Ph.D.
West University of Timişoara, Teacher Training Department
tiru.carmen@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The co-operation between facilitator and student is the main principle in the facilitation process. In this respect, professors at university level develop a personal style of facilitation based on students and their needs. Starting with a general discussion about the main theoretical orientations and researches in the field, this article has as goal to identity differences between the facilitation styles adopted by professors at university level and to propose modalities for developing and optimising this personal approach. In this respect, we questioned 105 students at the West University of Timisoara. The study reveals significant differences between course and seminary professors only at the level of activity based style of facilitation. The nondirective facilitation style is more frequently used by seminary professor-assistants and the activity based facilitation style is less used by course professors, in each year of study.*

Key words: *style of facilitation, nondirective, appreciative, activity based.*

1.Introduction

The style is a specific way of expression in a specific area of human activity, for certain purposes of communication; a personal way of expression (www.dexonline.to). So, the style represents a set of personal characteristics and behaviours which are used and strengthened for a long period of time. For professors, the amount of these particular manifestations in the educational process represents the teaching style. J. Lowman (1995) included characteristics of the professor into two categories: Intellectual excitement (enthusiastic, knowledgeable, inspiring, humorous, interesting, clear, organised, creative, exciting, engaging, prepared, energetic, fun, stimulating, eloquent, communicative) and Interpersonal rapport, as interpersonal concern (concerned, caring, available, friendly, accessible, approachable, interested, respectful, understanding, personable) or effective motivation (helpful, encouraging, challenging, fair, demanding, patient, motivating). We can see that the area of professor's characteristics are very wide and covers the main dimensions of his personality and psychological construction. In this respect, not only the scientific qualification of the professor is important, but also the personal characteristics, which sustain the educational process and the guidance of students' learning process. In other words, we speak about the style of facilitation embraced by professors in the educational process: personality, cognition, motivation, behaviour and personal learning process. The development of a personal facilitation style is a lasting process, a dynamic one and supposes objective self-knowledge. This personal facilitation style must be optimised during the career development process or must be changed, if the context and the characteristics of the educational process will require.

Thus, the professional identity of professors is formed, defined by their sense of self, as well as their knowledge and beliefs, dispositions, interests, and orientation towards work and change (Spillane, J., 2000). The personal style of facilitation represents one of these components of professional identity. Adopting a style of facilitation and customizing it in relation with personal, social and professional identity is not an easy process, but, it is certainly related to students and their specificity. In this type of educational relationship, not only the student must build a personal learning style, but also the professor must identify his personal orientation regarding facilitation. The two processes are tightly related and depend on each other.

M. Rosemann, A. Hjalmarsson, M. Lind and J. Recker (2011) realised a description of the ten styles of facilitation behaviour (presented by other consecrated authors in the field), through a dyadic relationship between two opposite behaviours. In the following, we will discuss and analyse the topic of specific facilitation behaviours which may determine a certain style of facilitation:

A. Communication style: talks vs listens – the facilitator models effective communication and supports participants to understand each other (Vennix, J., 1996; Webne-Behrman, H., 1998). In this respect, the facilitator's behaviour is: to listen and monitor communication; to take part in the dialogue; to set guidelines for group activities such as encouraging, clarifying, restarting, reflecting, summarizing and validating. The facilitator's behaviour can be characterized by the two extremes: talks (guiding the dialogue) versus listens (in order to derive the results from the participants). We must say that, related to the group characteristics, the facilitator can only suggest the direction of the discussion, emphasising the plan and the structure of the communication process or can use the student's expertise or background as support for future interactions.

B. Power style: assertive vs empathic - the facilitator takes an opposite position during the process and, in an assertive way, decides something or everything or can adopt a specific behaviour, based on empathic understanding, having the ability to understand the participants' reactions from the inside and a sensitive awareness for the process monitoring modalities (Heron, J., 1999; Rogers, C., 1967, 1989). The assertive facilitator expresses his own thoughts spontaneously and sincerely. This does not mean that he does not respect the students' opinion. He became a model for students regarding self appreciation and respect of the personal needs and necessities. The empathic facilitator is more centred on students' needs and permanently eager to satisfy their demands.

C. Adaption style: static vs flexible - the facilitator's work can have different degrees of predictability: if he adopts a static style, everything will be predefined and detailed from the beginning (the allocation of tools, the techniques and methods for each activity) or he adopts a more flexible approach, with plans and preparations of the specific actions, but with the possibility for adjustment of the successive actions which are dependent to the emerging events (Vennix, J., 1996; Rogers, C., 1989; Richardson, G.,P., Andersen, D.,F., 1995; Suchman, L.,A., 1987). Certainly, a few aspects of the educational process are predefined (like the objectives, the didactic time, the strategy of teaching, the evaluation strategy). Also, the timing of the students' activity is very important and requires changes and a certain dynamics of making personal decisions.

D. Disagreement style: embraces conflict vs avoids conflict - the facilitator adopts an alternative tactic, focusing on questions regarding to what can be done for hampering the situation and on participants' own behaviour. The other possibility is that the facilitator avoids conflict, trying to manage the disagreements between participants, which are encouraged to go on talking and tell more (Schein, E.,H., 1987; Doyle, M., Straus, D., 1986). In both situations, the facilitator became a conflict manager, adopting different management styles: in the first example, by own strategy, the facilitator offers solutions to the conflict, while in the second example it is important for him to determine the students to cooperate and manage group disagreements.

E. Control style: centralized vs decentralized - the facilitator delegates the participants to manage the process of taking decisions, encouraging them to play new roles and assume responsibilities, or the facilitator does not divide the roles and the tasks in the group, remaining in the centre of attention (Heron, Jh., 1999, Webne-Behrman, H., 1998).

This is an important issue of facilitation: the facilitator's control on the group activity and the dosage of the authority. A facilitator must know the following: in the process of facilitation, the facilitator would move back from centre stage into an invisible position (on the margins of the classroom), slowly but deliberately, facilitating a learning process in which young minds took charge of their own learning, design their own materials, invent their own learning opportunities, and he is preoccupied of developing „*a learner-centred classroom*” (Jansen, J., D., 2001).

F. Model behaviour: does model vs lets model - the facilitator simultaneously facilitates the dialogue and records the model from the modelling dialogue or uses a recording assistant and the participants are domain experts (Persson, A., 2001; Vennix, J., 1996). In contrast, the facilitator should let the participants do the modelling, transforming them into modellers, which are encouraged and governed by the facilitator. As „draftsman” of the dialogue, the facilitator transforms himself into a model of flexibility and transparency in communication. If he lets students choose the model of the dialogue, then the facilitator fundaments the process on the personal style of students' educational behaviour.

G. Facilitation behaviour: does facilitation vs lets facilitate – the facilitator tends to control the facilitation process, using the participants only as contributors or the facilitator allows joint facilitation, while the participants are co-opted as facilitators in some groups, as a source of knowledge and inspiration (Webne-Behrman, H., 1998; Rogers, C., 1989). If the facilitator considers that *he does facilitation*, is centred on the process and not on students' needs or learning activity. His goal is to develop permanently the facilitative process and not the students' learning process. In this way, this is not a facilitative process in a true sense, because of the lack of co-participation for attending the common objectives.

H. Involvement style: involves vs ignores – the facilitator is involved in the facilitation process, based on an agreement between the facilitator and the participants or the facilitator ignores this collaboration, having a rigid view of the rights and wrongs, the truth or the false in a situation. A. Sharp and P. McDermott (2009), proposed the concept of constructive ignorance, based on discovering that an "*off the wall*" comment from a participant was rather on the point.

I. Work style: structured vs unstructured – the facilitator observes a situation without prejudice and applies prior experience only as a guide, not as a constraint, in a planed and structured way or not predicts events, actions and makes decisions during the workshop (Sharp, A., McDermott, P., 2009). We observe that this style refers to the organisation of the process and a good facilitator plans and structures his activity, related to the objectives.

J. Domain knowledge style: domain agnostic vs domain expert (Webne-Behrman, H., 1998; Schwarz, R.,M., 2002) - the facilitator has deep knowledge in the domain, understanding the culture and domain from which the problem has arisen. The other style is characterised by the lack of knowledge about the domain, being modelled and depending on abilities, skills and techniques to develop domain knowledge during the modelling process.

Analyzing these dyads, we must conclude that the approaches of styles in facilitation are very wide and realized from different perspectives of different domains. Sometimes these styles are very similarly explained and confused because of their similarities.

In the educational process, during the evolution of facilitation, the following styles of facilitation are presented: the nondirective style of facilitation, the appreciative style of facilitation and the activity based style of facilitation. Each of these styles should be defined by some particularities.

The nondirective style of facilitation is centred on the signs which are offered by students in the educational process (Charlton, D., 1980). These are educational behaviours which are considered opportunities for self development and for setting up a certain direction of the facilitative process. Nothing is forced or specifically required, the professor and the students assuming the role of the negotiator. The singular aspect which will not be negotiated is the educational value regarding the objectivity of the facilitator in self evaluation and the evaluation of the students (Heron, Jh., 1999). Despite of the no implication appearance, the professor with nondirective style is a fine evaluator of students and suggests ways for improving autonomously their learning activity. As a result, students became more responsible and involved in the educational process. They are partners in the selection of the contents and the modalities of learning and are more motivated to be responsible for their educational development.

The appreciative style of facilitation revolves around the efficacy of the educational process, assured by the valorisation of the students' best characteristics. Considering what the facilitator thinks about the students, that the student will became (Torres, C., 2001), the facilitator determines the students to become better in certain field or in their learning activity, through a permanent positive feedback and encouragements. He sustains the idea which considers the personal involvement of the student in the educational process. The right way for professor' progress is determined by the way in which a student resolves certain issues.

The activity based style of facilitation valorised at the maximum level the students' practical activities, through group interactions. This style is centred on setting up specific learning situations, based on practical experience, which have as goals valorising the personal experience of the students and enriching it with a new one, in the context of group-work (Thiagarajan, S., Thiagarajan, R., 1999). The group-work is a resource to facilitate learning and pragmatic approaches of contents. On the other hand, the group became a framework for personal relationship development.

But, each style of facilitation is not limited on how to facilitate students. Beyond this reflection issues, the style of the professor as facilitator reflects the whole personality, manifested in the educational process. This assumption made many authors reflect on the importance of the facilitation style in the educational process or on what the main particularities which define a style of facilitation are. In the following, we mentioned some recent researches, having as a study theme the facilitation style of the professors and its influence on different characteristics of the educational process or the learning activity of the students:

- J. Gilmartin (2001) studied the four types of professors that emerged from the data research in nurse education: ranging from type 1, which displayed a striking negative attitude towards interpersonal skills work, to type 4, which was creative and enthusiastic. This article described the major characteristics in the different facilitation types and what the factors that influence the learning climate in the educational process are.
- J. Gregory (2002) proposed in his article a change of the professor's role: the professor has stoped being an expert or a guide who transfers knowledge, but he is a facilitator, a moderator and a discussion partner in the educational process.
- T.J Hostager, S. W. Lester, M. Bergmann, K.J. Ready (2003) studied the effects of agenda structure and facilitator style on participant satisfaction and output quality in meetings employing groups, using support systems GSS.

-J. Clifton (2006) described the characteristics of facilitator talk and pointed out that facilitator talk cannot be tied down to any one single pattern of interaction, but in the educational process there are certain interactional devices which could be described as facilitative.

-J. Reeve argues that the students' classroom engagement depends, in part, on the supportive quality of the classroom climate in which they learn. He proposed, for professor modalities, to nurture their motivational resources, adopting an autonomy and supportive motivating style, as an important element to a high quality professor and student relationship.

-S. Cacciamani, D. Cesareni, F. Martini, T. Ferrini, N. Fujita (2012) present the influence of levels of participation, facilitator styles and metacognitive reflection on knowledge building in two blended, post-secondary education contexts. The authors concluded that a high level of participation, a supportive facilitator style, and ample opportunities for metacognitive reflection on the students' own participation strategies determines fostering epistemic agency for knowledge building.

2. Methods and instruments of the research

The previous studies were not centred only on the facilitation style, but mostly on the relation with other important issues of the educational process. ***The hypothesis*** from which we started our research was: the course and seminary professors involved in the higher education system have a different style of facilitation, determined by the student's year of study and the specificity of educational activity.

Settled up on a ***survey based investigation*** *(a questionnaire with 15 items)*, our research goal was to establish the differences between the three facilitation styles: the nondirective style of facilitation, the appreciative style and the practice based style of facilitation, presented in the following:

A. *The nondirective style of facilitation:*

- ✓ The facilitator adopts an impartial attitude regarding the contents and students' learning activities.
- ✓ The facilitator suggests, does not plans when and how the students will act.
- ✓ The facilitator assures opportunities in order to facilitate the self development of the students.
- ✓ The facilitator encourages debates between students.
- ✓ The facilitator supports students in personal self knowledge and personal acceptance.

B. *The appreciative style of facilitation*

- ✓ The facilitator is centred on valorising the best characteristics of the students.
- ✓ The facilitator offers permanent feedback for students.
- ✓ The facilitator uses sustaining encouraging phrases for students.
- ✓ The facilitator motivates the students to become better, in every moment.
- ✓ The facilitator believes that what the students decide is the best way of doing it.

C. *The activity based style of facilitation*

- ✓ The facilitator used group-work and is centred on group development.
- ✓ The facilitator determines the group to solve the given task, in a predefined period of time.
- ✓ The facilitator generates experience in which each member of the group is learning.
- ✓ The facilitator is involved in team-work, for facilitating the learning process.
- ✓ The facilitator sets up tasks which sustain the pragmatic character of the learning process.

Identifying the main characteristics of the teaching process at university level, we may offer an objective image over the predominant styles of facilitation, which provide support in the students' activity of learning. In this respect, we surveyed a number of 105 students from the West University of Timişoara (year 1 to 3, BA) that analyzed the facilitation style of their professors (125 professors), for the courses and seminaries of the second semester of the year 2011-2012.

The objectives of the research were:

O1 To settle differentiating aspects regards the facilitation's styles in the didactic activity, relating to the study year.

O2. To identify differences between the course professors and seminary assistant- professors regarding the facilitation style adopted in the educational process.

O3. To formulate suggestions for defining the facilitation style of the professors in the educational process, at university level.

3. The results of the research

In order to analyse the obtained results, we made an analysis on the following dimensions:

1. The score averages for each style of facilitation and each year of study.
2. The t test on independent samples (course professors and seminary assistant-professors), to establish the significant differences between the averages of the scores obtained by course professors and seminary professors on each facilitation style and each year of study.
3. The t test on independent samples (course professors and seminary professors), to establish the significant differences between the averages of the scores obtained by course professors and seminary professors on each facilitation style.

In the following, we present the analysis of data on each mentioned dimension:

For the first year of study the highest average where the nondirective facilitation style and activity based facilitation style for seminary professors was noted. The score averages for each facilitation styles are very close, without one which is leading the others. The lowest average was obtained by course professors with the activity based facilitation style. The interpretation of the *t Test*, reveals significant differences between course professors and seminary assistant-professors only in the case of activity based facilitation style.

Table1. T test for the significant differences between course-seminar professors/facilitation styles/year 1 of study

Facilitation styles	Sample	Score averages	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
The nondirective facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,8248 3,9849	t(297)= -1,775	p=0,077; p> 0,05
The appreciative facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,7467 3,8548	t(297)= -1,094	p=0,275; p>0,05
The activity based facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,3987 3,9658	t(297)= -4,870	p=0; p< 0,05

For the second year of study the highest average on the nondirective facilitation style and appreciative facilitation style for seminary professors was noted. The lowest average was obtained by course professors with the activity based facilitation style. The interpretation of the *t Test*, reveals significant differences between course professors and seminary assistant -professors only in the case of activity based facilitation style.

Table2. T test for the significant differences between course-seminar professors/facilitation styles/year 2 of study

Facilitation styles	Sample	Score averages	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
The nondirective facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,4787 3,5556	t(182)= -0,685	p=0, 494; p> 0,05
The appreciative facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,4702 3,5556	t(182)= -0,678	p=0, 498; p>0,05
The activity based facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	2,8766 3,2822	t(182)= -2,873	p=0,005; p< 0,05

For the third year of study the highest average on the nondirective facilitation style and for seminary professors was noted. The lowest average was obtained by course professors with the activity based facilitation style. The interpretation of the *t Test*, reveals significant differences between course professors and seminary professors only in the case of activity based facilitation style.

Table 3. T test for the significant differences between course-seminar professors/facilitation styles/year 3 of study

Facilitation styles	Sample	Score averages	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
The nondirective facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,4459 3,5224	t(307)= -0,905	p=0,366; p> 0,05
The appreciative facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,3732 3,4842	t(307)= -1,129	p=0,260; p>0,05
The activity based facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,1796 3,4316	t(307)= -2,268	p=0,024; p<0,05

Analysing the results (score average on each facilitation style and each year of study), we observe that each facilitation style is well represented, at each year of study. The nondirective facilitation style is best represented at the level of seminary assistant- professor because of the specificity of seminary activity: students became in this context more independent; their actions are based on personal decision; the professor supports interactions and communication, debates on specific issues.
The lowest score obtained in each year of study at the level of activity based facilitation style, used in the course context is somewhat understandable: the course activity is based on the academic lecture, minimizing the real implication and pragmatic interventions of students in this context. Despite of this, the major issue of the educational process at university level (in our opinion) is the mismanagement of the pragmatic approach, related to the requirements of the future student's job.

The t test on independent samples (course professors and seminary professors), to establish the significant differences between the averages of the scores obtained by course professors and seminary assistant-professors on each facilitation style renders the following:

-for the nondirective facilitation style there are not significant differences between course professors and seminary -assistant professors;

-for the appreciative facilitation style there are not significant differences between course professors and seminary assistant- professors;

-for the activity based facilitation style there are significant differences between course professors and seminary assistant- professors;

Table 4.T test for the significant differences between course-seminar professors/facilitation styles

Facilitation styles	Sample	Score averages	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
The nondirective facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,5970 3,7041	t(790)= -1,919	p=0,055; p> 0,05
The appreciative facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,5373 3,6402	t(790)= -1,662	p=0,097; p>0,05

The activity based facilitation style	**Course professors** **Seminary professors**	3,1921 3,5979	t(790)= -5,639	p<0,01

4. Conclusions

The hypothesis of the study: the course and seminary professors involved in the higher education system have different styles of facilitation, determined by the students' year of study and the specificity of the educational activity was partially confirmed. As we previously noted, the T test for the significant differences between course-seminar professors noted that these differences are relevant only for the activity based facilitation style (which was already motivated in our study). The lowest average obtained for this facilitation style, on each year of study and in generally, of course professors may be perceived as a warning signal for professors. It is very important to sustain and guide the students at university level in their learning process, to sustain and motivate them in their personal development, but it is not sufficient. Students must be practically prepared for their jobs, in our opinion, gradually and in a progressive and systematic way, starting with the 1st year till the 3rd year of study. This progressive development is not reflected in our results: for example the appreciative style decreased from the 1st year till the 3rd year or the activity based style has not a stabile evolution.

The pragmatic approach must also be identified in the cohesion between course and seminary activities. The course professors must be involved with their students more frequently in the educational process, through reflection activities, using heuristic conversations, debates on specific field problems and accompanying their presentation with practical exemplas from the future students' jobs. The seminary professors must continue the applications, starting with the issues discussed on course activities and emphasizing more or also different possibilities to apply the specific theories and models. In our study, the seminary professors adopted all styles of facilitation: the nondirective one obtained the highest average score and the activity based facilitation style the lowest average score for each year of study and in general. This is a relevant problem for the university educational process, which should be resolved mostly assuring the utility and the grounding of curricular contents in the real life and future jobs of students.

Our general conclusion for this study is that the choice of the facilitation style depends on the context and the specificity of the educational activity. It is not important for university professors to adopt a single facilitation style, but to adapt to the students' needs and type of activity in which they are involved. This will be a solid fundament for their personal and professional development, with profound pragmatic implications in their future adult life. The context and the type of activity should determine the facilitation style, but the permanent resizing and optimising of personal facilitation style is necessary for learners, in order to become what the facilitator wants: himself/herself.

The analyzed data can be used as a support for further researches, such as: to establish the differences between facilitation styles at university level and secondary college professors; to identify specific modalities for the assurance of the continuity of facilitation process at different levels of study in the educational system.

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TUTORING ACTIVITY AND ITS ROLE IN ACHIEVING TRAINING OBJECTIVES AND LONG-TERM SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL INSERTION OF THE BENEFICIARIES IN POSDRU PROJECTS

Dana Bălaş Timar, PhD cd
Aurel Vlaicu University Arad and FDP Arad Branch
dana@xhouse.ro

Abstract: *The project Integrated services for promoting sustainable employment in 5 regions of Romania implemented by People Development Foundation (FDP) aimed to attract and retain on the labor market inactive people, the unemployed and people looking for a job through the promotion of active measures in the field of employment in the 5 regions of Romania. The project was implemented during August 2010 and September 2013. Now, at the end of our work, we are more than proud to have realized that besides accomplishing the proposed objectives: informing for 3.600 beneficiaries, integrated professional services for 1.080 of which 396 long-term professional integrated, developing a solid practice in tutoring beneficiaries' career paths mattered the most. We have learned that besides an indicator, a beneficiary, there lies a person to person interaction able to motivate and change a negative and passive mentality into a dynamic perspective about work and life in general. This paper presents a success story of a teambuilding aiming to develop competencies needed for a sustainable employment in our contemporary society.*

Key words: *PODRU Projects, integrated services, tutoring in training and mediation services*.

1. Integrated services for promoting sustainable employment in 5 regions of Romania

The project aimed: to attract a total of 3,600 people (urban and rural) on the labor market through the provision of labor market information; improving employment for 1,080 beneficiary by boosting motivation and personal skills for seeking and maintaining a job or increasing the level of qualifications in occupations in demand on the labor market; hiring and maintaining on labor market a number of 396 beneficiary by providing mediation services and tutoring; develop and disseminate a package of employment services in innovative public-private partnership model. Based on a transnational exchange of best practices with a Italian organization situated in Milano, ASLAM, these objectives helped achieve three operational objectives of key area of intervention 5.1 "*Developing and implementing active employment measures*" namely: 1. Attracting and keeping as many people on the labor market in order to obtain as high occupancy rate, with particular emphasis on disadvantaged groups in the labor market, 2. Reduced long-term unemployment through preventive and corrective actions; 3. Improving employability of people in search of a job, the unemployed, especially the long-term and inactive people, bringing their contribution to the overall objective of priority Axis 5 "*Promoting active employment measures*" by facilitating labor market integration of the young and long-term unemployed and attracting and retaining more people in the labor market, including those beneficiary who live in rural areas.

Through its training in occupations in demand on the labor market and the personal development of 1080 beneficiary, the project has contributed to the development of human capital and lifelong learning correlation with the labor market. The provision of information, guidance and counseling project have provided opportunities for increased labor market participation of 3,600 people. Thus the project made a real contribution to the general objective of POSDU " increasing competitiveness, by linking education and lifelong learning, labor market and ensuring increased opportunities to participate in a modern labor market, flexible and inclusive of 1,650,000 people."

With the objective of increasing the capacity of employment for 1,000 people the project has contributed to reducing disparities between regions, joined in line EU Cohesion Policy. The overall objective of the project is in line with the European Lisbon strategy. The strategy implemented by the project has increased the overall employment rate in 5 regions of Romania. Through the implementation of measures to promote labor mobility, the project is part of the Lisbon goals. Among the priority actions in the communication strategy for lifelong learning in 2001, there are mentioned: to promote practical training in the workplace for employees and the development of integrated employment.

The objective of the project is consistent with two priorities of the PNR 2007-2010: increasing employment / labor market participation rate, boosting employment and improving the quality of human resources. Its contribution to the achievement of full employment and sustainable development project is in line with the PND 2007-2013 and the objective of development and more efficient use of human capital in Romania provided by the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013. Active and inactive employment measures for unemployed, that action to promote the labor market integration of disadvantaged people enroll in the National Strategy for Employment 2004-2010. The target group consisted of 3,600 people in rural and urban areas in the counties of Arad, Cluj, Dâmboviţa, Olt, Gorj and Bucharest -Ilfov region (including 300 long-term unemployed).

Target group of the project were represented by: inactive, people looking for a job, unemployed, unemployed youth and older than 45 years long-term unemployed, people who have left school early. The needs of the target group were identified following a consultation process with partners. This analysis identified the following common needs of the target group: lack of access to information on all employment opportunities and access to quality integrated employment, lack of motivation to work, lack of required skills in regional or local market, low capacity employment in non-agricultural fields in rural areas, low employment opportunities in rural areas, low living standards. Also, limited access to employment services lead to the phenomenon of unregistered unemployment. The unemployment rate in July 2009 (source: National Agency for Employment -AJOFM) in the areas of implementation were: Arad (5.7%), Bucharest (1.8%), Ilfov (1.7%), Cluj (5.2%), Dâmboviţa (6.5%), Olt (7%), Gorj (8.9%) compared to a national average of 6.3 % increase compared to previous months. Number of registered unemployed at AJOFM Dâmboviţa (March 2009) was 12.585 people, up to 444 people from the previous month. Women represented 44.8% of the total number of registered unemployed, 55.7% of the number of professional integration and 45.5 % of the persons who receive emoluments.

According to AJOFM Arad during February to May 2009 there were 1,955 dismissed people. Of the 10,110 beneficiary registered unemployed in April 2009, 4,728 are women and 5,382 men and automotive, furniture manufacturing and computer manufacturing were among redundancies in the coming months, accounting for over 70% of the planned redundancies. According to AJOFM Olt in April 2009 11,889 unemployed were registered of which 4,540 women and 1,151 under 25 years old, while in Gorj county were registered 12.532 of which 5,942 unemployed women, 1890 were young. Even if the Cluj and Ilfov there were reported lower unemployment rate, the project aimed to stimulate employment and long-term unemployed young people that face other social problems as marginalization. Inactive persons involved in the project are welfare recipients or mothers with many children (mostly Roma) living in the poverty, experiencing low levels of education, lack of formal qualifications tend to be involved in the "black" labor market, record lower levels of employment than the general population average assets).

Promotion campaigns provided each year (media campaigns and caravan campaigns) on each of the 6 areas of implementation, have reached 4,000 people to be active and informed on the employment services available proposed by this project. Establishment of employment service centers and services in rural areas have helped to increasing access to 3,600 beneficiaries in quality employment services. By providing information, guidance, counseling and tutoring, this project helped informing beneficiaries about the occupations in demand on the labor market by providing them assistance for individualizing learning paths and training, counseling for self-awareness, personal resources development and building realistic and active career plans, techniques for searching a job.

Personalized support during the counseling process was enrolled to increase the motivation of individuals, their occupational and geographical mobility. With the objective of increasing the employment rate for 396 people in 5 regions of Romania the project has contributed to increasing the living standards of the target group. Through its training in occupations in demand on the labor market the project increased the competitiveness of 924 persons in the labor market, giving them the possibility of continuing the development of their careers.

Supporting access to and participation in vocational training has contributed substantially to approach learning and work as a process that takes place throughout life, in order to support employability and labor market integration. An essential element in the development of this attitude was to inform beneficiaries about possible training routes facilitated by the completion of training programs. Training and mediation activities were accompanied by mentoring/tutoring activities that have supported 1,080 people in the implementation of the individual plan, increasing their motivation for work and self-esteem. These training programs have tracked and provided other personal development necessary skills and labor market integration: use of ICT.

Vocational guidance and counseling programs and training programs included, also modules on health and safety at work.

The project has transferred and adapted a model of innovative occupancy (Italy) – at transnational level, to contribute to increased employability and attract and maintain employment for the unemployed, inactive people and those who are looking for a job. The added value of the project was that it promoted employment model based on developing partnerships in the community and in particular those between private and public providers of employment services in compliance with the roles and responsibilities in line with the principle of subsidiary. Following the analysis and practical application of the transferred model there had been elaborated a best practice guide for Employment. Employment services approach was based on market needs in order to ensure sustainable employment.

2. What is a tutor?

The tutor is a reliable and experienced professional figure, concerned with the development through training and learning of others.

Daloz (1990) pointed out that effective tutoring is similar to the guidance activity of the beneficiary. Tutoring relationship requires the allocation of a special working time, work for the benefit of learners, trainers and organization.

Standards of the professional figure of the tutor:

1. Tutors are individuals with outstanding teaching skills. Tutors demonstrate interest in their beneficiary’s learning process and ensure their success in learning;

2. Tutors have outstanding communication skills to support the full development of the beneficiaries. These capabilities include the ability to listen carefully, to ask questions that lead

to new insights, employing effective cooperative problem solving and providing critical purpose mobilize guidance on the efficient use of time;

3. Tutors demonstrate respect for the unique role of tutor. Tutors help to support the development and evaluation of guided skills. They demonstrate ethical attitude and interpersonal skills to develop a relationship of trust and to keep the role of resource person.

4. Tutors demonstrate advanced organizational skills necessary to establish and maintain productive relationships with the beneficiary. Tutors help in their work program to develop a complex repertoire of skills and abilities, constantly evaluates recipients formations needs to establish new benchmarks for development helps to acquire a reflective attitude to what has been gained and the creation of self-standing habit.

5. Tutors demonstrate involvement in the problems of the organization as a professional learning community. Tutors help improve organizational environment to support learning and development of new prospects format.

6. Tutors are interested in their practice and stay up to date with news in the field. Tutors seek continuous improvement of their practices in response to constructive criticism appreciated their efforts, are engaged in systematic analysis processes based on the needs of their beneficiaries, organizational needs and standards of their profession.

Basic Skills of a tutor:

- ability to communicate
- ability to process information
- the ability to think and solve problems
- demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors
- to be responsible
- permanent learning
- teamwork skills
- working with others
- to participate in projects and tasks skills
- basic skills in using treatment of text, e-mail, internet
- knowledge of ICT in education for effective use

Capacities of a tutor:

a) ability to receive and present (self, others, the institution) program, goals, requirements, training paths,
b) ability to collect and analyze personal motivations and expectations of the beneficiaries (involving the needs and expectations related to organizational, relative to their own career path and study, relative to the module taught),
c) ability to develop and exhibit knowledge (business projects),
d) ability to organize and manage groups (division into subgroups, the distribution of roles and tasks, observation grids of learner's behavior, solving difficulties occurred),
e) ability to encourage and motivate the beneficiaries (simple formative assessment tools, forms of personalized advice on study methodology for small groups, skills in organizing leisure moments),
f) ability for methodical preparation courses (study documentation, catalogs of tools and teaching resources, ways of developing training objectives and scenarios for self-evaluation of their own practice),

g) ability to continuously improve their professional skills and practices (permanent search of elements of competency required for self personal portfolio, reading specialist, in-depth research).

Qualities of a tutor:

1. able to listen and analyze,
2. able to guide the course of identifying the needs and demand for solution,
3. able to play the role of advisor and consultant in the search for information,
4. willing to work with the beneficiary to provide appropriate guidance and review of personal learning style,
5. open minded,
6. flexible, comprehensive,
7. able to coordinate,
8. good communication skills,
9. stimulates thinking and reflection capacity of the recipient,
10. sense of responsibility and autonomy.

A tutor's capabilities:

1. relational and organizational capabilities,
2. the ability to listen to facilitate communication,
3. ability to lead and manage a team,
4. ability to create and develop constructive relationships with the team and partners (the ability to listen, to dialogue),
5. ability to identify and understand the key elements of a problem situation and bring the right answers,
6. ability to make decisions,
7. ability to organize and plan work effectively,
8. ability to analyze and synthesize,
9. ability to inform and advise,
10. ability to negotiate,
11. ability to lead, guide, direct,
12. ability to encourage collaboration,
13. ability to draft documents and reports.

Skills of a tutor:

a. to communicate, relates to: ability to work with new technologies, ability to formulate clear guidelines and requirements, ability to present information extracted from a number of sources of information,
b. to plan, organize and present a session,
c. to guide, refers to: understand how people learn, understand the barriers in learning and their overcoming technology,
d. to identify and use opportunities to instruct the individual,
e. to understand: refers to the fact possess listening skills needed to "understand, analyze and interpret, analysis of documents containing policies, programs and strategies, reading skills to examine, interpret, compile the information contained in the bibliography

f. communication with superiors: refers to activities outside the job description of a tutor, ability to draw and edit specific documents, the ability to extract information from a number of sources of information, ability to draw and edit own texts, ability to communicate in various forms.

Tutoring activities:

1. Adapting tutor disciplinary knowledge to objective reality: translated into appropriate level terms, making information accessible to beneficiaries,
2. Monitoring group: to take account of the needs of beneficiaries, finding ways suited to their needs, level of interest, level of progress in study, calculating the period of the sequence the application of a suitable learning content,
3. Analysis of group activity: analyze patterns, highlighting reference to the diversify of intervention practices adapted to the needs of beneficiaries,
4. Teamwork: itineraries to discover the necessary information,
5. Identifying and understanding the individual characteristics,
6. To provide for updating their practices and knowledge: being up to date with news from the tutoring,
7. Diversification of tutoring methods: individually and collectively alternated guided exchanges between new beneficiaries and beneficiaries older),
8. Deepening the analysis of needs, in terms of their specificity,
9. Developing an academic tutoring,
10. Design and implementation of a safety monitoring of the beneficiaries progress,
11. Quality assessment and tutoring effects.

3. Tutoring standard procedure

Training and mediation activities were accompanied by mentoring/tutoring activities that have supported 1,080 people in implementing individual intervention plan for the development of independent living skills for employment, in order to facilitate the maintenance status of employed persons.

Objectives aimed:

1. Favor the training objectives of the participants, stimulating learning ability,
2. Supporting the acquisition of independent living skills and a proactive attitude,
3. Favor the employment status person.

Competent tutor is related to the dynamics of group management and acts as an incentive to motivate learning ability of trainees. Tutor accompanies the participants throughout the training process and a period of six months after the recipient has held a job, keeps and implements individual intervention plans, developing independent living skills for employment.

Group management of beneficiaries and monitoring the learning process:

- Takes care of beneficiary accommodation;
- Creates the most favorable conditions for every individual;
- Mediates relations beneficiary / trainer, beneficiary / employer;

- Constitutes a constant and mobilizing group for participants;
- Influences specific work climate and organizes group activities, (structuring the work of the training group, focusing on clarifying expectations, rules, rights and obligations: how many breaks we take, under what conditions;
- Prevents negative influences;
- Motivate participants to training through incentive.

Tutor begins the implementation of Individual Intervention Plan (IIP) from the employment skills assessment, resulting in independent living skills necessary for optimal adaptation to the workplace.

Desired Skills:

- use of time, task planning, organizational skills, punctuality;
- gaining and rational spending of money;
- proactive attitude: initiative, flexibility, adaptability to work, rules and procedures required;
- communication skills;
- teamwork skills;
- attitudes towards authority;
- networking at work.

In monitoring the learning process, tutor motivates and stimulates learning ability, keeps in mind the differences in educational: skills and learning styles, prior experiences of learning, different social origin contexts, different emotional behavior, in other words, harmonizes learning styles and rhythms.

Tutor is focused on developing personal skills and learning strategies (learning to learn):

- the ability to assign time for individual study;
- autonomy, discipline, perseverance in learning;
- ability to focus on short and long term objectives;
- ability to reflect critically on the object and purpose of learning;
- ability to communicate as part of the learning process, using appropriate means (intonation, gestures, facial expressions).

Monitoring the learning process takes place during the development of professional training by accompanying (escorting) beneficiaries, both in theory classes and in the practice. Tutor’s intervention will be individual and will be predominantly focused on valuing learning potential of each person. During the project implementation there were organized for each training session, group sessions up to 50 minutes to determine the learning style and work sessions, individual or groups, to stimulate learning and capacity building, according to individual needs.

Tutoring activity for people that are involved in a learning and education process aimed at developing a positive attitude and specific knowledge particularly adapted to each and every beneficiary.

After the beneficiary has progresses through informing, professional orientation and counseling and he has received a recommendation to follow a training course, he/she will be included in the category of people who will benefit from tutoring.

Tutor's role is to manage throughout education, viewed from the perspective of learners and not the trainer. First, the educational objectives will relate to adapt to the training program and stimulate student – trainer – content relationship. As the courses are conducted and adaptation stage is completed, the tutor will develop beneficiary's motivation towards learning more in a precise and detailed manner. The last stage in the mentoring activity will focus on providing accurate information about concrete work tasks they will face in a future job. This role play will take place and the beneficiaries will be directed to applying for different jobs.

One of the successful techniques used by counsellors in the counselling process is the use of beneficiary vocational skills balance. This instrument determines the current beneficiary's specific expertise and identifies its training needs. Tutoring activity for people who are professional mediated, are mostly oriented to employment education, aiming at developing a positive attitude about people with whom they work with and superiors. People's mindset that has no recent experience in the labour market is anchored in a non-constructive pattern that they should be protected at all times by the professional problems they are faced with.

Once beneficiaries have completed the steps recipients of information, guidance and counselling or mediation, they are prepared for the interview with the employer. Tutor's role begins when the beneficiary has participated in the selection interview. If the beneficiary has not been selected, it is directed to the analysis phase of the interview. He must be aware of the positive and negative aspects with which he was confronted, and this context will have to extract positive experience for him to cultivate in future interviews. Usually expectations of employers and beneficiary's inexperienced workers are very large; tutor's role here is to alleviate expectations about future employee payroll and received help from colleagues and superiors. When the designated person from the company describes the minimum employment criteria, the role of the tutor is to analyze together with the beneficiary if he or she is able to handle the responsibility or not. Tutor's work is nearing completion when the beneficiary has adapted to working schedule and conditions of work as well as teamwork and there is satisfaction with income.

4. Teambuilding to increase work motivation of trainees – A tutoring study case

Between 9 to 11 December 2011, I have delivered as a trainer, a teambuilding program designed to increase beneficiaries motivation for work financed by the project "Integrated services for promoting sustainable employment in 5 regions of Romania" organized by FDP. Teambuilding was delivered in one beautiful location, the resort May 1 in Bihor county, at Hotel Perla.

PARTICIPANTS: The 27 participants in teambuilding activity are unemployed or people looking for a job aged between 21 and 57, fresh graduates of training courses: Data Introduction Validation and Processing and Security Agent.

Beneficiaries have not previously participated in any other program of non-formal education.

TEAMBUILDING's PURPOSE: increasing motivation and developing employment strategies and skills in the professional integration.

OBJECTIVES SET:

1. Improving personal and interpersonal knowledge
2. Develop communication and networking skills

3. Developing Ego marketing skills

ACTIVITIES

To acquire an initial level of interpersonal knowing and networking, our program began with the presentation of the trainer and participants. Next immediate step was to develop rules of the group - presenting the agenda and structure of the course and settled share some general work rules (compliance program, closed cell phones, openness and involvement in activities, and so on).

Teambuilding's goals were presented to the participants as well as objectives and skills whose development is traced throughout the program.

4.1. Self-knowledge and interpersonal knowledge

Through this session participants receive:

- A better understanding of inter-and intrapersonal
- Define personal and professional expectations

To achieve the first objective there were used interactive practical methods, namely expectations tree and star and fears of self-knowledge.

A. Title Method: EXPECTATIONS TREE

The aim / purpose of the method: determining expectations and concerns of the target group, is the first assessment of the participants in terms of results they expect from the course, providing a relaxed working atmosphere.

Skills covered by using the method: the ability to self-assessment, self-analysis capability, expectations and fears.

Reference fields / thematic areas: starting sequence from an internship / training day

Method description:

The trainer distributes to each participant two post-it notes, each of a different color. On one color beneficiaries will have to write down expectations from the training program and on the other color they will write fears about the program. Meanwhile on the flip -chart trainer draws a tree with a crown made out of rich branches. After a few minutes, beneficiaries are asked to stick the post- its, on the top of the tree to put expectations and on the root of the tree to put fears. One of the trainees is asked to read out loud the expectations and fears. The trainer assesses the expectations and fears in relation to the objectives of the training program and training needs identified by this method.

Length: 15' - 30 'minutes

Optimal number of participants: individual

Logistics required: flip chart, post-its of 2 different colors

Expected results using the method: self-awareness expectations and fears, identifying training needs, evaluate the training program (if the expectations are met at the end of the program).

CONCLUSIONS: Participants were opened minded in addition to their expectations and fears, some of them have stated that they have no fear regarding the proposed activities. Majority expectations related to: find something new, fun, relaxation, self-awareness, better communication, resume writing, how to present the interview. Participants did not have fears because they have trust in FDP organization, but there were still people who wrote down fears as: not raining, someone forgot at home his swimming trunks and he was afraid of being a failure.

The conclusions regarding the expectations and fears of all aspects were clarified. The following activity aimed strengths and weaknesses of self-knowledge.

B. Method Name: SELF KNOWLEDGE / SELF-DISCOVERY STAR

The aim / purpose of the method: the participant self-reflection, self-knowledge

Targeted skills: the ability to self-analysis, the ability to select relevant aspects of self

Reference fields/ thematic areas: self-awareness, communication, team building (training and team development)

Method Description: Each participant receives a star-shaped drawing. To each edge of the star are there are noted two to three requirements for completing the star. Trainees receive a completion time of the star. Then each trainee presents the aspects that characterize the group. Another variant of the method is that the group presents the information from the star only to those trainees who agree with it. As an exercise in self-awareness and building self-esteem, an important fact for each student is to internalize the information and to present it in a relevant manner to others. Our exercise consisted of listing on a sheet of flip -chart of all aspects by each participant.

Duration: 30-40 minutes (10-15 minutes filling, 30 minutes presentation)

The optimum number of participants: complete individual regardless of the number of course participants.

Logistics: Star Worksheet

Expected results: self-awareness, personal development

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Three positive things that characterize you
2. Two things your friends appreciate you for
3. 2 things you bring in a friendship
4. 2 goals for the future - short and long term
5. 2 achievements that you are proud of
6. 2 things you want to change about yourself.

Among the positive things they are characterized by, our beneficiaries remembered: reliable, intelligent, sociable, honest, persevering, ambitious, loyal, resourceful, punctual, friendly, optimistic, talkative, good, creative, and modest. Achievements: are proud participants, are willing to know, having been born, family, household, raising children, cooking, house, carpentry workshop, graduation, travelling to South America, buying the machine, professionalism and successful completion of the courses. Among the objectives of the participants there were include: to be independent, own business, built the house for the boy, own financial support for girls for three months (husband left the country), to put money aside, painter course, to move to Italy, to gain lottery, to contribute to society, stable job, be committed, family, holidays, health, financial stability, working in education, to learn English, musical career.

Among the things that they would like to change about themselves, the beneficiaries mentioned: none, naivety, malice, too honest, to be calmer, too emotional, not to be affected / annoyed by events, to fit in more easily, to be diplomatic, be punctual, not to be so open, not to be so stubborn, not to be so hard, to be more relaxed. In the relationship with friends, our beneficiaries see themselves as: skip character, helpful, communicative, hearted, social workers, strong attachment, optimistic, honest, fair, full of life, trustful, calm, loving, hardworking, loyal supportive.

CONCLUSIONS: The final discussion focused on issues that recipients would like to change, exactly those things that should be generally accepted and applied: honesty, openness, kindness and fairness. This discussion has set up the following sequence, communication and assertiveness.

4.2. Communication and interpersonal skills

Throughout the session aiming the structure and components of effective communication, participants receive tutoring on:

- Clarify the components of effective communication,
- Develop skills of information transmission,
- Develop skills of active listening and asking questions,
- Awareness of the role of the transmitter and the listener.

Assuming that at least 50-60 % of the time spent on a job, we are involved in communicating with colleagues, superiors or subordinates is desirable to be aware of the skills that we have as communicators, to harness or develop them, as appropriate. Participants were presented and explained the structure of communication. Exercise: Participants divided into working groups were asked to consider what distinguishes a good communicator of a poor communicator (based on their personal and professional experience). Opinions were centralized on a flipchart list encouraging them to provide more detail for each intervention.

The exercise described above aimed at introducing the presentation components of effective communication. Each component was discussed in plenary, and participants were engage in a series of specific questions. During the presentation there were integrated and assembled components of the list generated by participants during the exercise.

Exercise used to practice effective communication was a legend story told using the cordless phone method. After reading the story for the first participant, the trainee volunteer was asked to tell the story to another trainee and so on, until reaching the last participant, everybody becoming first time listener, then storyteller and then observer. Participants thus put into practice the skills of active listening, questioning and information transmission. Finally, the story was recited to plenary and the message and difficulties in communication were discussed.

The trainer encourages participants to think about the structure and components of effective communication (mass flow) and how you will use in practice.

Throughout Assertive behavior session, beneficiaries have received information about:

- Identify preferred style of interaction in human professional and personal relations,
- Awareness of the effects of types of behavior on others.

Participants have learned that how we choose to behave with others depends on what we think about ourselves and what we think of others (our own beliefs about ourselves and others). To realize what everyone's behavior is preferred when working with others, beneficiaries were asked to complete the questionnaire, "Are you assertive?"

After filling in the questionnaire, participants were shown the kind of behavior that we prefer to use when working with others from the range OK. Plenary discussion was facilitated by questions: What do you think is the best behavior to get what we want? What are the effects of each type of behavior presented? The trainer records responses on flipchart grouping participants by types of behaviors.

The conclusions were highlighted by participants:

- We cannot say that there is only one way to respond to various situations encountered, however we mostly manifest in a certain way according to our fundamental beliefs about ourselves and others.
- Since all of us have interests and expectations that we made up, it is preferable to adopt assertive behavior to increase our chances of getting what we want.

Exercise: recognition of examples of behavioral type, participants were evaluated in groups of 3-4 participants, giving for each item a classification: passive, aggressive and assertive. Finally, participant's answers were centralized on flipchart with arguments from each group, for each situation, and discussed in plenary.

The next step was to interpret the results from the questionnaire "Are you assertive?" and writing down results on the flipchart. Discussions were facilitated on the basis of the questionnaire: We recognize the results of the questionnaire? If yes, what are the situations where you prefer to adopt this type of behavior? How does this affect your behavior? If not, what do you recognize? What is the behavior that you recognize? Others can confirm / deny?

The conclusion of the session, of great importance for participants: each of us has a unique behavior based on our beliefs about ourselves and about others. To increase our chances of getting what we want in a given situation we will have to consciously choose to behave assertively. This will increase our chances of getting what you want without causing negative effects and potential problems in relationships with others.

Throughout the skills session: giving and receiving feedback participants have learned:

- Knowledge of the role of feedback in communication,
- Understand the rules for receiving and providing feedback,
- Knowledge of techniques for giving and receiving feedback.

The theme of the session was opened by presenting and explaining what is feedback, what kind of feedback types there are.

Participants were encouraged to give some examples of feedback from personal and professional experience. Then there were presented rules to give and receive feedback and participants were analyzed together with examples of feedback that they have mentioned above. Exercise: divided into groups of 3-4 people, participants received a page containing a list of eight statements and then they were asked to analyze situations: if the statement has a correct feedback given, select it, if not try to rephrase it in order to give a fair feedback. The activity aimed to the proper understanding of providing feedback. Finally, each case was discussed in plenary.

4.3. Developing ego marketing skills

Throughout this session participants received tutoring on:

- Information on developing and writing a successful CV,
- Knowledge of techniques to find a job,
- Presentation skills job interview.

The trainer presented the main aspects of writing detailed curriculum vitae, depending on the job intended to apply to. As practical exercise, all trainees have written resumes for a specific job (security agent, computer operator, game tester, salesman and waiter). There was a role play: each participant has bent resume's header, so that the names could not be seen, CVs were collected and randomly redistributed. For each CV received, each participant received the task: to make a brief description of the applicant, to guess to whom it belong to and make the decision whether or not to invite that person to an interview. As conclusions, we had people employed right away, invited to interview and rejected. After this exercise, there followed conclusions on mistakes and strengths in resume writing. Thus, most participants completed correctly and legibly data on education and previous work experience. Two of the participants did not address the task seriously, writing down untrue things. Next, the trainer presented the main techniques in finding a job: newspapers , internet, AJOFM and recruitment agencies. There followed a group activity - 2 equal groups of trainees were given the task of identifying positive and negative experiences, in looking for a job.Final talks aimed discussing about efficiency techniques identified by the beneficiaries as positive. Most beneficiaries have complained that engagement is not possible unless someone recommends you, being very difficult to get an interview without a contact in the company. The aim of the discussions was to determine the beneficiaries to think objectively and positively when they decide to apply for a particular job, and from every experience to learn what went right and what went wrong.Last activity targeted behavior during the interview. Trainer presented suggestions on steps to getting a job interview, mistakes to avoid, prepare before the interview, seen as a way of expression of interest for employment. Role play - groups of 3 participants: recruiter, candidate and observer. Recruiter's role was providing ratings for candidates, observer monitoring and intervention in the process, and the candidate to submit with resumes previously developed. If during the previous task, there were beneficiaries that were not fully involved in, current task involving working in groups has been addressed effectively. Participants that were playing recruiters have used their experience in interviews, candidates have tried to obtain desired employment and observers provided feedback at the end of the role play. There were people who were hired and people who refused the job proposal.

Returning to the first activity, the expectation tree, trainer discussed every expectation written down by the trainee on the post-it, and together with beneficiaries concluded that all expectations have been met.

4.4. Conclusions and recommendations for future teambuilding

It is very important to clarify the objectives of the teambuilding and training stage to participants, so that there is a clear structure for both the trainer and the implementation team of what activities should be carried out and for what purpose.

None of the less, it is important also to ensure that participants have all the information needed for attaining the teambuilding program: the link with the training program, what happens, how long, what bags to bring.

For a successful program, keeping the possibility of extra fixtures, offering diversity, leads to an environment conducive to adult learning. Location was suitable and appropriate for the proposed activities. In addition to a beautiful conference room filled with all technology needed for interactive presentations, there were leisure facilities such as thermal pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, tennis table, TV. Travel time to the location was right, being quite close to Arad. Keeping the program as flexible as you can, as a trainer, is a must. This time it was quite busy, and participants felt that expressing dissatisfaction about a crowded schedule of 8 hours per day, at the feedback. Each participant completed a questionnaire to assess the trainer and activities. Objectives were largely achieved and the feedback from participants was mostly favorable.

5. Results and conclusions

The project *Integrated services for promoting sustainable employment in 5 regions of Romania* implemented by People Development Foundation (FDP) aimed to attract and retain on the labor market inactive people, the unemployed and people looking for a job through the promotion of active measures in the field of employment in the 5 regions of Romania. The project was implemented during August 2010 and September 2013. Now, at the end of our work, we are more than proud to have realized that besides accomplishing the proposed objectives: informing 3.600 beneficiaries, integrated services for 1.080 beneficiaries of which 396 long-term professional integrated, developing a solid practice in tutoring beneficiaries' career paths mattered the most. We have learned that besides an indicator, a beneficiary, there lies a person to person interaction able to motivate and change a negative and passive mentality into a dynamic perspective about work and life in general.

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STEREOTYPES AND GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LEADERSHIP

Mirela Ciolac, PhD.
Aurel Vlaicu University Arad
ciolac_mirela@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Stereotypes are beliefs towards certain groups that are formed based on mental representations. Some researchers have proven that preference for male leaders is associated with a management style that defines management in male terms. We can state that in Romania there is openness for the promotion of women in business and in management positions but the average number is still low compared to men.*

Keywords: *Stereotypes; gender; leadership; management*

The American journalist Walter Lippman was the first one to use the notion stereotype in his work entitled „Public Opinion", in 1922. He lists several definitions of stereotype in his book. One of them presents stereotypes as being "images that are to be found in our mind" which represent "maps that would guide us through the world"(Nastas, 2004, p. 262).

Later, Allport (1954, p. 191, cited by Yzerbyt & Corneille, 2005) defines the stereotype as being "an exaggerated belief associated with a category". Hilton & Hippel (1996, cited by Curşeu & Boroş, 2003, p. 17) sum up several approaches and define stereotypes as "cognitions (beliefs, expectations and commitments) related to characteristics, attributes and behaviours common to members of a certain social category. Ashmore & Del Boca (1981, p.16) consider that stereotypes are "a set of beliefs about personal attributes of a group of individuals". Hence, people behave in a certain manner towards a person, in certain situations due to stereotype features that guide their judgement and behaviour.

Stereotypes are beliefs towards certain groups that are formed based on mental representations. Their source is the identification of real differences between two groups (Vercellino, 2007, p.11) which means that they reflect the individuals` reality as they perceive it (Judd & Park, 1993). In this situation, individuals can perceive certain aspects, while others can be ignored. Thus, certain aspects can be overlooked and others, stronger that the previous would be considered as defining for a certain group.

The approach of stereotypes from the perspective of attitudes has been studies by Dorin Nastas. According to his theory "stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination are different facets of intergroup attitudes" (Nastas, 2004, p.262). From this perspective, the stereotype targets the cognitive aspect (we refer cognitively to a group), prejudice relates to affective aspects and discrimination refers to behaviour/behaviours emerging from stereotypes and prejudices (Fiske, 1998, Brewer & Crano, 1994 cited by Nastas, 2004, p. 262).

Stereotypes are not always negative, but if they refer to the attributes of the out-group members, they tend to acquire negative connotations, even when having a positive justification. Most researchers believe that the main effect of negative stereotypes which brings about diminishment of performance is the reduction of working memory of the individuals. This reduction can be explained through the occurrence of anxiety that diminishes cognitive resources, necessary in the task solving process (Croizet et al, 2004; Quin & Spencer, 2001; O'Brien & Crandall, 2003; Schmader & Johns, 2003 cited by Cernat 2005, p. 160). Thus, negative stereotypes diminish creativity, stimulate a careful processing style, an analytical thinking and positive stereotypes stimulate creativity and diminish analytical thinking. It has been proven that stereotypes can generate good performance when the task is mainly analytical and positive stereotypes have positive effects when tasks involve the identification of creative solutions (Sebt & Forster, 2004 cited by Cernat 2005).

Gender can be a universal dimension developed to create stereotypes which offer the opportunity to divide individuals into two distinctive categories: men and women (Powell & Graves, 2003). Gender stereotypes on characteristics assigned to men and women are well-known in the society and they frequently occur in the field-related literature (Orser, 1994; Heilman, Block, Martell & Simon, 1989).

It is considered that men and women have certain social characteristics (general - “common” and achievement oriented - “agentic”) which differentiate them (Gupta, 2007).

Women have more general, common qualities (expressiveness, ability to relate to the others, kindness, ability to help others, emotion). Men are described as achievement-oriented (independence, competiveness, determination, courage, autonomy). In reality, these stereotypes tend to place themselves in opposition: characteristics associated positively with men are not considered desirable for women and vice versa (Gupta, 2007).

Gender stereotypes describe the way men and women are – descriptive stereotypes – but at the same time, they offer a male, namely female specific type of behaviour – prescriptive stereotypes - (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs & Tamkins, 2004; Schein, 2002).

Descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes do not exclude themselves mutually. There are various elements that overlap (Heilman, 2001) because descriptive stereotypes represent the individuals` beliefs about the characteristics of a social group and reveal the attributes, roles and behaviours that describe that group. Prescriptive stereotypes depict specific rules of behaviour which individuals have to follow in order to avoid disapproval and punishment (Gill, 2004).

Gender stereotypes describe men and women and establish appropriate behaviour rules for the members of these two groups and produce gender stereotypes (Heilman, 1983). Ceratin qualities in men and women will play an important role in task assignment at the work place. They will determine the type of activity considered proper for them, leading to situations in which qualities required for a specific job are defined in terms of gender. Those occupations are called “men`s work” and “women`s work” (Heilman, 1997). In later research, the only situation when gender stereotype had no longer worked was when the situation of women managers was discussed. They were described as successful (Heilman, Block & Martell, 1995, cited by Heilman, 2001).

Cantor and Benay, in 1992, (cited by Boatwright & Forrest 2000) introduced the hypothesis according to which female leaders would respond to stereotypes by holding back gender specific behaviours, in other words they would act like men in order to be promoted. Oakley (2000) found a similar behaviour style among female leader that minify their womanhood in favour of a male behaviour that could be associated to success. Even androgen behaviours are perceived as more proper in the characteristics of a leader than female behaviours (Moss & Kent, 1996). Actually, women leaders often face a higher level of stress at work due to discrimination, especially in the industrial environment, which is male dominated (Gardiner & Tiggeman, 1999). The perception that “a successful leader” is male or with male features could also influence promotion and employment practices.

Some researchers have proven that preference for male leaders is associated with a management style that defines management in male terms (Brenner, Tomkiewitcz & Schein 1989, Heilman & Block, Martell & Simon 1989, Schein & Mueller, 1992, cited by Carless, 1998). This perception mode (shared both by men and women) can put pressure on women in leadership positions, forcing them to use a male-like management style in their attempt to be viewed as successful leaders (Gardiner & Tiggemann, 1999).

Morgan (1997) supports these ideas, identifying certain features required by a management position. An incisive, powerful, rational, competitive, compelling and independent manager (traits attributed usually to men), will have better chances for promotion. Compared to these traits, women are taught to assimilate qualities in opposition with those required from a manager. Male attributed stereotypes are usually opposed to those assigned to women (Morgan, 1997, p. 192).

Table 2. Male and female stereotypes (Morgan, 1997, p. 192)

Male stereotypes	Female stereotypes
Logic	Intuition
Aggression	Sensibility
Dominance	Patience
Strategic thinking	Empathy
Independence	Spontaneity
Competitiveness	Care
Ration	Cooperativeness

Thus, the man has the required characteristics for a leader and makes decisions; the woman is loyal and subordinate – even though these stereotypic roles are changing under the pressure of social movements. Women start with a disadvantage from this point of view. Moreover, - and partly as a consequence – the woman`s attitude, her goals in what concerns her personally or connection to her family, career, position, are in opposition to what a higher level position requires. This statement was strengthened by the consideration that a woman`s profession and abilities have a more limited significance, a lower self-confidence than the responsibility requires. The woman`s activity is attributed to external factors, such as luck or an easy task to fulfil (Fagenson, 1990, p. 268). Field literature stresses the importance of success fear if taken into consideration that women are not too willing to take risks.

The above mentioned facts underline that women acquire traits opposed to those required by a management position. Therefore, women who reach top positions in the organization adopt a male model in their attitude and approach, striving for acknowledgement and success. Their feminine attitude is left aside. There is an opposition between the gender created image of a good and efficient manager and the woman`s identity, while in different socializing processes, gender explanation seems dynamic and in continuous change (Kovalainen, 1990, p. 145).

Male managers` specific characteristics

The average weight of men and women in management positions has undergone though changes throughout the years. If in 1972, in the USA, the percentage of women managers was of 19%, in 1997, it reaches 40% (Neft & Levine, 1997; O'Leary & Ickovis, 1992, cited by Vercellino, p.99, 2007). This percentage refers especially to middle management positions; only 10,2 % women are in top management positions (Catalyst, 1996). Why is there this difference in gender distribution for top management positions? The situation is justified by the concept of „glass – ceiling", according to whom there is a series of obstacles that women face when they want to reach top management positions (O'Leary & Ickovis, 1992, cited by Vercellino, 2007).

Why are there more men than women in management positions? Researchers have tried to find an answer to this question within a project of the Centre Partnership for Equality (Popescu, 2006), which was carried out in Romania. Here are some causes that could generate differences:

- the existence of certain attitudes at some women towards leadership – the encouragement of women to have a reserved attitude, contrary to the behaviour a leader should have (a leader has to assert and promote the image)
- due to some women`s self-confidence – a "second place" attitude towards her own person leads to lower self-confidence and to the others 'confidence that a woman is capable

of handling tasks properly as a leader. This is a possible explanation for the fact that some women in similar hierarchical positions with men accept lower wages than they have. This situations brings about the company`s lower confidence in the woman`s performance and also lower performance.

- due to women`s limited professional experience – a consistent corporate experience is essential in building women`s credibility for a leadership position and certain women do not have this experience
- the existence of negative influences in the organizational environment – within companies, the most highlighted values are male specific, which leads to reward of such behaviours. Male specific traits (dominance, determination, force, ration, task-oriented) are considered superior to other attributes such as intuition, interpersonal relations.

How are man and women managers perceived?

Stereotypes on women`s promotion in top management positions are detrimental to women and are an obstacle in their way. In 1973, Schein used an instrument (SDI – Schein`s Descriptive Index) whose aim was to investigate the male managers`, the women managers` and the managers` perception without making any reference to their gender. This instrument contains 92 individual adjectives that reveal stereotype descriptors for men and women. The study included 300 male managers whose task was to match the 92 adjectives with the category they fit in the best (men in general, women in general, successful managers). The results show that most similarities can be seen between the descriptors "men in general" and "women in general". The study included also women, which is very relevant for the study because the respondents` gender can influence the association of descriptors (Ezell, Odervahm & Sherman, 1981; Taylor & Ilgen, 1981 cited by Vercellino, 2007).

Messengil & DiMarco (1979) noticed that the association between women and "successful manager" in male perception still has few common elements; this perception underwent changes, when the subjects were women whose answers were alike when referring to men or women managers and their association to success. After 10 years, Schein (1989, cited by Eagly & Karau, 2002), made similar studies to the ones of Messengil and DiMarco, and the results were similar, so basically nothing has changed in the society.

Heilmann, Block, Martell & Simon (1989) made a study that wanted to compare the women mangers` and the men managers` perception with the managers` perception, in general, with the gender not mentioned. Results revealed that even in situations when women were characterized as successful managers, men described them as egotistical, arguing and with poor management abilities.

Another tool was used by Powell and Butterfield (1979) – The Bem Sex Role Inventory – by means of which they studied the link between typically male traits and the description of a "good" manager. Students (women and men) taking part in this study were asked to describe a good manager. Descriptions made by both categories were similar and underlined the existence of typically male traits, perception which did not change since then.

Recent studies show us that the situation has not changed. In this respect, Deal and Stevenson`s research (1998) show that women and men perceptions on management are still similar with perceptions on the manager`s portrait noticed in previous studies. The descriptions made by the subjects differ only in terms of word choice regarding the gender unspecified manager.

The situation of perception on women`s management abilities in Romania is characterized as follows: (Curşeu & Boroş, 2003, p.51): 54% of the inquired population states that men are more appropriate for management positions than women, 46% consider that women do not belong in a company`s board, 68% claim that domestic responsibilities do not allow women to have management positions. 39% of participants consider that women`s families do not permit their access to management positions, 45% disagree with this statement and 16% do not want to answer.

Official statistics

Research on international level reveal a growth of women`s presence within organizations even in management positions. (Hayes, 1999, p. 113). However, international studies (Frey, 1993; Rueschmeyer, 1994) show that the number of employed women is still lower that men`s.

On national level, the National Institute of Statistics (INS) shows that also in Romania, the number of employed men is higher than that of women (Table 3). On reduced stretches of time (Table 3 reflects the situation in Romania over a stretch of five year), the number of employed people is quite constant – both overall and analysed on genders. The same reality is shown by Table 4: the employment rate in Romania over a stretch of five years (both on general level and presented separately, according to the employed person`s gender). Between 2002 and 2007, we can notice that almost 64% of men are professionally active while only 52% of women are employed. A difference of more than 10% in the occupancy rate is not to be neglected.

Table 3. Employed population of Romania between 2002 and 2007 (Data reported by the National Institute of Statistics) (INS) (2008)[3])

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	9.234.000	9.223.000	9.158.000	9.147.000	9.313.000	9.353.000
Men	5.031.000	5.057.000	4.980.000	5.011.000	5.074.000	5.116.000
Women	4.203.000	4.166.000	4.178.000	4.136.000	4.239.000	4.237.000

Table 4. The occupancy rate of the population in Romania between 2002 and 2007 (Data reported by INS (2008)[4])

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	58,0%	57,8%	57,9%	57,7%	58,8%	58,8%
Men	64,1%	64,1%	63,6%	63,9%	64,7%	64,8%
Women	52,0%	51,5%	52,1%	51,5%	53,0%	52,8%

In this context, we think it is worth highlighting that gender distribution of professionally active persons is not balanced within occupations groups (Table 5). On national level, we can notice a male predominance in legislation and executive board but also in top positions in the public administration and craftsman for 2007. Women predominance is observed especially in public administration and trade services. Unfortunately, INS statistics do not provide information on the average weight of woman in top positions of organizations previously mentioned in this paper.

Table 5 The number of professionally active persons reported to the occupancy groups (year 2007) (Data reported by INS (2008)[5])

[3] Statistical yearbook 2008, http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/anuarstatistic2008.ro.do, accessed in 11.10.2010
[4] Statistical yearbook 2008, http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/anuarstatistic2008.ro.do, accessed in 11.10.2010
[5] Statistical yearbook 2008, http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/anuarstatistic2008.ro.do, accessed in 11.10.2010

		Members of the legislative and executive board, leaders in the public administration	Specialists with intellectual and scientific occupations	Technicians, foremen	Administrative clerk	Worker in services and trade	Agriculturalist	Craftsmen	Other occupations
Total	9.353.000	253000	876000	857000	411000	946000	2343000	1524000	2143000
Men	5.116.000	182000	428000	332000	115000	335000	1185000	1142000	1397000
Women	4.237.000	71000	448000	525000	296000	611000	1158000	382000	746000

The situation in the Western region is pretty similar to the one found on national level. Table 6 reveals the same occupancy rate, higher for men than for women.

Table 6 The occupancy rate of population in Western Region: 2002-2007 (INS (2008)[6])

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	57,6%	57,1%	56,9%	56,6%	58,7%	59,6%
Men	64,9%	64,8%	63,4%	63,9%	66,5%	66,9%
Women	50,5%	49,7%	50,5%	49,5%	51,1%	52,5%

Unfortunately, INS does not provide date that would allow us to identify the distribution of men and women in management positions in various fields of activity – neither on national nor on regional or county level.

After studying the documents of the National Institute of Statistics, though, related to the demographical distribution of Arad county`s population and also the distribution of managers in various fields of activity (public and private) we could extract some relevant date for our study.

Arad County is 455.953 people, out of which 257.147 (56%) are the stable population aged between 25 and 64. As seen in Chart 2, the stable population is mainly female.

The active civilian population of Arad County[7] aged between 25 and 64 is 214.700, out of which 119.200 (56%) are men and 95.500 (44%) women. The civilian population employed in traditional activities of national economy sums up 208.200 people, out of which 115.800 (56%) men and 92.400 (44%) women. The criterion for choosing the population is their employment. We notice that although the number of women is higher than that of men, more men are employed than women.

Starting from this reality, we have identified the number of women and men aged over 25 that are placed in management positions for business operators and educational institutions of education in Arad County. After consulting the data of different institutions (Public Finances of Arad), we have observed that gender distribution at business operator managers is as follows: 20.761, out of which 13.024 are men and 7.737 are women.

[6] Statistical yearbook 2008, http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/anuarstatistic2008.ro.do, accessed in 11.10.2010
[7] County Statistics, http://www.arad.insse.ro/main.php?lang=fr&pageid=491, accessed in 9.10.2010

In certain field of activity such as education, women are predominant in management positions. The study of documents at School Inspectorate of Arad County revealed the following for the gender distribution of managers: out of 185 educational institutions with legal personality, 74 are managed by men and 114 by women.

Based on the previously discussed data, we can say that there is a gender difference in the managers` distribution in fields of activity. Therefore, in fields with more men employees, the number of men managers is higher, while in other fields (such as education) with more women employees, the number of women managers is superior to men.

The problematic of female management, presented in economic publications

In our country the presence of women in business publications is lower than that of men as far as the visibility and promotion (in business publications) of women in top management positions is concerned.

The analysis was performed on the main business publications in Romania, with the mention that it was conducted online. The most accessible was the weekly publication "Business magazine"[8], whose archive is very well structured. We have consulted the archive for the year 2010, and the number of articles related to "woman manager", "woman leader", "female management" is below 1%. The maximum number of articles on this topic – 4 of 100 articles with economic profile – was reached in number 19/2010. Examples of articles " A Romanian woman aged 36 coordinates the activity of six Kraft factories in Central Europe" – article published in no 41/2010; " What do Mariana Gheorghe and Liliana Solomon think of entrepreneurship" – no 40/2010; " Mariana Gheorghe – Petrom: For us, renewable energy is not a *fashionable adjustment*" – no 18/2010. This weekly magazine has published also TOP 100 MOST ADMIRED CEO FROM ROMANIA where we find 9 women (9%).

The research continued with the „Financiarul"[9], daily publication, which between January and May 2010 dealt with the subject of woman leader/entrepreneur with a rate of 1 to 8 articles a month. The percentage remains low, if compared to the total number of business articles. Examples of articles: Mihaela Nicola: "In our business, investment is made in the people`s minds" (20 January 2010); Rodica Sfaca, general manager Ronex: "Furniture producers seek salvation on national market" (1 February 2010)

The daily publication „Ziarul Financiar"[10] and the weekly publication „Capital"[11] do not have a filtered archive so that one could extract only articles on a certain topic. No articles were found in „Ziarul Financiar" or in „Capital", after a refined search with the key words "woman leader", "woman manager", "female management", "female entrepreneurship"

We can state that in Romania there is openness for the promotion of women in business and in management positions but the average number is still low compared to men.

We could estimate a positive evolution, from a numerical perspective, if we consider the ascending trend of women in various fields of activity. Changes within a society where not too long ago certain positions were exclusively male oriented would occur slowly, as revealed by studies in the field, so that the society gets accustomed to women in these professional areas.

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RELATIONS OF ANTHROPOMETRIC CHARACTERISTICS WITH VO_2 max AND HEART RATE UNDER LOAD IN FOOTBALL PLAYERS OF JUNIOR AGE

Dragan Martinović, Vladan Pelemiš, Momčilo Pelemiš, Nebojša Mitrović
Faculty of Teacher Training, Belgrade, Serbia
Faculty of PedagogycalBijeljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina
vladankinesiology77@gmail.com

Abstact: *The research was conducted on a sample of 23 football players ofFC "ČukaričkiStankom" in Belgrade of who there was performed the measurement of anthropometric characteristics (Body height, Body weight and Mean thorax circumference) and functional abilities (Maximal oxygen consumption and Heart rate under load). The regression analysis revealed a statistically significant effect of the predictor system of anthropometric variables on both criteria: VO_2 max and Heart rate under load. Variables Body height and Mean thorax circumference have a statistically significant positive effect on thecriterion VO_2 max by which the maximal oxygen consumptions assessed. In the second criterion, Heart rate under load, the variables Body height and Mean thorax circumferenceshowed a statistically significant negative effect on the criterion variable.*

Key words: *VO2 max, heart work under load, body height, body weight, thorax circumference.*

INTRODUCTION

Measuring and monitoring (diagnostics) of the functional abilities as well as diagnostics of anthropometric characteristics are an integral part of the training process in most sports (Farraly,1995a and Farraly, 1995b; Jones, 1997; Ramsbottom, Brewer & Williams, 1988). It is also frequently used as an aid or guidance to those involved in the recreation-kinesiology process, in order to maintain good health (Sprunt, 2000). The term "aerobic capacity" means the general scope of aerobic metabolic processes in the human body (athletes), and is the basis of the physical working capacity of an athlete. The values of maximum oxygen consumption (VO_2 max) are the best indicators of the differences in the aerobic capacity.

Aerobic capacity is an essential component in most sports. It is also necessary to football players who want to be actively, ie. professionally involved in football, totheir sport teachers who teach them the sport. It is also very important for all participants in the training process. All participants in sport (sport teachers, athletes, sports medicine doctors, professors of kinesiology) are equally interested in following progress in terms of several functional capabilities including aerobic abilities, which is essential for sports science (kinesiology) in general.

Football is characterized by a continuous stream of activities with a variable intensity of activities and a very low coefficient of performance (eg. a number of goals scored can be taken into account when talking about the coefficient of success in football) to the possession of the ball. A football player during a match runs out approximately 10 km (Reilly, Clarus&Stibbe 1993; Mayhew& Wenger, 1985). In that, easy cyclical locomotor movement (<11km/h, <80% of maximal oxygen consumption-VO_2max) is represented in the largest percentage of the total motion actions, after which are walking and intense cyclic locomotormovement (11-18 km/h, about 80 % VO_2 max) and then sprint (11-27 km/h, <85% VO_2 max). By the nature of such

activity that corresponds to the aerobic needs of about 80% of maximal oxygen consumption (Reilly, Clarus&Stibbe, 1993; Helgerud, Engen&Wisloff, 2001).
Good aerobic capacity undoubtedly affects also the performance of explosive motion actions during this activity, both in terms of quantity (number of sprints per game), and quality (without slowing down). Research of Reilly, Clarus&Stibbe (1993) show that, especially in football, a good aerobic capacity of the body is one of the most important prerequisites for achieving the best results. Energy requirements of the body in footballvary and to a large extent depend on the league, team position, athletemodel, training cycle phase, age (Reilly, Bangsbo& Franks, 2000). Such requirements mean exceptional motoric and functional readiness of all the athletes on the field, of all ages, which could be the reason for minor differences in the aerobic capacity in relation to the position in the team. It is well known that the aerobic capacity depends on three important factors: VO_2 max, anaerobic threshold and work economy (Pate &Kriska, 1984), ie. running economy ("running economy"; RE).
Maximal oxygen consumption is the greatest amount of oxygen a person can take from the inhaled air during a dynamic motoric activity that engages large muscle groups (Wagner, 1996). Economy of running represents an oxygen debt in the submaximal exercise intensity and can vary by over 20% in athletes with an approximate value of VO_2 max.
Genetics represents a major role in a human maximal aerobic endurance, while anthropometric characteristics slightly affect these results (Bouchard, Dionne, Simoneau, Boulay, 1992). Heredity can be explained by 25-50% variation between individuals, especially when comparing athletes, the difference in maximum oxygen consumption and aerobic endurance is reduced to about 10% with age (Wilmore and Costill, 2005). Maximum oxygen consumption decreases with age, andthe average measure of the decrease is usually accepted at about 1% per year or 10% per decade after 25 years.
The aim of this research was to determine the association between anthropometric characteristics, aerobic capacity (maximal oxygen consumption) and heart rate under loading athletes (football players) of junior ages.

METHOD

Testing and measurement (diagnostics) of the functional abilities and anthropometric characteristics was conducted on a sample of 23 subjects, football players of *FC "ČukaričkiStankom"* from Belgrade, aged 17-18 years.

Anthropometric characteristics which were measured (the predictor variables accounted for in the paper):

1) body height,
2) body weight,
3) mean thorax circumference.

The selected anthropometric characteristics were chosen because each of them can affect the aerobic capacity and the heart rate under load, especially mean thorax circumference and body weight. For the measurement of the anthropometric characteristics there were used theanthropometerby Martin, a decimal scale and a centimeter tape. The measurement of the anthropometric characteristics was performed immediately before testing the functional capacity-maximal oxygen consumption and heart rate under load.

The assessment of the maximal oxygen consumption (VO_2 max) and heart rate under load (which constituted the criterion variables in the paper), were measured using a direct method:

1. Bicycle-ergometer "all out" test for 6 minutes. The subjects were tested on a bicycle-ergometer with paddles for air brake where the heart rate underloadwassimultaneously monitored.

The description of the test:

The test on the **bicycle-ergometer** (protocols KF20)-duration of an individual load level is 1 minute, and the power increasewas 20W (KF20) every 30 seconds. A subject began pedaling with the power of 100 W (juniors). The number of rotations was defined at 50-75 rotations/minute and would be constant. The load on the bicycle-ergometer was determined based on the previous calibration with an engine of known power, and the number of the wheel rotations was precisely measured with an electronic counter. Respiratory parameters were registered with the gas analyzer OXICON-OX2, calibrated with a gas mixture of known concentration.

In processing the data there was used the descriptive statistics to calculate the basic descriptive statistics of the anthropometric and functional variables: arithmetic mean (AM), standard deviation (S), minimum and maximum values of the measurement results. In order to determine statistically significant relations between the anthropometric and the functional variables, the regression analysis was used.

RESULTS

Table 1.shows the values of the basic descriptive statistics of the anthropometric and functional variables for 23 football players of *FC "CukarickiStankom"* from Belgrade.

From this table, it can be concluded that the athletes were homogeneous in the variables for assessment of the longitudinality of the body (Body height) and body volume (Mean thorax circumference) and the variablefor assessment of the heartwork under load(Heart rate under load). Based on these data it can be concluded that the athletes are of similar growth, body constitution, and that their heart rate under load is at a similar level. In the variablefor assessment of maximal oxygen consumption (VO_2 max), the homogeneity was not observed, due to large individual differences in oxygen consumption (large are the differences between the minimum and maximum results registered in this sample of subjects).

Table 1. BASIC DESKRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE ASSESSEDVARIABLES

Variable	N	MIN	MAX	AM	S
Body height (mm)	23	1547	1821	1683.00	82.45
Body weight (kg)	23	40.00	76.90	58.80	12.24
Mean thorax circumference (cm)	23	70.00	99.10	85.97	9.84
VO_2 max (l O_2/min)	23	1.58	5.49	3.04	1.15
Heart rate under load (freq.)	23	182	201	191.48	5.25

Legend: N - number of subjects; AM - arithmetic mean; S - standard deviation; MIN minimum values of measurement results; MAX - maximum value of measurement results.

In Tables 2.and 3.are shown the regression analyses of each criterion variable in the system of predictor variables.

In the presented regression analysis of the criterion VO_2 max, it can be concluded that the value of the coefficient of multiple correlation($R = 0.84$) indicates that the predictor system shows a statistically significant effect on the tested criterion ($P = 0.00$). The system of predictor (anthropometric) variables explains 70% of the common variability, while the remaining variability can be attributed to some other characteristics and capabilities that were not included in the applied system of predictors (motivation, the current level of training of the athletes and the muscles condition, the condition of other functional, motoric, cognitive and conative systems). The values of the standardized regression coefficient Beta indicate that the predictor

variables Body height and Mean thorax circumference have a statistically significant positive effect on the criterion (functional variables). This means that taller athletes with higher values of the mean thorax circumference make higher (better) values of maximum oxygen consumption.
The values of the Pearson correlation coefficient indicate that all three predictor (anthropometric) variables are in a statistically significant positive correlation with the criterion. Such a correlation confirmsthattaller and more developed athletes (in the upper body part, with larger thorax circumference), achieve higher values of maximum oxygen consumption.
The data on linear correlations of the predictor variables with the criterion variables indicate that thiscorrelations is most pronounced in the variable Meanthorax circumference ($r = 0.78$), more than in other predictor variables. Looking at the values of the partial correlation for the variable Mean thorax circumference, it can be concluded that, after the partializationbyother predictor variables, *Body weight* and *Body height*, this correlation between the predictor and the criterion remains in positive statistically significant correlation, because the value of the coefficient of partial correlation ($r_{part} = 0.68$) and that it decreased in relation to the coefficient of linear correlation ($r = 0.78$) and remained statistically significant. It can be concluded that the body height and body weight contributed to the subjects with higher values of the mean thorax circumference to achieve better (faster) results of VO_2 max.
Also the data on linear correlations of the other predictor variable, *Body height* with the criterion ($r = 0.63$). Looking at the values of the partial correlation for the variable *Body height*, it can be concluded that, after the partializationby other predictor variables, this correlation (between the predictor and criterion) remains in positive statistically significant correlation, because the value of the partial correlation coefficient ($r_{part} = 0.50$) and that it decreased compared to the coefficient of linear correlation ($r = 0.78$) and remained statistically significant. It can be concluded that the higher values of mean thorax circumference and body weight contributed to the taller subjects to achieve better (faster) results of VO_2 max.

Table 2. RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSISOF THE VARIABLEVO$_2$ max

Variable	r	p	r_{part}	p_{part}	Beta	p_{beta}
Body height	0.63	0.00	0.50	0.02	0.47	0.02
Body weight	0.63	0.00	-0.39	0.08	-0.55	0.08
Mean thoraxcirc.	0.78	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.98	0.00

$R = 0.84$ $R^2 = 0.70$ $P = 0.00$

Legend: r - Pearson correlation coefficient; p - level of statistical significance for r; r_{part}–value of partial correlation coefficient; p_{prat} - the level of statistical significance for r_{part}; Beta - regression coefficient; p_{beta} - the level of significance of the regression coefficient; R - coefficient of multiple correlation; R^2- coefficient of determination; P - significance of the coefficient of multiple correlation

From the results of the regression analysis of the second criterion, it was found that there was a statistically significant effect of the system of predictor variables also in the criterion *Heart rate under load*, because the significance of the coefficient of multiple correlation ($P = 0.02$), that is, the value of the multiple correlation coefficient ($R = 0.62$), which explains 39 % of the common variance, while the remaining percentage can be attributed to some other characteristics and capabilities that were not included in the applied system of predictors in this research (condition of other functional systems, the level of training and other anthropological space). Looking at the variables individually, it can be seen that the variables *Body height* and *Mean thorax* *circumference* show a statistically significant mathematicallypositive, but logically negative effect on the criterion variable (p = 0.04). From this it can be concluded that taller athletes, and the subjects with higher values of the thorax have a higher heart rate during the test performed on a bicycle-ergometer, which is actually a consequence of the higherrecorded values of the results of VO_2 max and lower aerobic capacity of these athletes. Between these two criterion variables there is a cause-effect relationship.

All three predictor anthropometric variables are inpositive statistically significant correlations with the criterion. The taller, heavier, and subjects with higher values of the mean thorax circumference (larger and heavier athletes) during the applied cardio test have increased heart rate values. It may refer to a smaller degree of their training, lower aerobic capacity of these subjectswho compete in a lower league, where the pace of activities is slower. The need for some exceptional changes of movements, in the form of cyclic locomotor movement is less obvious (or is it increasing fatigue and hard work during the testing, which was manifested by increased heart work under load).

From the data on linear correlations of the predictor variables with the criterion it can be seen that this correlation is most pronounced and statistically significant in the variables *Body height* (r = -0.48) and *Mean thorax circumference*(r = 0.47). Looking at the partial correlation values for the variable *Body height*, it can be concluded that with the partialization of the remaining predictor variables (*Body weight* and*Mean thorax circumference*) remains in positive statistically significant correlation with the criterion, because the value of the partial correlation coefficient (rpart = 0.44) decreased compared to the coefficient of linear correlation (r = 0.48) and remained statistically significant. Body weight and increased mean thorax circumference led to increased values of heart rate intaller athletes.

In the second predictor variable, *Mean thorax circumference*, the value of the partial coefficient (r_{part} = 0.46) also decreased compared to the linear coefficient (r = 0.47), and it can be assumed that the body height and body weight hindered the ability (led to increased values of heart rate) of the cardio-respiratory system of the subjects with higher values of the mean thorax circumference.

Table 3. RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF THE VARIABLEHEART RATEUNDER LOAD

Variable	r	p	r_{part}	p_{part}	Beta	p_{beta}
Body height	0.48	0.01	0.44	0.04	0.58	0.04
Body weight	0.34	0.06	-0.38	0.09	-0.76	0.09
Mean thorax circ.	0.47	0.01	0.46	0.04	0.79	0.04

R = 0.62R^2 = 0.39   P = 0.02

Legend: r - Pearson correlation coefficient; p - level of statistical significance for r; r_{part}–value of partial correlation coefficient; p_{prat} - the level of statistical significance for r_{part}; Beta - regression coefficient; p_{beta} - the level of significance of the regression coefficient; R - coefficient of multiple correlation; R^2- coefficient of determination; P - significance of the coefficient of multiple correlation.

DISCUSSION

Functional tests provide useful information about athletes health, planning and monitoring the effects of the training process, can be used in the early selection of athletes, and are the major factor in the diagnostic of sport. The fact that most of our athletes have never been subjected to a similar testing (Spiroergometry) is really worrying. Education of sports medicine doctors and professors of kinesiology, the improvement in the dosage of an optimal, individual-specific training process, especially in working with younger categories with regular health checks and constant supervision of sports medicine doctors are an essential step towards achieving top sports results.

This research confirmed that the predictor system, which consisted of anthropometric variables, significantly influences the criteria *VO_2 max* and *Heart rate under load*. They depicted with the criteria 39% to 70% of common variability, while the remaining percentage can be attributed to some other characteristics and capabilities of the anthropological status such as motivation, the current emotional state, the state of the muscles, the level of trainingof athletes, subcutaneous adipose tissue and many others.

Variables *Body height* and *Mean thorax circumference*, affected positively the maximal oxygen consumption in this group of subjects. With the increasing volume of the thorax, which may indicate a greater development of the thorax muscles and increased respiration (functional) capability, there is a greater possibility of the body to transport oxygen to the muscles and organs and use it in the course of activities with a gradual progression of intensity, with which was also higher the aerobic capacity of such morphologically includedsubjects. The higher vital capacity and better development of the thoracic part of the body (better blood flow to the muscles of the caudalbody part) intaller athletes contributed to better transport of oxygen, which allowed for better functioning of the body with higher loads. It directly affected the increasing aerobic endurance and aerobic capacity. These results could also be affected by the economy of running, which is extremely important for maximal oxygen consumption, genetic predisposition, ie. aerobic capabilities of the organism during prolonged activities with increasing load intensity (Pate &Kriska, 1984). It can be concluded that taller athletes and athletes with more developed thoracic part of the body (thorax) are at an advantage, because they have a higher aerobic capacity - higher aerobic capacity compared to lowerathletes, smaller by the constitution. Perhaps this is due to the completion of development of the respiratory and cardiovascular system intaller athletes with higher mean thorax circumference, which can be the next potentialresearch.

For the second criterion, *Heart rate under load*, the variables *Body height* and *Meanthorax circumference*negatively affected the manifestation of the heart work under load. The taller the subjects were and the higher values of the mean thorax circumference they had, their heart rate was higher during the load. Taller subjects with higher mean circumference achieved higher maximum valuesof oxygen consumption (and it is known that between the heart rate under load and maximal oxygen consumption there is a cause-effect relationship - higher O_2 consumption demands faster heart rate, because that O_2 must be transported to the muscles and organs), and the body is tired more quickly. Higher heart rate also provides more blood flow to the tissues, muscles,it provides greater aerobic capacity of athletes in general. Despite the fact that they achieved better results compared to lower athletes, the tallersubjects needed more power for the heart muscle to "pump" the blood to distant parts of the body to the periphery which realize work (the muscles of the lower extremities).

Because eduring the development of a superior athlete the maximal value of the aerobic capacity is reached between the age of 17 to 22 years, after which it decreases linearly with age (Shephard, 1999), these athletes can count on a significant improvement in VO_2 max by only a few years, when it will give a more realistic picture of their aerobic capacities. New rules and a great competition dictate exceptional aerobic capacity of all in the field, and it should not be surprising that the tallersubjects with higher mean thorax circumference achieved higher values of maximum oxygen consumption. It often happens that some athletes do not change the position in smaller clubs (because someone wants him to be a striker at all costs). This may be the reason for the major difference in VO_2 max of our athletes who work at different positions. One of the possible reasons may be inadequate individual-specific dosing of the training process itself which would explain the huge difference in aerobic capacity (inhomogeneity of the subjects in the variable for assessment of maximal oxygen consumption).

In order to precisely determine the condition of maximum oxygen consumption, it is necessary in future researches, to divide athletes into several groups (goalkeepers, defenders, midfielders, forwards), and then there will be a more realistic picture of the status of training of the athletes, in this case, football players.

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INVOLVING TEACHERS IN PROMOTING PRESCHOOL INSTITUTIONS

Mariana Norel, Ph. D.
Transilvania University of Braşov,
Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences
mariana_norel@unitbv.ro

Abstract: *Achieving a coherent system of early childhood education in Romania is a necessity arising from global and national education priorities, as specified in the Curriculum for preschool education (3-6/7 years) in 2008. This article aims to highlight the results of research undertaken to demonstrate the involvement of teachers in implementing effective programs, in rethinking teaching approach by adapting to the challenges of new programs to exploit modern methods of teaching-learning-assessing with combined and homogeneous groups of preschoolers. Processing of questionnaire data, show a positive influence on the performance of teaching curricula in pr-primary education.*

Keywords: *curriculum for pre-primary education, teaching approach, the need for training, promoting pre-primary education institutions.*

1. Introduction

Achieving a coherent system of early childhood education in Romania is a necessity, arising from global and national education priorities, as shown in the National Curriculum for pre-primary education (3-6/7 years) in 2008. This document which marks a moment of high importance regarding reform in pre-primary education and which proposes a new vision for educational activities held in kindergartens, becomes o review of the major events in the history of education from the last decade.

The basic coordinates of the early childhood education in the Romanian space are outlined in the following documents: National Program for Reform, Ministry of Education and Research Strategies for Early Childhood Education Domain, realised with the help of UNICEF, according to the *Curriculum for pre-primary education. Presentation and explications. (2009, p.8)*

2. Study aim

A true reform of an educational system requires changing the vision of all actors involved in education, and therefore changing / adapting the attitude of teachers towards the life of school organization – in our case kindergartens, perceived as an alive organism which is continuously developing and transforming.

We present, below, the results of a research realised under our coordination, by the Milescu Dorina, a bachelor graduate of the *Pre-primary and primary educational program*, in order to write her bachelor diploma paper. The paper describes the commitment of educational stuff in the implementation of actual curriculum and also in rethinking the whole didactic activities so they can face the challenges of the new programs, to exploit modern methods of teaching – learning – assessing methods with homogenous and combined groups of preschool students.

The aim of the research was to reconsider the importance of pre-primary education in the national system of education, actually to revival, to improve the quality of education for all children, by promoting the educational contents, methodologies and appropriate educational materials according with the present curriculum. It was made an assessment of the present situation in the pre-primary educational system, assuming that new general educational programs positively influence didactic performance in pre-primary education. There were formulated the following research objectives:

- ✓ Identifying the openness and acknowledgment levels for the pre-primary education curriculum, needed to implement it.
- ✓ Identifying the degree of dependence on the pre-primary education curriculum, in general, and on the experiential domain of "language and communication" specifically.
- ✓ Identifying the interest of teachers for modernization of educational institutions: for their own professional formation and for using new didactical materials and teaching methods.
- ✓ Classifying the connection between teachers and social, political, cultural and familial factors.

The projected objectives conducted to the following work hypothesis: as teachers are more open to the new teaching programs, as they show more interest regarding their carrier formation and as they use more modern teaching materials and methods, they will better acknowledge their importance and will integrate them more easily in the teaching-learning- assessing process.

3. Research design

3.1. Subjects

The questionnaire was applied on an number of 20 teachers, selected according with 4 categorical variables: occupation, work experience, teaching degree and age, all showing quality differences, considered of central importance for the hypothesis validation. The frequencies distribution inside the researched population is presented in the next table:

Table 1 Frequencies distribution of the categorical variables

Categorical variables		Distribuţia pe frecvenţă	
Profession	Educators	14	70%
	Institutors	2	10%
	Pre-primary education teachers	4	20%
Teaching degree	Young teachers/ Unexprienced	3	15%
	Tenure	4	20%
	2nd Teaching degree	1	5%
	1st Teaching degree	12	60%
Work experience	Between 0 – 10 years	7	35%
	Between 11-20 years	2	10%
	Between 21-30 years	2	10%
	Over 31 years	9	45%
Age	Between 20-30 years	7	35%
	Between 31-40 years	2	10%
	Between 41-50 years	2	10%
	Over 51 years	9	45%

3.2. Research methods and instruments

Our research is a concrete investigation – which has as research method the opinion based survey, an widely spread algorithm in social sciences research, from conceptual and description, followed by the design of the research questionnaire and its pretesting; there was established the exact number of research subjects, followed by the instrument application and by data analysing and interpretation, as well as by conclusion elaboration.

In the process of developing the questionnaire we considered the following requirements: a variety of questions such as commentary as well as the type of the answer we required, adapting speck and language so to be able generate the idea of "transcription", of a dialogue with a colleague, also answers were asked as personal opinions, to underline that respondents answers are important for solving daily working tasks in the pre-primary education.

3.3. Data analysis and interpretation

Indicators:

1. *Curriculum as a regulator factor in teaching activity – items* 1,2,3,5,7,8,9,10,20;
2. *Teaching experience of teachers in teaching activity*: items 4, 6, 9;
3. *Teaching methods used in didactic activities and on "Language and communication" experiential domain*: items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23;
4. *External factors influence in the didactic activities: political and family factors*: items 11, 12, 18, 21, 24, and 25.

Data analysis was made according to the following tables, where the collected data are organized after 2 concluding variables: *age* and *seniority*.

Indicator 1. Curriculum seen as regulating factor of teachers' activity at classroom.

Table 2.The necessity of period adjustments brought to curriculum from pre-primary education

Answers by choices (intensity)									
YES					Total	NO			
Total	Din care					Din care			
	20-30	31-40	41-50	over 50 years		20-30	31-40	41-50	over 50 years
15	5	1	2	7	**5**	2	1	-	2

As seen in the upper table, most of the teachers agree that curriculum should be changed, and in the same time they consider that teachers be actively involved in designing the curriculum, most of all because of their valuable experience in the class. The arguments for rethinking the curriculum of pre-primary education are:

- ✓ changing generation of children have different aspirations and concerns;
- ✓ children are early maturing;
- ✓ new social changes are coming;
- ✓ a new dynamic society results in adapting the curriculum;
- ✓ since the curriculum is the major guide of teachers in designing the class activities, it is more than normal to adapted it to the educational paradigm principles agreed by the educational

system , a system that must be connected to the present and also must have a deep look in the future;

- ✓ some of the educational subjects of the curriculum become surpassed;
- ✓ curriculum should be permanently adapted to the needs and requirements of the society.

Among the motivation of some teachers for not reconsidering the curriculum we found:

- ✓ curriculum should not be changed so often;
- ✓ not all reconsideration were always good, some of them created gaps in teaching-learning process;
- ✓ in order to assess the results of implemented curricula we need time;
- ✓ Goals are the same and but the way they are achieved should stay under educators choice.

Respondents also believe that is absolutely necessary to include teachers in the designing of curricula for pre-primary education (question no.2), as a statement that they are directly involved in the education process and because they desire a better coordination of activities in the kindergarten. Valorising the experience of teachers is a "must" regarding the curriculum design because in this way we can avoid gaps between the teaching reality and the curriculum requirements.

The respondents' answers for item no.3 were grouped in the following table:

Table 3. Strengths and weakness of the curriculum for pre-primary education

Strengths of actual curriculum:	***Weakness of the actual curriculum:***
flexibility and openness;	It has too many educational contents;
is in perfect harmonization with the new reform in the educational system;	Has high standards and requirements;
is well documented scientifically;	
all the activities are organized in 5 "experiential" areas;	The educational content is difficult;
there is a higher degree of mobility in the activities chronology within a day and a week;	There are found unclear educational contents;
it promotes the concept of complex development of student;	Framework objectives are too general;
the educational contents are appropriate to nowadays requirements, and are structured on 6 major subjects;	Specific objectives aren't grouped according to the framework (general) objectives
there are introduced new active - participative teaching methods.	The structure of its contents is realized only for two age groups ;
the interest area inside the class organization;	The flexibility is too high, especially for young teachers (it isn't explained enough);
it offers total freedom of children, since the educators become only mentors or guides;	
learning process becomes more personal;	
parents and different members of society are directly involved in projects;	Projects are too complex for the pre- primary education level;
the accent is set more on forming than on informing students.	The specific language is too difficult to be understood.

From given responses to item no.5, it results that teaching experience isn't valorised enough, the respondents arguing that curriculum is developed by academic and not by practitioners. On the other hand, the publication procedures and the Ministry approval are too complex, and teachers were never encouraged or helped to design scientific papers based on the practical activity from classes.

As for the dependence of teachers for educational curriculum (item no.7) we can argue that it is mandatory for a normal implementation of teaching - learning activities. Reason why, as expected, many teachers demand a unitary curriculum, and in the absence of such an instrument many would design their own curriculum, in other words we say teachers are open to adapting the curricula to the student potential, to the socio-economical factors and to the local ones, etc.

With the items: 8, 9 and 10 we analyzed teachers' level of satisfaction towards the curriculum, by using both an objective and a subjective construct of those items.

After the classification procedures the following conclusions were extracted:

- ✓ the curriculum is improvable (item no.8);
- ✓ educators are mostly satisfied by educational process quality and by its standards;
- ✓ the objectives should be projected by taking consideration age criterion;
- ✓ the curriculum should be more specific;
- ✓ the scientific language used for general objectives and behaviour examples is difficult and lacks clarity;
- ✓ the six subjects description is ambiguous and vague for a new practitioner.

The item no.20, concerning the new curriculum, highlights the fact that 70 % of teachers are higly satisfied by the curricular quality.

There also found deficiencies in the curriculum implementation (item no.9), for which teachers suggest improvements, as shown in the next table:

Table no. 4. Deficiencies resulted in the process of curriculum implementation

Deficiency	***Improvement suggestions***
- Not all formulated objectives are measurable; - Curriculum is unclear and complicated; - Both objectives and educational contents are structured on only 2 age groups, disadvantaging 5 year old students, and for level one students they are too complicated while for level II ones are too easy; - experiential domains don't find themselves in an explicit position, reported to the all 6 general subjects; - The curricula is full of information; - The scientific language used for general objectives and behaviour examples is too difficult and unclear.	- The objects should be created after the age criterion, while immeasurable verbs are replaced with measurable one (for eg. "to know" should be replaced with "to define") - Curriculum should be structured taking into consideration 3 age levels, especially for young teachers; also the schedule is recommended to be used again; - A better correlation between the 5 experiential areas and the 6 major subjects that must approached within; - To remove the educational contents centred on information and not on developing students' personality factors.

Indicator no. 2 teaching experience as a element of reform evolution

On item no.4, most of our respondents said that reform can be developed only with the help of dedicated educates, open to new and motivated to change themselves firs of all, because they say that experience in most of the cases generates stagnation. The idea according to which the quality of people matters was questioned: good people can save a bad system as well as low quality people can compromise an efficient system. A competent teacher is not mandatory to have seniority. Theoretical background is eminent, but without practice, they don't represent a thing, and experience will uncover a number of situations never met on theory.

Table 5. Desirable qualities of a teacher working in undergraduate education

Young teachers	Seniors
1. Understanding, tolerant, confident, emphatic, sociable and calm; 2. Humanity, honesty, fairness, firmness, with a high sense of justice and responsibility, also perseverant; 3. Intelligent, creative, imaginative; 4. A good educator, a good psychologist and also a manager; 5. Love for children and for his profession, vocation and talent; 6. Flexible, open to new; 7. Sense of humour, in good disposition and with a playful sprit. 8. Communication and interpersonal abilities; 9. Theoretical background; 10. Pedagogic skills and professionalism; 11. Motivation.	1. Love for children and for their profession, vocation and talent; 2. Understanding, tolerant, confident, emphatic, sociable and calm; 3. Humanity, honesty, fairness, firmness, with a high sense of justice and responsibility, also perseverant; 4. A good educator, a good psychologist and also a manager; 5. Theoretical background; 6. Flexible, open to new; 7. Pedagogic skills and professionalism; 8. Intelligent, creative, imaginative; 9. Communication and interpersonal abilities; 10. Sense of humour, in good disposition and with a playful sprit; 11. Motivation.

As seen on the table linked to item no.6, teachers have different opinions regarding only the ordination of the desirable qualities of a young teacher compared to experienced one.

At item no.19, which refers to the necessity of graduating different training sessions, we conclude that 95% of our respondents said they are necessary, while 5% say the opposite. The respondent that chose NO, finds himself in the age class 20-30 years old with tenure degree in education; he didn't justify his choice. In the case of first class of subjects who said YES their reasons were: to keep in touch with the new elements and to learn more as well as to be able to update their knowledge. The answers we have at this item demonstrate the necessity of training in early childhood education.

4. Conclusions

In the politics of human resources must be a certain balance in order to achieve positive changes inside the educational system.

Throughout his carrier, an educator should be able to adept at least 3 to 4 cycles of curricular reform. But while time passes teachers' adaptability lowers. It is scientifically proven that as people age they develop resistance to change. A young graduate has the tendency to reform the system from down to top. With time the same person agrees with certain professional values. After 30 years of activity, the educator will try to defend those values accumulated that he believes in. A successful education reform isn't correlated with the presence of many young teachers. Those young teachers even if they are enthusiastic don't have enough experience to be able to change the curricular activities. The human resources population able to implement curricular reform elements consists in educators with ages between 28 and 45 years old; psychologists believe this is "the golden age of creation and full professional maturity inside the educational carrier". (Munteanu, C., Munteanu, E.N., 2009, p.20)

There is a complementary relation between the teachers' activity and curriculum because curriculum always represented a regulating factor in the teachers' activity and teacher on the other hand, with the help of their experience they have managed to continuously improve the educational contents of this document.

The design of the research instrument - the questionnaire which included items requiring to sustain or to argue about your opinion, represented both a limitation but also an advantage for the research was the. Another important dimension invited respondents to approach a wide range of factors like: family, politics, curriculum, teaching methods and procedures, etc. For our subjects it represented a limitation, while it became an advantage for the research.

The resulted recommendation is: we need a wider knowledge over the present curriculum in pre-primary education, by both teachers and decision maker in the Ministry.

As a research result we concluded that there is a need for graduating different professional training, which is another recommendation, but with the specification they the training must be accredited and that they must take in the consideration the present needs of pre-primary education system.

Questionnaire for teachers in pre-primary education system

Dear respondent ,

This questionnaire is part of a research which aims to study the evolution of curricula in pre-primary education. Designing curricula generated a series of discussions with different perspectives. It is natural to be like this because the educational system lies under the pressure of a dynamic society.

The questionnaire invites you to contribute with your experience at shaping opinions regarding the curricula in general and particularly for those of the experiential area of "language and communication".

Not the positive or negative answers make the research object, but those which are sincere and responsible, which reflect the work reality.

I want to thank you for collaboration!!!

I. IDENTIFICATION DATA

1. Profession (tick): educator ______, institutor ____, teacher in pre-primary education _______
2. Seniority ______
3. Teaching Degree ________________
4. Age (tick): between 20-30 years __, between 41-50 years __, between 31-40 years __, between 50 years __.

II.

1. Do you believe it is necessary to periodically adjust the curriculum? Yes____ No____
Motivate your choice:
....
....
....

2. Do you think teachers should be involved in curricula design activities?

Absolutely necessary	Necessary	Less necessary	Irrelevant	I don't know

Motivate the chosen response.

....
....
....

3. Specify the strengths and weakness of curricula

Strengths	Weaknesses

4. Do you believe teaching experience is the most important element regarding the evolution of educational reform. Yes____ No____ Motivate your choice:
....
....
....

5. Do you consider that teaching experiences from the degree papers is valorised in the curricular design?

Very much	**Much**	**Mediu**	**Less**	**Few**

Motivate your choice:
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

6. List some qualities a teacher must possess to have performance in teaching
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Let's imagine educational institution without curricula. How do you think that teachers will act?

Possible answers	**Is true for:**				
	All teachers	**A lot of teachers**	**Some teachers**	**Few teachers**	**No one**
a) They spend the same time for preparation without any changes.					
b) They will prepare only for the subject they are interested in;					
c) They will prepare rarely, unpredictable					
d) They won't prepare at all;					
e) They will design their own curricula;					
f) They will ask for curricula to be introduce.					

8. Do you believe the present curricula is:

Very good	**Perfectible**	**Inappropriate**

9. If your answer was: perfectible or inappropriate please specify the major deficiencies of them
....
....

....
....

10. Describe 2-3 ways to improve the present curriculum.
....
....
11. Did political factor influences the educational institution and curricula?

Very much	Much	Medium	A little	Almost not

12. If you considered that politics has very much or much influence in the schools' life and regarding curricula, specify at least 3 situations to describe its' involvement
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………...
13. Do you prefer traditional or modern teaching methods? Justify your answer:
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
14. How important do you believe that is each of the following forms of activity?

Activity form	Very important	Important	Important enough	Less important
Frontal				
Group				
Individual				

Justify your answer:
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
15. Place a circle in front of the teaching methods you use more often for the experience domein "language and communication"

a. conversation;
b. team work;
c. role-play;
d. lecture;
e. games in nature;
f. interview;
g. problem solving;
h. exploration;
i. storytelling;
j. didactic games;
k. drama.

16. Considering your experience with kindergartners do you think they prefer cartoons instead of stories?
Yes______ No_______
Justify your answer:
....
....
17. When the weather allows do you prefer to work outdoors with the young pupils?

Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rare	Never

18. do you believe that expenses were allocated more for the kindergarten infrastructure than for its' material resources?

Yes____ No____ Motivate your answer:
....
....
19. Do you believe that teachers, managers and administrative stuff in kindergartens must attend training session in early?
Yes____ No____ Motivate your answer:
....
....
20. To what extent are you satisfied with the quality of the educational standards and process?

Very satisfied	**Highly Satisfied**	**Satisfied**	**Not so satisfied**	**Almost unsatisfied**

21. Do you consider efficient the communication of kindergarten organization with families?
Yes____ No____ Motivate your choice:.
....
....
22. List two or three teaching methods used in teaching children to communicate fluent and expressive.
....
....
23. do you agree with the sintagm: language training is "a priority of the educational system" or "urgency 2000- communication and language bet" (Preda V., 1999).

Total agreement	**Agree**	**I don't care**	**I don't agree so much**	**I disagree**

24. In your opinion which are the problems kindergartens have at this moment? Make an hierarchy.
…..
....

25. Do you believe decentralization is strength for a quality education?
Yes____ No____ Motivate your answer:
....
....

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INTERCULTURAL LEARNING – AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH TO SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Oana Nestian Sandu
Intercultural Institute of Timisoara
oana.nestian@intercultural.ro

Abstract: *There is a wide variety of practices in intercultural learning, yet there are very few evidences of the impact of those practices. In order to ensure quality of the intercultural learning processes, educators need to go beyond celebrating diversity to creating learning environments in a human rights-based approach, in order to stimulate meaningful interactions, social transformation and access to social rights. This article argues for the need for more research, more quality assurance instruments and more coherent approaches at European level in the field of intercultural learning. And invites practitioners in this filed to test and feedback the instrument. One of the tools recently developed by the Partnership between the European Commission and Council of Europe in the field of youth, entitled Indicators for Intercultural Dialogue in Non-formal Education Activities is currently available for educators to test it into practice.*

Key words: *intercultural learning; social rights; interactions; learning environments*

The intercultural perspective in plural and dynamic societies

The perspectives on culture have evolved from a static, essentialist view to a dynamic, constructivist one (Gray and Thomas, 2006). The essentialist view on culture is based on the idea that culture has fixed characteristics, variation among members being considered as secondary. This approach is inadequate in nowadays context in which people often migrate from one place to another, travel so much physically and virtually and live in continuous interaction with the others. Moreover, this reductionist view on culture has the effect of limiting human understanding to theories and methodologies that are not adequate to the realities of people and that promote simplistic analysis and solutions to complex problems.

In the constructivist view, culture is defined in interaction with others, it is fluid in expression and continuously evolving and adapting to the realities lived and perceived by its members. Culture evolves and reshapes itself throughout the years; it is influenced by the interaction of its members with members of other cultures, with the surroundings, by cultural and economic exchanges, by globalization.

In people's everyday discourse about culture there are both inflexible and flexible approaches to ethnicity, religion and nationality. In some situations, those who are interested to present a rigid view of culture (mainly extremist groups, politicians, media, etc.) describe it as fixed and closely related to ethnicity and religion. In political discourse there are still tendencies to claim for 'purity of culture' and to use culture for politics of exclusion.

Another type of discourse refers to culture as a *making* process, which views culture as multifaceted and diverse in its range of values, beliefs, practices and traditions – some of which may be recent inventions – and hence as negotiable and subject to personal choice, and as a dynamic process through which both meanings and the boundaries of groups or communities are renegotiated and redefined according to current needs (Byram, Barrett, Ipgrave, Jackson, Mendez Garcia, 2009).

All too often, culture has been considered as completely overlapping with nationality, with the borders of nation states, or even an entire region (e.g. Arab culture). In intercultural learning processes we must acknowledge that there are general characteristics of a culture, but there is also a multitude of specificities related to how a culture is lived.

Moreover, people have multiple cultural affiliations, they identify with characteristics of different cultures, they create their own cultural identity and that cultures themselves are internally heterogeneous. We often receive messages that assume there can only be one cultural identity (e.g. Where are you from? Do you consider yourself Serbian or German? How come you go to church if you are gay?). This type of worldview has a great potential to create a cognitive dissonance (a discomfort caused by holding simultaneously conflicting ideas, emotions, beliefs, values, etc.). In order to avoid this, and to reach a coherent narrative about ourselves, we need to go through a process (both conscious and unconscious) of accommodating the different facets of our identity, to feel that we are a unique and complete human being. For this reason, the Council of Europe published the *European Manifesto for Multiple Cultural Affiliation*, which openly affirms that at a given time or at different stages in their lives, people may adhere to different cultural affiliations:

Multiple cultural affiliations make it possible both to conceive and to experience the complex, differentiated development of cultural identity in mature democratic societies. It firstly recognizes communities which bring with them different references in terms of identity and secondly allows each individual to have a number of specific identities expressed through belonging to various cultures. Multiple belonging is perceived as the possibility for everyone, either individually or in a group, to feel simultaneous or successive affiliation with a set of values or cultural references shared by several groups or communities of beliefs or interests.

Individuals subjectively identify with more than just a single social group. In addition, people frequently use their personal attributes (such as fun-loving, conscientious, conservative, tolerant, etc.) and their interpersonal relationships and social roles (such as mother, friend, son, employee, etc.) as further components of their self-concepts. These multiple identifications with social groups, attributes, relationships and roles help individuals to orientate position and define themselves in the social world relative to other people (Byram et al., 2006).

As Titley (2007, p. 72) states: "The tendency to see and valorize people as belonging to cultural groups underplays and simplifies identity and the importance of gender, class, sexuality, disability and political allegiances in practices of identity as well as practices of discrimination. […] The question is not whether or not culture should be engaged with, but how, in relation to whom, to what extent, in interrelation with what, and with which underlying meanings*"*.

All individuals have the tendency to maintain a positive self-identity and to feel secure in their identity. Different strategies are used in order to attain this. One of them is to make a distinction between in-groups ('us') and out-groups ('them'). When people define their group belonging in opposition to others groups, an artificial categorization is created, one that accentuates differences and reduces similarities, saying basically that 'we are good and they are bad'. Therefore, it is important to accept that no culture is better or worse than other, that there is no hierarchy of cultures.

One of the recurrent themes of the consultations realized for developing the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue was that old approaches to the management of cultural diversity (such as multiculturalism) were no longer adequate to societies in which the degree of that diversity was unprecedented and ever-growing.*Multiculturalism is now seen by many as having fostered communal segregation and mutual incomprehension, as well as having contributed to the undermining of the rights of individuals – and, in particular, women – within minority communities, perceived as if these were single collective actors. Intercultural dialogue is seen as the route to follow in order to achieve inclusive societies*. If multiculturalism was a policy aiming at respecting cultural identities of people living in the same social space, interculturalism goes beyond mere coexistence, towards living together in a space of respect, but also of interaction, communication and genuine exchanges. In this understanding, "interculturalism has already processed the lessons of multiculturalism's limitations, replacing a static parallelism with an emphasis on dynamic interaction and exchange" (Titley, 2012, p. 164).

At the core of an intercultural society lays the concept of integration, understood as a situation in which all citizens (beyond any categorization as national, migrants, minorities) are given the opportunity to affirm their cultural specificities, as well as to participate in communication and dialogue processes with the rest of the society, based on democratic collaboration.

Intercultural perspective first requires us to recognize that reality is plural, complex, dynamic and changing, and that interaction is an integral part of all lives and cultures. Intercultural perspective asks us to ensure that such interaction fosters mutual respect and the enrichment of mutually supporting communities and individuals, rather than the strengthening of relationships based on domination and rejection. The aim is therefore to search for the truth through dialogue and to work towards mutual understanding (Olafsdottir, 2011).

Interculturality refers to the capacity to experience cultural otherness, and to use this experience to reflect on matters that are usually taken for granted within one's own culture and environment. "Interculturality involves being open to, interested in, curious about and empathetic towards people from other cultures, and using this heightened awareness of otherness to evaluate one's own everyday patterns of perception, thought, feeling and behavior in order to develop greater self-knowledge and self-understanding" (Byram et al., 2006, p.10).

When speaking about diversity there are both the risk of *dilution* (to consider every aspect of life, every experience, every difference in the concept of diversity) and the risk of *essentialisation* (to consider that a person that belongs to a certain group that is 'different' necessarily represents the viewpoint of that particular group). In the first case, there is too much emphasis on the individuality in detriment of group belonging, while in the second case there is too much emphasis on group belonging and presupposed homogeneity within groups. For example, in the first case we might believe that we have diversity in a group of straight men with the same religious and cultural background just because they had very different life experiences. In the second case, we might have the tendency to always look at the African participant, or search his approval when speaking about things related to Africa, as if he/she would represent the point of view of an entire continent.

All human beings are different and unique in their individuality, talents, potential, desires, but they are equal before the law, as citizens and with regard to their human rights. "He who reduces political language to difference only will come out as an individualist and social Darwinist, he who does the same with regard to equality will end up as collectivist. It is only by keeping the concepts of difference and equality in balance that one can speak of a fair and just society" (Ohana & Rothemund, 2008, p.138).

Intercultural learning – a key educational approach at European level

The main purpose of intercultural learning – to inflect ethnocentric perspectives, fight prejudices and promote solidarity actions that support equality in human dignity and respect for the plurality of cultural identities – remains fully valid and more relevant than ever in European societies whose futures are further intertwined and interdependent with the rest of the world (Cunha and Gomes, 2009).

In order to contribute to this purpose, certain key aspects of intercultural learning need to be taken into account. Unfortunately many of the approaches to intercultural learning promote simplistic analyses and solutions for change that are at odds with the fine-grained knowledge many participants have of their context. Despite unquestionably good intentions on the part of most people who call themselves intercultural educators, most intercultural education practices, instead of challenging the dominant hegemony, actually support prevailing social hierarchies, and inequitable distributions of power and privilege (Gorski, 2008). Good intentions need to be backed up by intercultural competence, understanding and promotion of intercultural learning principles.

The shift in intercultural learning needs to go from celebrating diversity and cultural events to redressing inequality and fostering social change, so that everyone can have the opportunity to use their capacity to contribute to community development, to be active citizens, to influence policies and get involved in structural changes in their own reality.

Intercultural learning is never a completed fact. It is a lifelong, on-going process. The concept of *process* implies systemic aspects of on-going or continuous change over time, functional interdependence, equifinality (different paths to the same outcome) and multifinality (one path to multiple outcomes) (Spitzberg and Chagnon, 2009).

In the process of learning we pass through different stages of development. In each stage our worldview is re-shaped based on the new knowledge, skills and attitudes that we acquired. Not only our perception of reality changes based on new learning, but reality also changes, new variables come into play, complex situations need to be faced. Therefore, we can never say that our intercultural competence is fully developed, but it is always in process, just like the construction of our identity.

The activities aiming at developing intercultural competence, which are realized mainly in the non-formal education sector, need to ensure a certain quality standard for intercultural learning processes. No matter how diverse the activities are in themselves, in order to ensure quality intercultural education certain principles are to be respected. These principles are summarized in figure 1 and described below.

Intercultural learning is an **educational approach**; it is a quality of education, not a purpose in itself. It is a process aimed at the development and stabilization of all individuals' willingness and ability to acculturate, to live together in diverse societies (Nedelcu, 2008). It is holistic and transversal; it is a lifelong process that concerns all ages.

Intercultural learning intersects with education for democratic citizenship and human rights education. Intercultural learning is not about disparate models and theories thrown into a training programme or about mere techniques for group work and simulations of culture, but about unmasking and engaging with desires, politics and assumptions (not just associate them with education about culture), in order to involve all citizens in shaping the societies they live in, so that they reflect the pluralism of their own realities.

Intercultural learning **carries a potential for social transformation**, it is a tool for social change that provides a framework for the analysis one's own living context and working context and ways to asses when the framework of "culture" is (not) useful in understanding and acting in their context. It needs to take place in everyday life and to be evaluated against the world we are living in (Otten, 2007). Intercultural learning provides models and theories to help us understanding the world we live in, and should not create expectations that the world will have to fit theoretical models. It is heuristic; it encourages learners to discover solutions by and for themselves in order to reach a fairer world, a world of **solidarity, social cohesion**.

Another important principle is **multi-perspectivity**, an understanding of the complex nature of the people and society and the uselessness of trying to find the absolute truth in relation to interpersonal interactions. The way in which people perceive reality is the reality for them. Intercultural learning operates at the level of perceptions. Shifting of perceptions leads to changes of reality, which is why empathy and tolerance of ambiguity are key aspects of intercultural competence. Intercultural learning works against the tendency of a majority-cantered vision of the world and presentation of the history. It denies any reminiscent idea of a race superiority, or hierarchical distribution of ethnic groups.

The approach and methods of intercultural learning need to move in the direction of placing more emphasis on 'action', to equip its participants for acting in favor of the social change they have identified as necessary (Ohana and Otten, 2012), to take a clear stand **against discrimination, racism and other forms of intolerance and social injustice.** An important accomplishment of intercultural learning is to develop people's abilities to recognize the existence of stereotypes and to understand the impact of prejudices on their lives and on other people's lives. Intercultural learning offers the means and tools to break the stereotypes and to deconstruct the ethnocentric perspectives and promotes attitudes and behaviors that prevent social injustice and foster positive relations.

People need to develop their **critical thinking** towards media and political discourses. They need to learn how to make a balanced discourse analysis, to navigate among what is being "served" to them by the media and to deconstruct the stereotypes launched too often by media, politicians, and the people around them in general. Critical means to stay away from certainties and cultivate doubt. It means having the capacity to formulate questions, to analyze, relate and contextualize, to move away from passively interiorizing the information transmitted by others. Through intercultural learning people learn to deconstruct and reconstruct the reality, to unlearn what they have learned.

Intercultural learning offers an **alternative to multiculturalism** (Rus, 2010, Lentin and Titley, 2011, O'Cinneide, 2012). The intercultural approach goes beyond simple recognition of diversity to facilitating dialogue between different socio-cultural groups, addressing power relations and fostering positive relations in the society in general. Intercultural learning aims at the right balance between the freedom of expression and respect of cultural diversity, acknowledges and respects diverse cultural worldviews and practices. This does not mean that any kind of behaviour is acceptably if framed as cultural practice. Human rights framework acts like a guardian which sets the limits of cultural relativism.

Intercultural learning is not only about authentic dialogue, but also about **equal opportunities**. Ensuring a ratio of migrants or minorities in order to satisfy the cultural diversity requests is not enough. The aim is to reach the higher levels of the ladder of participation (Arnstein, 1969), to make sure that everyone has a voice and to ensure cultural diversity in the decision making groups, to empower migrants and minority groups to take initiative. Equal opportunity does not mean equal treatment; it means differentiated treatment with the aim of reaching equality and social justice.

Many recent articles and papers have critiqued the apparent de-politicization of intercultural learning (Özdemir, 2012). Nowadays, the call is to "**re-politicize**" intercultural learning. Tolerance and awareness, even though they are crucially important, they are sometimes presented as the end-game of intercultural learning. This approach assumes that cultural identities are inherently problematic, without taking into account the deep foundations of institutional and state racism (Titley, 2007). Intercultural learning needs to address aspects of structural discrimination and to develop strategies for finding consensus for social action and transformation.

Speaking about intercultural learning without including the power context in which intercultural encounters often occur would exclude a big part of our reality. Too often conflicts are characterized as cultural by the state power that is happily to complicit in the illusion that mere cultural difference is the basis of discrimination. Getting people together in training is not a miraculous way of increasing tolerance and appreciation of cultural difference. Individual changes must work along with state and international policies.

Intercultural education emerges in response to the conflicts that occur in multicultural societies. Its aim is to promote an encounter and an exchange on an equal footing between different groups or communities (Lafraya, 2012). From an intercultural perspective **conflict** is seen as a source for development. Whenever people with different world views come together there is a potential for conflict. Intercultural learning offers the tools for being an active citizen, able to question, and prepared to be questioned by others, to listen and be listen to; to have the courage to disagree, but also the will to go the extra distance to work through and solve a conflict to get a common solution.

Figure 1. Principles of intercultural education

Developing intercultural competence through educational activities

Intercultural competence is not acquired automatically. This competence instead needs to be learned, practiced and developed continuously. The general objective of intercultural education, to prepare individuals for life in an intercultural society implies essentially supporting them in acquiring intercultural competence. In short, the learner needs to acquire knowledge, skills and values that contribute to a spirit of solidarity and co-operation among diverse individuals and groups in society. This is also closely related to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulates that the aim of education should be to "promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups".

The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue assigns to education professionals the specific responsibility of fostering intercultural competence in learners. Bennett defines intercultural competence as "a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts" (2008, p.97), while Moosmüller and Schönhuth (2009) affirm that the aim of intercultural competence is to support the development and growth of individuals and groups.

Intercultural learning processes can lead to the development of intercultural competence by creating frameworks in which participants access opportunities for self-realization and social transformation. Intercultural learning creates group situations in which young people deal with uncertainty and ambiguity in order to understand self and others, to understand the socio-political context and to develop their abilities to transform the world together.

Indicators for Intercultural Dialogue in Non-Formal Education Activities – an instrument for quality assurance

One of the tools recently launched by the Youth Partnership between Council of Europe and European Commission is a guide for trainers/facilitators/organizers entitled: *Indicators for intercultural dialogue in non-formal learning activities*. The aim of this tool is to promote an on-going reflection on our understanding of intercultural learning and to reduce the gaps between different interpretations, by helping trainers and facilitators reflect on the 'why' and 'how' of intercultural processes and concepts. The tool offers a set of criteria and indicators that need to be taken into account in different phases of a learning activity (preparation, implementation, follow-up), and it refers both to activities which focus mainly on intercultural dialogue, as well as to activities that focus on other topics, but which embed an intercultural perspective.

In a process for developing this tool (in which we were closely involved) took place in a period of about three years, using the method of expert consensus. About 20 experts in the field of non-formal education, research, training and project management took part in each meeting.

The feasibility research showed that a wide variety of scientific, practical and political information is available in relevant domains, like inter-religious dialogue, intercultural education, migration, conflict management, but very little information refers concretely to indicators for intercultural dialogue. Nevertheless, intercultural dialogue and intercultural education are present on the agenda of all international organizations that develop non-formal education programs making therefore the definition of indicators for quality in intercultural approach imperative.

The purpose of this instrument is to reduce the gap between different interpretations in the field of intercultural education and to facilitate the reflection of trainers and facilitators of non-formal education activities regarding the processes and concepts in the field.
The instrument comprises 18 criteria, each criterion having a set of indicators for intercultural dialogue on the following dimensions: people, content, process. Each indicator is necessary, but not sufficient to fulfill the criterion to which it belongs. The three dimensions refer to the following aspects: (1) people – all the people directly involved in planning, implementing and evaluating the educational process; (2) process – interaction between participants, both planned and unplanned aspects; (3) content – topics approached at theoretical and practical level.

Criteria and indicators for intercultural dialogue have also been categorized based on the three phases of a training activity, preparation phase, implementation phase and follow-up phase. Preparation phase includes the definition of the framework of the activity, including institutional, cultural and thematic aspects, target group, purpose and objectives of the activity. This phase includes also the creation of a support network, a team of trainers and planning of the training process. The implementation phase includes dimensions of learning during formal and informal time (program, approaches, methods, means of communication and cooperation, etc.). The follow-up phase is focused on a series of aspects like: systematic and participatory evaluation, commitment for future activities, realistic approach of long term objectives and a structured way for supporting future activities and network development.

The *Indicators for Intercultural Dialogue in Non-Formal Education Activities* have both an evaluative and an educational purpose. When it is used retrospectively, the instrument can offer a clear image of the way in which educational activities were realized, of the relationship between the objectives of the course and the outputs. When it is used before conceiving a training course it can serve as a guide for setting objectives, selection of the team of trainers, selection of participants, contents and processes included.

Conclusions

Intercultural learning is an education for all; it is not an education for the culturally different. Therefore, it should be available to all, at every level of education, in the formal and non-formal sector.
Intercultural education is not the answer to all problems in the society, but it is definitely a step forward in addressing aspects related to diversity in a human rights-based approach, in order to stimulate meaningful interactions, social transformation and access to social rights. However, current practices in intercultural learning need to adapt to current realities. Teachers and trainers need to continuously develop their competences in the field, to report their practices in a way that integrates “lessons learned” in order to contribute to future activities and to a more coherent approach in the field of practice, policy and research.
The Indicators for Intercultural Dialogue in Non-formal Education Activities are meant as a support for educators to develop their competences and as a tool for quality assurance of practices in this field. Therefore, educators are invited to test the tool and send feedback on the website or to: oana.nestian@intercultural.ro through November 2013.

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INFLUENCE OF ANTHROPOMETRIC DIMENSIONS ON THE PREDICTION OF VO_2 MAX BY STEP-TEST

Goran Šekeljić, Milovan Stamatović, Danica Dzinović, Filip Kojić
Faculty of Teacher Training, University of Kragujevac, Serbia
Faculty of Teacher Training, University of Belgrade, Serbia
Faculty of Sport and Physical Education, University of Belgrade, Serbia
gsekeljic@sbb.rs; stamatovic@ucf,kg.ac.rs; danicadzinovic@uf.bg.ac.rs

Abstract: *Our interest in this paper is directed toward answering this question, whether the anthropometric characteristics affect the prediction of VO_2 max results obtained by step-test? The survey included 57 young athletes aged 15 to 17. The assessment of maximal oxygen consumption was determined by Astrand test on the treadmill and by step-test by von Döbeln on the stools 30cm high. The results were processed by comparative statistics methods: Spearman's correlation coefficient, Student's t-test and multiple regression analysis. The results indicate that the estimated values of maximum oxygen consumption of the respondents obtained by Astrand cycle ergometer test and the values obtained by step-test assessed by von Döbeln's formula are significantly different. The identified differences between the two tests were significantly correlated with body height, leg length, leg and body mass of the sample. Dependence among the described phenomena has been described by mathematical model, based on which it is possible to perform correction of the results of measurement and reduce the error estimates of VO_2 max by 5%.*

Keywords: *aerobic capacity, step-test, cycle ergometar, a corrective factor*

INTRODUCTION

The need to assess the aerobic capacity led to the appearance of Harvard step-test back to 1943, and to the appearance of the first ergometer test of functional ability (step-stools). Since then many new tests have been patented, which, in the meantime, have been modified many times in order to obtain reliable data.

It took decades of research in order to standardize the measurement conditions, acquire the necessary tests and psychometric properties. Over the years, the number of gaps have been removed and the assessment of the intensity of stress has included weight of subjects, it was evaluated the mechanical work that requires descent from the bench, the obtained values began to be expressed in $ml \times kg^{-1} \times min^{-1}$ as the true representative of the values of VO_2 max and technological advances made it possible to measure heart rate during labor and immediately in the first seconds of recovery.

The first respectable test was patented by Wilhelm von Döbeln, Irma Astrand and Arne Bergström (1967). Applying several submaximal and one maximal load on a cycle ergometer on the 84 subjects aged between 30 and 60, they noted regularities between the following:heart rate during maximal load and several submaximal loads, performed mechanical work expressed in kilopondmeter/min, body weight and age and in this way the mathematical model suitable to calculate VO_2max was defined based on heart rate measured immediately after the submaximal workload.

However, climbing the step-stool system requires a specific work that is not typical of other ergometers, such as treadmill or bicycle ergometar. Because of this specificity there is doubt that longitudinal anthropometric characteristics may affect the test results. Therefore Keen & Sloan (1958), using the protocol Harvard step-test, conducted research on two groups of healthy young men. The test was performed, recovery indices calculated according to the original procedure, but nothing pointed to the connection between the structure of the body, leg length, bi-iliac diameters or weight with the obtained results, although one of the conclusions was that the length of the leg could affect the results of step-test.

Ten years later Ariel (1969) tried to determine the impact of the angle between the part of the leg below the knee and the one above the knee, obtained by moving the height of the bench while the foot was raised on it, with index values of recovery obtained while performing the Harvard step test. For this purpose 30 students were subjected to tests at four different heights of stools. The authors concluded that the angle formed between the lower leg and the upper leg with height stools significantly affected the values of the recovery index, but not in a linear relationship with cardiorespiratory parameters/

Miyamura (1975) on a sample of 69 young Japanese between the ages of 13 and 14 performed a series of tests with stool heights of 22-30% of the length of each leg of the respondents. Based on the research results the authors conclude that there is no significant correlation with directly measured values, except in cases where the height of the stools were 25, 27 and 29% of body height, and even then they were very low r=0.351. After all, the authors believe that the results achieved in the step-test are influenced by many different factors such as aerobic capacity, anaerobic capacity, testing techniques, motivation, and duration of operation and structure of the body. On the other hand, the results suggest that within reasonable limits the results do not depend on the weight, height or leg length.

The aim of the study of Shahnawaz (1978) was to evaluate the objectivity of the results with respect to the amount of steps and anthropometric characteristics of the respondents. The survey was conducted on ten men whose height ranged from 162 to 191cm. A total of 8 tests were conducted, one of which was at the height of 40cm, and in the other seven cases the height of the stool made 30 to 60% of the length of each leg of the respondents. For this purpose, useful and specially designed steep platform with sliding stool was used. The workload was standardized according to body weight of the subjects. The results showed that the height of the stool and the rhythm of climbing directly affect the measured values of maximal oxygen consumption. The lowest values of oxygen consumption were measured at a height bench that was 50% of the length of each leg of the respondents, and the highest value when the bench was 30% of that length. Within the range of climbing from 17 to 35 cycles per minute minimum oxygen consumption values were recorded with the speed of climbing from 20 to 25 cycles per minute. For this sample, the bench height of 40 cm is considered optimal for subjects with leg length between 75 and 85cm, while the standard height of 50.8cm most appropriate to the subjects with leg lengths over 90cm. The author concluded that the validity of each form of step-test increases if the height of the step is adapted to the lengths of the legs of the subjects compared to previously fixed values.

The research conducted by Francis and Kiuapepera (Cuipepper & Francis, 1988) was aimed at examining the possibilities of modifying step-test in relation to the biomechanical relationships arising from the anthropometric characteristics of the respondents. The study was conducted on thirty students at the University of Alabama, and a three-minute test consisted of a single-step climb on the stool at a pace of thirty times a minute. The stool height was adjusted to anthropometric characteristics of subjects in a manner that the foot was raised on the step-stool in the hip joint and the flexion of 73.3 degrees was achieved.Cardiac frequency of recovery was measured between the fifth and twentieth seconds. The correlation was identified between the value of the pulse in the recovery and directly measured values of maximal oxygen consumption on treadmill by Bryus protocol was r=0.70 with a standard error of ± 2.9ml×kg^{-1}×min^{-1}, which made an error of less than 7%. Retest showed high correlation r=0.86 when the heart ratewas measured by palpation of the carotid artery, and r=0.89 in the case where these values are measured by ECG.

This problem was also of interest to the Military Medical Academy research team that dealt with the problem of standardizing the step-test for the army (Životić-Vanović, 1991). The authors do not consider it necessary to take into account some of the other anthropometric characteristics except for body mass, because their impact on the adaptive response of the body on the work in a step-test assessed through mechanical efficiency has not been statistically changed significantly. The authors conclude that anthropometric quantities such as leg length, thigh and knee angles do not affect the size of the internal loads, because of the small size of their impact on the performed work.

Based on the previous research, it is clear that the size of the mechanical work of step-test is determined by the following: height stools, rate of climb and descent from the bench in a unit of time, the length of the duration of the performed work and the body mass of those who do the work (Nikolic & Ilic, 1994). However, it is unclear whether the amount of mechanical work performed can affect any of the anthropometrical characteristics (height, leg length, weight). Previous studies have not determined with any certainty the nature of these relationships and why the VO_2 max assessment carried out on different protocols differ so much. This study was undertaken in order to answer the question, whether it is possible to standardize an accurate and reliable test for the assessment of functional capacity of young athletes, with respect to their anthropometric differences?

METHOD

The research included 57 men aged 15 to 17. For the purpose of this research it was operated with 6 variables. Of these, 4 are of morphological area (body height, leg length, leg length and body mass), and two from the area of functional capacity (VO_2 max established by Astrand test on the treadmill, and VO_2 max test established by step-test according to von Döbeln at the height of the stool of 30 cm. Measurement procedures were performed according to the instructions of the original authors (Astrand, 1972; von Döbeln, 1967).

All data obtained in the survey were processed using standard procedures of descriptive and comparative statistics. From the area of descriptive statistics the following have been analyzed: frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation. From the area of comparative statistics the following have been used: X^2 test, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, Student's t-test and multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to facilitate the perception of the observed phenomena the sample that was chosen was non-homogeneous in terms of anthropometric variables, as indicated by the high value of the range (max-min) and coefficient of variation (Table 1). Thus, for example, analyzing the mass (AMAS) of the respondents it has been noted that the lightest respondent has a mass of 37, and the heaviest of 89kg.

The range between the lightest and the heaviest is 52kg. When it comes to body height (AVIS) is the shortest respondent in the sample was 149.5cm high while the tallest had a height of 204.5cm, this making the range of 55 cm. Similar descriptive characteristics have been observed in the length of the legs (ADNG), and the length of the lower leg (ADP), which is quite expected due to the fact that these anthropometric variables are characterized by high correlation with body height (Medved 1987).

Tablel 1. Descriptive parameters are related to the mass of the respondents (AMAS), body height of respondents (AVIS), the length of the legs of the respondents (AND), the length of the lower leg of the respondents (ADP).

	Mean	Min	Max	Std. Dev	Coef. Var.	Count
AMAS	64.18	37.5	89	11.373	17.72	57
AVIS	178.2	149.5	204.5	11.677	6.554	57
ADNG	95.6	79	108.5	6.493	6.789	57
ADP	45.43	37	52	3.17	6.977	57

Descriptive parameters of VO_2 max are shown in Table 2. It is notable that the sample is characterized by very high values of maximum oxygen consumption as the average value of VO_2 max amounted to 52. 256 ml×kg^{-1}×min^{-1}, classified according to Morehouse (1972).

Table 2. Maximum oxygen consumptions of the respondents expressed in ml×kg^{-1}×min^{-1} measured by Astrand test on the treadmill and step-test by von Döbeln on the stools 30cm high.

	Mean	Min.	Max.	Std. Dev	Coef. Var.	Count
Astrand	52.3	35.6	76.6	7.97	15.252	57
Döb.- 30	59.4	43.7	78.4	7.51	12.648	57

Descriptive parameters of the actual difference between Astrand and step-test (Table 3) indicate that the subjects on cycle ergometer on average achieved 6.27ml×kg^{-1}×min^{-1} (14%) higher score on the step test than on the cycle ergometer .

Table 3. Descriptive parameters of the difference in VO_2 max achieved on the treadmill and step-test (values are expressed in ml×kg^{-1}×min^{-1}).

Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error	Variance	Coef. Var.	Count
6.27	6.513	.863	42.422	103.876	57
Minimum	Maximum:	Range:	Sum:	Sum Squared	Missing:
-0.9	22.8	26.7	357.4	4616.6	0

Realized differences were statistically significant ($t=4.334$, $p<0.001$), which confirms our expectation that the estimated values of maximum oxygen consumption obtained on the treadmill and step-test differ significantly, which is confirmatory and in relation to some other research (Wasserman et al., 1999; Fitchett, 1985; Šekeljic et al., 2012).

For submaximal tests estimates that are 10% above or below the true value are acceptable (Kilby, 1990). However, the differences may be significantly beyond the acceptable framework, to which the works and Swain and Wright indicate (Swain & Wright, 1977), where the values were 28% and 26% in the work of Greiwe et al. (1995). In the study of Životić-Vanović (1991) the obtained values on the step-test the according to von Döbeln formula were 11% lower, and on bicycle ergometer using Astrand's method 17 to 19% lower than the directly measured values .

These differences occur because of several reasons. One of the reasons is great individual variations typical of all age groups (Kilby, 1990; Wasserman et al., 1999; Noonan & Dean, 2000). Balgos et al. (Balgos, et al., 1996) think that achieved load level affecst the outcome of the test, and that the results are more reliable if submaximal load reaches 90% of VO_2 max (Fletcher et al., 1998).

Different cardiovascular responses may be caused by different methods in testing, such as the speed of pedaling that in certain protocols varies from 50-80 rpm (Swain and Wright, 1997), or the duration of the test (Fairster et al., 1983).

Variations can also be explained by the fact that the physiological response to the work achieved by different ergometers need not be the same. Work on the step stool compared to bicycle ergometar, even when it is of equal sizes, varies in relation to the involved muscles and their masses, and can cause different reactions of cardiovascular system (Wasserman et al., 1999; Noonan & Dean, 2000; Šekeljic, 1996).

Despite the fact that the causes of variability may be numerous based on Spearman 's correlation coefficient ,statistically significant correlation has been found between the actual difference in tests and anthropometric characteristics of the respondents (Table 4). A weak but statistically significant inverse correlation of stochastic nature has been determined, suggesting that the actual differences in the results between the tests are not affected only by independent variables (anthropometric variables), but also by a number of other factors which have not been identified.

Table 4. Spearman correlation coefficient at a significance level of α=0:05 between some anthropometric variables and differences in VO_2 maxobtained between Astrand and von Döbeln's test.

anthropometric variables	The correlation coefficient
AMAS (masa)	.367 gr. vred. - .362
AVIS (visina)	.387
ADNG (duž. noge)	.413
ADP (duž. potkole.)	.357

Interestingly, the survey results were in line with our expectations. The paradox is that the shortest respondents with the lowest body mass achieved significantly better results in the step-test than on the treadmill. This unexpected result could be explained by the fact that the values of heart rate during labor, among other things, depend on the involved muscle. If on the same load greater muscle mass is involved, heart rate will be lower, stable condition will be set up sooner, and the work will be carried out under aerobic conditions. On the other hand, the same work with less muscle mass may partially activate the anaerobic mode, resulting in lower efficiency and increased heart rate. Therefore, for example, in the case of the same load heart rate is higher when arms are involved than legs. In our experiment, in case of both ergometers (step stools and bike) work is carried out by legs. However, it is possible that work on cycle, due to the characteristic position of the respondent during the test, causes performing of the work exclusively using legs, which is the reason why the patients with lower muscle mass experience anaerobic mechanisms of energy release, which causes greater heart rate and substantially lower estimated values of VO_2 max than the real ones.

Studies of Miller et al. (Miller et al, 1993) show that anthropometrically dominant individuals generally have a higher absolute value of muscle force due to greater muscle mass and a higher contractile potential. This fact probably contains solutions to the paradox. Namely, Dopsaj et al. (2011), Kljajic et al. (2012) while exploring the muscle force during the grip of the hand, concluded that women show a greater endurance in this motoric task, despite the fact that men with whom they were compared were capable of realizing greater absolute force. Lower absolute force also includes lower energy demand and reduced need for oxygen. Therefore, the authors believe that people with lower absolute muscle realize physical work that requires endurance with greater energy efficiency. The mechanism is based on the phenomenon that such persons have a higher coefficient of respiratory exchange during submaximal exercise.

The results of this study indicate that respondents in the step-test achieve greater values in relation to VO_2max assessment carried out on the treadmill. Deviations are on average $6.27 ml \times kg^{-1} \times min^{-1}$, which amounts to 14%, and depending on the height and weight of respondents deviations range from -0.1 to 22.8% (Table 3). Taking into account the correlation of anthropometric factors and differences in the maximum oxygen consumption, using a statistical regression analysis a mathematical model that describes these relationships was obtained. With regard to body mass (BM) and body height (TV) mathematical model (MM) can be represented by the following formula.

MM = 0.019 x TM(kg) + 0.0257 x TV(cm)

The mathematical model describes how the error in estimating VO_2 max in step-test increases with increasing the height and weight of subjects. If this information is taken into account it is possible to correct the results obtained and reduce the error estimates VO_2max by 5%.

The importance of this work for functional diagnostics is that earlier research has been confirmed (Francis & Cuipepper, 1988; Shahnawaz, 1978), which suggest that the anthropometric characteristics may affect the psychometric properties of some tests for assessing VO_2 max. Unlike other work in this field, the dependence between the described phenomena has been described by a mathematical model, based on which it is possible to perform correction of the measurement results and reduce the error estimates by 5%. The results can be used for further research in the field of anthropometry, sport, medical rehabilitation, special education, and related areas.

A limitation of this study is the lack of data on maximal oxygen uptake, which is achieved by measuring in the laboratory, by the application of some of the tests of maximum physical exertion. According to Životić-Vanović (1991), in order to predict maximum oxygen consumption to be based on the pulse-step test to predict maximal oxygen consumption, pulse values and oxygen consumption must be known with the increase of standardized load to the maximum possible. Otherwise, despite the fact that the coefficients of correlatios can be very high and repeatedly confirmed, the results can not be generalized and may apply only for the test persons, regardless of the sample size.

CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained in this study suggest that body height and weight affect the actual differences in the assessment of VO_2 max obtained by the step-test and cycle ergometer. Dependence between phenomena has been described by mathematical model, based on which it is possible to perform correction of the results and minimize the error estimate VO_2 max by 5%.

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THE SEPARATION ANXIETY AT KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

Olga D. Moldovan, PhD
Teodora Moldovan, MA
od_moldovan@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The separation anxiety is one of the most frequent anxiety troubles met at children. The major risk of the debut of this trouble is in three age stages: between 5-6 years old, 7-9 years old and 12-14 years old, appearing aproximatively at 40% from the children. The authors made a study on the separation anxiety on 36 kindergarten children and presents their quantitative and qualitative results, obtained with three different questionnaires: for educators, for parents and for children. The conclusions of the researche made them propose an intervention programme for the children with separation anxiety syndrome.*

Key words: *separation anxiety, kindergarten children, stage ages, physiologic, cognitive and emotional symptoms*

Theoretical frame

The separation anxiety is one of the most frequent anxiety troubles met to the children and that is why its definitions and its causality are very different, fonction of the authors. Even the periods of manifestation and its procentual frequence is different from an author to another.

After Olaru (1988), the major risk of the debut of this trouble is in three age stages: between 5-6 years old, 7-9 years old and 12-14 years old, appearing aproximatively at 40% from the children.

The anxiety of separation is a disease which are manifested by an intense fear feeling, which appears to the children in the moment in which they are in unfamiliar situations and in which they are not with the persons with whom they feel secure (usually the mother). This type of reactions are considered normal until the age of 2 years old. After this age, the children begin to accommodate themselves with the new persons and situations, and the fear of separation are less intense (Erikson, 1985).

For other researchers in the domain, this emotional problem affects 4-5% from the children with ages between 5-7 years old and tends to lower to 2% till 11-13 years old. The debut of the separation anxiety takes place most frequently in the period 7-12 years old, but it is possible earlier and it is manifested by the excessive fear which appears at the real or imaginary separation of the child from a significant person, usually one of his parents (Dindelegan, 2012).

The separation anxiety is a problem frequently meets: about 12% from the children suffer from this problem before 18 years old. Taking into account that half of the children with an anxiety disease will continue to experiment anxiety problems even at the adult age, it is very important that this problem be indentified early and adressed to a specialist (Birţ, 2001; Fodoreanu, 2004).

The separation anxiety have the debut, generally in the preschool period (but it can happen latter, till the age of 18 years old) and appears after some stressant events, as: the parents divorce, the death of a favourit relative or animal, the change of the house, of the school, the movind in another district, or in another locality etc. It is different from the generalized anxiety by the facts that it interesed, predominantly, the separation from the house or persons to whom the child is attached (Enăchescu, 2008).

The children with anxiety separation can present, each time that they are separated from the house or the persons on which they are attached, manifestations like: social isolation, apathy, sadness,concentration difficulties in the games or other activities, fear of animals, of darkness, of monsters, of thiefs, of kidnappers (Galbard, 2007).

They perceive different situations as being dangerous for them and their family. They have difficulties to go to bed and insist to stay with somebody near them till they are asleep. In the sleep time some of them live true nightmares of which content expressed their fears (Dobrescu, 2011). Many times they relate unusual perceiving experiences: horrible creatures, eyes that are looking to them etc. These are based on the erroneous perception of a real stimulus, appear only during the night and disappear in the presence of the person to whom the child is attached (Enăchescu, 2007).

The diagnosis of separation anxiety is made to a child if the disposition troubles last at least 4 weeks and he presents the symptoms describe before. Although the separation anxiety become manifest in the middle period of the childhood, it reflects itself also latter, limiting the person independence and making it to refuse living home (Munteanu, 2009).

Causes and manifestations

The authors agree to mention between the principal causes which determine the separation anxiety to the child, the followings:

- *genetic causes*: the anxiety in separation situation can be more intense if it is associated with temperamental (innate) predispositions, which favour the tendence to retire and to isolate in connection to new persons or situations;

- *environmental causes*

- the anxiety in separation situation can be more intense, if the parents do not take any measures to accustom gradualy the children with their absence;

- the tendence to protect excessively the children in new or unfamiliar situations, encourages their dependence to the parents and deprives them from learning experiences about how they can behave in such contexts;

- the stress factors (as for example the divorce, the communication problems between parents, the firsts days in kidergarten or school) can favour the manifestation of the separation anxiety (Creţu, 2001; Ionescu, 2006).

The environmental factors are considered as having the most important role in the installation of this desease. Some authors (Holdevici, 2009) mention in this categories:

- anxious parents that become overprotective, encouraging the dependence from the parents and depriving the child from the different learning occasions;
- stress factors (besides those mentioned above also the appearence of a new brother, the leaving of a parent abroad etc);
- the very authoritarian parental style;
- perfectionist or very critic parents, who forget to reward the positive behaviors of the child;
- sleeping in the same bed with the mother (or one of the parents).

The symptoms of separation anxiety are manifested in physiologic, cognitive, emotional an behavioral plane (Schaffer, 2005).

The physiologic symptoms can represent a good indicator for the parents to identify the separation anxiety. The children or the adolescents with this problem present headaches, nausea, stomach aches, vertigo, powerfull heart knocks, the respiration out of order or other physic symptoms typical to the anxiety state. Usually these symptoms appear befor the vicinity of the separation moment and are absent in the moments in which the child is togheter with his parents – for example they appear in the morning when the child must go to school, but they are absent in the weekend days, when the child stay at home with his parents (Şchiopu, Verza, 1995).

In the cognitive plane appears a series of worries and anxious thoughts related to the separation and to be alone; some children, from a smaller age, do not succeed to identify these worries or thoughts, but the bigger children or the adolescents can say that they are affraid that something bad will come to them or to someone close to them – a close person (parents or the person who look after them) (Cattell, 1983).

In the emotional plane, provoke an intense state of fear and uncertainty. The little children manifest themselves by crying crisis, shouts, rolling over on foot, or hanging on the parents when they anticipate or are passing through the separation moment. They can also refuse to remain alone in a room, to stay at the kindergarten or at school or to participate to oher activities (swimming, dance, group activities etc) in the absence of their parents (Verza, 2000).

Hypothesis and objectives

The research domain was that of the separation anxiety. The research is from non-experimental type, a fiding out one. The hypothesis from which we started in our research approach were the following: 1.We have supposed that the separation anxiety is present to half of the kindergarten children from the little group; 2. We supposed that the separation anxiety is bigger to the children who have never be separated from their parents, until the entrance in the kindergarten; 3. We supposed that the separation anxiety is bigger to the children that are unic child to their parents.

The enouncement of these hypothesis determined us to coach the following objectives of our research: the emphasizing of the separation anxiety to the children from the little groupe in kidergarten; the selection of the adequate samples of subjects on which the research must be carry on; the establishement of the methods which could evidentiate the separation anxiety; the establishement of the link between the separation anxiety and the fact to be unic child to the parents; the settling down of the relation between the separation anxiety and the frequency of the separation from the parents in the precursory period to the entrance in kindergarten.

The studied sample

To realise the proposed research we took for sample a lot of 36 children from two small groups from the PP.17 Kindergarten from Arad. In the sample we had 15 boys and 21 girls.

Work methodology

With the view of verifying the validity of the enounced hypothesis, we made three different questionnaires: for the children, for the parents and for the preschool learning teacher (educators). The questionnaires were applied individual to each child from the two groups. In the same time, the parents questionnaire was applied to the parent who came to take the child from the kindergarten. The educators questionnaire was completed by the two educators from the two little groups took into the study. The questionnaires were completed six weeks after the begining of the school year.

Results and discussions

The first hypothesis

We have supposed that the separation anxiety is present to half of the kindergarten children from the lower group.

To verify this hypothesis were analysed the answers to the questions 1 and 2 from the educators questionnaire and the answers to the questions 1, 2 and 3 from the parents questionnaire. Also we took into account the answers to the firsts two questions from the children questionnaire.

Both the educators asserts that a quarter from their group could be framed to the separation anxiety. It is a relative great number of children who can not separate from their parents and who can influence the well progress of the daily programme in kindergarten by their behavior. The figure 1 presents the time that the childdren are crying after the leaving of their parents.

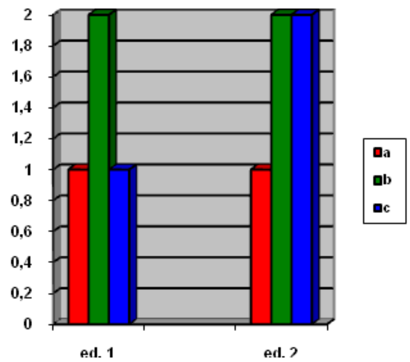

Fig. 1. The educators estimation about the time that the childdren are crying after the leaving of their parents.

Where: a = some minutes; b = a quarter of hour; c = half an hour.

Analysing all the answers we can appreciate that in conformity with the educators evaluation, a quarter from the children from the little group, present separation anxiety, because they manifest crying behavior even at 6 weeks after the begining of the school year. The time duration that the children are crying, after the parents evaluation is aproximavely a quarter of an hour. From this point of view we can assert that **our starting hypothesis is validated**: *there is separation anxiety to the little group children*, but this is present only to a qurter of the preschool population of a group, not to a third part as we supposed.

The answers of the parents soustained this hypothesis. We have a number of 3 parents who estimate that the cry of their children was about 4 weeks; 10 parents appreciate that the cry duration was about 5 weeks and 3 parents evaluate the duration of the cry to 6 weeks, that means till the begining of our research.

The prolongation over 4 weeks of this type of behavior is considered already separation anxiety. It is appreciate that in a month interval the child must habituate himself to the kindergarten life, to the colleagues and to the educator who replaces the role of the parents on the period that the child spend in the kindergarten.

The accommodation incapacity of the child can be an alarm signalt on many directions: either the parental education and behavior regarding the child were not adequate, or there are some accommodation problems which belong to the child intimate structure and than it must be seen a specialist. We make this mention, especially for those children who continue to cry even after a month and half after their entrance in the kindergarten.

In conclusionm, taking into account the qualitative interpretation of the obtained results by the application of the specific questionnaires to the three categories of subjects- children, parents, educators – we can assert that **our starting hypothesis was validated by the practice.** There are differences between educators who appreciate the presence of the separation anxiety to a quarter of the children population, and the parents who approximate the presence of the separation anxiety to half of the children, but performing an average between the two evaluations and estimating in a qualitative way the educators and parents evaluations we consider that the separation anxiety is present to about a third from the little group children.

The second hypothesis

We supposed that the separation anxiety is greatter to the children who have never be separated from their parents, until the entrance in the kindergarten.

To verify this hypothesis we have resort to the interpretation of the parents answers to the questions 6, 7 and 8 and to the question 3 from the educators questionnaire.

More than half of the parents state that they never separed from their child before his entrance in the kindergarten.

This could be one of the reason for which a so great number of children manifest separation anxiety. Never being separated from their parents, between the previous three years, the children consider that there are no activities wich can be done without them, or consider that there are no location in which they can be without their parents.The moment when they must separate from the parents becomes a dramatic one, because the fear to remain alone and the anxiety related to what could happened to them or to their parents is very great. This anxiety is as great as they were less separated from the parents in the previous three years.

Anyhow, the separation from the parents, previous to the kindergarten, even it was done for a short period of time, habituated the children with the idea that they can remain alone without their parents or can make some activities alone, without anything wrong to them or to their parents happened. In this way the child is more prepared to manage with the separation situation from the parents in the moment in which he must remain in the kindergarten for a part of the day.

Table 1.The degree of integration in the collective

	Answers	**Number**
a	they do not integrate	5
b	they integrated but they do not communicate with the colleagues	4
c	they integrated but they do not play with their colleagues	6

From the children with separation anxiety, after the educators opinion, 4 couldn't integrate themselves in the collective. They do not arrive to establish collegial relations with the other children, don't want to discuss with the educator and, generally, are isolated and maintain the distance from the other children. A number of 4 children can be considered as being integrated but they do not discuss with their colleaguse. The integration was considered fonction to the participation to the daily activities. These children participate to the activities, but they do not want to communicate with their colleagues in any way; they don't answer to their questions and they do not initiate any communication. Finnally, a number of 6 children are considered integrated, but they don't play with their colleagues.These participate to the daily activities but they want to do all the things alone, without cooperation ar collaboration with the others and they do not accept the team work.

It is a consequence of what we mentioned previousely regarding the parents attitudes. If the parents do not create conditions for the children to be independant, to confront themselves fonction of their own powers to the separation and other difficulties, than at the begining of the kindergarten will arrive problems of integration and accommodation.

The results obtained by us through the answers to the questionnaires, as well as their quantitative and qualitative processing allow us to affirm that **the second hypothesis**, made by us to the begining of the research, **was validated in practice**. The separation anxiety is gratter to the children who never were separated from their parents and this fact has consequences on the accommodation degree of the children to the kindergarten life.

The third hypothesis

We supposed that the separation anxiety is greatter to the children that are unic child to their parents.

To verify this hypothesis we analysed in a quantitative and qualitative way the answers obtained to the following questions: 4 and 5 from the parents questionnaire; 3, 4 and 5 from the children questionnaire and 4 and 5 from the educators questionnaire.

The children answers analysis pointed out for us that there where does not exist brothers or sisters, the child is dependent from the adult not only to eat and sleep but also to play or to go to a walk. The family adults become the only anchors for the child and when they are not present, the child anxiety grows because he doesn't understand their absence and why he must accept some stragers in their place. They cant understand what could happen in the presence of this strangers or of the outside children. We can state that the separation anxiety is more powerfull to the unic children.

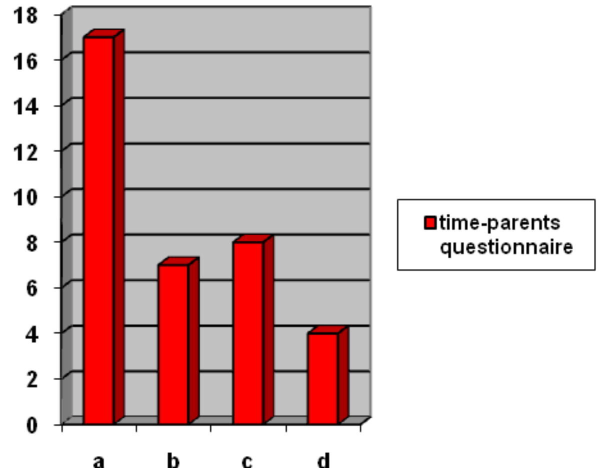

Figure 2. The person with which the child spend his time at home

Where: a = with the mother; b = with the father; c = with his grandparents;
d = with the baby-sitter.

It is normal if we think that in the contemporary society the woman is that who is responsible for the growth and education of the children. She shares her time between the husband and the children, between the wife and the mother duties. All these in the idea that the mother doesn't work. The actual legislation permits to the mothers to stay at home with the children till the reaching of the age of 2 years old. In all this period the father is absent from home most of the day, because he works. That is why the mother is the main character whom the child sees from his wake-up till he is asleep, with her he eats, he plays, he goes for a walk and it is she who answers to all his questions.

It remains to analysis the last two questions from the educators questionnaire, which are regarding most the capacity of accommodation and integration of the children with separation anxiety.

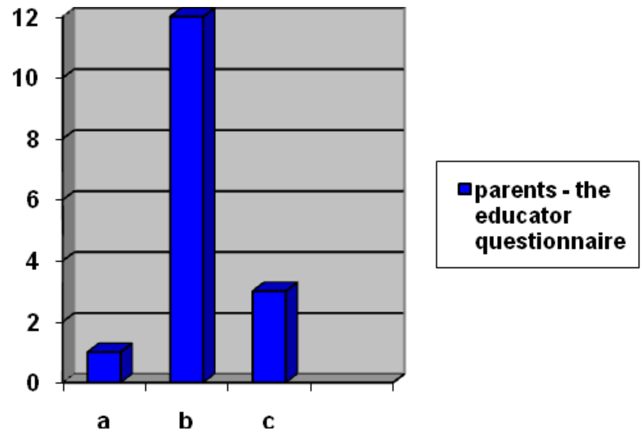

Figure 3. The evaluation of the parents by the educators (educators questionnaire)

In the educators evaluation, only one parent appear as being indifferent towards his child. This comes to take the child from the kindergarten, but he doesn't ask anything about the daily activities, the way of behaving of the child, or the problems that the child has. Moreover, when the educators tried to speak to him, their observations were took as personal and insulting criticism made to his parent qualities.

Twelve (12) from the parents are evaluated as being overprotective. This overprotection appears as a result of the fact that we have here a unic child, without brothers or sisters. Due to this fact, the preoccupations, the attentions and the worries of the parents are centred on a single direction, becaming exagerated, inspite to be shared in two or three directions. Without being conscious of this the overprotective parents determine a greatter separation anxiety to their child, in comparison with the parents who have more than one child.

Three from the parents (3) are evaluated by the educators as being too occupied by their profession to have time for their children. These are parents whom in the analysis of the previous answers made by us, let their children to the care of babysitters, who must supply them and undertake all their educational fonctions.

In conclusion, we can assert that **the third hypothesis** made by us **was validated in practice**. The child who is a unic child presents a greatter separation anxiety due to the fact that they are overprotected by their parents.

Final conclusions

The collection of data and their statisc processing, as well as their qualitative interpretation lead us to the following assertions:

- *the first hypothesis was validated in practice*. There are differences between educators (who estimate the presence of separation anxiety to a quarter of the children) and the parents (who estimate the presence of separation anxiety to half of the children). Making an average between these two estimations and taking into account the qualitative evaluations of the educators and parents, we consider that the separation anxiety is present to about a third from the little group kindergarten children.

- the second hypothesis enounced by us to the begining of the research is validated in practice. The separation anxiety is greatter to the chhildren who never been separated from their parents and this fact has big consequences on the accommodation degree of the child to the kindergarten life.

- the third hypothesis enounced by us was also validated in practice. The children who are unic chlidren to their parents have a greatter separation anxiety due to the fact that they are overprotected by their parents.

The separation anxiety, one of the most frequent emotional problems met to adolscents and children, can be treated successfully by cognitive-behavioral intervention methods and by the collaboration between the psychotherapist, children and parents.

Some of the essential principles in the intervention on the separation anxiety are the followings:

1. The parents play a crucial role in the separation anxiety treatment, the practitionner experience suggesting that the degree of motivation, envolvement and disponibility of them is the condition for a successfull intervention.

2. The gold rule in the separation anxiety treatment, as in the case of other anxiety forms, is the gradual exposure to the feared situations, after the previousely settling down of a hierarchy of them. The principles of an efficient exposure are the duration (the child must remain in the feared situation untill he feels a diminution of the anxiety intensity) and the frequency (to reduce the anxiety intensity, the exposure must be made daily, for the begining).

3. At the begining, the child will feel badly (the exposure to the feared situation – the separation – will start an intensification of the emotional discomfort and of the physical sensations), and latter he will feel better (the symptoms diminished in intensity). It is very important both to the child and to the parents to know this thing for being able to understand the therapeutic approach and the emotional and behavioral manifestation dynamic.

4. The structured and predictive environment, created by the daily routine of the child (meal, hygiene, sleep, the games) increases the control degree of the child on the current activities and on the eveniments from his life, reducing the intensity of the uncertainty and incertitude.

5. The child emotions must be validated („I understand that it is difficult for you to...”), and in this way we transmit to the child that he is understood. This method offers in another hand to the child an alternative to manage with the anxiety: insteed of rolling on foot and the shouts, he can verbally expresses what he feels. It is very important to support all the time the child in his attempt to defeat his fear and anxiety.

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AMAZING ARCHIMEDES NUMBER 22/7

Mirko Dejic
University of Belgrade
Teacher-Training Faculty

Aleksandra Mihajlovic
University of Kragujevac
Faculty of Pedagogical Sciences
mirko.dejic@uf.bg.ac.rs

Abstract: *The first mathematician in Ancient Greece who did not understand mathematics in an idealized way, but was occupied with counting and applications (logistics) was Archimedes. The aim of our work is to point out to some elements of Archimedes' work in Numerical Mathematics. A special attention should be paid to the work "On Measuring a Circle", where Archimedes got the optimal approximation of the number π and square roots. It can be confirmed that these approximations are optimal in the theory on continued fractions, which was created many centuries after Archimedes. Didn't Archimedes know about continued fractions?*

Key-words: *Archimedes, continued fractions, number 22/7, number π, the best approximation*

1. Introduction

Mathematics has had exclusively practical character until the appearance of Greek science (VII century B.C.), and calculations were approximate. The first approximation a man has made at the moment when he knew about 1,2, and all the rest of the numbers he replaced with the word "plenty". In early mathematics there were no proofs and generalization.

Greek mathematicians, starting with Thales (about 625-548.B.C.) began to prove the statements and in that way raised mathematics to the level of a science.

In the beginning, preserving the purity of mathematics, the Greeks detested any of its applications for practical purpose. For them, the application was unworthy of mathematics, whose aim was to bring a man closer to deity. Approximate numerical values computing was pejoratively called "logistics" by the Greeks. According to them, the task of science was not to count the values, but to deal with the relations of volumens, surfaces and segments.

Archimedes (about 287-212, B.C.) is considered to be one of the first scientists who broke off the conception of mathematics as an idealised science which should be separated from practice.

Archimedes does not have greater contributions in the field of numerical mathematics in most of his work. But, in one of his later works "On Measuring a Circle", Archimedes not only gave a contribution to numerical mathematics, but entered the history of numerical mathematics as the first scientist who evaluated an error and the way of determining the level of correctness of obtained result. For the first time in history Archimedes stated a task on measuring a circumference of a circle and determining the approhimate value of relation of a circumference and diameter. No doubt Archimedes, by intuition of a genial mathematician, felt and comprehended the special nature of a relation of a circumference and diameter of a circle. As approximate value for π Archimedes used 22/7. The aim of this study was to examine the secret of this number.

2. Archimede's Number 22/7

A basic theorem in the work "On Measuring a Circle" is as follows [9]:

The relation of any circle to its diameter is smaller than $3\frac{1}{7}$ *and bigger than* $3\frac{10}{71}$. *In other words, it applies*:

$$3\frac{10}{71} < \pi < 3\frac{1}{7}\cdot$$

Archimedes came to this result by gradual inscription and circumscription of regular polygons in a circle, drawing out the circumference of a circle in that way. He starts with a triangle and stops at a 96-angle.Archimedes does not inform us where he takes the quoted limits for the number π from. He in a series of calculations where he uses square roots of many numbers, about which we do not know how he counts them, gets that the relation of a circumfered 96-angle to the diameter is:

$$< 14688 : 4673\frac{1}{2} < 3 + \frac{667\frac{1}{2}}{4673\frac{1}{2}} < 3\frac{1}{7}$$

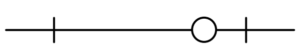
Similarly, the relation of a 96-angle inscribed in a circle, to the diameter is:

$$> (66 \cdot 96) : 2017\frac{1}{4} > 6336 : 2017\frac{1}{4} > 3\frac{10}{71}\cdot$$

What we would like to present as a curiousity of the obtained result and genial Archimedes' intuition is the fact that the approximate value of $\frac{22}{7}$ present a better approhimation of the number π that all the fractions with a denominator smaller or equal to 7. Similarly, for $\sqrt{3}$ Archimedes in his work takes the number $\frac{265}{153}$, and that is a better approximation than all the fractions with a denominator smaller or equal to 153.

Although Archimedes does not inform us about the ways of getting the quoted approximations, with the help of Computational Mathematics we could state some hypotheses.

What in general does it mean to approximate some real number α with a fraction whose denominator is q? That means that from all the fractions with a denominator q it should be chosen the one which is the closest to the number α i.e., it should be found that kind of a fraction $\frac{p}{q}$ so the value $\left|\alpha - \frac{p}{q}\right|$ was the smallest. In the case the relation: $\frac{p-1}{q} < \alpha < \frac{p}{q}$ should be valid. The case when α coincides with one of these numbers is not interesting. We take for α that $\frac{p-1}{q}, \frac{p}{q}$, which is closer to α. Let it be $\frac{p}{q}$. Than the absolute error is $|\Delta| = \left|\alpha - \frac{p}{q}\right|$. It can be clearly seen in the picture that $|\Delta| \leq \frac{1}{2q}$ is valid.



$\frac{p-1}{q}$ α $\frac{p}{q}$

Let

$$\lambda = \frac{\text{the upper limit of absolute error}}{\text{absolute error}}, \text{ i.e. } \lambda = \frac{\frac{1}{2q}}{|\Delta|}.$$

That number shows how many times the real absolute error is smaller than absolutely possible one. It could be seen that the value λ increases with the increase of correctness, i.e. with the decrease of absolute error.

Let us observe the following Table 1. Let number π be approximated by the fractions whose denominators are one after the other, numbers 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,89,10.

Table 1. Approximate value for π

q	Approximate value for π	The upper limit of absolute error	$\lvert\Delta\rvert$	λ
1	$\frac{3}{1}$	$\frac{1}{2}=0.5000$	0.1416	3.5
2	$\frac{6}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}=0.2500$	0.1416	1.8
3	$\frac{9}{3}$	$\frac{1}{6}=0.1667$	0.1416	1.2
4	$\frac{13}{4}$	$\frac{1}{8}=0.1250$	0.1084	1.2
5	$\frac{16}{5}$	$\frac{1}{10}=0.1000$	0.0584	1.7
6	$\frac{19}{6}$	$\frac{1}{12}=0.0833$	0.0251	3.3
7	$\frac{22}{7}$	$\frac{1}{14}=0.0714$	0.0013	54.9
8	$\frac{25}{8}$	$\frac{1}{16}=0.0625$	0.0166	3.8
9	$\frac{28}{9}$	$\frac{1}{18}=0.0556$	0.0305	1.8
10	$\frac{31}{10}$	$\frac{1}{20}=0.0500$	0.0416	1.2

We can see from the Table 1 that the fraction with the denominator 7 gives the smallest absolute error, 0.0013. If we would search for a denominator in advance, so that the absolute error does not exceed 0.0013, we should get

$$\frac{1}{2q}\leq 0.0013,\ \ q\geq 385.$$

Archimedes has achieved, as it can be seen from the table, the corectness of 0.0013 for a great deal smaller denominator than 385, what is more appropriate for usage.

From the above we can conclude that Archimedes could not reach his result by chance in any case. How he felt a premonition of a denominator 7 in the fraction $\frac{22}{7}$ present a secret for us. A possible way to the quoted number is through continued fractions.

3. Continued fractions give the solution of the secret of number $\frac{22}{7}$

The expression

$$a_0+\cfrac{1}{a_1+\cfrac{1}{a_2+\cfrac{}{\ddots+a_{s-1}+\cfrac{1}{a_s}}}}$$

where $a_1, a_2, ..., a_s$ are natural numbers, and a_0 is an integer, is called a continued or continuous fraction. L. Euler (Leonard Euler, 1707-1783) proved that an arbitrary rational number can be rationalized into a final, and an irrational into an endless continued fraction [4].

For further operation we can define the fraction $\frac{p_n}{q_n}$ in the following way:

$$\frac{p_n}{q_n} = a_0 + \cfrac{1}{a_1 + \cfrac{1}{a_2 + \cfrac{1}{a_3 + \ddots + a_{n-1} + a_n}}}.$$

Then the following theorem [1]:

If $\frac{p_n}{q_n}$ $(n \geq 1)$ is a fraction obtained from the continual development of a certain real number α in the above defined way, and $\frac{p}{q}$ is an arbitrary fraction, where $q \leq q_n$, then it is

$$\left|\alpha - \frac{p_n}{q_n}\right| < \left|\alpha - \frac{p}{q}\right|.$$

This means that the fraction $\frac{p_n}{q_n}$ is a better approximation of the number α than all the fractions whose denominator is smaller or equal to q_n,and it can be improved only by increasing a denominator. It should be noted that a reverse theorem does not apply, i.e. it exists a fraction which is not obtained from a continued development of number α and that fraction could be a better approximation of number α than all the fractions with a denominator smaller than its. We should also have in mind that the theorem does not assert that the fraction $\frac{p_n}{q_n}$ is the best approximation in general.

Let us observe the continued development of the number π:

$$\pi = 3 + \cfrac{1}{7 + \cfrac{1}{15 + \cfrac{1}{1 + \cfrac{1}{292 + \ddots}}}}$$

It follows that: $\frac{p_0}{q_0} = \frac{3}{1}$, $\frac{p_1}{q_1} = 3 + \frac{1}{7} = \frac{22}{7}$, $\frac{p_2}{q_2} = 3 + \cfrac{1}{7 + \cfrac{1}{15}} = \frac{333}{106}$, $\frac{p_3}{q_3} = \frac{355}{113}$, ...

We can see that $\frac{p_1}{q_1} = \frac{22}{7}$. So, according to the quoted theorem, Archimedes' number $\frac{22}{7}$ is the best approximation of the number π of all the fractions with a denominator smaller or equal to 7.

In a way, the secret of the number $\frac{22}{7}$ is solved. We can reach it with the help of continued fractions. Did Archimedes work in this way, too? This still remains the secret. However, there are some clues that he might have also used continued fractions [4]:

1. Archimedes did not know about decimal numbers, and the only way of reaching $\frac{22}{7}$ was through continued fractions;

2. The Egyptians used fractions a lot earlier than Archimedes, presenting them by means of the sum of fractions and numerator 1;

3. In the seventh book of The Elements, Euclid presents his algorhythm for finding a mutual divisior of numbers *a* and *b*, that directly leads to disassembling of fraction $\frac{a}{b}$ into a continued fraction.

The following approximation of the number π by means of continued fractions is $\frac{p_2}{q_2} = \frac{333}{106}$. This may clarify the fact why Archimedes was stopped by a 96-angle. The number $\frac{333}{106}$ is far more complex for usage than number $\frac{22}{7}$.

Let us mention one more fact which convinces us that Archimedes did not reach his results by chance. At determining the relation between a circumference of a circle and its diameter, Archimedes counted square roots of numbers, as well, and did not quote how he had obtained the values. So, he determinates the limits for $\sqrt{3}$ for example:

$\frac{265}{153} < \sqrt{3} < \frac{1351}{780}$.

In the continued fraction of number $\sqrt{3}$ it is obtained: $\frac{p_{12}}{q_{12}} = \frac{1351}{780}$. Therefore, Archimedes chose of all the fractions with denominator 780 just the one that approximated $\sqrt{3}$ best.

4. Conclusion

We have seen how we get so easily to the approximation of real numbers by fractions which are optimal in relation to all other fractions with smaller or equal denominator with the help of continued fractions. Althought continued fractions have important part in numerical mathematics, they are rerely used due to their bulk size. Huygens (Christian Huygens, 1629-1695) made the theory of them. The very idea of disassembly of real numbers through continued fractions was used in the XI century. Euler was the first to introduce the usage of the term continued fractions.

As we have seen, Archimedes, a genius in everything he was occupied with, through one “little thing”-counting number π and square roots, has given genial results whose value we realize through a modern apparatus of Numerical Mathematics. The honorary place in the historical development of Numerical Mathematics belongs to him, because he has found the methods of obtaining numerical results and in that way made dealing with this kind of mathematics (logistics) official and public, and was the first to determine the accuracy of obtained results.

Finally, let's look at the importance of the number 22/7 in school education. Due to the lack of knowledge of irrational numbers, primary school students usually use the number 22/7 instead of pi. We think that it would be pedagogically very useful for students to use computers to gain knowledge about number 22/7. Then the students would know what is the meaning of pi, error, and so the best approximation. Using computer animation students will be able to understand the method of exhaustion circle by poligons, just like how Archimedes did [10], [11], [12].

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NEW FROM TRADITIONAL – INNOVATING FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE OF TRADITIONAL TEACHING

Aleksandra Gojkov Rajić
Jelena Prtljaga
Učiteljski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu
Visoka škola strukovnih studija za vaspitače „Mihailo Palov“, Vršac
vsvaskatedrasj@hemo.net

Abstract: *Consideration of the foreign language competences of students who have finished secondary school has shown that, in spite of new and, according to the statements of variety of authors, more efficient methods and materials, has shown that there is no expected improvement in the field; instead, that we could even talk about certain deterioration. Such a standpoint has lead to the question referring to the cause of the mentioned condition; the text is an attempt at providing an answer to the raised question. In this sense, new curricula, methods and learning materials have been considered, leading to a conclusion that there has been a shift towards functionalism and practicism, narrowing the notion of language and boiling it down to its pragmatic layer. Starting from the generally accepted fact that foreign language is best learnt in its natural setting, the authoresses of the paper advocate for bringing more extensive texts back to foreign language teaching as a possibility of creating a natural environment, to an extent similar to the foreign language speaking setting, without expensive travels and disturbing other obligations, through immersing into the world of works written in the language which is learnt.*

Key words: *foreign language teaching, text, innovation*

It is beyond dispute that any education leads to development and progress, as well as that education is an absolute precondition for advancement in any field; however, those dealing with the sphere of education more seriously and reflecting on the issue more deeply make efforts to always again and from new angles consider their own approaches, test them and search for those better and more efficient. When focusing on education leading to development, foreign language has a special place in contemporary conditions, since it is one of the prerequisites of both following and being in step with the events on the world scene and presenting one's own achievements to the rest of the world. In this sense a modern man is expected to have mastered at least one of the world languages, and, according to the modern trends permeating school curricula, even two foreign languages. As a consequence, foreign language teaching methodology is relentlessly searching for new high quality and more efficient methods, procedures, materials and ways of teaching and learning it.

Contemporary expansion of globalization we have all been witnessing has brought to a great "demand" for foreign language competence, which, again, resulted in tireless search for more modern, and even more importantly, more efficient methods of its acquisition. The mentioned broad discussion on the subject has led to the "flood" of modern methods, courses and materials, which supposedly, according to their authors, certainly and as quickly as possible lead to full acquisition of the desired language. Nevertheless, an attempt to consider language competences of graduated pupils from a neutral perspective has revealed a different picture. A foreign language teacher working at a faculty or a college is in a position to consider and evaluate foreign language knowledge and skills of newly enrolled students each year. Having in mind that university students are in question, i.e. we are talking about a casual selected sample of the most educated layer of young population, a conclusion can be made that the rest of population, apart from the students who have chosen to enrol at studies at philological group, do not have higher level of knowledge in the field. The monitoring of mentioned evaluations have for many years now shown that not only that the announced improvement of competences has not been achieved, but that we could also in a sense talk about a step back.

Such a statement has naturally resulted in raising a question referring to the cause of such condition. In this sense, textbooks, materials and foreign language learning and teaching curricula have been considered and it seems that what has become increasingly evident is the shift to functionalism and practicism. The curricula proscribe that students should master communication in particular situations, like, for example, in a restaurant, post office, finding one's way on the street, in situation typical for holidays, etc, which is then reflected on textbooks consisting of texts with such titles covering these contents, actually representing the models of possible behaviours in given situations while using certain formulations in the language which is being learnt.

Reflections on possible causes of such a shift get us back to previous century, i.e. the period when teaching methodology which actually brought to the present stated had started to appear. What should be certainly mentioned is the Vietnam war when American teachers involved in foreign language teaching methodology had the task to equip within the shortest possible deadline with such competences which will enable them find their place and get involved in basic communication in a foreign language; subsequently a whole new movement started to develop within foreign language teaching methodology surviving even nowadays. The idea permeating the movement is in itself rather good, but such an approach is not satisfactory enough when the intention is to really master a foreign language. It should be born in mind that the movement has arisen out of the courses whose aim was to enable their participants, who otherwise lived with their fellows in their own country communicating in their own mother tongue, were supposed to get trained for managing and getting involved in basic communication in the country they would spend a limited period of time, rather than to actually master the language in question.

The introduction of the mentioned method in foreign language teaching has led to excessive narrowing of the notion of language and reducing it to its pragmatic level, i.e. boiling it down to everyday communication; as a consequence, students are often instructed to acquire the models covered by the textbooks, imitating short dialogues and participating in role-play activities. To be honest, learning in such a way seemingly gives fast results, but it unfortunately does not bring us to acquisition of real language knowledge, since language is indisputably much broader than the formulas offered for imitation. What is easy to notice as one of the main negative consequences of such an approach is the lack of forming of systematic language knowledge, both in the field of grammar and in the field of vocabulary, since it often remains at the surface level and leads to acquisition of the offered forms without deeper dealing with their essence; thus, it might be that numerous possibilities which certainly exist in such tests and exercises actually remain unused, which is especially problematic with older students. Furthermore, there is another problem appearing and it refers to the authenticity of the text foreign language teaching is based on, often neglecting the level of content and serving solely as means of transfer of language forms which are supposed to be learnt and repeated (Jung, 2001).

In this regard and in accordance to modern pedagogic theories insistence was introduced on active use of acquired language knowledge which sometimes became exaggerated and distorted into its opposite. Even though it is a generally accepted fact that passive knowledge is much easier and faster acquired and that it subsequently leads to transformation of this potential stock into active knowledge in actual use, foreign language teaching often insists too much on immediate use of new words and constructions, not leaving enough space and time for the mentioned transformation process from passive to active to occur. For this idea of instant foreign language knowledge to be realized, it is necessary for textbooks to offer as simple texts and forms as possible, so that the students could be able to instantly actively use them, which, even in this case, is not always successful. In such a way students' contact with longer texts in a foreign language they are learning is set back at the very outset, thus preventing creation of a broader base of passive knowledge. The mentioned approach demanding the equality of "input and output" in foreign language teaching and learning has in the meaning time become so disseminated and broadly accepted that in contemporary literature on foreign language teaching it is considered traditional (Jung, 2001); as its alternative, new ideas and suggestions have appeared grounded on the mentioned fact that the receptive effect in the process of foreign language learning is greater and that it will always be so.

Ulrich Gibitz was occupied by a similar problem (Gibitz, http://www.lernen-wollen.de, p. 5) and has, in his paper titled *Handlungsorientierte und authentische Textarbeit im Fremdsprachenunterricht* emphasized that the focus of the current rule within foreign language teaching according to which all four language skills should be developed in parallel and simultaneously should, in certain situations when foreign language is learnt abroad, i.e. not in foreign language speaking country, be shifted to more pronounced development of some language skills which will certainly find their application, probably at the expense of others, which may not be used at all. A statement supporting such a thesis offered by the mentioned author is the fact that in the case of 99 percent of students who learn a foreign language in distant countries, longer stay in the country where the language being leant is spoken as a mother tongue, is nothing more but an illusion, while the very assumption that foreign language learners will actually spend time in such a country permeates the teaching aim referring to equal development of all four language skills. In spite of the fact that such an emphasis on some language skills while at the same time neglecting others is, from the standpoint of foreign language teaching unacceptable, it actually supports the previously stated reflections on giving more space to, so to say, passive skills, especially in the initial phase of learning, in order to, according to subsequent development and advancement, reach a balance between all language skills and competences.

One more issue which is in the grounds of the mentioned development probably are population migrations. In the second half of the 20th century, the so called developed countries faced the challenge referring to large numbers of immigrants, who actually could not speak the language spoken in the country they migrated to; thus, these countries were supposed to train their new citizens to manage and live in new settings, i.e. they were supposed to integrate them in the given societies. As a consequence, a whole range of materials and textbooks appeared intended for foreigners living in a country, i.e. in a certain speaking area; these very textbooks have then, even though they were inadequate, simply introduced into school teaching of a the given language as a foreign one in other countries, as well.

Another problem refers to the fact that two notions have often been equated: learning a foreign language within teaching in another country and learning a language in the language speaking environment, i.e. in the setting where the language which is being learnt is actually spoken by majority of population. In the meaning time, two terms have been adopted in the literature denoting these two essentially different processes of foreign language learning. So foreign language learning refers to learning a language in another country, while when learning a language in its natural environment is in question, we are talking about foreign language acquisition; the same term refers to acquisition of another language in the case of children born in a given country who, due to the origins of their parents, acquire another language as their mother tongue, but having in mind the situation they are living in, they actually become bilingual speakers of two languages. According to the above, it is clear that these are completely different processes but these terms have still been ambiguously used so that it is not a rare case that the term foreign language acquisition is used for learning in a natural setting and vice versa.

Having in mind the circumstances in which the two processes take place, it is clear that the textbooks designed for acquisition of a language in the setting where the language is actually spoken as a mother tongue by the majority are not adequate for learning in another country, i.e. abroad. Two problems arise when such textbooks and materials are used abroad. Having in mind that they are designed for work with learners in the speaking area of the language, i.e. with people who have found themselves in a new and unfamiliar setting, the textbook aims to provide such learners with the language means to cope with in such a setting. The choice of texts included in these textbooks is also oriented to the same aim, so that what can mostly be found in them refers often to various forms of ads, parts of daily newspaper articles, news, as well as possible practical solutions of administrative problems immigrants might face. Another significant thematic field refers to one's introduction to other people and a description of the country a course participant comes from. It is clear that such topics are not only interesting, but also necessary for newcomers in the language region, but it is also obvious that they are not the best choice for those who learn the language as a foreign language in another country, especially in teaching environment. This is especially true for beginner's levels of foreign language learning, when within the very first lessons the learners face the structures which are grammatically much more demanding that those they are at the given moment able to acquire. For example, in the case of German language teaching, they should at the very beginning learn not only the names of various states, but also the gender of the states in question, so that they could use them with a proper article, or preposition as well as a proper article form in the case the name of the state is in a case; furthermore, they face the names of the representatives of these nations in male and female gender form, followed by their professions which are also in male and female gender form, along with the whole range of terms necessary for describing nothing more but basic personal details. The exercises supporting the texts and serving to reinforce the learnt material, i.e. new words and expressions, are also not adequate for work in rather homogenous group, and this is most often the case in teaching a foreign language out of the speaking region of a given language. Faced with the questions like, for example, *Where are you from? What is your nationality? Where do you live? What do you do for a living?,* most, if not all the students offer the same answer, which leads to boredom and does not bring the class to the desired conversation development, which could be achieved in heterogeneous groups. What should be mentioned here is another difference between the groups that learn a language in the speaking region and those who learn a foreign language in their own country. Those who have found themselves in an unfamiliar language region, faced with the need to manage and solve numerous life problems, like registration in local authorities, finding a place to live, finding a job, opening a bank account, etc, show much greater desire to acquire the terms necessary for them in their everyday lives. On the other hand, learners who learn a foreign language in their own countries rarely want to deal with these problem issues and see them as boring and difficult. Even though they often fulfil the need for authenticity (Edelhoff, 1985) these texts are not appropriate for teaching a foreign language beyond the space it is spoken in as a mother tongue by majority of population.

A conclusion could be reached accordingly that what is adequate for learning a language within its speaking area is not appropriate for learning the language in a different context, i.e. in the speaking area of another language. Even though in both cases teaching is in question, the circumstances in which teaching are realized differ significantly, both in the view of student groups and in the view of their interests and needs, not to mention the degree they are exposed to the language they learn and intensity of their contact with it. In the speaking area of the language which is being learnt learners are constantly exposed to the language and they are in intense contact with it, regardless of whether they want it or not. The language is always present, permeating their lives even though they are often not aware of it: through various displayed signs, announcements and ads, or through the conversation they have accidentally heard only passing by other people talking in the street or in another setting, through a song played nearby, through other medial contents... This is, of course, an explanation and an answer to the question how it is possible for learners who learn the language in the given language speaking area with the same number of classes at weekly level to learn the language in question much faster, i.e. to master it through the same fond of classes they used to have back home, while it was not the case while they were learning the language in their own countries.

In spite of the fact that the mentioned statement according to which a foreign language is learnt best and fastest in its speaking area is generally accepted and acknowledged, the implications arising out of it are nevertheless often neglected. It seems that insufficient attention is paid to the causes leading to such a context, as well as the possibilities to, in a way artificially, create similar circumstances for learning a foreign language out of its natural speaking area, which would give similar results.

Since the above mentioned reflections have led to a conclusion that in order to ensure better and more efficient foreign language learning its influence on students should be increased, i.e. they should be in more intensified and frequent contact with it, possibilities of making the idea true have been searched for. Having in mind that it is completely clear that such a contact with a language learnt out of its speaking is impossible to provide naturally, we have tried to find the options to create some forms of virtual reality in which contacts with the language would be much greater and more intensified. In this sense modern technology has opened a number of various possibilities, but imposes itself as a rather simple and applicable solution is reading longer texts in a given foreign language. Immersing into the world of a literary work, a reader at the same time dives into the world of the language he/she learns; thus like with the help of a science fiction film device, a reader moves through space and time, not crossing the threshold of one’s home. In such a way the mentioned problem of impossibility of a great number of learners to go to or even to spend some longer periods of time in the speaking area of the language they learn is overcome, opening up broad and versatile possibilities for acquisition of a large base of passive knowledge, especially in the field of vocabulary and stylistics. As it has already been pointed out, for many language learners, the ideal way to increase their understanding of verbal, i.e. nonverbal aspects of communication in the country within which that language is spoken - a visit or an extended stay - is simply not possible. For such learners, literary works, such as novels, plays, short stories, etc. open up possibilities to have a glimpse and understand how communication takes place in that country. Even though the world of a novel, play, or short story is an imaginary one, it provides a full and colorful setting in which characters from many social backgrounds can be described. A reader can discover the way the characters in such literary works see the world outside (i.e. their thoughts, feelings, customs, traditions, possessions; what they buy, believe in, fear, enjoy; how they speak and behave in different settings). This colorfully created world can quickly help a foreign learner to feel for the codes and preoccupations that shape a real society through visual literacy of semiotics. Literature is perhaps best regarded as a complement to other materials used to develop the foreign learner's understanding into the country whose language is being learned.

The above consideration of modern materials for foreign language learning and its comparison with those which used to be used in foreign language classrooms has shown that reading of longer texts, often chosen from the literature of the people whose language is being learnt has completely disappeared from foreign language teaching. Bringing this statement in relation to the noticed decrease of foreign language knowledge level obvious in the case of graduated secondary school students, in spite of all the greater possibilities of modern age, has led us to a conclusion that both traditional and modern models of foreign language teaching should be reconsidered, keeping what has turned out to be good and efficient in both and rejecting what hasn't. In this sense it is suggested to introduce processing of longer texts again in foreign language teaching, as a form of compulsory reading which once existed.

There are other authors who have also pointed to the importance of reading in foreign language teaching (Kost, C. http://www.forumdeutsch.ca) and who have noticed the same shortcoming. Negligence of reading is especially pronounced at beginner level, since many consider that beginners do not have sufficient language knowledge in order to read. Another often stated reason is the already mentioned foreign language teaching focus on speaking, i.e. oral communication skills, which was for a long time neglected in the past, so that, in the attempt to establish a balance, as well as the consequences of learning-centred teaching emphasizing learner's activity in contemporary didactics in general, we have gone to the other extreme. Like the former one, such a disharmony is not good, and should be made better and improved.

Just like other activities, dealing with a text also needs a good preparation suggesting (Kost, C. http://www.forumdeutsch.ca) differentiation between text contents and text structure. In the case of text structure, i.e. scheme, it can be concluded according to its format, appearance, introductory line and the presence or absence of pictures what kind or what genre of text it is, i.e. whether it is a newspaper article, a novel, a fairy tail or a scientific paper. In order to establish text contents the titles are of help as well as the pictures students use to make assumptions, subsequently looking for general or specific information according to which previously made hypotheses are either confirmed or rejected. In such a ways, students are trained to use a variety of possibilities when faced with an unfamiliar text (which, of course, includes new, i.e. unknown words) to decipher its meaning. What could also be used in the same purpose is the activation of prior knowledge on the subject, along with the pictures which are given by the text. Contemporary technical means have created what used to be impossible opportunities for preparation of multi-medial materials driving different intelligence factors thus contributing to better contextualization of text, its easier and better understanding and faster acquisition of language material appearing in the text.

Even though it may at first sight seem less important, dealing with students' prior knowledge on the subject of the text is rather important, since through it both the teacher and the learner become aware of the individual differences, the so called patterns conditioned by personal experience, education, age and many other factors. Prior knowledge can to great extent facilitate (or, make it more difficult, if there is none prior knowledge) understanding of a text and can guide the reader in certain direction, as it has been outlined by a research (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert & Goetz, 1977) indisputably showing that a group of female music students and a group of male sport students interpreted a text they were reading in two completely different ways. Such a finding is in close connection with the theory of reception that was established in literature science in 1970s, according to which each reader experiences a literary work in his/her own way, so that a question is raised whether it is possible to talk about a piece of literary work or only about its reception, i.e. the way its readers interpreted and experienced it (Gojkov-Rajić, 2008).

Through reading longer texts learners not only get into a closer and longer contact with the language they learn, but they also get additional knowledge, i.e. information on writing, which also contributes to language learning. Mastering these texts learners also practice reading strategies, making it possible for them to determine content and grammatical meaning according to the context and to understand basic meaning of the text, without checking every unfamiliar word in a dictionary, acquiring at the same time a positive feeling of being dedicated to new texts in a foreign language. Having in mind that the acquisition of these strategies is necessary for foreign language learning, it is good to introduce them and practice them at the very outset of language learning. For this purpose the text in familiar language can be used enriched by new words http://www.referendar.de), whose possible meaning is discussed at class and which sentence by sentence with the help of the mentioned patterns and prior knowledge gradually become understandable for learners, even without introduction of their meanings. Apart from being interesting and fun for students, through such an activity they realize that a text written in a foreign language permeated by unfamiliar words can be understood according to the context, thus breaking fear from the unfamiliar and the unknown and creating in students a sense of security and trust in their own abilities.

A lot has already been discussed and written about text processing within foreign language teaching, since language teaching is, as it has been formulated at teacher forum (http://www.referendar.de), whether we like it or not, based on text, so that the professional circles have in the meaning time advocated for the standpoint that working on a text, which sometimes can be boring, should be "sugared" with adequate methods. In this sense the same source offers in detail elaborated example for work on a longer authentic text as early as during beginner's phase of learning a foreign language, supported by the description of all the steps to be taken, possibilities and suggestions for additional materials for this teaching unit. When talking about understanding of a longer text in foreign language, some authors (Edelhoff, 1985) mention three different types of understanding. Namely, global understanding refers to an attempt to cope with unfamiliar sounds and signs of a language that is being learnt, i.e. an attempt to understand what the text is about. Another type of understanding is called selective understanding during which certain meaningful units are understood. The highest level refers to detailed understanding when certain situations and texts are thoroughly mastered. Even though learners are not able to understand each and every word in longer texts in a foreign language, which is not the aim of the exercise anyway, they, gradually and in time, encountering the similar sometimes unfamiliar words in a variety of texts and in a number of different places in them, start to unintentionally acquire them, doing so with much understanding for different senses of their meanings, since they acquired knowledge naturally, just like children who learn their mother tongue in childhood.

The type of texts to be processed in teaching can be discussed from a number of viewpoints and aspects; however, those texts from the domain of literature written in the language which is learnt deserve significant attention and certain space should certainly be reserved for such texts, which used to be an inevitable part of foreign language teaching, and we could even go so far as to say that they were a base of foreign language teaching and its inevitable part, have nowadays, as noticed by other authors (Hofmann, 1980; Kraus, 2004.), almost completely disappeared from it. This is often justified by the fact that they are difficult and that students are not trained to cope with them; however such a situation in foreign language teaching and the place of literary texts in it could also be related to high demands imposed on literary texts, i.e. that they should go beyond the frames of interpretation, but that they should incite communication and, if possible, open controversial discussion (Hofmann, H., 1980). Although they may seem nice, such demands in majority of cases turn out to be a utopia and they rather result in counter effects, i.e. in complete elimination of not only literary but also other longer text and their disappearance from foreign language teaching. According to Collie and Slater (1990:3), there are four main reasons which lead a language teacher to use literature in the classroom. These are valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement. In addition to these four main reasons, universality, non-triviality, personal relevance, variety, interest, economy and suggestive power and ambiguity are some other factors requiring the use of literature as a powerful resource in the classroom context. As it has already been mentioned, such texts should certainly once again become a component of foreign language learning, while their contents, volume, difficulty level and the way of processing should be adjusted to the age and prior language knowledge of students. Having in mind that one of the basic didactic principles is that students should be motivated for further and advanced work, but at the same time high demands and difficult tasks should not be imposed on beginner groups and at younger age; as a consequence, a recommendation could be made to get to the satisfactory level of understanding of the text that has been read, so that according to gradual development and increased expectations we could get to the mentioned ideal.

When processing an authentic text from the field of literature written in the language that is being learnt focus should be on its aesthetic aspect (Jung, 2001), rather than, as it is often done, instrumentalize them through their transformation into material for vocabulary enrichment, grammar exercises or view them only as a document of culture, thus bringing into question the very definition of the notion of literature (Leskovec, 2010). Where else can be beauty of a language found but in its acknowledged literature pieces? If we want learners in classrooms to develop inclination and love for a language, we have to bring literature back in the classroom; since, as we all know it takes time to learn – but once love and curiosity for the subject matter is created, an endeavour of foreign language learning becomes easy, pleasant and rewarding. Having in mind the personal involvement it fosters in a reader, literature can actually be precious for language learning process. Once the student starts reading a literary text, he begins to identify with the characters and think about them. He or she is drawn into the text. Understanding the meanings of lexical items or phrases becomes less significant than pursuing the development of the story. The student becomes enthusiastic to find out what happens as events unfold, feeling close to characters and sharing their emotional responses. This can have beneficial effects upon the whole language learning process.

Even though they actually serve to broadening and improvement of all the mentioned skills and knowledge, practice and drill should not be in the forefront when literature is in question, but they should be dealt with in the same way they are processed in literature teaching in general. In other words, what should be done is create for a moment an illusion of mastery of a given language in order to enjoy a piece of art, neglecting for the time being the situation of learning a language and getting closer to being able to immerse in language and its beauty. Even though it may at first sight seem almost impossible, lonely attempts at getting reading and literary texts back into foreign language teaching have shown that it is possible that even at early age only if adequate tests are chosen, like, for example the fairytales of brothers Grim for German language learning (Gojkov-Rajić, 2010) or William Saroyan's works for English language learning and teaching, which are rather suitable for overcoming the fear of reading texts in original (Jakubovska, 1994.) which is present in majority of students. Thus, possibilities for older ages of students would be endless.

Apart from literary works, other types of texts can also be used in foreign language teaching, like, for example, newspaper articles, passages of professional-research literature, etc, depending on the age and competence level of students. When everyday news are in question, news covering the most significant events in the country the students live in can be used; in such a way familiarity of the situation and students' prior knowledge will certainly make understanding significantly easier.

It is beyond dispute that the modern technical means have opened up a whole range of possibilities for foreign language learning, according to a film, a video clip, a song TV or radio shows and other different audio and multimedia materials, which of course seem much more up to date, more attractive and entertaining to students; however, they seem to have a small shortcoming. In spite of all their mentioned features, they are often more demanding and acquire higher language competence; as such they are more appropriate for work at higher levels of foreign language learning, as opposed to a text which can be at student's disposal as long as the student needs and he/she can get back to it as many times as he/she wants or needs, when he/she wants to check an assumption or remember something from the text.

Finally, a conclusion could be reached that contemporary foreign language learning should certainly once again turn back to traditional teaching in order to consider all the advantages of reading longer texts, which would not be directly "used for" practicing of planned contents, but whose purpose would be to bring in a relaxed atmosphere the students back to the very essence of foreign language learning, its understanding and appreciation. In such a way, the presence of language learnt in a pleasant and relaxed way would be increased, thus facilitating learning, but also encouraging numerous other mentioned aspects.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF DIDACTIC GAMES IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

Alina Pădurean, Ph. D.
"AurelVlaicu"University, Arad
alinapadurean@yahoo.de

Abstract: *The process of teaching-learning-assessing has always been in the centre of methodologists` research. They have tried to improve the methods and techniques used for teaching foreign languages and to make the didactic process challenging and attractive. In the past few years, they have discovered that using interactive techniques, songs, games and other communication-based activities increases the chances of acquiring communicative competence in a foreign language. Didactic games are one of the most attractive techniques that teachers of English use with young learners, and not only, in the didactic process. They are interactive, communication based, challenging and most of all fun.*

Keywords: *teaching, interactive techniques, communication, didactic games*

Didactic games are essential in the educational process because they make the classes funnier and the students are motivated to actively participate in the activity and do not perceive their contribution as a must, a mandatory activity. The didactic game has aims, objectives and results and in order to play it, pupils have to perform different tasks and say different things. Therefore, they have a reason to communicate and don`t have to repeat things without thinking what they say. Through playing, pupils want to learn more and are more confident in their ability to use the language. Games stimulate and motivate pupils to achieve a new level in the mastery of a foreign language.

Using didactic games in the foreign language classroom from time to time will determine pupils to interact with each other and the teacher and to be an active participant in the instructional-educational process. They will also bring about a bound between teaching and having fun. Teachers have three main goals regarding the pupils` education:

- to help them think on their own
- to help them pass exams
- to help them trust themselves when speaking a foreign language, as well as when reading and writing in it.

Games help teachers when they want to practice speaking, without neglecting spelling, reading and writing. They develop contexts where pupils can practice language in a useful manner. Playing is an interesting activity for all children; therefore they want to take part in the games. In order to do so, they have to understand what their mates tell them as well as be able to talk back.

The benefits of didactic games in teaching English

There is a series of benefits for using games in the English teaching process. Wright, BetteridgeşiBuckby (1994: 1) list some of them:

- didactic games help and encourage students because they are funny and interesting;
- they help teachers to create useful contexts;
- they assure an intense and useful practice of the language;

- they develop all four language skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking), in all stages of the didactic process (presentation, repetition, practice, etc.) and for different types of communication (encouragement, approval, disapproval, explanations, etc.);
- using games can engage pupils in different activities and it motivates them to interact on a given subject.

Sugar şi Sugar (2002: 6-8) identifies other benefits of the didactic game:

- games are experiential;
- they allow teamwork and pair work;
- provide an educational alternative to traditional methods;
- revise what has already been taught;
- develop abilities required to pass exams;
- the games show how good the energy of a classroom is;
- can be used to introduce a new or difficult topic;
- improve teamwork;
- teach pupils to follow and obey rules.

The goals of didactic games

The teacher has to take into consideration certain variables, when s/he chooses games for the activity. The variables are the following: the age of the pupils, the level of the classroom, the pupils` interests.

After establishing these details, games have to be chosen according to certain criteria:

- a game has to be not only funny;
- it should involve all students and keep their interest high;
- explanations should be short;
- they should involve a friendly competition;
- they should give pupils the opportunity to learn, practice and revise vocabulary or other studied material;
- they should not last too long because pupils will lose their interest;
- they should involve all four skills.

The teacher has to explain the rules and once something was settled, s/he should stick to what has been said. Otherwise pupils will lose interest and consider the teacher unfair. On the other hand, the teacher has to encourage pupils in their work, not highlight every mistake they make. S/he should be fair and honest, but also understand the fact that being fair is not about being authoritarian and making faces when pupils make mistakes.

The teacher can be considered funny and friendly but at the same time strict. The most important is for him not to break his own rules and to shout in order to be heard. S/he should talk in a low and calm voice or to stop and give pupils time to make silence. They should be aware of the fact that for each minute the teacher loses over discipline matters, extra homework will be assigned. The teacher can use the 1, 2, 3 …rule, namely to count while waiting for the pupils to slow down. If counting reaches 3, the pupil who keeps making noise will no longer take part in the game. An alternative is allowing him to join the game but if s/he breaks the rules again, the punishment will be magnified.

Classification of games

The variety of techniques used in the classroom is very important when choosing the didactic games.

There are two types of games: **competitive** (the pupil tries to be the first one who finishes the activity) and **collaborative** (pupils try to achieve the same goal together, they help each other). It is very difficult to classify and name all types of games. We will list only some of them, the one that can be used more frequently in the classroom.

Movement games: are those types of games where children are physically involved in the activity (for instance finding the partner). All pupils can take part in this activity and the teacher`s role is to supervise the game. Movement games have clear rules and can be both competitive and cooperative. It depends on the teacher and how s/he wants to organize the activity. The same thing can be said about the didactic material. No material is required for movement games; for example the game called Directions requires no material. A pupil is blindfolded and other pupils tell the directions. For "Find your partner". The teacher will prepare some cards. While playing movement games, pupils train all four skills.

Board games for example Hangman. The teacher needs any type of board (black, white, smart). These games can be played in different types of groups and the teacher has to prepare the material for these games. They can be competitive or collaborative and the teacher is organizer, participant and facilitator of the didactic process.

*Guessing/identification games*are based around the principle that a student possesses a piece of information and another one has to guess what it is about (for example, with the help of a sheet of paper glued on his back). There are several versions of this game, where the teacher assumes two roles: participant and facilitator. Material does not have to be prepared in advance and pupils practice their listening and speaking abilities. They must follow the given rules, which are not very severe.

Grouping games involve finding the pair. The teacher has to prepare some material in advance. It can be topic based and used as a revision activity (for example pairs of fruit, animals, actions, etc.) or just used as a warm-up activity with the ultimate aim of grouping students. In this situation, the teacher can just use coloured sheets of paper and ask the students to group themselves according to the colour they have chosen. Pupils cooperate in order to find the pair and solve the task as quickly as possible. The task can change the game from a collaborative to a competitive one, if they face time pressure. The game can be played individually, in pairs or teams. Pupils develop their reading and speaking skills and the teacher is the facilitator.

Card games are very much appreciated by both parties. Nowadays, publishing houses print didactic cards, but teachers can prepare them at home too.

Desk games can be played as individual work (puzzle) or in pairs and team (scrabble). These games required material prepared in advance and are both collaborative and competitive. Memory games and scrabble are considered competitive while puzzle is collaborative. The teacher is the assessor of pupils` work.

Role play can be used as an independent game or part of other games. The pupil is actively involved in the game and some role plays do not require materials though they might be useful. The teacher gives the instructions and supervises the activity. Pupils train their writing, reading and especially speaking abilities.

Task-based games are very popular nowadays. Pupils receive a task and cooperate for its fulfilment.

"I Dare You" Cards (Card Set 1)

I dare you to spell the word "orange". (2 points)

I dare you to hop on one foot 20 times. (2 points)

I dare you to sing the "ABC" song. (4 points)

I dare you to say 6 colours in 5 seconds. (3 points)

Computer games are also very popular among pupils. They can be played both at school in an IT lab or multimedia room, or at home on the pupil`s personal computer. Pupils find them extremely attractive, because they contain pictures, colourful visual material, sounds and the assessment usually take ores their points which is encouraging and at the same time challenging.

As seen in our study, there is a wide variety of games that teachers can use in teaching English as a foreign language. Most of the above listed games are for young learners but there are also other games that can be used with intermediate or advanced students as well as with adult learners.

For this study, we have interviewed a number of 40 English teachers that teach young learners and a class of 30 pupils that study English as second language, third year of study, namely 4th grade.

We have applied a very short questionnaire to teachers and pupils. The pupils were asked to rank their favourite games for TEFL usage and teachers had to answer questions about the usefulness of didactic games, about the frequency they use them and their preference in terms of games.

As revealed by Figure 1, pupils mostly appreciate computer games, board games, movement games, card games and desk games. We think that the reason is that they require less effort than other games (card and board), they are more challenging (computer games) and are also competitive (desk games). Movement games are more about understanding orders than about practicing English; therefore they seem easier and funnier for the pupils. On the other hand, role play for instance, requires concentration, skills and discourages shy pupils. Tasks based games are viewed as too strict and boring if the task is not challenging. The last category, the guessing games are considered useless, boring and too noisy.

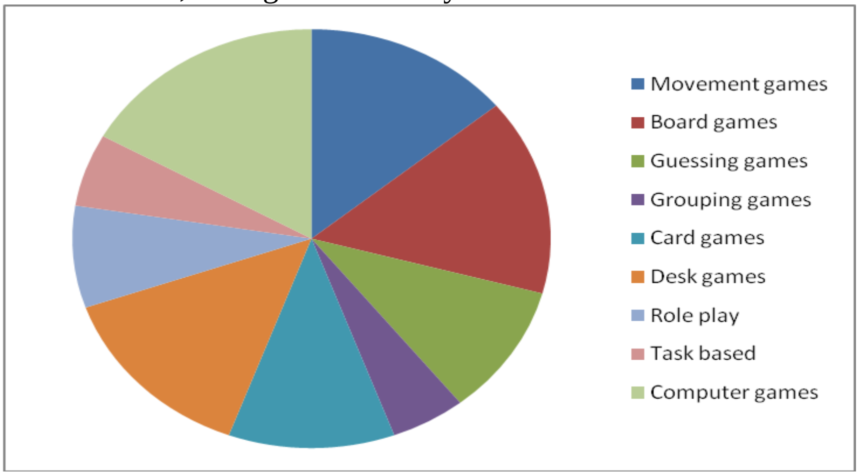

Figure 1 Pupils` preference in terms of didactic games

Figure 2 shows the teachers` opinion about the usefulness of didactic games. Some games from the list (common with the pupils` list weren`t ranked; therefore they do not occur in the chart). In the section *Types of games* we only refer to those mentioned several times.The frequency is referred to in terms of *often*, *sometimes*, *rarely*, *never* and it represents the frequency of game usage in general, not of a particular game. For this aspect we have taken into consideration all types of games. As seen below, teachers use role play, grouping games, card games and movement games very rarely. They explained their choice in terms of noise management, because movement games cause a lot of noise. They consider their pupils not prepared enough to perform a role play properly; therefore they use it only rarely. Computer games are almost never used due to the lack of computers in the classroom.

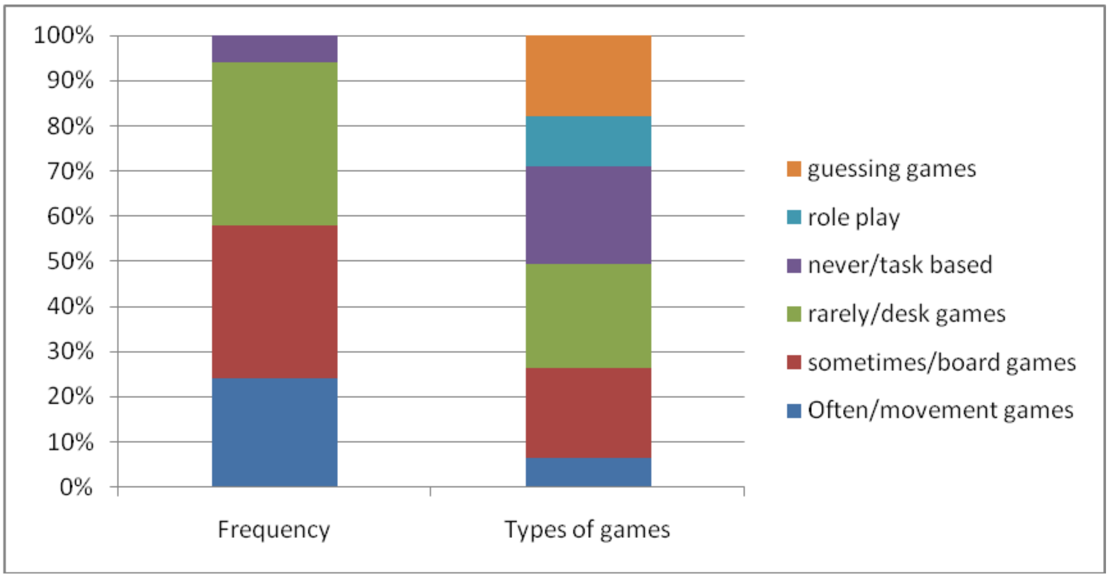

Figure 2 Teachers` opinion on didactic games and the frequency of usage

As we can see in the above presented figures, teachers are still reluctant to interactive classroom techniques, while pupils like them and would work with more interest and commitment in an interactive classroom. Our recommendation is to try and get over technology barriers or barriers attributed to exterior factors and work for the child`s best interest. In a communicative society the child`s best interest is an interactive classroom, a challenging atmosphere but at the same time a relaxed one.

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COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF GEOGRAPHICAL CONTENTS IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULA OF SOME EU COUNTRIES AND SERBIA AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Milanka Dzinovic, MA
University of Belgrade
Faculty of Education
milanka.dzinovic@uf.bg.ac.rs

Abstract: *A comparative overview of geographical contents in the first cycle of compulsory primary education in Serbia and the European Union countries provides an insight into the current state of affairs, and the developmental tendencies characteristic of European educational systems. The results gained will be immediately applicable in practice provided they are taken into consideration in the very process of the reform of the overall educational system in the Republic of Serbia, and especially of the Primary National Curriculum and its segment related to geographical contents. In particular, we emphasize the comparative approach, which this research has been based on and which we expect to contribute to further improvement of the educational system in Serbia and its harmonization with the educational systems of European countries. The findings resulting from the mentioned comparison of geographical syllabi will be a useful step forward towards European standards, which Serbia is expected to reach.*

Key words: *geographical contents, primary education, comparative overview*

Introduction

Starting from the aspiration to reach the overall standards of the countries comprising the European Union, this paper gives a comparative overview of geographical contents in the first cycle of primary education, as well as their analysis, based on which it is possible to make improvements in the Educational system of Serbia. This has been done on the grounds that, more or less intensively, the EU countries have already been included in the process of educational system reforms. “By analyzing European educational systems, i.e. their national curricula, educational objectives, teacher and student roles in them, as well as the role of education itself, we can see that Europe has already gone deep into the process of innovation and reformation of its educational system, in compliance with its great social, political, economic and technological changes. The countries which comprise it strive to achieve ever greater unity and to erase the barriers which separate them“ (Danilović, 2002: 32).

The national curricula in Serbia and EU are not easy to compare, since there is no unique approach to a comparative analysis, because children do not start education at the same age, compulsory education does not last the same amount of time in different countries, and the school systems themselves are rather different. European countries have been or are still undergoing reforms aimed at improving education, in the first place compulsory education (which, in many countries, includes junior high school education apart from primary education), as the basic and most important segment of every system.

Today, the differences in the national curricula within compulsory education are evident. Some countries have specifically defined curricula: strictly prescribed contents (with a defined number of teaching hours), objectives and tasks. Other countries prescribe only the general curriculum (60–70% of contents), while schools have the freedom to define certain parts of the curricular and syllabus contents (school curriculum) in cooperation with the local educational authorities and parents.

During the last century, the educational system of Serbia was much centralized. Everything related to education was uniform for all students. Meanwhile, educational systems of developed European countries were carrying out reforms in the opposite direction: they were seeking opportunities to include local communities, schools, students and parents in the school curriculum. School modernization, which has already started in most EU countries, is characterized by striving to thoroughly change the position of the student in the teaching process, to show better appreciation of their personality, needs and capacities, as well as the background experience that they gained out of school.

The research (which lasted from 2011 to 2012 and was aimed at then valid curricula) includes: the analysis of geographical contents, the way in which Geography teaching objectives are defined for the lower primary school grades and the students' achievements. The comparative overview included a sample of the following five countries (Table 1): Slovenia, Finland, England (the analysis was done for England rather than for the whole of United Kingdom as the curricula in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland differ), France and Serbia. The differences among the mentioned countries in this respect are evident, which can be seen in the name of the subject, the total number of hours allocated to teaching geographical contents and the organization of the teaching process. Nevertheless, there are certain similarities, especially regarding the contents taught.

Table 1. A comparative overview of the geographical contents taught in Serbia and EU countries at the primary level of compulsory education

State	Serbia	Slovenia	Finland	England	France
Name of the teaching subject or teaching area, primary level of compulsory education which includes geographical contents	1.The World around Us 2.Social, Environmental and Scientific Education	Environmental education (Spoznavanje okolja)	1. Environmental and natural studies	Geography (Geography, Key Stage 2)	1.Discovering the World (Découverte du monde) 2.Areas: History – Geography – Civic and Moral Education (Histoire-géographie-instruction civique et morale)
Grade	1. Grades I and II 2. Grades III and IV	Grades I, II and III	Grades I to IV	Independent and obligatory subject throughout compulsory education	1. Grades I and II 2. Grades III to V

Integrated group of subjects, areas, teaching area	Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Geography and History	Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Geography, History and Health Education	Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Health Education and Sustainable development	Geography	Cycle of fundamental knowledge (cycle des apprentissages fondamentaux) and Cycle of expanding knowledge (cycle des approfondissements), where geographical contents are studied within the areas of History – Geography – Civic and Moral Education

Scientific research methods

Given that the subject under study is Geography teaching and Geography syllabus, apart from the methodological requirements of geography as a science, the study included general methods pertaining to social sciences, in particular those methods that lend themselves to pedagogy.

The *general method* that was used was the *descriptive method*. The specific procedures applied in the study include a *comparative study of literature and documentation (theoretical research)*. The *comparative method* was used to consider how scientific geographical contents were transformed in the teaching syllabi of a range of European countries, including the National Curriculum of the Republic of Serbia, based on which conclusions were drawn.

An overview of Geography Syllabus for grades I to IV of primary education in Serbia

Compulsory education in the EU countries lasts from the age of 9 to 12, and consists of primary and junior secondary education. As opposed to most countries under study, Serbia is characterized by eight-year long compulsory education, exclusive of junior high education, and primary education itself lasting four years.

In the primary cycle of compulsory education in Serbia, geographical contents are taught within interdisciplinary subjects The World around Us, in the I and II grade of primary education, and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in grade III (*Pravilnik o izmenama i dopunama pravilnika o nastavnom planu za prvi, drugi, treći i četvrti razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja i nastavnom programu za treći razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja* (2010), and grade IV (*Pravilnik o nastavnom programu za četvrti razred osnovnog obrazovanja i vaspitanja,* 2006), making compulsory teaching subjects with 2 lessons per week or 72 lessons per year.

The current syllabus for the subjects The World around Us and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education stipulates the following: general objectives and tasks within the subject, specific tasks per grades, contents of the subject, and forms of programme implementation (including student activities). As opposed to the National Curriculum from 1991, in which operational tasks and syllabus contents (by which we mean geographical contents under study) were explicitly stipulated, in the currently valid Syllabus, both tasks and geographical contents are unspecified.

The contents of the subject The World around Us for grades I and II define the teaching topics and teaching units; in addition, the teaching topics include the allocation of teaching hours, tasks and forms of programme implementation. In grades III and IV, the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education is given the same amount of lessons as in the first two grades and represents an extension to the subject The World around Us taught in the first two grades. Teachers are recommended, depending on their pupils' background knowledge and class structure, to individually determine the number of lessons devoted to the teaching, practising, consolidation or testing of the contents stipulated in the syllabus. Apart from syllabus contents, the document offers recommendations regarding the forms of programme implementation, and in particular those related to student activities. The teaching contents are thematically structured, while there is no specific allocation of teaching hours per teaching topics listed. Teachers are given the freedom to individually plan and determine the type of lesson, teaching methods and didactic resources to be used in the teaching process.

Geographical contents are related to the immediate neighbourhood in the I grade – “My neighbourhood”; in the II grade to – “The place where I live and its surroundings”; in the III grade to – “My hometown”; and in the IV grade – “My country”. This concept is devised on the grounds of a homeland principle. The primary school syllabus is based on the model of spiral circles. Geographical contents of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education are closely related to the teaching contents of a whole range of sciences and scientific disciplines that are similar or mutually horizontally or vertically overlap (biology, history, physics, chemistry, etc.).

In senior primary school grades, Geography is an independent and compulsory subject, with one lesson per week in grade V and two lessons per week in grades VI to VIII.

Slovenia

Compulsory education in Slovenia lasts 9 years. “EU required from Slovenia, as a candidate for joining the Union, to implement several reforms of the educational system, in order to adjust its educational system to that of other European countries. The reform began in 1999 and still lasts” (Resnik-Planinc, 2005: 189).

In Slovenia, geographical contents are studies within several compulsory subjects (http://www.mss.gov.si/fileadmin/mss.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/devetletka/predmetniki/Predmetnik_splosni.pdf): Environmental education (grades I to III), Natural, Technical and Social Education (grades IV and V), and as an individual subject, i.e. Geography, in grades VI to IX. The subject Environmental education (http://www.mss.gov.si/fileadmin/mss.gov.si/pageuploads/podrocje/os/devetletka/predmeti_obvezni/Spoznavanje_okolja_obvezni.pdf) includes contents from different scientific areas: natural, social and technical, and is most similar to the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in Serbia (which is why it was included in the study).

Table 2. General objectives of the Environmental education subjects in Slovenian curriculum which include geographical contents (grades I to III) and the General objective of the subjects The World around Us and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in the National Curriculum of Serbia

Slovenia		*Serbia*	
General objectives of the subject	General objectives of the subject referring to geographical contents: training for correct and safe conduct in traffic: developing orientation skills in the environment and inhabited areas; developing a positive attitude towards our surroundings; introduction to maps in support of immediate neighbourhood orientation; basics in spatial orientation; Sun, Moon and Earth movement; learning more about time measurement; measuring of time (use of watch).	*General objectives of the subject*	The general objective of the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education is for pupils to get to know themselves and their neighbourhood and to develop skills for a responsible way of life within it.

Table 3. Environmental Education and The World around Us (I grade) – subject contents

Slovenija		*Srbija*	
Teaching topics	Who am I My school Celebration My past Once upon a time We and the nature We and our health When I look around What can I do	*Teqaching topics*	Me and the others Living and non-living things Spatial and time orientation The culture of living

The following are examples of geographical contents related to weather conditions, which can be found in the first-grade syllabi of the subjects Environmental Education and The World around Us in Slovenia and Serbia respectively.

Table 4. From the Operational goals of the first-grade subject Environmental Education

Operational goals	*Examples of activities*	*Suggested content*	*Special didactic recommendations*	*Cross-curricular links*
What can I do				
➢ introduction to weather events; ➢ describing and experiencing weather events	students observe and describe weather conditions; students form a simple weather calendar	Weather conditions: sunny, cloudy, rainy, windy, foggy, warm, cold, etc.; weather events: wind and clouds.	Observing weather in a certain time period, writing results in simple tables, using symbols. Everyday activities are performed for a few minutes in a certain time period.	Slovenian

Table 5. Geographical contents in the first-grade syllabus for the subject The World around Us

Grade I
Living and non-living things Influence of weather events on living beings: day and night changes, change of seasons, weather conditions and their influence on flora, fauna and human beings (2 lessons)

In Slovenia, the programme statements clearly define the minimal and basic knowledge standards required upon completion of the Environmental Education subject course. Accordingly, the statements describe what the pupil knows and can do related to the contents of the respective teaching topic. Contrary to this example, in Serbian General standards of achievement for the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education – geographical contents (*Pravilnik o obrazovnim standardima za kraj prvog ciklusa obaveznog obrazovanja za predmete srpski jezik, matematika i priroda i društvo*, 2011) there is not a single statement describing what a student should know or be able to do at the elementary, intermediate or advanced level with respect to geographical contents related to weather conditions. This indicates non-compliance between the National curriculum and the general standards of achievement for the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education.

Environmental education as a teaching subject in Slovenia is allocated 3 lessons per week, i.e. 105 lessons per year, in grades I to III, with the total amount of 315 lessons, whereas Serbian subjects The World around Us and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education are given 72 lessons per year, whereby the total of 216 lessons in grades I to III makes a difference by 99 lessons.

The educational goals in Slovenian curriculum are clearly defined and divided into general and operational ones (with stipulated basic contents for each thematic segment). The operational goals of the subject clearly define: examples of activities, suggested (precisely given and chronologically ordered) contents, special didactic recommendation (teachers are suggested to apply active teaching methods, research-based approaches, problem and project-based teaching, and fieldwork), with an emphasis on cross-curricular links with history, Slovenian language, etc. All analyzed documents offer a careful and detailed definition of the aims of geography learning, with crucial dimensions being: knowledge, skills and understanding. In Slovenia, a great importance is given to determining the goals of the subject and the operational goals per grade, unlike the curriculum in Serbia, which only gives the overall objectives and tasks of the subject, whereas specific tasks (related in particular to geographical contents) and the syllabus contents per subject are insufficiently defined.

Finland

Compulsory education in Finland (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, Finnish National Board of Education, 2004a) lasts 9 years. From grade I to IV, geographical contents are studied within an integrated group of subjects Environmental and Natural Studies with 9 lessons per week; in grades V and VI, within the subject Biology and Geography with 3 lessons per week, and from grade VII to grade IX Geography is an individual and compulsory teaching subject which is given 7 lessons per week in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education.

The National Curriculum is defined by the Finnish National Board of Education and provides the contents, subject goals and expected student achievements (three levels), cross-curricular links, including general evaluation guidelines for complete education. Within the National Curriculum, schools and local authorities define their own regulations. Organization of the teaching process and the choice of teaching methods remain the responsibility of teachers.

Environmental and Natural Studies

The following table shows examples of geographical teaching topics and goals included in the National Curriculum for the subject Environmental and Natural Studies (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, Finnish National Board of Education - Environmental and natural studies, 2004b) in Finland and the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in the National Curriculum of Serbia.

Table 6. Curriculum contents for subjects Environmental and Natural Studies in Finland and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in Serbia (grade IV)

Finland	*Serbia*

Teaching topics	Immediate surroundings, region and the world as human life environment Organisms and the surroundings Natural phenomena Substances around us Health care Safety	*Teaching topics*	My country – part of the World An encounter with the Nature Exploring natural events Work, energy, production and consumption Looking back - the past

Table 7. The objectives of the Finnish curriculum subject Environmental and Natural Studies related to geographical contents (grades I to IV) and the General objective for the subjects The World around Us and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in Serbia

Finland		*Serbia*	
Subject goals	Students will: learn how to act responsibly in order to protect themselves and their environment, follow instructions given at school and take care of themselves in traffic; learn about the nature and how to protect the environment, observe changes and events in the field and get to know their region as part of Finnish and Nordic countries; learn to gather information about the nature and their environment by observing, exploring and using different resources; learn to observe by using simple research tools, and to describe, compare and classify their findings; learn to conduct simple scientific experiments; learn how to use maps and the world atlas; learn to present information about the environment and its phenomena from different perspectives; learn to protect the nature and natural resources; learn to develop psychological and physical self-cognizance, self-respect, and respect of others, as well as social skills; learn the concepts, vocabulary and procedures relevant for health, illnesses and promotion of a healthy way of life and how to make choices good for their own health;	*General subject objective*	*The objective* of the teaching subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education is for students to get to know themselves and their environment and to develop skills for a responsible life in it.

Conceptual framework of the Finnish curriculum places emphasis on the subject goals and the expected student accomplishments. The teaching aims are clearly outlined, and stipulate that students should get to know the nature and their environment, themselves and the others, including mutual differences. Contrary to this, the objective given for the subject Social, Environmental and Scientific Education in Serbia is overgeneralized and fails to list what it is that students should learn.

The Finnish curriculum emphasizes the research-oriented approach and students' use of experiment-based experience in order to develop a positive attitude towards the nature and a close relationship with it and their environment, with the aim of learning how to protect the nature and natural resources. All countries, including Finland, define as one of the most important objectives in their curricula the following: "[...] gaining knowledge and raising awareness about the importance of the preservation of nature and rational use of energy resources, the importance of sustainable development and cooperation on environmental protection throughout the World, and learning about the dangers and consequences of inappropriate use of technology" (Curić at al., 2007: 464).

England

According to the National Curriculum of England (The school curriculum, Department for Education, 2011), compulsory education is divided into four phases: from age 5 to 7; from age 7 to 11; from 11 to 14, and from 14 to the age of 16.

Schools themselves choose how to organize their curriculum. In England, Geography is an obligatory subject throughout compulsory education. The exact number of teaching hours is not predetermined, either per week or per year, but rather depends on the decision of the school staff. What is important, however, is that the teaching units defined in the National Curriculum be covered by the end of the foreseen phase of education, when students' academic achievement is subject to evaluation.

The following are examples of contents related to the environment that can be found in the National Curriculum for the subject Geography (http://www.education.gov.uk /schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00199002/geography/ks2) in England and for the subject The World around Us in Serbia.

Table 8. During the second phase of learning Geography, students should gain the following knowledge and skills:

Learning and understanding of climate changes and	Students should learn to: recognize how people can show appreciation to and improve natural environment or how they can cause damage to it; recognize how and why people can manage sustainable development, and identify the possibilities of their own inclusion in the process.

Table 9. The World around Us (grade II) – syllabus content

Syllabus content	
Grade II	Water, air and earth pollution, (ways of polluting and their consequences) and possibilities of protection.

During the second phase, students should explore the environment, and discover how people influence their own natural surroundings and vice versa. Geography plays an important part in promoting knowledge relevant for sustainable development. During the process of education, English students develop geographical skills by using resources such as maps, atlases, information and communication technologies, etc. The suggested exploratory approach implies methods of active learning. The National Curriculum of Serbia, however, does not lead one to similar conclusions. An important facet of the English syllabus is pragmatism and geographical knowledge usability.

France

A comparative overview shows that compulsory education in France (http://www.education.gouv.fr/) lasts from the age of 6 to 16 and includes primary education, junior high school, senior high school (collège) and grammar school or secondary vocational school (lycée). Primary education lasts five years (age 6 to 11) and is divided into two cycles. The cycle of fundamental knowledge covers the first two years of primary education, during which geographical contents are learned within the area Discovering the World, with 3 – 3.5 hours per week, that is 81 hours per year. The developmental cycle - cycle of expanding knowledge – lasts another three years. During this period geographical contents are learned in the area of History – Geography – Civic and Moral Education, with 3 – 3.5 hours per week, or 78 hours per year.

Discovering the World

The following are examples of geographical topics included in the syllabus of the subject Discovering the World (http://www2.cndp.fr/ecole/quapprend/pdf/755a0212.pdf, Qu'apprend-on à l'école primaire? Nouveaux programmes, Paris, CNDP/XO Editions, 2002) in the French curriculum and of the subject The World around Us in the Serbian syllabus.

Table 10. Discovering the World and The World around Us, grade II, syllabus contents

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">France</th><th colspan="2">Serbia</th></tr>
<tr><td>Teaching topics</td><td>From familiar to distant space
Time passes
Matter
Living world
Things and materials
Information-communication technologies</td><td>Teaching topics</td><td>Living and non-living things
Where humans live
Human activity
Movement in space and time</td></tr>
</table>

Following the French example, the teaching topic 'From familiar to distant space' could be included in the future syllabi of the subject The World around Us.

Table 11. Syllabus for the geographical contents within the subject Discovering the World in France

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Syllabus</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">From familiar to distant space</td><td>In the kindergarten, children acquired the basic concept of space that surrounds them. In this cycle they learn how to present that space by drawing. Pupils also discover other, more and more distant spaces in town or a nearby village, all the way to unusual landscapes. With teacher's help they use a globe or map to learn orientation in the region, France, Europe, on other continents and in larger geographical areas.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Also, by using albums, photographs, films and electronic images, they discover the versatility of environments and ways of life (habitat, food, clothes, means of transport, forms of vegetation and animal life) indicating similarities and differences. The teacher helps them understand the influence of the relief, climate and seasons or the societal development status.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reading age-adapted texts enriches children's vocabulary and their spoken expression of spatial relationships.</td></tr>
</table>

The syllabus also describes the competences that a student should develop related to space (geographical contents) by the end of the first cycle in France. The emphasis is placed on knowledge, use and development of the mother tongue, on acquiring basic geographical contents defined in the syllabus. "History and Geography offer an entry into humanities and the first step in time and spatial orientation. This is also the first encounter with the cultures and characteristics of a civil society and its values" (http://www.eduscol.education.fr/cid46065/comment-l-histoire-et-la-geographie-sont-elles-enseignees-a-l-ecole-primaire%A0-constat-et-evolution-en-cours.html).

Conclusion

There is no such country in the world which is completely satisfied with its educational system. Unfortunately, "what is missing are some concrete and operational proposals; and even if they are given, they are commonly fragmentary and unsystematic 'improvements', 'innovations', 'reforms' and the like" (Nahod, 2001: 83).

We have presented different solutions for teaching geographical contents in the primary stage of compulsory education in a number of European countries with a particular insight into those which could be applied in Serbia, which would help improve the teaching of the subjects The World around Us and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education. We have identified certain differences between the syllabi which include geographical contents in the countries of EU and Serbia.

The aspirations to make the educational system of Serbia closer to that of EU countries includes the harmonization of the mentioned syllabi in the part related to geographical contents that are learned in the first years of primary education. The examples given include Slovenia, Finland, England and France. We have shown similarities and differences between these countries and the contents learned in schools in Serbia. The number of lessons planned for geographical contents varies significantly from country to country, while the contents are most commonly similar (certain differences are of rather terminological nature). However, it is worth noticing that the mentioned foreign countries pay much more attention to geographical contents, regardless of the area within which they are studied - natural or social sciences, or both.

There are elements which could be taken over from the analyzed foreign syllabi. Primarily, this would be placing more emphasis on the application of the acquired knowledge in the life of either every individual or the whole social community (this especially refers to ecological contents). Furhermore, following the model of Slovenia, certain topics, such as "What can I do" and health-related contents, could be introduced. Standards of geographical knowledge, such as the ones in Slovenia, are necessary, though they should rather be defined per grades and not per educational cycles, because they guarantee a much better insight into students' achievement.

Following the example of the Finnish syllabus, subject goals and tasks related to geographical contents could also be better elaborated and defined through practical activities and health-related issues. This syllabus also defines the achievements that should be made on the basis of geographical contents, as well as the indicators of student success. It is not by mere chance that the Finnish National Curriculum, and their overall model of education is considered to be among the best in the world.

The English syllabus is characterized by pragmatism and usability of knowledge gained in the sphere of geography. This kind of knowledge is paid a lot of attention and is included in compulsory subjects. Standards of achievement are also very well defined, and they should similarly be included in the Serbian National Curriculum.

The French teaching subjects Discovering the World, and History, Geography, Civic and Moral Education put to the forefront the pedagogical component, which is highly important. The emphasis is placed on "an entry into humanities", as well as time and spatial orientation, and special importance is given to the mother tongue. These are also examples to follow, which could help improve the educational system in Serbia.

To conclude with, by comparing the objectives, tasks and contents of the teaching subject Geography and the position of geographical contents in the system of subjects in Serbia and a number of European countries at the primary level of compulsory education, we made an overview of different solutions and an evaluation of their positive and negative aspects. We find these useful for further improvement of the teaching of Geography, as well as for the application of geographical contents inside and out of school.

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MOTIVATIONS OF ROMANIAN STUDENTS TO STUDY ABROAD

Daniela Veronica Necşoi, Ph.D.
Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania
danielanecsoi@unitbv.ro

Abstract: *The paper studies the issue of international student mobility, especially diploma mobility (students taking their entire degree outside Romania). The first aim of the study was to evaluate the current situation of Romanian students' mobility, collecting data from several organizations that have researched the issue, NGOs, UNESCO, and OECD. Also, the study aimed at improving understanding of the motivations behind the international diploma mobility of Romanian students. In order to do this, we used self-reported data, based on questionnaires, from 50 high-school students from 12th grade, from Romania. The results indicated that the top destinations for Romanian students are: Italy, France, United Kingdom, Germany, but also Denmark and Netherlands. The factors that students consider when determining the country where they will study are: improved education conditions (laboratories, equipments, quality teachers, students' involvement in research, students' access to resources for their projects), employment opportunities after graduation, language and cultural considerations.*

Keywords: *Romanian students, international students, motivations, studying abroad*

1. Introduction

There are currently an estimated 3.0 million international students of all nationalities studying abroad worldwide (Findlay, King, 2010). According to the OECD this figure rose four times faster than the overall trend in international migration between 1998 and 2004 (OECD, 2008).

According to European Commission data, there are more than 4000 institutions of higher education in Europe, with over 19 million students and over 1.5 million employees in the system. Many of the European universities are found on the leading positions in the world rankings in terms of the quality of education and study conditions. In Romania, there are an increasing number of young people that choose to continue their studies abroad after finishing high school or undergraduate courses.

The benefits of following a program of study at a university abroad are numerous. The system of education, study programs that follow the market trends, new technologies, international study environment, an international career which may be initiated since the time of studies and development opportunities in an environment that corresponds to the student's skills and interests are only a part of them.

International or mobile students are those who left their country of origin and moved to another country for the purpose of study. Depending on country-specific immigration legislation, mobility arrangements, such as the free mobility of individuals within the EU, and data availability, international students may be defined as students who are not permanent or usual residents of their country of study or alternatively as students who obtained their prior education in a different country, including another EU country (OECD, 2013).

2. The study

This study is focused on the issue of international student mobility, especially diploma mobility (students taking their entire degree outside Romania). We have two objectives, set out in the form of two research questions, as follows:

- *What is the current situation of Romanian students' mobility?*
- *What are the motivations behind the international diploma mobility of Romanian students?*

In order to answer the first question, we analyzed statistic data from several organizations that have studied the issue of international student mobility: *Educativa* Group and *Integral Education Programs* Company (Romanian organizations that offer counseling services for admission in foreign universities), UNESCO, OECD, and Institute for International Education.

Currently, in Romania there isn't an institution that would centralize the number of Romanian students who study at universities in other countries, and NGOs working in the educational area report different figures. Thus, the exact number of Romanian students who study abroad is a matter of debate: the Ministry of Education does not have such statistics and between UNESCO and the *Integral Education Programs* Company data, there is a big difference, the latter claiming that the real figure is closer to 50.000, while UNESCO reports a figure closer to 26.000 (in 2010). Moreover, statistics show that the number of international foreign students from Romania was approximately 10.500 in 2009, and the National Institute of Statistics mentions a number of nearly 14.000, in the same year.

Foreign universities have attracted approximately 30000 alumni, who currently are registered in different degree programs. According to *Integral Education Programs*, a company of educational consultancy, universities of United Kingdom occupy the first place in top universities abroad chosen by Romanian students. The second place is occupied by the Netherlands universities, followed by those in Denmark and Sweden, according to data made available by the same consulting company. According to these data, in the last years, the number of Romanians candidates for universities of Netherlands has increased by up to 50%, while interest in Denmark has doubled. The fact that young people are targeting universities from Netherlands is due to lower taxes and because of very good programs in English (10 of Dutch universities are standing on the leading places in the Top 200 universities, according to The Times Magazine), according to the source cited.

Latest UNESCO official data on the number of Romanian students abroad and their destinations are from 2010, when there were reported 25.299 Romanian students learning in foreign universities. According to UNESCO statistics, the dynamic of Romanian degree students' mobility in the Top 10 international destinations looked like this: Italy (4174 students), France (3856 students), Germany (3232 students), United Kingdom (3165 students), Hungary (2307 students), Spain (1807 students), Austria (1336 students), Denmark (332 students), Netherlands (194 students), Norway (168 students).

According to *Educativa* Group, the top destinations for Romanian students are France, Germany, but also Italy and Spain giving the fact that Romanian community has grown in this countries in the last years. Also, these are countries where tuition fees have decreased significantly for students from EU countries. Annually, 5000 Romanian people leave to study abroad, according to official estimates of the Ministry of Education, and some of them take advantage of the tuition fee facilities. Significant grows are reported for countries like Netherlands and Denmark because of their valuable educational systems and reduced costs for education. Moreover, there is a tendency of the Romanian students to apply for government loans to continue their studies, as in the case of the British Government, which grants a loan covering the full tuition fee. An explanation for the large number of Romanian students who learn in Hungary (over 2300) is that many of them have dual citizenship, Romanian and Hungarian, and prefer to study in the native country.

To answer the second question of the study, we used self-reported data, based on a questionnaire. The instrument was administrated to 50 high-school students from 12th grade, from Romania.

First, we asked students about the destination they would choose to continue their studies. The obtained results reproduce those of UNESCO reports, the top destinations being UK (22%), Denmark (18%), Italy (15%), France (12%), Germany (10%), Spain (10%), Netherlands (9%), and other countries (4%). One explanation for choosing the UK, for instance, may be the fact that in this country there are so-called "sandwich" programs which lasts 4 years instead of 3 and incorporates one year of paid work experience as part of the program. In Netherlands, students begin to take increasingly into account the universities of Applied Sciences where different internship programs offer employment opportunities after the completion of the program. In Denmark, the government integrally supports the tuition fee.

We were interested in finding out the main determinants of students' decision to study abroad. The main factors mentioned were:

- improved conditions for education (laboratories, equipments, multimedia; attractive courses, the quality of teachers, internships in different companies, students' involvement in research projects, the access of students to resources for their own projects)
- employment opportunities after the graduation
- language and cultural considerations (integration in an intercultural environment, foreign language proficiency, opportunity to learn about other countries culture)
- academic tradition of the university
- simple entry requirements

In a lower proportion, the students mentioned:

- geographic proximity
- similarity of education systems
- travel opportunities
- better living conditions

Another important issue addressed by the research is the relationship between international student mobility and intentions to return to Romania. 37 per cent of students in the survey claimed that they have no intention of returning to the native country once they have finished their studies. The motives were related to the desire of permanent emigration, or they claimed that they were seeking to access an international career. A big part of the students, however, plan to return (39%), although many of them want to work abroad before coming back to Romania (24%).

Studying abroad is not an easy thing, so we asked the students about the difficulties they think they might have. The main obstacles that student mentioned were:

- Not having enough financial means for living abroad (29%)
- Getting a local job while studying (18%)
- Difficulties related to leaving the family and friends (15%)
- Not confident enough with the language (13%)
- Different study standards (9%)
- The image of Romanian people in Europe (8%)
- Concerns about the costs of health service (6%)
- Bureaucracy (2%)

3. Conclusions

According UNESCO reports, in the last years, there has been an increasing in the number of Romanian students that are choosing to continue their studies in an international institution. This paper showed that the main destinations desired for Romanian students are UK, Denmark, Italy and France. The reason for choosing these countries is related to their student mobility politics.

The discussion has been moving around the motivations of Romanian students about studying abroad. The dominant reasons given by students for going abroad were related to attending a world class institution which offers optimum conditions for learning. The students in the research are interested in attending international universities that are offering quality teachers, access to various resources that enhance academic and professional achievements. A significant idea that emerges from this study is that the global hierarchy of universities will become even more important over the next years and therefore that the desire to attend a world class university will become even stronger in the future (Findlay, King, 2010).

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DIALOGUE AND EDUCATION

Adrian Negru, PhD
Teacher Training Faculty
University of Belgrad
negruanastasia@yahoo.com

Abstract: *This paper deals with the relationship of dialogue and education, and for the nature of the dialogue to be clearer it will be necessary to analyze the philosophical, historical, sociological and psychological connotations. The following aspect of the work is to show the arguments that education, by its structure, meaning and sense, necessarily dialogic process, and that the two terms refer, taken abstractly and theoretically, at almost the same semantic field as the dialog itself, on the other hand, it carries educational, developmental and formative. The paper will show which problems will occur in trying of throwing light on the authoritarianism reasons in education, and more, when designing their overcoming. The beginnings of philosophy and, in general, people's thoughts are related to the dialog.*

Keyworks: *dialogue, education, semantic*

This ancient precursor to understanding the dialectic, which, according to Hegel, constitutes the most general principles of the natural and social development, as well as "the nature of thought itself, which must appeal to the negative itself as constituting one side of the logic" Thus, man is created through the process of contradictory activity , achieving the world for himself, a denial as the source of his existence, very well known in a symbolic story of master and servant, through which they alternately change their roles, developing awareness of its direct and natural, sensual knowledge to absolute knowledge of the subject of self-consciousness.

Also, the dialog as this is in the concept of understanding (it's understood what is opposed and different), comprising the essence of Gadamer's hermeneutics. His goal was to reconstruct, if one could say so, rediscover the nature of human understanding. Unlike the positivist method, Gadamer seeks to examine the concept of understanding in a different way, in fact thinking about what the performer does over interpretation even doesn't knowing, rather than to create a new hermeneutics. Every reader or someone who understands, and the dialog is compared with some text, in his view, shaped by its historical places and cultural position. Dialog, in our re-interpretation, can have an implicit effect and this effect is greater as the instance which "fits" the subject is higher, more abstract and invisible.

From all the foregoing, we can see just how much dialogue is an important concept in philosophical thought. Based on it, on the basis of this "dialog tools", it is possible to establish an open society based on the principles of liberty and opinions, such that there will always question himself.

All of these previously mentioned, directly or indirectly influenced the development of similar thinking in linguistics and psychology and their development to create new perspetiva and possible conceptualization. Even in the monologue, in Bakhtin's view, there is the internalized voice of the social field from which the calls and your voice is positioned in relation to the anticipated voices. So when a man thinks, seemingly by itself and independently of their environment in fact constantly in dialog, which begins to change the Cartesian view of man as a solitary thinker, creating a new way to conceptualize the man who is primarily thought of as being relations. Bakhtin's dialogism implies the use of the relativity of meaning, because the two entities that belong to both the same and different areas created after such a confrontation of new and different places and new and different meanings. The dialogue is so much more than direct interpersonal relationships, it is the opposition of various "social language", because one never speaks as isolated individuals, but in his speech can perceive statements social groups and culture to which it belongs, and who really shape his individual statement. The dialogue is something essential: it is what creates new units, architectural element of science, art, religion, politics, and, finally, the man's identity. According to Bakhtin, what we call "identity" or more simply, a man ceases to be understood as something given by nature and therefore is non-susceptible to change. But, on the contrary: as a dynamic, changing, proactive.

In psychology, the works of L. S. Vygotsky had the most pronounced effect on hindsight development principles that formed the co-construction, ie. joint action between child and adult, which through their interaction (dialogue) the child builds new cognitive structures. In fact, the most far-reaching theoretical discovery of vygotskian school school is to admit the inevitability of socio-cultural factors and its crucial effect on human intellectual development. Higher mental functions mediated by the sign and therefore variable, it is organized by different devices of lower mental functions and internally structuring individual behavior and intellectual function. They are social background because a sign is the main feature of social situations. Therefore, they are directly internalized in the social field. Each intrapsychic function, noticed by Vygotsky, previously was interpsihic. In other words, no other man and language seen as a symbolic system, and their relationship has neither the awareness nor intellectual development.

In more recent psychological theories, the constitutive element of identity is precisely the dialog. The man's identity ceases to be seen as something static, unchanging, and, finally, as something given a priori as something in itself. Hermans, inspired by Bakhtin linguistics and discovery polyphonic novel, posits what he calls the dialogical self. Hermans sees the key determinant of identity in polyphony, and the relatively autonomous position of the subject I in a variety of situations in which an imaginary space enter into a relationship. The combination of these, sometimes completely opposing positions and their entering into dialogue leads to a complex whole different voice that Hermans called the self.
Barbara Rogoff, moving into a similar theoretical framework posits the idea of apprenticeship as a dialogic and proactive method of learning about the education community of learners in which all active but have asymmetric roles, and the learning process ceases to be perceived as passively receptive monologue receiving the above material but as a process of transformation of participation in a variety of roles that are very specific socio-cultural activities of communities.

Also, interactions are asymmetric, as with traditional schooling, but complementary, because learning takes place through conversation and not in the form of questions and answers, where one doesn't know anything else and knows everything, as is the case in the regular school where adults support and guide, but don't control. The child is evaluated by pushing their own progress rather than comparing with others. Rogoff also sees competitiveness built into monologue education system, where adults have formal power to rank, control and rewards, defining the successes and failures of individuals, who compete with them - leading to competition for the sake of learning and not learning for the sake of knowledge.

Competitive monological educational matrix, in Rogoff's opinion, is associated with the wider competitive social environment, which supports such behavior patterns. Common to all previous understandings is that dialogue as something formative, something creative and something that is the basis of any knowledge but also the man's identity. Although this conception of dialogue rather broadly, it could be said that the dialogue mechanism and the way in which man produces, the active and willing manner in themselves and understanding of the world around him. Grasp the importance of this dialogue, in modern times, a man stops seeing himself as something static and unchanging and thus potentially subjected to any kind of dogma and ideology. Since Nietzsche - who can be considered the creator of perspectivism and relativism, particularly in establishing a different notion of truth (which performs crucial impact on almost all the aforementioned thinkers) - dialogue and bringing together different perspectives, the subject tries to establish a free, independent and active. Nietzsche's philosophy, according to Gilles Deleuze and promote affirmation of the subject and his existence, and Nietzscheanized will to power is in fact a willingness to create.What in poststructuralist thought and works of Derrida, Baudrillard, Blanchot, Kristeva and the other takes the form of an opening to other , the dialog reflects a deeper and more abstract forms.

In all these attempts, the subject is trying to establish itself as an independent, if not the very term "subject" then the work diferent or "pure distance" in relation to the social reproduction of the same production structure, where the differences become apparent, in fact using the same. The subject is entitled to their own perspective, simply stated, from which follows the realization that truth is relative and dependent on the subject of sermons and to postulate a single, universally accepted, and the only possible truth inevitably is committing violence. Dialogue, open to others, becomes an act of freedom that entity the right to change.

Now, when we have displayed the meaning of the dialogue we can move on to the main part of the analysis: realize the existing link between education and the formative role of dialogue and their divergence, but before that we need to briefly illuminate the structure of the concept of education. Education is a key process in the integration of individuals into society and one of the most important agents of socialization, it affects the shape of the company, maintaining its status quo and what Vivian Beer called sensus communis thruts. In other words, the school is a controlled agent of socialization plan works in the direction you want the ruling forces in society, according to N. Rot. Therefore, the relationship between dialog and education can be observed - in its own way it creates a social space and the individuals within that, in such an interactive context, creating their opinions and through them shape their own identity and its own view of the world and their own place and possibilities in it. Educational and constructive dialog and individual factors are at their positions and coincide, but not necessarily by the effects they produce, because educational practice is institutionalized, as opposed to dialogue.

The following is an interpretation depending on the education of the broader social context and the effects that education is produced. In the 17th century, relying on the old Plato's understanding of the importance of arithmetic ability to speculative opinion, John Locke developed the first theory of transfer of learning, the theory of formal discipline. According to this theory, the first academic programs in the 19 century were made. which were based on the so-called psychology of power - it was based on the assumption that the human mind consists of a number of specific, independent capabilities that combine to specify a particular person. The most important thing in this theory was understanding – which, later experiments of psychologists Tordajnka, Vudvorta and Judd, refuted - that these specific powers can amplify the exercise. Thus, students are taught those subjects who, in the opinion of teachers, the best discipline of power, which were primarily Latin, mathematics, grammar, based on the principle: the more effort the better, as this particular ability increases. For example, a student has learned by heart the whole book in Latin, superficially, without understanding, without having any practical use of it in later life, even though it had invested too much effort, it was assumed that this would improve their intellectual capacities. Motivation is also the theory of formal discipline, had any relevance to the effectiveness of learning.

Michel Foucault leads development of these educational practices in connection with the parallel emergence of hospital, prison and military practice - connecting them with the tendency, which occurs in the age of enlightenment, the inefficient mechanisms of sovereign power efficient replacement, disciplining, "microphysics" as they are called, standardization and control techniques. (Recall that the same author - John Locke - who postulated the theory of formal discipline and, at the time, first came up with the idea of limiting the distribution of its sovereign authority to the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary, in his Two Treatises of Government!). Foucault somewhat challenging opportunity for a dialogue with this attitude, since the possible dialogue as a creative and free process, as we understand it here, always be mediated power and the exercise of power. He even, all science with the prefix "psycho" (which is normally involved in education and determine its legality) belongs in this historic turnaround in the proceedings individualize and disciplined individual, stipulating it in a safe and stable but violent and trapping system. Foucault believes that the reality of each individual produced specific technology of power that he calls "discipline", postulating a myth about the final, "dissolved" the man, as opposed to proactive concept that gives one a creative role. Contrary to such beliefs, Foucault believes that "(government) creates reality and the specific areas of objects and rituals that lead to the truth. The individual and the knowledge of the possible consequences of it are that production ". However, in the later works, as the criticism that attaches itself to take away the rights of others, in terms of the possibility of such criticism, which just conducted, he replied that" he does not write his lyrics but his texts make it "- recognizing discursivity and volatility of its own identity, and therefore, in our opinion, the possibility of dialog that involves critical thinking, or what Foucault calls the" difference "Task, ie. different identities that we carry in the form of various discourses (which largely coincides with Hermans' self, dialog).

However, the most important is that Foucault in his historical analysis argues monologue explaining the nature of education, pointing to its former origins and functions it had. Just realizing this, the Brazilian theorist Paulo Freire sees an opportunity to overcome the dialog just establishing a hierarchical relationship in education, which gives wider and post-Marxist connotations, perceiving that the only chance for liberation of the individual from authoritarian and hierarchical structured on society. The key obstacle to the release of a hierarchical order of considered in the Freire identity elements that are "oppressed" have adopted and which do not tend to liberation, but they want to be the same as their superiors, as well as their "oppressors", leading private revolutions, which incorporates the shadow of the violence previously. The path of liberation from authoritarian society, in the opinion of Brazilian scholars, is in education, which will be jointly intentions of both participating entities, not only to detect but also in the co-creation of reality and its critical consideration, thus rediscovering and established knowledge. Arguments based on authority here cease to exist, and the authority takes the side of freedom. This process is mediated, according to Freire world itself, or by what is a cultural, historical, and social subjects sermon took shape, and that is what he calls "generative themes" dialogue. Education of the "generative" themes in the dialogue, the reality demystify and demyth, unlike monologue education in which students are actually objects, Education, based on which, as already mentioned, Foucault constitutes his criticism panoptic, repressive society based on an implicit and invisible, "microphysical" action-control techniques, monitoring, standardization, punishment and discipline.

The word, according to Freire, is not merely a signifier, but the constituent power of each reflection and action, and in them is based a person's identity. Thus, the dialogue, mediated by the world, in fact his only appointment and renaming, but only between the two such that they want to rename. As the basis for any dialogue changes the world, Freire says that dialogue is "an existential need" whose absence leads to dehumanization. Finally, Freire posits a necessary feature that should have a meaningful dialogue, and this is critical thinking: such that there is never a quiet lull in the "now" that "fresh thinking" is interpreted as a result of past experiences and accumulated burden of history, but it must be such that reality is understood as a process that can affect continually since that critical thinking is inseparable from the subject's actions. Freire opens up the possibility of overcoming authoritarianism in society that it sheds its consequent reflection and planning and education, and demonstrates the way in which education can reestablish a dialog. In this way, Freire somewhat managed to overcome Foucault's pessimism regarding the establishment of the dialog as the essence of education and establish models for equitable distribution of power within the education system.

Sammerhill as a school of freedom opposed to the school of disciplined knowledge under the auspices of similar ideas took place the first attempts to establish a free and self-governing schools, where the children will take the upper hand and manage themselves and their interests. The most famous attempt is the famous Summerhill, founded back in 1921. However, these attempts have failed, mainly because of the inability of children from these schools that are then fit and achieve knowledge peers from regular educational institutions. Although the children were happy during their stay in Summerhill, and later "became successful and happy in life," as reported Neil, the school ceased to exist, although she worked for more than forty years. A special remark. Nile on disciplining order in regular schools was that it pedagogical shortcomings in terms of neglecting the child's personality and of his right to freedom of choice and their interests, which sometimes are off school or influence or the influence of parents, and these factors is Summerhill particularly want to correct it.

Analysis of failure that has suffered Summerhill is a special issue, but I guess it would probably witnessed more about the nature and quality of the knowledge acquired normal education and less on the structure of Samerhill, although Summerhill was based on the principles of liberty, freedom of choice and decision-making of child. Thus, it is recognized that the knowledge gained in regular schools, inseparable from the discipline and forcibly acquired knowledge, as reported by many psychologists (Perkins, Skinner), is rapidly forgotten and does not develop critical thinking skills, and children, and even less aesthetic or emotional, by Neil in particular stood out. The knowledge acquired during formal education is largely passive, inert, ritual, and while almost no change students' naive conceptions.

A good example of the expression characteristics of the knowledge gained during the regular school is Perkins' eksperiment. He testified that students were primarily focused on the strategies of memory, and to a lesser extent, the strategy of designing materials: exposed numbers which should be remembered could be easily created as Republic Day or Ludolf's number, but a small number of students recognizes such relationships as they are used in an inappropriate way of learning which mainly relies on mere reproduction. But under the influence of certain factors, children from Samerhill could not achieve levels of this in terms of knowledge, knowledge that is the opinion of many psychologists based on the reproduction and passive storage of various facilities, they still made it difficult adaptation to later environmental conditions.

All in all, Summerhill has somehow opened an important topic nature of acquired knowledge during the regular school, opened some insights into the reflection of such a learning process in children's personality and deepen the already existing problems of authoritarianism and education. Samerhill's failure as a free school may be interpreted as a symptom: the basis of it is beautiful view, as in the classical treatment of neurosis, the real causes overlapping of authoritative and authoritarian in education.

Without making any findings, the cause of Samerhill's failure still remains unknown, but at the same time it sets strikingly a question about the essence of educational institutions.
Keeping knowledge: classification and selection of educational facilities.
School as an agent of socialization - we saw with Foucault - is also an agent of discipline and norms and in spite of the dialog to grasp the necessity for the development of knowledge and identity, educational institutions remains largely monologue. The specimens were in the school of individual, spatially specific, directed towards the view that the figure only it has the authority and to provide "knowledge". The knowledge, communicated in such a way monologue, itself become problematic: are learned by heart and thus become meaningless and quickly forgotten. An important function of education is the classification and selection of individuals, their predetermined redistribute to all sources of knowledge and the social division of labor. The current education system can not be imagined without this mediocratic function, and it was made without their norms without its quota criteria, scoring, selecting candidates, no gradient own structure itself must reflect the monologue and the authoritarian character faced with challenging educational matrix.

Knowledge is stored and is not freely exposed to all. Knowledge in their division at some stage and development stage, knowledge weathered the autonomous languages developed specific scientific group that ceased to be understood broader populations (despite the apparent possibility of their "translation" into intelligible discourse), the knowledge becomes hidden power, the power of elusive and invisible, as Foucault says, it all helps in the "preservation" of knowledge and its reduced availability. This fact alone greatly complicates all attempts at reform, because they impinge much deeper than just the education.

The very gradation of educational path is speaking in support of his thesis about the closure of knowledge even in some colleges in the United States, according to renowned psychologist Sternberg, to students enrolled in a particular college's or doctoral degree must pass the SAT test (Scholastic Assessment Test) similar to intelligence test , confirming the general consensus that knowledge should be given to the most able students who, later, the hierarchical levels of management occupied the highest positions, thereby forgetting the socio-economic factors in determining intelligence and thus supports the status quo of existing social divisions . Education is what still keeps the social fabric, stores the company from the inside, kept environs social divisions.

Education Reform (often theoretically based by the work of solitary psychologists and pedagogues) therefore presents enormous problems in the existing order of the inherent coupling of education and social action. In this way, it is recognized that the nature of the problem that bears monologue education transcends the individual attempts to through certain teaching methods, electives and learning how education changes. As Freire said, only the establishment of generative themes in the dialogue that is itself shaped by, the world (ie, historical and culturally specific subjects, sermon), we did get to look at the problem monologue that is largely rooted firmly in the institutions, practices, and even in certain theories and knowledge. The content of knowledge must shape the interaction, ie. through dialogue. And that means the freedom of subjects (not objects) education.

Conclusion:

Insisting on the dialog modern theorists of pedagogical practice they can easily contain (or even include) the authoritarian and disciplining form for Education. Because, as long as the dialogue is spoken in a monologue, theoretical positions, and the dialogue itself shall fall shadow authoritarian monologue, trapped. As long as there are areas of education, which should do this or that, to be applied to this or that reform of this or that method, authoritarian, inseparable from the broader social context, in their practice continues to serve hierarchically structured society, reproducing its own authoritarian in order to infinity. Just highlighting the problem requires immersion in historical and in the core of the social.

Because knowledge has historically always been a closely guarded subject of fascination: the slave of Athens, where he was allowed free citizens, to monasteries and convents during the Middle Ages as the only islands of literacy. Will the rise of information technology opened by the door for a wider distribution of knowledge, or will it only reinforce the existence of social divisions and isolation of knowledge? Some see it as the "implosion of meaning" (Baudrillard) and the other end of history in achieving its goals. What is certain, the dialog is inseparable from education and knowledge as such, in the conceptual definition of both. Freedom is always required to open the second. Since most concrete psychological research and theory to an upsurge of philosophers saw that freedom is what makes the dialog as such. And hence this existential need should be done as postulated by Freire: Revived on the horizon that connects the two independent entities.

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THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE – A MAJOR FACTOR IN MOTIVATION OF PRE-UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Stela Galemba PhD cd,
The Institute of Education Sciences,
Chisinau, Moldavia
ste_gal@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The article addresses the issue of teacher motivation through the elements of organizational culture. It explains the motivational power of organizational culture levels, it is argued dependence of the type of staff motivation organizational culture, the organizational culture is defined by optical ratio "culture: motivation".*

Key words: *teacher motivation; organizational culture; human activity*

Any educational institution can become modern, only through the joint efforts of its members, efforts that are dependent on direct/ indirect their motivation level, the extent to which the staff feels responsible and consciously involved in achieving the objectives of the institution, being motivated internally or externally.

The staff motivation is an extremely complicated process. There are no universal recipes or patterns of motivation, this is a flexible, temporary process and greatly influenced by a number of subjective and objective factors. However, it can be synthesized a series of circumstances, regularities, strategies that would form the basis of a managerial approach to motivate the staff of an organization.

The research shows that the level of motivation and management effectiveness is dependent on the existence of internal organizational schemes of maintenance of this level and one of these mechanisms are organizational culture [1,3,10,11]. In fact, a majority of organizational processes are noticeably influenced by organizational culture.

The organizational culture is considered to be the invisible, intangible "driving force" behind all phenomena and things in every organization, it is the energy that may determine people to act or not, most elements of the organizational culture are intangible, unwritten, but with an extremely high power.

In order to understand how the organizational culture determines people to act, to be involved in achieving the organization's objectives is desirable to clarify what this concept means, what are the components and how they can motivate.

Although the concept of organizational culture has been analyzed in a number of works, is still not a universally recognized definition.

By Nicolescu O. and I. Verboncu, the organizational culture is consisted in all values, beliefs, aspirations, expectations and behaviors contoured over the years in each organization, that prevails within its framework and influences directly and indirectly the functionality and performance [6].

Ouchi W.G. Defines the organizational culture as a set of symbols, ceremonies and myths, those communicate to its members the basic beliefs and values of the organization.

From the definitions mentioned above, we can conclude that the organizational culture is nothing more than a set of values, customs, and traditions, ideas, shared by members of an organization.

Iosifescu Ş. argues that the organizational culture can be defined as a specific complex of values, leading beliefs, representations, understandings, ways of thinking, shared by members of an organization that determine the ways in which these would behave inside and outside of the organization and are sent to new members as the fair.

The specialized literature highlights the idea that this complex of values, customs, traditions, ideas is divided into three levels [2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 etc.].

Level 1, surface (of symbols) includes the physical elements that were constructed, modified, enriched by organization members (the emblem, the spoken language, poster of honor, the dress code, architecture, space, specific organizational procedures, prominent personalities who have worked/taught in this institution, etc.)

Level 2 (attitudes, behaviors, organizational procedures, rituals, ceremonies) are elements that reflect the components, way of thinking and action of respective culture are the fundamental values that provides the identity and moral and psychological stability of all community members.

Level 3 represents the core values that validity has been confirmed a long time ago, they have been turned out viable in most situations that are led to an almost unconditional acceptance of those by the newcomers. The core values are those that generally are not subjected to discussions, debates, are considered to be from the beginning, the only ones that may normally exist. Where a value is strongly supported, behavior based on a different value of this will be considered as totally unacceptable, as something unthinkable. Namely, due to this force of persuasion, the fundamental values and behavior based on these are extremely difficult to change.

We will try to analyze the motivational power of these elements of organizational culture.

According to the research [1,5,10,12,13] the reasons are on the basis of human activity, determined by its energizing pulse, impulse, trends side.

The question appears: what the employee needs can be met via these elements of organizational culture? We will try to answer by appealing to the most popular theory of needs – that of Maslow A. [5]. We remind you that the author has set five groups of needs: 1. the physiological needs, 2. the needs for safety/security, 3. the group membership needs, 4. the needs of esteem and consideration, 5. the needs for self-fulfillment.

Putting the organizational culture levels against levels of human needs, we can deduce a relationship between them. Thus, by offering a suitable space for activity (level 1 of the organizational culture) can meet the needs of the first category. The physical elements of organizational culture transmit meaningful messages about what is important for the institution (cleanliness, order, etc.) and they may or may not cause the staff to follow.

Level 2 (attitudes, behaviors, organizational procedures, rituals, ceremonies) come to meet the need for safety/security. The organizational culture offers protection of its members, provides a feeling of stability and safety. Its role is all the more important, as the speed of changes is higher, especially in education system. The organizational culture has the power to provide the "psychological safety"[3], giving its members a familiar setting in that to express their own personality and opportunities in conditions of comfort and safety. At the same time, we believe that a stable, strong, lasting "psychological safety" can affect the long-term development of the organization.

It happens, that human nature tends to structure their lives, to create a known environment to have, so as to be able to successfully adapt behavior to environmental requirements when are familiar with the context, people enjoy a greater emotional stability and intellectual, should not stay, permanently tensed, waiting for the unpredictable, unknown elements dictate them a different behavior than the normal [6, 10, 12].

Therefore, they feel themselves comfortably in certain structures, with some people around them, with some procedures, that are not likely to present original situations that would require an additional consumption of resources, the human being accepts this stability even if the environment has a number of unpleasant traits, but they already know, have some specific defense mechanisms developed. Uncertainty, fear, occurs when there can appear new unknown elements when the man is asked to change his activity without knowing the essence and in this case the majority prefer stability, routine.

A study conducted by researchers from Iasi (Romania) [4] identifies a number of defining elements of the organizational culture of secondary education institutions in Moldova. The researchers have called a "culture of routine" with the following characteristics:

- the uniformity presents both in the overall look of the schools and in the mentalities of interest groups. The decoration and "dressing" schools and classrooms are the classic, largely linked to the subjects and unattractive carried.
- The lack of initiative, indicated by the tendency to imitate (the exchange of experience, mutual assistance at the lessons, is a form of the required continuous education), the constant expectation of "indications" and the fear of directors and teachers to assume the initiatives ("if someone comes from administration and says it's wrong")
- The tenderer excessive focus on education and not the student.
- The feeling of uncertainty because of the rapid changes taking place in education system.
- The generation gap (mainly of teachers, who are close to retirement or very young with different patterns of thought and education)
- The feeling of ineffectiveness and/or uselessness school.

Can such an organizational culture motivate? Yes, motivates, people prefer uniformity instead of creativity, innovation not imitation, the strict focus on curriculum, not the student's educational needs, etc.

It is evident, that the organizational culture of schools in our country has points of contact. Maybe there are a lot because the organizational culture appears at the interface between individual and cultural elements prevailing nationwide. The individual cultural background looms the national culture, members of the national culture elements adapted to specific activities [4, 9, 11]. So, educational organization culture integrates the values, principles, patterns of thinking that are consistent with the values, principles, models of society thinking within the school organization activities. This allows each organization to develop its own cultural pattern and all it affects the vitality and functionality of the models that are different from those promoted in the respective society.

Returning to the relationship between levels of organizational and human needs, we continue the idea, that organizational culture provides the feeling of belonging to a specific community, thereby satisfying the needs of group membership (the need to be accepted as a partner, as a member of the group). In this case performing work in an institution with a strong culture will become a motivator for employees who perceive a need of belonging. They will say with pride: "I activate in school X" with that he is identified automatically, to activate in this school is for a teacher a motivator.

Level 3 of organizational culture offers the premises for meeting needs of 4 and 5 rank of the hierarchy. We believe that organizational culture are its own and consistently promotes values such as respect, human assessment, professionalism, the equity provides the proper motivation in order to meet the perceived needs of esteem, appreciation, seal-fulfillment, etc.

The organizational culture is a collective phenomenon, because it is eventually accepted (at least partially) by the people that live and work together in the same social average where a successful outcome was. Each member of an organization has an individual culture, consisting of systems of knowledge, values, symbols, attitudes and behaviors that define personality and makes decisions and actions in relation to other components of the community where he works.

G.Hofstede argues that organizational culture has a pattern, a collective mental programming that distinguishes the members of a particular social class of members of other groups or social categories. So, still are looking for his own identity man will be found in the cultural space that represents a human being or defines to some extent. Each of us has a set of core values and we will feel ourselves comfortably in a homogenous context with our set of values where we can interact with people who have similar patterns.

At the same time, we learn to mold our own systems of values, attitudes and behaviors according to standards that are accepted by others around [1]. Namely, the organizational culture molds individual and group identity. Through the displayed values, through activities, the organizational culture puts pressure on a newcomer in its framework, causes changes in the way of perceptions, thought and in action areas. In order to be accepted the individual will tend to "redesign" certain personality traits, so as to fit better the group that wants to work.

So the organizational culture through its levels is a determinant major of the members' behavior of some organization. In the organizations with a viable organizational culture, strong employees know what is expected from them and what types of decisions and action methods accepted. As a result, they focus rapidly their actions on achieving established objectives. And vice versa, weak cultures, in that there are no generally accepted behavioral decision patterns, the employees will not take responsibility. We believe that the motivational power of organizational culture depends on the type. Literature offers several classifications of organizational culture. One of these classification identifies 4 types of culture organizations:[9]:

1. The culture of power: control/power emanates from the center, prevails the power and personnel resources, this culture serves the leader. In this case the director, the authority has, may adopt a pattern of behavior or decisions that motivate/ affect any of its employees effectively. The leaders are real patterns for employees. In this regard, it is recommended that they should have a high capacity for empathy, can understand and to be understood. The important source of motivation and persuasion ability is represented by the own cultural basis, the system of beliefs, values, attitudes.
2. The culture of roles: classical structure, the bureaucratic nature, roles are more important than the people who occupy them, dominate the power positions and the power experts is tolerated, theirs culture serves the cause of the structure.
3. The task culture: the emphasis is on carrying out the activity, power experts prevails, but personal power and position of hierarchical group are more important, the unifying force is manifested in a high level of collaboration.
4. The person's culture: a lot of people, usually professionals working in the same room/rooms but following their separate role, power is not an important element because the members are experts, each in his field this type of culture promotes self-fulfillment, the potential development.

We believe that any school that does not have a pure type of organizational culture, but a mixed culture with the predominance of one of these types. As a rule, we find in each school a "cultural mix" and expanding the "culture of work" with elements of the other mentioned patterns.

We highlight the classification of types of organizational culture formulated by Demison D.R. [2], considering as a more relevant classification closer to the specific of education. The author identifies 4 types of the organizational culture: the group culture, the development culture, the rational culture and hierarchical culture.

– The group culture is concerned with especially human relations. This culture emphasizes the flexibility and internal organization.

In this culture, core values, respectively, the motivational factors are: ownership, trust, participation, commitment, cohesion. The major criterion of the effectiveness of this pattern is the development of human potential.

– The development culture emphasizes the flexibility and charge. The culture values the professional growth, performance, creativity. The key factors that motivate the development, stimulation, creativity.

– The rational culture highlights the performance, achievement. Organizations with a rational culture rely on well-defined objectives. The motivating factors are: competitiveness, the success of those set. Criteria of effectiveness of this pattern are planning, productivity and efficiency.

–The hierarchical culture emphasizes the internal efficiency, uniformity, coordination and evaluation the focus is on a logic internal organization and stability. The purpose of the organization is focusing on proper execution and hierarchical culture within regulations. The motivating factors are security, order, rules and regulations. The efficacy criteria are the control, stability and efficiency.

Analyzing these patterns, we find that each of them has the tangential points and diametrically opposed points of view. The group culture that emphasizes control, the culture of development that is characterized by flexibility and focus on the external environment, is in opposition to the hierarchical culture that emphasizes control. At the same time, the group culture and development are focused on flexibility and cultural development and the rational is focused on external relations.

What kind of culture is characteristic of school organizations in our country? It is unlikely to find any institution with a pure pattern. But it seems that it does not need it because too much flexibility can create chaos, too much order and control can lead to rigidity, bureaucracy.

In our institutions may be found the paradoxical combinations of values. In this context, we appreciate the valuable idea told by Demison D.R. [2] that nowadays, organizations need a new kind of organizational culture, the culture of competing values, that are a cultural pattern with a combination of values from all other types. Namely this type will facilitate the individual and organizational change.

The motivation of teachers can be influenced by organizational climate that dominates in a certain period of time in the organization.

The recent studies explain the link between the organizational culture and organizational climate. Analyzing the relationship between these concepts, Demison D.R. [2] argues that the organizational climate can be regarded as a code, a logical structuring of behaviors and meanings, that successfully passed the test of time and serves as a guide for members of the organization to adapt and survive, while organizational climate is an area of much smaller extent, being partially a subjective reaction to the impact of Organizational culture of organization members and indicates how an individual shares the core values and beliefs.

According to Nicolescu O. and Verboncu I. organizational climate expresses the mood of the staff that tends to prevail in a certain period, reflecting both the organizational culture and recent developments of organization [6].

In conclusion, the organizational climate is a result of employees' perceptions who exert a major influence on their behavior, in a certain period of time, both an individual interpretation and the organization's collective culture.

The organizational climate is characterized in terms of psycho emotional skills (opinions, fears, positive or negative feelings of employees and a major influence on their behavior in a certain period of time.

The organizational climate variables are an excellent indicator of the mood of the employees in the form of suggestions or solutions for motivation of employees.

It is considered the climate is directly responsible for the "health" of the organization, so as school " health" is characterized by an open climate, participative and that promotes human potential and competitiveness based on competence, mobilizes the efforts of all the as providing a quality education.

Finally, through the optics of ratio, "the organizational culture: the staff motivation" we conclude that organizational culture is a system of values, beliefs, activity principle, norms, symbols specific to educational institutions that become the reference major determinant of behavior, the essential factor in teacher motivation / demotivation.

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CREATING AND DEVELOPING THE COMPETENCE OF READING/ LECTURING AT SMALL AGE PUPILS

Mariana Norel, Ph. D.
Transilvania University of Braşov,
Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences
mariana_norel@unitbv.ro

Abstract: *For secondary education, especially for the first 2 mandatory grades, the scholar year of 2013-2014 means to apply new educational plans and curriculum, approved by OMEN no.3371/12.03.2013 and by OMEN no.3418/19.03.2013. We aim to analyze the curricula for* ***Romanian language and communication*** *(for preparatory grade and for 2nd grade)* ***and Romanian language and literature*** *(for 3rd and 4th grades), in order to highlight the role of training in creating and developing the competence of reading/lecturing inside the framework personality and in cultural development of young pupils.*

Keywords: *key-competence, , reading, communication, cultural development*

1. Introduction

Creating a modern and efficient educational system in Romania of the 3rd millennium, implies first of all a positive attitude towards school and learning, coming from all educational actors.

One of the major concerns of a teacher in primary education system, at *Romanian language and communication* classes / *Romanian literature and language* is to create and develop reading competence at young pupils, wishing to help them become avid readers, capable to read texts from different domains: literature, administration, journalism, science and of course cartoon subtitles, etc.

In 2013-2014 we proposed to teachers from preparatory and 1st grades a new challenge, approved by OMEN no.3418/19/03.2013: a curriculum centred on competences. We note that curriculum is for 2nd grade, and will be available from the following scholar year. In this scholar year for 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades, teachers use actual curricula, approved by OME no.4686/05.08.2003 (curricula for 2nd grade), OMEC no.5198/01.11.2004 (curriculum for 3rd grade), OMEC no.5198/1.11.2004 (curriculum for 4th grade).

2. Creating and developing the lecture competence is an attribute of curriculum

Our study aims to analyze the actual curricula in order to highlight the way it aims to create and develop the competence of reading/lecturing inside the framework of personality and for cultural development of the young pupil.

Why do we have this aim?

Because all international statistics show a sad reality – Romania, in all three of the PIRLS tests (tests aiming to assess the 4th graders ability to read: to understand and use simple written language as society requires / and as people value) found itself in the second half of the global ranking, holing 22 place from 36 participating countries, in 2001 and place 36 from 45 participating countries in 2006 and 2011.

PIRLS – *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study* – represents a comparative study between reading performances of the participating states at the end of the primary education cycle. It one of the most ambitious evaluative approaches taken by IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) , which wants to measure and interpret different national systems, to contribute at teaching improvement and in the same time at improve abilities reading, in the whole world.

The purpose of presenting results isn't to create a classification, but to diagnose the current state of the progress in the educational area of reading, by comparing national practices to international ones, in order to attract the attention of decision makers from the participating countries. As it can be verified, the international assessment takes place once at 5 years – representing the duration of the primary education cycle in most of the participating countries, duration which is the same now for Romania, too.

The Ministry of National Education, in partnership with the institute of Educational Sciences implements a POSDRU project – *Effective education based on fundamental decisions. Strategies for international assessment of learning outcomes* – with the help of this project, during the training sessions held for teachers in primary educations and for Romanian language / maternal language teachers, inspectors, school managers and methodologists for disciplines involved in PIRLS of the participating, they managed to sensitise the decision makers from the Romanian education system, highlighting the proposal development for improving the curricula and the exploration of different teaching strategies needed to stimulate the reading skills (we referred only to the segment that interests us in terms of our study, actually the project is more complex and offers multiple perspectives needed to connect the national educational system to the international one.

PILS tests include 6 processes of text comprehension:

- ✓ Extracting given explicit information;
- ✓ Creating direct conclusion;
- ✓ Interpreting and integrating ideas and information;
- ✓ Examination and assessment of educational contents, language and textual elements.

Ensuring basic education for all, according to social and economical requirements of a knowledge based society that requires- according to the document Mandatory Reform in Education in Romania, 2003 - the formation of the following basic competences: communication abilities; writing, reading and numeracy; digital and informational literacy; scientific and technologic culture; entrepreneurial culture; communication in different international languages wide spread; civic culture and behaviour; democratic citizenship, critical thinking; ability to adapt at new situations; team working; personal development and continuous learning. In designing the curricula for Romanian language and literature *Annex 2 Domains of Key Competences – Definitions, Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes) from Interim working document for the objectives 1.2. (Developing the skills for the knowledge society), 3.2. (Developing the spirit of enterprise), 3.3. (Improving learning ability of foreign languages).*

In *Table 1. Summary table for the training and development of the reading competence at young pupils*, we represented correspondence between specific competences in preparatory grades to the 2nd grade and specific objectives from the 2nd grade to 4th grade for creating a unitary image of the way curricula aim to develop the receptivity of different written messages, in well known communication situations and not only. At the 2nd grade we introduced specific objectives from the present curricula and specific competences of the second paradigm, offering examples for the creation of the new paradigm, centred on competences.

An precise analysis of the curriculum for Romanian language and communication for preparatory, 1st and 2nd grades, followed by the analyze of the Romanian language and literature, for 3rd and 4th grades, show that difficulties encountered by students when decoding messages, aren't necessary linked to the absence of certain specific competences or objectives, needed to form the reading ability at students. It is also true that new curricula from 2013, offers a new model of curricular design, centred on competences. As we can see in the curricula approved in 2003-2005 the focuses mostly on text interpretation, even on identifying and valorising the information in the text. In other words, working with books is taken into consideration, aiming on one hand to respect the age specific and on the other to value the cyclic construction of curricula for developing reading competence.

Future curricula for 3rd and 4th grades should continue this vision, which can result in their implementation in teaching, in supporting reading at home and in motivating students to learn more in order to achieve better results at national and international test. More we encourage the described practices and we'll assist at national evaluations at the end of 2nd and 4th grades, justified by fundamental acquisitions (at the end of 2nd grade) and by the primary education cycle graduation (4th grade).

As for the educational contents, we observe a gradual introduction of the literary and informative texts; in the preparatory grade the accent sets on reading usual symbols; in 1st grade after learning basic writing and reading, it sets on reading short texts (with no more than 75 words), introduced step by step; in the 2nd grade we concentrate on reading literary and short informative texts (with less than 120 words) while in 3rd and 4th grades children should be able to reflect the universe of their childhood and their own values, to discover logical segments of texts, spatial and temporary elements of action, physical and moral characteristics of characters, and all this without using specific language.

3. Conclusions

Changes in curricula should lead to changes in the textbooks and on the other to rethink the resources used in the educational process. Cultural development is possible as long as all factors involved in the training process of young pupils offer real teaching opportunities, allowing lecture to be perceived as life experience. The construction of the new curriculum contribute to the developing training profile of students in primary education and to personalised teaching, ensuring a personal and general formation and development of competences in the classroom.

Table.1. Summary table for the training and development of the reading competence at young pupils

Preparatory grade	**1st grade**	**2nd grade**	**3rd grade**	**4th grade**	**Curricular standards of performance**
General competence 3. Reception of different written messages in known communication contexts			**General objective 3. Developing the capacity to perceive written message (reading/lecture)**		
		3.1 to identify the basic element of text organization on the page	3.1 to identify basic elements of literary /non-literary text organization on the page	3.1 to identify the role of illustration coming with texts	S7. Drawing main ideas in a narration
3.1. Recognizing of common words, written with both small and capital letters.	3.1. Reading words and short phrases, written with both small and capital letters.	3.2 to draw important information from a read text 3.1. Reading written messages	3.2 to draw main ideas from a read text	3.2 to grasp main ideas and details in a read text (literary –non-literary)	
3.2. Identifying signification of images, facts, or phenomena or any common	3.2. To identify short texts presenting facts, or phenomena or	3.3 to read fluently, accurately and expressively short known	3.3 to read consciously accurately, fluent and expressive a known text	3.3 to read consciously accurately, fluent and expressive a known text	S6. To read consciously and accurate a text

Preparatory grade	**1st grade**	**2nd grade**	**3rd grade**	**4th grade**	**Curricular standards of performance**
General competence 3. Reception of different written messages in known communication contexts			**General objective 3. Developing the capacity to perceive written message (reading/lecture)**		
events	any common events	texts			
		3.2. To identify a text's message about facts, phenomena or common events			
3.3. Identifying the signification of symbols containing common urgent necessity messages	3.3. Identifying the signification of symbols containing common messages.	3.4 to read in own time a small text	3.4 to read correctly an unknown text	3.4 to read consciousness and accurately a short unknown text	
		3.3. Identifying signification of symbols in known situation			
			3.5 to recognize narrative sequences and dialogues in a text	3.5 to identify narrative and descriptive sequences and dialogues in a text	S8. Identifying narrative and descriptive sequences and dialogues in a read text S9. Identifying physical and moral characteristics of characters in a read text
			3.6 to recognize in the texts different learned communication constructs	3.6 to recognize in the studied texts, learned communication constructs	
3.4. Using their word to express visual or audio messages. Showing interest in for working with the book.	3.4. Showing interest for reading simple texts with images.	3.5 to show interest for lecture	3.7 to show interest for reading different literary and non-literary texts	3.7 to show interest and initiative in reading different literary and non-literary texts	
		3.4. showing interest for lectures appropriate to their age			

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IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES IN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS - IMPACT STUDY

Anca Egerau, Ph.D.
"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad
anca_petroi@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The process of developing management skills must be addressed in a dynamic perspective, focusing on complex and practical analysis. Self-analysis and self-reflection on one's own career enables educator - managers to relate to the requirements and standards of management positions, to acknowledge the gap between personal aspirations, the level of development of their skills and training opportunities. Responsibility for professional development lies with the educator - manager, the development of their career being determined in relation to personal aspirations, focusing on what they will accomplish in the future.*

Keywords: *transversal competences, transformational management approach, organizational development project, operational leadership.*

1. The need and opportunity of management alternatives

According to the strategic guidelines for the development of managerial skills of teachers, the focus shifts from results, to the generation of new meanings and perspectives to problem-management approaches, occurring at different levels within the school, and assessment of the opportunity of constructive analysis of the development and implementation of actionable alternatives (strategies and management styles) by experimental subject groups.

The formative approach targeted the flexible approaches and interactive training processes of educators in schools in urban and rural education, in Arad, by implementing a specific methodology for the development of transversal competences and styles of transformational management approaches, drawing such complex interactions by the school. The department's priority was to improve and optimize the management practices of school organizations, exceeding the explanatory ascertaining, appreciative or critical spirit that prevails in such action. At the same time, this process of reflection and self-assessment of personal involvement and participation mechanisms, is of particular relevance for formative experiment, the results obtained in step post - test and retest.

2. Analysis of qualitative data provided by the training log and semi-structured interviews

During the formative experiment, subjects in the experimental group used a specific instrument – training journal to stimulate meta-evaluation as a means of constant reflection on the process of development of managerial styles and strategies, and their impact on a personal and organizational level. Respecting the experimental design, we conducted 12 semi-structured individual interviews (3 in each school that included the experimental sample) to find and highlight the changes in terms of styles of management approaches, as a result of the subject's participation in formative experiment, but also after the implementation of projects to improve and optimize the educational interrelation.

Qualitative analysis of information provided during the interviews by the subjects, especially those drawn from formative logs reveal important issues regarding the facing educators to new concepts and guidelines of management approach:

- Educators' reflections on previous management practices involved in conducting formative experiments of their own styles of management approach, revealed predominant focus on tasks in achieving results without obvious concerns of current theories and adapt to new realities actionable educational alternatives. Subjects statements are inconclusive in this regard. "To me the style of management approach was a great unknown, which is part of my personality equation. An important aspect of my work consisted of the application of regulations and obtaining performance for the recognition of the school locally."(A.M)

- Regarding the strategies used to motivate and stimulate interrelation on an organizational level, many educators felt that they were not carefully designed, without being optimally integrated in the educational activity, and is often a neglected aspect. I noted the following: "An inappropriate emotional state prevents me sometimes to use a democratic style, taking authoritative decisions without communicating these intentions in advance. " (P.B)
- Another aspect mentioned by the subjects, regarding practiced management approaches, referred to inefficient management of problem situations, by delayed reactions, the delay in resolving problems and making unilateral decisions : "Because we have an overloaded curricula I became more of an administrator and less of a manager, and the problems I'm facing are becoming more complex and diverse. I often felt that I was overwhelmed and did not know how to address them effectively, so as to gain time, but to find a solution. So what was my role? "(C.M)
- Educators have noted that their initial preparation for the teaching profession has suffered in terms of management skills training, which led to an incorrect assessment of their managerial potential, by overrating or underrating themselves. In this regard they stated: "I had the tendency to overstate my abilities and managerial skills, considering them as a gift of nature, or I preferred to avoid certain situations when I considered that problems were beyond me. "(D.V)
- Through active involvement in the development of educational programs, educators have noted that they are part of a process of transformation, restructuring of the interrelationship mechanism, while acknowledging at the same time the limits of passive / avoidant managerial styles. Here's what they said, "a real danger for me is the routine that can be easily installed and the fact that I participate in such training leads me to refocus on how to address the meaning of transactional and transformational management. It is a long and difficult road, but not impossible."(A.C)
- Educators have emphasized the role of intellectual stimulation in the development of human resources in the educational organization by implementing styles of transformational management approaches. Subjects noted that transposition in various managerial roles, contributed not only to realizing the difficulties not only in addressing their situational awareness but also to the discovery and application of alternative action. These benefits were assessed as follows: "After role-play I discovered another way of effective management approach through inspirational motivation exerted on educational partners . Thus I realized how collective attention can be developed, how we can improve teamwork, reacting positively and getting involved directly in resolving educational issues. "(L.R)
- The use of strategies of qualitative and quantitative analysis of school climate within the ongoing training program was assessed as having special value for educators, facilitating their involvement in achieving institutional and individual diagnosis. The impact of formative experiment is evidenced by the following statements: "I was curious and preoccupied to apply the tools presented and developed in creative workshops, making a real team diagnostic study in a professional manner."(F.D)
- Regarding efficiency styles Peer and self management approaches it has been noted that the relevance of the criteria used , and the benefits of these procedures on motivational and emotional state : "The organization of a design contest provided an opportunity to address in a original way the development of communication and influencing relationships, developing my self-confidence, but especially my confidence in the team."(L.S)
- Educators have realized the importance of design, monitoring, evaluation and self-regulation of management practices, their options for how to deal with management is influenced

by the perception of the educational environment. The need to optimize the learning environment was another issue mentioned by the subjects: "I realized that it is very important to create an optimal climate, based on co-operation and inter-knowledge that lead to greater group cohesion." (H.M)

- The Formative Program supported the subjects in making an assessment as to the potential management objectives specific to each person, but also in estimating the difficulties in implementing styles of transactional and transformational managerial approaches. "We realized that we encountered difficulties in defining priorities and responsibilities, but also that it is important to evaluate my capabilities and managerial skills. " (A.N)
- Formative instruments designed and implemented in the creative workshop proved useful in raising awareness of the need for professional development, assessing management effectiveness evaluation sheets. "We realized as we applied these tools that they are useful in observing systematic management practices, in systematizing information and situational modeling default."(R.T)
- Teachers appreciated the restructuring of the styles of management approaches due to ownership and action by engaging in complex roles and performing different styles of management approach . In this respect we mention: " This program has facilitated training formative responsibility in each of us in order to address various situations. I discovered through role play, what strategies and management approaches are effective in such cases. " (B.R)
- Subjects mentioned in large numbers both in training diary and in individual interviews that such pedagogical research is indispensable in improving management practices. "To develop the optimum communication and influence within the school organization it is necessary to participate in such programs, which focus on addressing practically the real problems we face."(T.A)
- The training log and individual interviews provided qualitative information on the translation which subjects performed, following the formative experiment, towards a transactional and transformational management approach. Their assessments are relevant: "I learned how to improve my management approach and style and with their help how to develop cohesion within the group of students, how to effectively use information I received." (SM)" I learned how to become a good manager , and how to influence others to achieve their goals. " (C.R.)

By using various methods and instruments for data collection is a tendency to restructure styles of management approach to the whole experimental sample.

3. Analysis of data provided by the educator portfolio - manager

Educator-manager portfolio focuses a great deal of tools and products developed during the training program, both through personal effort, and especially through teamwork, and the results of their application by the school. Using this my goal was to create a complex system of information, with data and indicators which can provide a clear picture of progress every educator made in what concerns the styles of management approach, by reference to the entire educational activity. This portfolio includes the following:

- quantitative and qualitative analysis sheets of educational needs;
- checklist for situational modeling;
- sheet for peer assessment of organizational development projects;
- self assessment of management strategies and styles;
- observation protocols of how to approach management;
- project to improve and optimize the educational relations;
- training diary;
- other products and tools used during the formative experiment .

Educator - manager portfolio assessment was made based on multi-criteria - *rating scale for portfolios*, that address the following issues:

- planning and interpretation of information collected;
- management approach and original creative problem-situations;
- modeling situational relevance and timeliness;
- relevance (situational appropriateness) stimulating educational strategies;
- project feasibility (adequacy of the opportunities and resources available);
- diversity of products in the portfolio;
- projects developed scientific correctness;

Unit and consistency of materials averages were used to, based on test t for one single sample, resulting in an observed average (29) significantly higher than the theoretical average (26), which indicates interest, and effort involved educators, managers in the formative experiment to developing an original and creative manner portfolio management (table 1).

Table 1. Educator -manager variable scores portfolio - comparison between observed and theoretical average

Educator -manager variable portfolio	*Theoretical*	*Observed*
Minimum score	7	13
Maximum score	45	45
Average	26	29
Average difference significance	t= 6,029 relevant for p<.01	

Table 2. Variable educator - portfolio manager - descriptive statistics
Variable Portfolio Management

Managerial Portfolio Variable	
Average	31,54
Median	31,50
Module	31
Standard deviation	8,314
Variable	76,793
Minimum	14
Maximum	45

The central tendency values are equal (31), with maximum values at the middle frequency of the data series (Table 2), so that the scores are distributed according to a regular and symmetrical curve. Regarding averaged a comparative analysis was made by reference to the following independent variables: gender investigated subjects (Table 3), the category of teachers (Table 4), and the professional development (Table 5). In relation to these criteria we find that there are significant differences between the means obtained, this being revealed additional calculations by SPSS (calculation method variance ANOVA and partial regression coefficient calculation). The variable educator -manager portfolio is therefore a very small extent predicted by variables: gender of the subject, category and level of teacher professional development.

Table 3. Differences between the means obtained by the variable – gender

	Gender		*Total*
	Male	*Female*	
N	80	110	190
Average	30,91	31,99	31,54
Standard deviation	7,250	9,036	8,314

Table 4. Differences between the means obtained by the variable - staff category

	Staff Category		*Total*
	Staff with managerial positions	*Staff with non - managerial positions*	
N	46	144	190
Average	30,00	31,96	31,54
Standard deviation	9,073	7,972	8,314

Table 5. Differences between the averages obtained by the variable - professional development

	Professional development				
	Debutant	*Tenured*	*Second level teacher*	*First level teacher*	*Total*
N	32	58	76	24	190
Average	30,24	33,78	30,04	32,65	31,54
Standard deviation	5,531	8,235	9,530	10,048	8,314

3. Conclusions

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the products that make up the educator - manager portfolio and the tools used during the formative intervention revealed among educators in the experimental group, the tendency of restructuring management approach styles in the sense of taking responsibility, of action but also enhanced personal efforts to implement transactional and transformational management styles. Therefore the collected results in the stages of posttest and retest will be processed qualitatively and quantitatively to confirm or refute the effectiveness of formative tools used in the formative program to see if these changes occur at an individual and organizational level.

The process of developing management skills must be addressed in a dynamic perspective, focusing on complex and practical analysis. Self-analysis and self-reflection on one's own career enables educator - managers to relate to the requirements and standards of management positions, to acknowledge the gap between personal aspirations, the level of development of their skills and training opportunities. Responsibility for professional development lies with the educator - manager, the development of their career being determined in relation to personal aspirations, focusing on what they will accomplish in the future.

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SCHOOL ORIENTATION AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE COMING FROM PROTECTION INSTITUTIONS

Alina Costin, PhD
"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad
alinatcostin@yahoo.com

Abstract:*The present study follows the evaluation of the professional integration process of young people, and I want to emphasize the aspects related to school orientation and professional integration process, and also to underline the importance of AJOFM implication in the identification process of a work place for this segment of population. Teenagers who want to become employed do not need just support of school orientation to meet the requirement of labour market but also support to identify a suitable work place. This task is successfully completed by employment agencies.*

Key words: *professional integration, school orientation, young people, protection institutions, labour market*

The studied sample

The sample included in the research comprises young peoples which came from the protection institutions, in the area of Arad County and who were professionally integrated between 2009 and 2013. The young people were contacted /identified through personal networks, social homes and through students in their social work practice activities.

The socio-demographic structure of the sample

They were selected 50 young people post – institutionalized with ages between 19 and 32 years old, from which 34 were boys and 16 were girls.

Taking into account the studies level, the situation is the following: 12 from them are graduated from the highschool, 21 graduated the courses of professional schools, 3 of them have superior studies and 14 from them graduated the courses of the post-highschools. This situation is presented in the following table:

Table 1.The sample structure on studies levels

Total number of young people	Highschool graduates	Professional school or trades school graduated	Faculty graduates	Post-highschool graduates
50	12	21	3	14

The data on which are based the revealed results from this paper were collected using more research methods. Beside *the sociologic inquiry* (based on an interview or questionnaire), we used *the documents analysis* (we studied the statistic data, the legislation, the official documents, the social policy in the domain).

The applied questionnaires, the interviews with these young people, and also the study of the occupation policies addressed to them, offered us the possibility to shape a picture regarding the perspectives that they have to occupy a work place and to underline the importance of school orientation activities unfolded in the institutionalization period.

School and professional orientation

School and professional orientation is a problem with great actuality and general interest, its importance and necessity being justified by the newness and the diversity of the services appeared on the labour market. In the case of the young people coming from institutions, the professional orientation is realised fewer accord with the personality and the internal resources of that. This fact is due to the special „ achieved" deficiencies, which are the consequences of the numerous deprivation suffered by them.

In the actual socio-economic context, school and professional orientation obtain a special importance: "*in the present nobody doubts about the fact that it must be as influent and active in the adequation plan with the labour market reality and the social changes, as in the educational psychological plan"* (Jigău, 2001, p.13).

Personality factors involved in School and professional orientation (SPO)

The present study pursues the evaluation of the professional integration process of the young people protected in institutions, and that is why the orientation and the choice of trades are relevant for the studied theme. It is well known that the free and adequate choice of a profession supposes maturity and a good psychological training of the individual.

The pupil`s psychological training regards the intellectual, affective-motivational and willing character elements; *„by the harmonious unite of the three elements which means the forming to the pupils of an equilibrate system of representations and notions, mental proceeding of work, general and specific aptitudes, the forming of attractions, willing, aspirations, interests, professional ideals followed consistent and firmness, passing through the obstacles from internal or external nature by supporting voluntary effort and manifesting the moral probity towards the social requirements which ensure the agreement between what it must be, what he desire and what he can realise the subject, therefore the possibility of optimal realisation of the SPO"* (Zăpârţan., 1990, p. 6).

Thus, the self-knowledge has a particular importance in SPO act, supposing the self-identification of the following elements of the personality.

The encoding of the self-image. A good self-image means self-esteem, optimism, trust in the own forces, success source in the career. M. Borelli and R. Perron utilised a scale of attributes-values in which the ordering is made according to the own system of evaluation or the individual values scale, of self-portrait or the ideal self. An important moment in the deciphering of the self-image is represented by the understanding of the own statute, which is realised reporting the self-evaluation made by the subject to the evaluation that he believe that he enjoy in the other eyes.

The completed interviews show that to the institutionalised children these processes are realised more slowly and carry the mark of the untidy and instable life from the institutions, and I refer here to „*the episodic separations, the number of the persons who are taking care of them and the continuous changing to which the institutionalised child must accustom himself and which lead to disorientation, the reality distortion, anxiety, apathy and renouncement*" (Neamţu, op.cit., p. 801).

The abilities, aptitudes and skills identification represents a condition of the SPO **in** the mean that it is necessary to put into relation the own resources with the reality of the labour market.

The greater is the similarity and agreement between the own resources and the personality type with the occupation, the more will the individual be satisfied and more performing at the work place. That is why, the identification of the own abilities, aptitudes and skills is essential in the professional orientation process of the individual. In the same time it is necessary that the young people be informed regarding the existent professions and for which he will be suited; in this situation he can benefit from the counselling services, information regarding the SPO offered by the institutions or by the agents from the National Agency for Work Forces Occupation (after they leave the institutions).

The following table shows the existing relation between the activity domains, abilities, aptitudes, skills and the correlating professions:

Table 2.The connexion abilities, skills and the adequate choice profession
(Students textbook: Counselling for your future, 2004, p.13):

Activities types	**Abilities and skills**	**Possible professions**
Everyday environment activities	Spatial orientation, planning and adjustment capacity, solving problems, communication, mechanical aptitudes, manual abilities, initiative	Driver, reception clerk to a hotel, postal office worker, shop assistant
House holding and menial activities	The planning of the family budget, taking decisions, the priorities establishment, communication, aesthetic sense in interior and exterior arrangements, mechanic abilities for minor reparations	Cook, decorator, house painter, plumber, gardener
Nourishment	Financial planning, punctuality, interpersonal communication, artistic sense, creativity, attention to details, commercial abilities, hygienic skills, thoroughness	Chief cook, administrator, freelancer in the nourishment sphere
Textile industry	Manual, motor coordination, group communication, colour sense, visual acuity, effort resistance, material and financial resources planning, creativity	Tailor, freelancer in the fashion domain, decorator, textiles engineer
Social activities	Skills for working in group, communication capacity, teaching abilities, leader abilities, creativity, sensibility to details, perseverance, responsibility, empathy, the motivation of others	Counsellor, psychologist, social worker, consultant professor human resources, psychotherapist

Interests have complex structures and contain elements of cognitive, affective and connotation structure. Distinction can be made between school interests (which take the form of a selection of one`s favourite school subjects) and professional interests, expressed and manifested that are usually in agreement with the type of school where the students are enrolled.

The bases of professional orientation are set in school where school orientation includes the elements of future career orientation. J.Burinaux stated that a pupil is actively involved in his orientation, i.e. a dialogue with himself during which he decides for or against after balancing theoretical and practical knowledge on the one hand and desires, interests and professional aspirations, on the other. The situation of institutionalized children is different from the one of children living in natural families. When he talks to himself, he does it with lacks in self-image knowledge, of his qualities, limitations, talents and abilities. Holland noted that interest and preference for certain fields of activity is bound to the personality types: realistic, inquiring, artistic, social, entrepreneur, conventional. For institutionalized children we face various cases of slightly shaped personality, i.e. an inefficient self-determination that would lead to random and unproductive associations between the personality type and the chosen profession.

Ginsburg argues that choosing a profession is linked to the following factors: each person`s life environment, the level of education and professional training, personality and affective characteristics, the values he adheres to.

Motivation has also an important role in SPO**.** The teenager will be determined to work, will aspire to a profession and have a certain image of his professional path according to behavioural models that are connected to work and are discussed in the family. Without them and if the institution provides everything for him, the teenager is more likely to feel demotivated, entitled to obtain everything without any effort, ending as an irresponsible person. One can infer that institutionalized teenagers face difficulties in choosing the right profession because the process of school and professional orientation involves a certain coordination between the demands and the peculiarities of each profession and the person`s internal resources (skills, abilities and interests). Another belief is that due to the environment they live in and their experiences they show dysfunctions on the level of self-knowledge and self-determination.

The questionnaire results underline once again the vulnerability of these teenagers, their distrust in the future, a low motivation for professional fulfilment. The moment they leave the residential centre is a very difficult one for them: the lack of material and affective support, the lack of a house, the feeling of frustration and confusion determined by the fact that they are totally unprepared for life and for the teenage period they cross.

The offer of social services for children in difficulty is rich and plentiful. It can be noticed that the number of teenagers leaving institutions decreases from 152 in 2007 to 65 in 2009. This proves that prevention services offered in our county are effective and that alternate services have been developed. Discharges for the protection service in the past years show that most teenagers are transferred, i.e. oriented towards adults` fostering centres. They would become long term or even lifelong beneficiaries of social work services.

Thus, children who are about to be discharged from these institutions are prepared for independent life long before this moment, according to each one`s needs and level of maturity (mentioned in assessment reports filled in periodically). The child is helped to know and discover his abilities and skills in order to find a suitable profession. There is no case of discharge when the teenager does not have a job or a place to stay.

The number of jobs taken up by the individual shows their instability. The experience of changing jobs is repeated several times in a year but eventually insecurity and lack of money make them accept the conditions more easily.

Some of them report dissatisfaction with the fact that they are encouraged/ obliged to attend professional school courses and less are encouraged to enrol in highschools or universities. Specialists in the field explain that the fact is determined by the teenagers` lack of interest for studies, most of them being interested in studies only to prolong their residence in the centre. On the other hand, insufficient funds lead to a preference for discharges and immediate employment (more easily to be achieved after attending a professional school, due to Arad`s labour market demands).

Perspectives of professional integration of post-institutionalized teenagers

According to Law no 116/2002 on preventing and combating social exclusion, ANOFM is obliged to develop a personalized social support for young people aged 16 to 25, who are in need or at risk of professional exclusion, in order to facilitate their access to a job. Thus, county agencies for employment organize information campaigns and professional counselling in order to increase these teenagers` employment rate.

The 2009 report of ANOFM (p.19) signals the following situations: 845 contracts of solidarity have been closed and 317 insertion employers have been identified; 710 persons were employed (99 from placement centres, 45 teenagers with children, 133 young families with children and 381 persons belonging to other teenage categories in difficulty).

Job fairs for these categories were organized only by 4 county agencies in 2009. Arad was among them. Data provided by ANOFM show a low attendance of economic agents, namely 78 which offered 744 work places. 931 persons took part in job fairs but only 72 were selected for employment, and 27 teenagers from fostering centres were employed.

- Out of 1.144.000 persons who benefited from employment measures until December 31st, 2013, 255 were post-institutionalized teenagers. 254.889 persons were employed in the first nine months of the year, and among them 69 teenagers were discharged from fostering institutions.

An effective measure to encourage the employment of these teenagers is the job fairs organized once or twice a year only for them.

Conclusions

It can be observed that AJOFM proves interests for this category of disadvantaged teenagers. However, the results are not the expected ones.

The legal framework provides opportunities and perspectives for the teenagers` professional integration; they also ensure the economic agents` openness towards them by the benefits they receive. Currently, the difficulties they encounter are related to the lack of affectionate and material support. The economic situation makes their survival efforts even harder. Most of them are forced to find alternating ways of survival, of course, outside the formal labour market.

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM RESITA

Gianina Cătălina Prodan, PhD.,
„Eftimie Murgu" University of Reşiţa, România,
g.prodan@uem.ro

Abstract: *In the context in which a series of imperatives of pubic politics at a national level are not in agreement with the wishes, aspirations and feelings of common people, community development is identified more with interventions axed on the cultivation of a local democracy with a high degee of pariticipation and public politics initiated by citizens. Community development is correlated with an associative activity at a local level that has as finality an upwards approach of the elaboration of public politics. Actions of community development refer to a more complex process with a higher degree of awarness and analysis. From the stages of this process we can not miss a process of identification of youngs' needs and aspirations, reason for which in this paper we will presend an analysis of the needs of young people from Resita that aim their civic knowledge, abilities and atitudes in connection to a civic participation. This analysis may represent a starting point for the development of an efficient strategy of development of politics for young people.*

Keywords: *community development, democracy, public politics, lobby, advocacy,*

1. Community development – principle of modern and postmodern education

Community development is a complex concept, which supposes change at the community level for the society. The analysis of terms – change and utility – represented an interest, a theme and a debate even since the 19th century. Thus in 1896, the American pedagogue John Dewey opened and experimental school called "the Laboratory school". The purpose of this school was to cultivate social awareness and a democratic vision. The pupils of this school were engaged in educational activities in order to develop their intellectual and to cultivate social relations based on cooperation. The schooling act supposed learning through collaboration, inter-disciplinary, civic learning etc.

J. Dewey believes that the reason for graduating school is not exclusively preparing for a career, but the closeness to an ideal of democracy. In his belief, a school centred on pupils doesn't have a well contoured social direction and this is why we tend to see the child more "competitive" than "intrinsic". This comparison supposes acquisitions fixed by an adult. These acquisitions have the purpose of "knowledge purifying in a mental and moral cavity that is waiting to be filled up". But life means development, a concept that is superior to acquisition. Development implies "an intrinsic plenitude and absolute claims", actions through which we live "for real and in a positive manner" (Dewey, 1916, p.51). The corresponding solution supposes a connection between society and educational change.

In the pedagogue's belief, it is essential for schooling to be correlated to society. The pupils are the ones that will plan and realize a social change. Schools that ignore this aspect will produce egocentric individuals, incapables of development. J. Dewey thus proposes the idea of school and of simplified community. This idea supposes a number of people united by the fact that they work according to common rules, in a common spirit and with common goals. In reality, this embryonic society supposes pupils that are guided in a democratic and cooperative manner and which are involved in "active occupations". This demarche is based on two hypotheses. The first hypothesis is that life, in general and those occupations that serve social need, in particular, represent the key elements of education: "Active occupations refer to manual skills and technical efficiency so that, an immediate satisfaction is found in work" (idem, pag. 197). The second hypothesis is that work leads to development, only if it is guided. This is why schools fulfil a guidance role, but also one for the understanding of pupils.

The ideal of education is supreme. This ideal can be reached when schools functions to change society: "The are some who declare that schools must, pure and simple, reflect social changes which have already happened… others insist that schools must take part actively in the directing of social changes …." (Dewey, 1938, pag. 69). The purpose of education is determined by the type of society, society is the one that influences education.

Elements of J. Dewey's conception are also used by his collaborator W. H. Kilpatrick, known in the education domain through the development of the "project method", a method applied with success in USA primary schools. The project method puts an accent on extra-curricular activities for the development of a community by involving pupils in the process of proposal of public politics and in the influencing of authorities through specific activities of lobby and advocacy. The idea predominant social, are also identified in the conceptions of postmodernist pedagogues:

- The community concept is central to P. Freire's conception (1970). In the pedagogy for the oppressed, the pedagogue proposes a stage of critical transformation, during which people change their statute through a social action. Education supposes a dialogue between pupils and adults, regarding the problems of the community, of the world, by using an inter-disciplinary approach.
- H. Giroux considers culture an artefact, and the school an instrument for its transmission. The pedagogue argues the lack of "moral leadership models necessary for the advancing of interests of a democratic society". This demarche doesn't ensure progress, because excellency implies "new forms of practice and civic participation", and not a quartering in a dominant tradition. The role of schooling is to capacitate people to be "active and critical citizens, capable of fighting for the reconstruction of a public democratic life" (Giroux, 1988, p.245, 296).
- According to Michael Apple's opinion, education indoctrinates pupils by intentionally placing each of them on a pre-established social role and by excluding from education nowadays problems of the society: relations between races, violence, economic and politic control. Schools accentuate the dynamics of power, representing an instrument of pupils' oppression (Apple, 2004, p. 2).

Any development supposes the option for certain values and assumptions that legitimate its process and finality. One of these values is humanism, because development is made for people with their participation. The development of a community starts from the people's needs and aspirations that compose it. Another supposition of community development is participation, development being a process that implies participation in a great measure of the community and hardening the community by developing cooperation abilities and the collective action of its members. Thus, a basic definition presents community development as: "an active participation, if it is possible, in the community's initiative, but, if this initiative doesn't appear spontaneously, challenge and stimulation techniques can be used to obtain an active and enthusiastic reaction."(Smith, 1996, 2006)

Community development is correlated with an associative activity at a local level that has as finality an upwards approach of the elaboration of public politics. An important concept is the one regarding capacity building: special, economic, cultural, technical or ecologic competencies. The developing of capacity is strongly connected to the demarche of elaboration or influencing of public politics at the young people's level. Actions of community development imply a more complex process with a higher degree of awareness and analysis. From the stages of this process the identification process of the young people's needs and aspirations can't be missed, together with the evaluation and hierarchy of alternative actions, the active search for resources and a process of systematic planning.

2. The civic participation of young people from Resita

The analysis of young people's needs at a local level might represent a starting point in the development of an efficient development strategy of politics for the young. For this reason, in May-June 2013 I have applied a questionnaire which was filled in by 710 young people with ages between 18 and 15, from which 242 males and 466 females.

The analysis of young people's needs from Resita aimed at:

- civic knowledge (about democracy the democratic system and public politics);
- cognitive civic abilities regarding a civic participation of young people in the domain of public politics;
- civic behaviours: forms of civic participation;
- attitudes towards the involvement in political action expresses through the importance of a participation to political action (local and general elections, to follow political problems in newspapers, to help people from their community in difficulty),
- political civic abilities: the perception of a personal political efficiency of young people, the degree of familiarity with the problems of the community;
- a present and future political presence of young people.

For the first question "During your education, how did you learn about democracy, citizenship, public politics and other notions of the same type " 39,3% of the young people questioned recognize the role of school in offering information regarding civic knowledge. Also, the mass media means (radio, TV) represent for 38,6% of the young people interviewed modalities of gaining civic knowledge. Non-formal educational activities have a minor role in their civic education: a small percentage of young people declared that they found out information about democracy from activities realized by public institutions or from activities outside schools.

Table 1 - During your education, how did you learn about democracy, citizenship, public politics and other notions of the same type?		
1	From school	39,3%
2	From activities outside schools	11,2%
3	From activities realized by public institutions	8,9%
4	From radio, TV	38,6%
5	Family	2,0%

The second item had the role of questioning the efficiency of a transposal of civic knowledge into practice:

- 38,3 % of the young people interviewed consider that the civic information gained from the activities specified have "somehow" helped them in the interpretation of political events.
- 29,6 % of them consider that the civic information acquired from the activities specified helped "much" in the cooperation with other people in order to solve a problem.
- 38,9 % of the young people questioned sustain they have the capacity to critically approach social events.

Table 2 – In what measure did these activities help you in the developing or acquiring the following…					
	Not at all	A little	Somehow	Much	A lot
The interpretation of political events on the	15,5%	26,8%	28,3%	15,5%	3,9%

basis of real information					
Cooperation with other people in order to solve a problem	5,6%	13,8%	34,9%	29,6%	16,1%
Understanding the fact that an individual implication is important for social change	5,1%	14,4%	30,7%	29,6%	20,3%
A critical approach of social events	11,3%	23,4%	38,9%	20,0%	6,5%
Taking decisions independently	7,1%	18,6%	29,1%	31,1%	14,1%

Item 3 – "When we say about a person that is hold civic virtues we refer to…" – has the role to evaluate the correctitude of civic knowledge. 65,63% of the young people questioned answered correctly to this item – this person "is interested in the goals and the interests of the community".

The perception of young people on what civic participation represents to them is analysed in item 4 – "Which of the following statement refer to the young civic participation". 34,37% of the young people interviewed consider that a civic participation supposes "the contracting of representatives in order to improve politics and programs for the young"; 56,90% of them the variant "participation to the training program for the young"; for 19,71% of the young interviewed "the offering of funds to a young organization" refers to a form of civic participation; the other variants were also chosen "the offering of assistance for young with a risk factor" - 18,02%, "belonging to a political party" - 7,32%. In fact all these aspects refer to the young people civic participation.

Items 5 and 6 "How many of you did you take part in the following activities during the last year" and "How probable is the realization of the following activities" have the role of evaluating the young people's actions and to offer us an image of their future desires and actions.

Table 3 - How many of you did you take part in the following activities during the last year

	Weekly	At least once a month	2-3 times a year	Never
You voluntarily helped a neighbor	14,08 %	32,40 %	41,12 %	12,39 %
Offer voluntary services	6,76 %	12,40 %	26,76 %	53,80 %
Participated in the taking of important decisions at your school	5,91 %	18,02 %	32,68 %	43,38 %
You joined a local protest or signed a petition	4,50 %	11,55%	27,04 %	56,90 %
Contacted a local representative for an important community problem	4,50 %	8,16 %	22,53 %	64,78 %
Objected in an open manner against an injustice	13,80 %	17,46 %	23,39 %	36,06 %
Implicated in mass media discussions regarding community problems	4,50 %	9,30 %	24,51 %	61,70 %

The results obtained reveal a scarce participation of young people in civic activities at the level of local communities. At the level of this age segment and of this community, community development resumes to concepts without applicability and a practical efficiency.

Regarding future civic actions of the young people interviewed, the results are more gratifying. More than half of the sample questioned declared the wish to participate in community development.

Table 4 – How probable is the realization of the following activities

	Certainly yes	Probably yes	I am not sure	Probably not	Certainly not
Have you joined a local protest of signed a petition	7,04 %	21,97 %	27,32 %	24,22 %	19,44 %
Have you contacted a local representative for an important community problem	10,42 %	30,70 %	23,66 %	22,25 %	12,68 %
Have you objected openly against an injustice	10,14 %	8,17 %	21,13 %	29,58 %	30,99 %
Have you got involved in mass media discuss regarding community problems	12,11 %	23,94 %	30,70 %	19,72 %	13,52 %
Have you registered to a political party	41,13 %	21,97 %	21,13 %	8,45 %	7,32 %
Have you started an NGO	7,60 %	14,93 %	29,30 %	27,89 %	20,28 %
Have you run for a public function	5,63 %	16,39 %	18,87 %	32,66 %	35,49 %
Have you notified or written to a newspaper about corruption	12,11 %	24,79 %	25,63 %	19,72 %	17,75 %

For the item 7 *"State three problems with which the town Resita is confronted with*" - 69,4 % of the young people questioned denounced the lack of working places, 18,1 % of the young questioned denounced a poor infrastructure, 12,2% of the young questioned denounce the lack of places and means to spend their free time, , 20,6 % of the young people questioned denounce problems of education (drugs and alcohol), 47,5 % of the young questioned denounce other problems: safety, social differences, the lack of cultural programs, the existence of dilapidated buildings, indifference towards the young, the lack of young at a local level, the lack of community programs, the lack of homes for newly married persons. If we make a comparison with the problems underlined by these studies and reported at a national level, we may confirm the correctitude of the problems identified.

When questioned about the institution that offers credibility in solving these problems, the young people from the town Resita offer a degree of trust close to three institutions: Town Hall, Local Council and County Council. The prefect's institution obtains a degree of trust close to the one offered to specified institutions.

Table 5 – *How much do you trust the following institutions in solving these problems*

	A lot	Much	Some what	A little	Not at all
Town Hall	22	51	128	97	56
Local Council	13	42	117	110	72
County Council	15	41	126	104	68
Prefecture	15	43	105	108	83
Political parties	10	18	72	97	155

The last question *"How interested are you in local community problems"* – has the role to underline the interest of the majority in a civic participation: *14,41% are very interested, 43,22 % are interested, 38,42 % are some what interested and 3,67% are not interested.*

3. Conclusions

In the context in which a series of imperatives of public politics at a national level are not in agreement with the desires, the aspirations, the feelings of common people, a community development identifies more with interventions focused on the cultivating of a local democracy with a high degree of participation and public politics initiated by its citizens. The empowering of young people to participate in a community development and in the initiation of public politics representes a challenge and a necessity.

Community development encourages decisions and participation at a local level, but on the other side it may be looked at as an implementation of national politics at the level of the community and of the local authorities. This process supposes the development of the young people's principles in the following way:

- Humanism, the fact that a development is made by the participation of humans;
- The durability of process, because the young people's motivation is intrinsic;
- The responsibility of development actions, a concordance with the basic values and with the traditions of that society.

Public politics are, first of all, a means of hardening the sense of the community. By participating in the process of identification of community problems and the elaboration of public politics as an answer to these problems, young people interact more frequently with neighbors, with colleagues and with other people exchanging a series of opinions. Thus a series of initiatives of public politics may appear, but the effect is the most important one and the durable fact is the revival of the community sense. The practice of civic competencies in order to obtain transformations in the social and politic environment influence in a strongly positive manner the development of the young people civic profile and produces a durable motivation of civic participation. Through the young people's participation in the process of trigger and elaboration of public politics the feeling of personal political efficiency is increased and capacities of civic participation are formed. The phenomenon of empowerment appears in young people and the creation of connections between their needs and the elaboration process of public politics. In other words, through the implication of the young in activities of intimation of community problems and of influencing the public politics we assist at a qualitative transformation of a democratic society: a passing is created from an electoral democracy to a participative one.

The young are a real force of the society, if they are empowered and have action instruments. For this reason we consider it to be necessary to implement programs of community education with the help of public institutions; the development of programs by local educational institutions of extra-curricular activities on the theme of active citizenship. It is important that these programs accentuate the acquiring of knowledge, the development of abilities and the exercise of civic behaviours, the promotion and practice of all forms of civic participation: volunteer, the appurtenance to a political party, the participation in social programs, the offering of assistance for young with a risk factor, discussions with mass media, with the representative of the local community etc. The results of the programs are visible:

The young are familiarized with forms of participation to a civic life, other activities than the electoral ones, practicable in a daily manner.

Programs of community education influence in a positive manner the young trust in the capacity of finding a solution to the problems of the community, the trust in the capacity of finding a representative of authorities responsible and the trust in the capacity to influence by his forces the decisions of public authorities. It also influences in a positive manner the young's capacity to be leaders, a civic participative ability especially important for a good functioning of a democracy. Moreover, the repeated contact with the members of the community and with representatives of authorities and a mainly positive attitude lead to an increase of trust in the people of this community. The positive effect registered on the civic profit of pupils shows us important clues and essential recommendations regarding the projecting of a strategy of development of local politics.

The interactive-participative, non-formal demarches in community education programs develop in superior manner knowledge, attitudes, abilities and civic behaviours; these have positive effects on the development of a civic profile of young people and produce a durable motivation of civic participation.

A development strategy for local politics for the young people is based on an objective analysis of their needs and may have as result young people that are more prepared for participation to a public or political life of this country, with chances of personal, social and professional success.

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CURRICULAR MODELS APPLIED IN THE SCHOOLS FROM THE REGION OF WESTERN ROMANIA

Gianina Cătălina Prodan, PhD.
„Eftimie Murgu" University of Reşiţa, România,
g.prodan@uem.ro

Abstract:*The paper „Curricular models applied in the schools from the region of Western Romania" has in view an actual problem, the onset of the educational curriculum, analysed in the terms of present educational practices. Using a fundamental methodology on the seven curricular models applied in the field of international curriculum, the paper proposes to present a whole image of the way in which schools and professors from the Western Region of Romania orient themselves in implementing and developing the curricular offer. In order to highlight the methodological pluralism, comparisons between counties, types of high- schools and areas of residence are presented.*

Keywords: *educational curriculum, curricular model, praxiology, curricular offer.*

1. Curricular Models

The educational curriculum, with terminology, theory and adherent praxiology, represents one of the most actual points of the pedagogic problem. Being an object of study and research, theoretically and pragmatically, the curriculum appears to have become, in the present, the most important pedagogic subject.

Numerous pedagogs in the 20th and 21st centuries were preoccupied with defining the theoretical bases of the curriculum, the planning, developing and evaluating the curricular content. According to their conceptions, the educational practice is not an art, but more a science or a scientific approach; the purpose, content and educational experiences must be planned. In this sense, there were drafted models for identifying objectives, selecting and organising learning activities, identifying empiric methods for evaluating school results.

The success of a curricular model, however, is determined by its impact on the educational practice. For example, countries such as China, Japan, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and the post- socialist countries declare the usefulness of the curricular models based on design and curricular development (Pinar, 2003, p. 14). The practicians need guidance, principles and scientific models. In this sense, R. W. Tyler"s rational curriculum (1949) represents a model in action. On the other hand there are the curricular models, which, for various causes, cannot be applied in the educational practice.

These points have determined us to analyse, within this paper the curricular models, according to which, the schools and teachers from the Western Region of Romania, orient themselves towards implementing and developing the curricular offer. A first step in realising this undertaking is presenting the curricular models proposed for analysis, models that have influenced the educational practice.

Franklin Bobbitt's Model (1918, 1824)

The author of the first book of the scientific curriculum- F. Bobbitt (1918) proposed a curriculum with a social model "of adult education for professional roles." Contribution teacher stated in four areas:

a) Identification of objectives as a basis for curriculum implementation. F. Bobbitt demonstrated the importance of goals, not just for the content of the curriculum, but especially for the requirements of social roles.

b) The scientific approach to the curriculum. The teacher proposed the scientific procedures of design and curriculum development, in order to optimize its relation to social requirements.

c) Reform the curriculum. Curricular plans proposed by F. Bobbitt include vocational and academic programs.

d) The definition of curriculum. F. Bobbitt is the first educator defining curriculum designed based on social objectives.

In the book „How to make a curriculum" (1924) the American pedagog presents almost 800 such objectives, which he later correlates to activities that are based on the pupils needs.

Conclusions are translated into principles that can be applied today : eliminate targets that are impractical or cannot be achieved through a normal life, emphasizing the objectives that are important for success in school and success in adult life, eliminating opposing objectives community involvement in the selection of targets, the distinction between the common goals of all learners and educators in a particular group, coordination objectives so as to establish a uniform criterion for completion.

Based on these principles, F. Bobbitt proposes a model for curriculum development in five steps - curriculum -by- objectives: analysis of the human experience, analysis of specific activities, provenance objectives, target selection, planning in detail the training activity.

Werret W. Charters Curricular Model (1923)

W. Charters effort, most faithful disciple of Bobbitt, has been to shift the focus of concern for curriculum content for the determination methods. The method is priority over the content. In his analysis of the work is the method of determining the curriculum.

Using the concept of task analysis (job analysis), W. Charters has developed a model curriculum based on building specific and concrete activities, structured as follows:

a. determining the principles for building a curriculum
b. use of behavioural objectives, (Behavioural Objectives)
c. derive learning objectives necessities and checked by analysis and assessment of Needs (Needs Assessment)
d. Actual construction of the curriculum. Understood as a discipline and a process in Which study subjects are intertwined and interrelated.

Follower of scientific approach, Charters defines curriculum as a series of objectives that students achieve learning experiences. The teacher proposes such a curriculum derived from specific objectives (measurable and observable) and activities using a process called "job analysis".

Tyler's Rational Model (1949)

In the book „Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction" (1949), R. W. Tyler prescribes and describes in detail the steps involved in planning a curriculum. Promoting productive technical perspective based on educational research on educational goals and behavioural objectives, pedagogy has proposed four fundamental principles necessary for developing a curriculum project:

a. definition of learning objectives appropriate,
b. choice of useful learning experiences,
c. organizing learning experiences,
d. evaluation and feedback.

According to these principles, teachers and curriculum experts become scientific observers obligation having to apply and modify curriculum plans in order to achieve proper results.

Principles advanced by the teacher contributes to the argument that the science curriculum.

- Curriculum implies a rational process. Such a process is comprehensive and practical, because it is a way of ordering the educational situation.

- Use objectives to select and organize learning experiences. Human complexity must be linked to practical use. Relationship goals - learning experiences is based on the principle of utility: the production of changes in student behaviour.

- Using assessment results to determine (whether objectives have been met). It emphasizes the need for formative assessment in terms of feedback to achieve all objectives.

- Correspondence between verticality and horizontality curriculum at both the system and the level of educational process.

Hilda Taba's Interactionist Model (1962)

Taking over the ordered procedure, similar to Tyler's technical productive thinking, the researcher Hilda Taba (1962) proposed a model curriculum building in 7 steps: diagnosis of need, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organizing content, selecting learning experiences, organizing learning experiences, determining the content and the method of evaluation. This model improves "Tyler rationale" because of the flexibility and interaction of the elements that are part of the curriculum.

Brady (1989, 1995) studied how teachers who have complied with the principles established by Hilda Taba use key concepts such as "targets", "content ", "method" "evaluation". He found that over 86 % of teachers considered as an optimal curriculum must match the sequence rigorous curriculum components: content> object> methods > assessment, over 51 % of teachers considered infallible succession: content> methods > objectives > assessment, only 13 % of teachers considered that the optimal sequence: objectives > content > methods > evaluation.

McGee's Dynamic Model (1997)

Fierce critic of "traditional theories", Clive McGee model proposed in 1997 a more integrated and interdependent than those described above, with the "head-to-head" five categories of theories and techniques: situational analysis, theory technological objectives content selection techniques, theory of learning experiences, assessment and appraisal of the theory of learning. The principle used by the teacher integrator is based on decision theory. McGee believes that support any development curriculum must be "dynamics of any process of change that occurs in complex contexts" (McGee quoted in Negreţ – Dobridor, 2008, p. 170-171).

Walker's Naturalist Model (1972)

Some researchers have tried to solve the problem of reformulating it and reversing entries. D. Walker proposed a "natural model curriculum" based on a more flexible and varied. The model does not show how to build a curriculum- prescriptive approach, but as an actually built a curriculum- descriptive approach. The teacher claims that optimal planning the curriculum must take place in three phases: the platform, deliberation and design. Platform curricular approach consists of concepts (beliefs about what exists and what is possible) theories (beliefs about relationships between different entities) and goals (beliefs and beliefs about what is desirable). Ruling leaves and gets immediate preferences when designing the solutions of all possible alternatives. It is a decision process that underlies the design. The design involves thinking and solution structure determined by consensus in previous phase in a rational manner that requires organization and time assessment of the training activities themselves (Walker – quoted in Negreţ – Dobridor, 2008. pp. 170- 171)

2. Curricular models of the teachers from the Western Region of Romania- research

Based on the above presentation, we proposed, in a research conducted in the 2012-2013 school year, after which curricular models to identify schools in Western Region of Romania is focused on developing and implementing curricular offer. This study surveyed a total of 579 teachers from 29 schools in Caras-Severin, Hunedoara and Timis.

Table 1- Specimens of research

County	Teachers questioned	Teachers from the urban area	Teachers from the rural area
Caraş-Severin	130	109	21
Hunedoara	154	99	55
Timiş	295	215	80
Total	579	423	156

The instrument used is a questionnaire with 28 items. Teachers interviewed expressed their views on the characteristics of the school curriculum offer which includes using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = very little / not at all and 5 = to a great extent. Each of the seven patterns in each set curriculum is characterized by a set of four items:

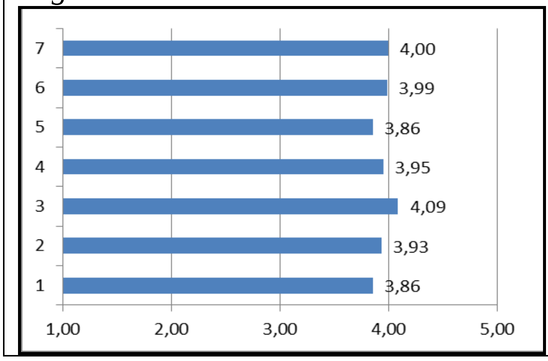
a. **Bobbitt's curricular model**: "Setting goals according to the needs of adult working life, and in line with community goals to integrate learners in adult life.", "Setting goals that can be achieved in specific learning situations disciplines offered at both overall, and for each group and the individual to be involved in the educational activities that education "," establishment of plans and programs to achieve the objectives, specifying deadlines "," Attracting the community in setting and achieving goals ".
b. **Bobbitt's and Charters curricular model:** "Identification and formulation of behavioural objectives , easily observed and measured ," " a set of principles for curriculum design with reference to the following aspects : the purpose curricular offer , program objectives, the needs of individual learning experiences and appropriate training activities", "the actual construction of curricular offer , both as a subject and as a educational process with a thematic structure and system procedure", "Derivation of the objectives pursued learning the needs of learners and their verification through analysis and assessment of needs".
c. **Tyler's curricular rational model**: "Identification of specific educational activities that goals will be achieved by offering curriculum," "Identifying and defining goals which the school will achieve the proposed curricular offer", "building plans and projects that offer educational activities that support the curriculum will be implemented ","the formulation of specific evaluation strategies".
d. **Hilda Taba's Interactionist curricular model**: "Rethinking curricular objectives in terms of needs offering training and taking into account: attitudes, values , concepts and theoretical knowledge in the field of environmental learners", "content selection according to the criteria: social, epistemic aspects of learning , scientific staff development peculiarities of human subjects and content elements", "Diagnosis of needs of learners training", "Development of curricular offer based on interaction goals, content, methods and evaluation ".
e. **Walker's naturalist curricular model**: "Designing curricular offer the organization, structure and timing of solutions made by consensus in the previous step and evaluate the effectiveness of curricular offer", "Deliberations on curricular offer viable solutions that provide frameworks outlining concerns identified", "offer curriculum is based the concepts, theories in the field, but also for desirable", "construction account for the dynamics of change curricular educational context of curricular offer in the context of the local community".
f. **McGee's dynamic curricular model**: "Identification of decisions on learning and instructional activities and their evaluation", "Fixing decisions on the content to be studied", "Recovery of decisions resulting from situational analysis", "Decision making on intentions , goals, objectives curricular offer".
g. **The curricular comprehensive model**: "Demand construction of multidimensional

curriculum, enabling real development of student potential in almost all sides of his personality even if not all ", "curriculum development process is based on the interaction between projection, implementation and evaluation study", "Development offer curriculum involves developing core curriculum products (curricula, programs) and auxiliary (methodological guide, practical notebooks, educational software)", "offer the curricular goals pursued (reference framework objectives), learning content (themes and sub-themes or they mandatory or optional) , training time (time spent), instructional strategies (examples o) and assessment strategies (examples of assessment procedures)".

Results of the analysis

Curricular models by which teachers in the Western Region of Romania work are focused on developing curricular offer provides a diversity methodological activities aimed at designing, implementing and evaluating curriculum.

Diagram 1
Curricular models from the Western Region



1- Bobbitt's curricular model
2- Bobbitt's and Charters curricular model
3- Tyler's curricular model
4- Hilda Taba's curricular model
5- Walker's naturalist curricular model
6- McGee's dynamic curricular model
7- Comprehensive curricular model

If we draw a parallel with the diversity of curricular concepts found in the literature, we see the same trend of openness to methodological pluralism.

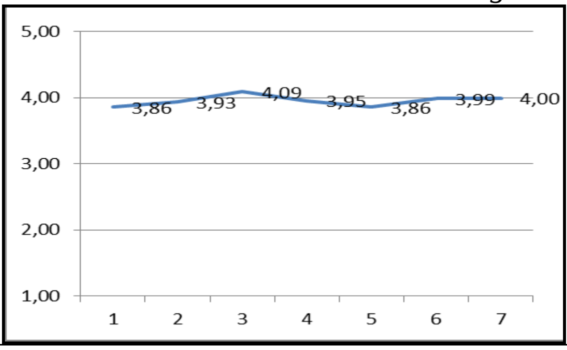
The percentage of 4.09 obtained for rational curricular model Tyler shows predilection teachers to order the methodological rigor and targeting a specific need, translated into clear, diversified content, methods, techniques and methods of teaching, learning and effective assessment strategies. Applying the tylerian model in current educational practice can be justified by the history of education and teaching Romanian. Many of the teachers who work at the university today are the result of traditional education; the top goal - training for the job - requires careful planning of the route instruction.

A significant percentage of 3.99 for the dynamic model of McGee express the need to link education with social change, visible in Romanian society. Percentage of 3.86 obtained for Walker's naturalistic model curriculum emphasizes a specific opening that subjectivity and human.

Relatively close percentages for all 7 models curricular analyzed and 4 percent for comprehensive approach to curriculum and education shows a holistic practice, based on the development and understanding of the development, key issues in a mature and effective educational vision.

Power belief expressed is characterized by a curve "running", with a percentage of approximately 3.95. On a scale of 1-5 is a relatively large fraction which can show high efficiency awareness and methodology.

Diagram 2
Curricular models Western Region



1. Bobbitt's curricular model
2. Bobbitt's and Charters curricular model
3. Tyler's curricular model
4. Hilda Taba's curricular model
5. Walker's naturalist curricular model
6. McGee's dynamic curricular model
7. Comprehensive curricular model

At county level, the results presented can be influenced by the county education policy, professional development opportunities offered to teachers, school specializations and profiles they teach, etc.

Diagram 3 Curricular models – County Hunedoara

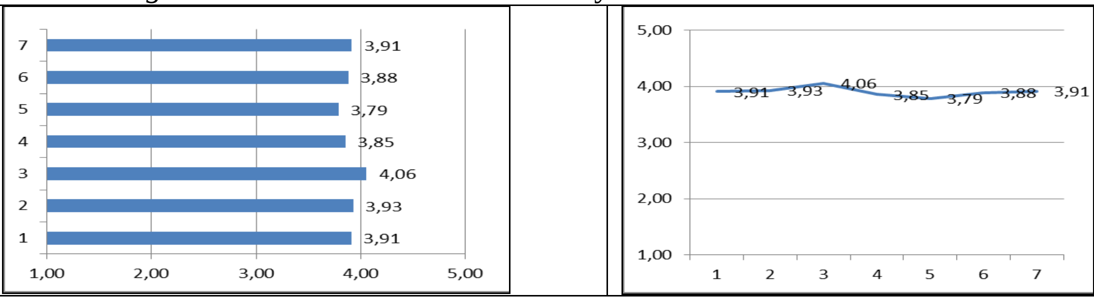


Diagram 4 Curricular models – County Caraş-Severin

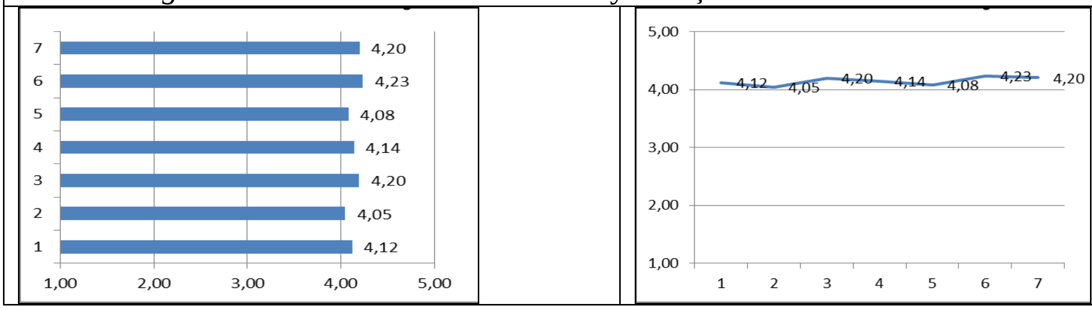
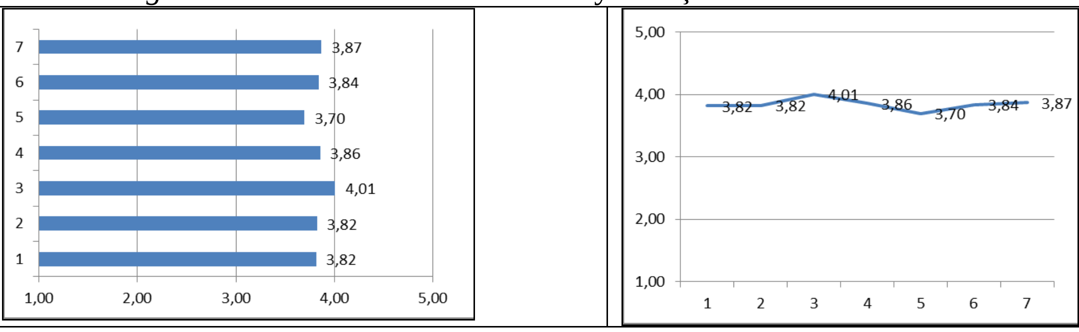


Diagram 5 Curricular models – County Timiş

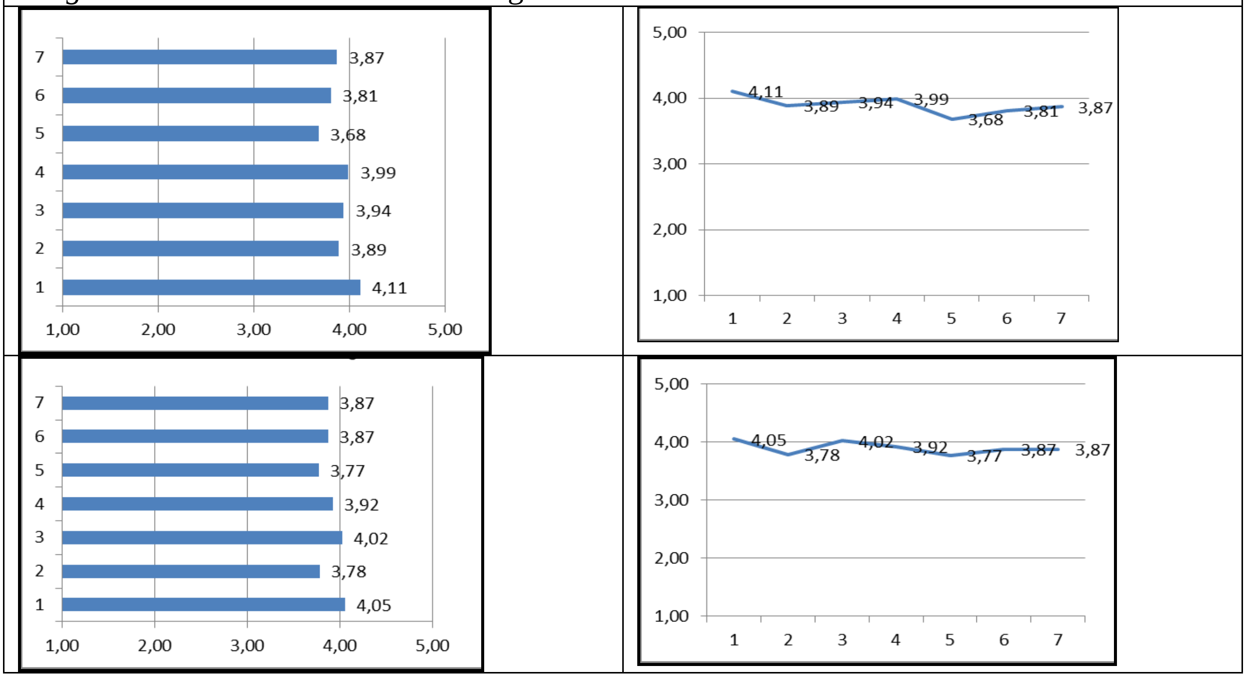


Thus, in educational practice in schools in the Western Region, a model curriculum and meets the following means:

- Vision multidimensional complex realizing the educational impossible characterized by a single design.
- targeted goals a reality, translated into scientific content, shaped by modern methods and techniques and evaluated through effective strategies, experiential learning, coupled with the demands of society, real learning experiences,
- actions, statements of teaching, learning , assessment , in close interaction and interdependence , forms and continuous reformulation , process open to change, a technical process in which the main scientific result is professional preparation for adult roles,
- A deliberative process with respect to subjectivity and human specific.

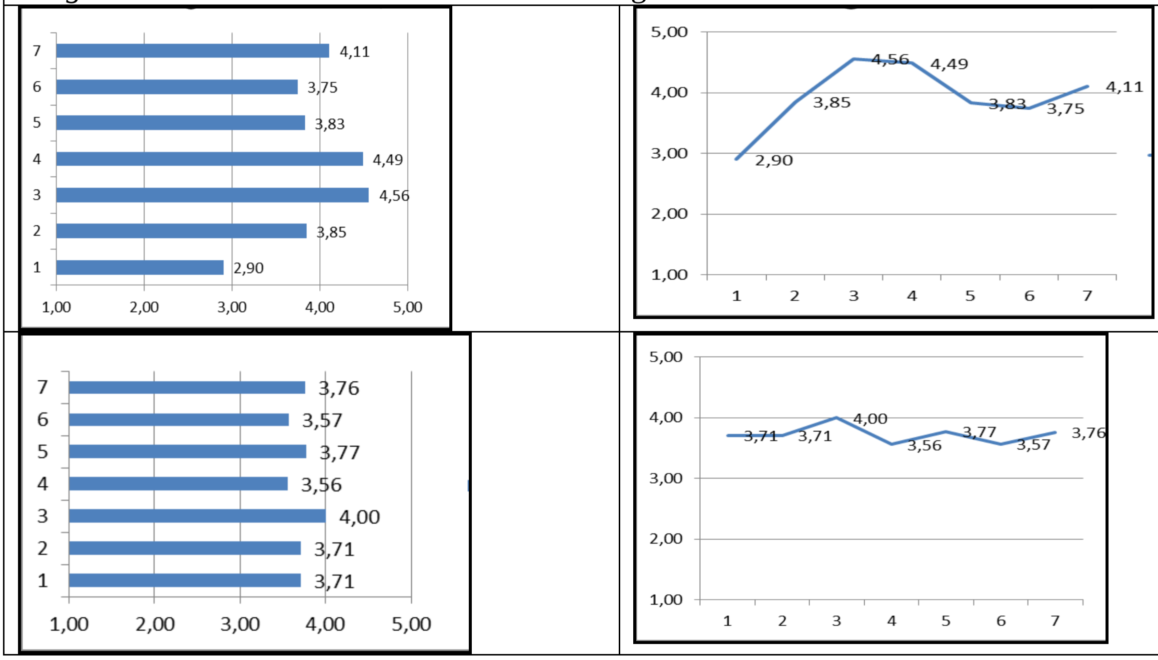
Graphical representation of curricular models in rural schools show an increase in F. Bobbitt's model, the purpose of education and instruction is to prepare students for professions, trades. Patterns close scores awarded to R. Tyler and Hilda Taba in the detriment of postmodern models - Walker and McGee - demonstrates feature traditional - modern Romanian schools.

Diagram 5 Curricular models – the high- schools from the rural areas



The choices for models of R. Tyler and H. Taba in technical secondary schools practice emphasize instruction purposes. But our attention focuses on the representation of bimodal peaks, which may indicate indecision and suggests the need for philosophical clarification. The presence of peaks showing the power of expression of opinions, preferences and beliefs, but also a limitation, incapacity or impossibility of objective justification is important. This may be due to the current context in which the technical high schools. Blamed the poor results on high school, these schools no longer found a clear purpose in the current socio-economic conditions.

Diagram 6 Curricular models – the technical high- schools



The diagram of theoretical high scores recorded close to all curricular models analyzed, due to the scientific diversity promotes. This really is beneficial in terms of compliance with the conceptual and methodological pluralism.

Diagram 7 Curricular models – the theoretic high-schools

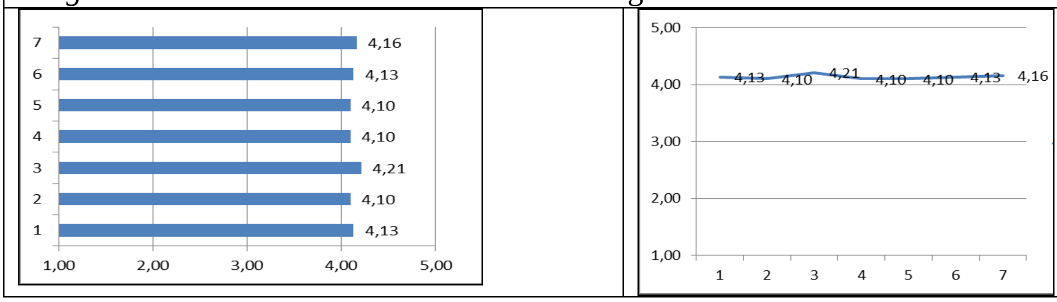
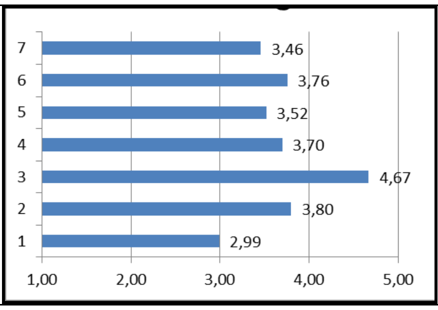
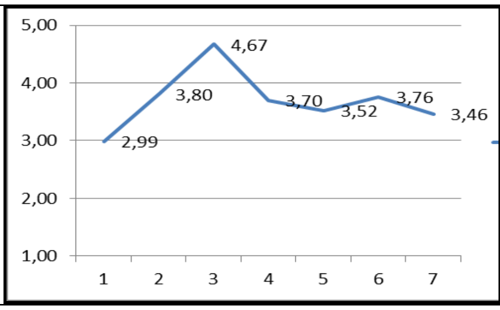


Diagram of a vocational high school, presented as a bimodal distribution with large opening in terms of curricular model Tyler may indicate strong beliefs, opinions and ideas supporting their educational and divergent perceptions of the educational system. Choosing the Tyler Rational is justified by the essential purposes of a vocational profile - prepare for a profession and personality development.

Diagram 8 Curricular models – the vocational high- schools





3. Conclusion

The practical usefulness is the essence of developing the curriculum. The influences on the public policies generated by the discussions and disputes regarding the efficiency of the curricular actions have had a direct involvement on an often neglected aspect: the utility of research. The specialty literature proposes a multitude of beautiful theories, idealistic ones, however, important remains the practical utility. There is obvious a discrepancy between the reality of the educational practice and the theoretical ideal stated in the works from the field of curriculum. C. Cucoş considers that „the pedagogic ideology and the explicit philosophy of the National Curriculum are inscribed in a post- modern line, of building the unique ideal, all encompassing and summarising" (Cucoş, 2006, p. 264), however, the presented results show that in the educational practice they are mostly applied modern designs (R. Tyler, H. Taba).

The curricular model of application and development, confirmed at the scale of the practical community is founded on rational principles, open towards flexibility, dynamism, sensibility for the great human values. R. W. Tyler's conception, based on progressiveness (highlighting the needs of the educated, using scientific procedures, the principles are applied in various situations) and behaviourism (the importance of behaviour objectives), is presently a marker for the educational practice in Romania. This influence may be due to the fact that Tyler's rational model embraces a real spirit of the practical side.

The success of a curricular theory is determined by its impact on the educational practice. However, the attempt to impose a general theory does not confer efficiency, for the dynamic of the field does not offer the fundament to the endurance of decisions. It is important to discover the essence, the axis from which we can develop a curriculum, in concordance with the national specific and the international evolutions. The curriculum must become essential!

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FRIENDSHIP AMONG TODAY'S TEENAGERS. AN ASCERTAINING STUDY

Dorin Opriş, PhD
„1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia,
Department of Teacher Training
dorincorneliu.opris@gmail.com

Abstract: *In psychological terms, adolescence is characterized by a propensity toward association in different groups, friendship being the major criterion for selection and cohesion. Friendship relationships established during high school years bear the seal of strength and durability, many of them being preserved intact for extended periods of several decades. Our proposed research was meant to identify the elements that the surveyed adolescents considered to be the qualities of a friend, and the aspects that support such a relationship. A number of 1127 high school students from Alba Iulia County were questioned*[12]*, whereas the age, the classes and the specializations of studies were representative for that area. The results show the need for honesty, trust and empathy that teenagers consider important for the building of a friendship.*

Key words: *values, friendship, adolescence, education, school, community.*

1. The qualities of a friend

Although the statement *Man needs friends* represents a truism, when we analyze and, especially, live the experience of building and strengthening this particular type of interpersonal relationship in its dynamics, which begins with choosing our friends and continues with keeping in touch with them for the rest of our life, we understand the difficulty of this experience. Specialized works emphasize that a person goes from being a simple acquaintance to being a friend if a number of friendship's features are met, namely: reciprocity, constancy, self-sacrifice, sharing thoughts, feelings and experiences, communion, particularly manifested by the desire to spend more time together and to advance professionally or spiritually.

First, we intend to highlight the existence of some levels in the formation of each feature and a certain course in building them in a certain order, with interpenetrations and specific aspects that give an individual character to each relationship with a person. In this respect, students were asked to mention three qualities for which a person receives the status of best friend. We opted for an open item as we wanted to make an inventory of the characteristics that the students identify in their friends. In Table 1, we summarized the students' responses to this item, stating the place of each of the three qualities of a friend in the list made by the students and the total number / the total percentage of the qualities' mentioning, independent of their position.

Table on the place of the qualities of a person in a friendship *Table 1*

	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	Total

Qualities	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
honesty	414	36,7	134	11,8	74	6,6	622	55,2
trust	172	15,3	108	9,5	140	12,4	318	37,2
empathy	139	12,3	147	13,0	118	10,5	404	35,8
kindness	45	4,0	83	7,4	84	7,5	212	18,9
discretion	41	3,6	76	6,7	85	7,5	202	17,8
respect	56	5,0	65	5,7	60	5,3	304	16
correctness	41	3,6	79	7,0	33	2,9	153	13,5
sense of humor	34	3,0	53	4,7	57	5,1	144	12,8
communicativity	27	2,4	47	4,2	41	3,6	115	10,2
willingness to work together	14	1,2	11	1,0	34	3,0	59	5,2
similarity	17	1,5	22	2,0	17	1,5	56	5
beauty	6	0,5	24	2,1	3	0,3	33	2,9
love	4	0,4	8	0,7	18	1,6	30	2,6
good listener	17	1,5	1	0,1	9	0,8	27	2,4
intelligence	7	0,6	2	0,2	17	1,5	26	2,3
common sense	3	0,3	8	0,7	10	0,9	21	1,9
dilligence	2	0,2	16	1,4	3	0,3	21	1,9
sociability	1	0,1	11	1,0	7	0,6	19	1,7
seriousness	3	0,3	9	0,8	3	0,3	15	1,4
faith	6	0,5	5	0,4	5	0,4	16	1,3
resourceful	4	0,4	8	0,7	2	0,2	14	1,3
the same principles	4	0,4	3	0,3	6	0,5	13	1,2
tolerance	1	0,1	3	0,3	8	0,7	12	1,1
responsible	3	0,3	7	0,6	2	0,2	12	1,1
prompt	2	0,2	2	0,2	6	0,5	10	0,9
wealth	6	0,5	1	0,1	2	0,2	9	0,8
courage	1	0,1	3	0,3	4	0,4	8	0,8
ambition	2	0,2	1	0,1	2	0,2	5	0,5
prestige	1	0,1	1	0,1	3	0,3	5	0,5
closed age	2	0,2	1	0,1	1	0,1	4	0,4
no specific qualities	2	0,2	64	5,8	4	0,4	70	6,3
not filled in	50	4,4	104	9,2	269	23,86	423	37,46
Total possible choices	1127	100	1127	100	1127	100	3381	300

The data in Table 1 lead to the following observations:

• 85.38% of students mentioned all three qualities of a friend, the difference up to 100 being represented by the students who haven't completed this item to varying degrees (at all, a quality, two qualities - 12.52%), and by those who don't wonder about the necessity of criteria in choosing friends 2.1%.

• The list of the qualities noticed by the students at their friends - understood as conditions for receiving the status of best friend - is long. We identified 30 characteristics in the students' responses, the frequency of their presence - regardless of their position - ranging between 1.1% and 55.2%.

• The data in Table 1 reveal differences (with some exceptions) in the hierarchy of the qualities that the students put in first place and the hierarchy made by us according to the frequency with which they occur, regardless of their place.

• The quality that appears in first place and with the highest frequency is honesty: from the percentage of 55.2% of the students who mentioned it as quality, 36.7% have placed it first. The importance of this quality is also showed by the difference of 18 percentage points ahead of the other qualities: confidence (37.2%), empathy (35.8%), kindness (18.9%), discretion (17.8%), respect (16%), correctness (13.5%), sense of humor (12.8%), communication skills (10.2%). The remaining 21 qualities occur in percentages smaller than 5%.

For the first nine qualities listed by the students, we propose different analyses by gender, area of residence and age, based on the data from Tables 2, 3 and 4.

Table of the place of the qualities that have a frequency higher than 10%, according to gender *Table 2*

Quality	Girls		Place	Boys		Place
	No.	%		No.	%	
honesty	354	62,32	1	265	47,74	1
trust	279	49,11	2	218	39,27	2
empathy	233	41,02	3	170	30,63	3
kindness	91	16,02	5	120	21,62	4
discretion	116	20,42	4	86	15,49	6
respect	83	14,61	6	98	17,65	5
correctness	71	12,5	9	82	14,77	7
sense of humor	72	12,67	8	70	12,61	8
communica-tivity	78	13,73	7	37	6,66	9

The observations that we can make based on the analysis of data depending on the students' gender are the following:

• Regardless of the students' gender, the first three positions are occupied by the qualities that have achieved the highest score in all the students' preferences. For the girls, there are some differences of 10 to 15 percentage points.

• Places 4-9 are occupied differently by gender. Compared to boys, for girls discretion is more important (4th place for girls, 6th place for boys) than kindness (4th place for boys, 5th place for girls). Qualities such as respect, correctness, sense of humor are more important for boys than communicativity, which received the lowest percentage, fewer than 10%. Girls are more prone to communicativity, which is more important than the sense of humor and correctness.

Table of the place of the qualities that have a frequency higher than 10%, according to area of residence *Table 3*

Quality	Urban		Place	Rural		Place
	No.	%		No.	%	
honesty	305	56,58	1	285	53,07	1

trust	232	43,04	2	243	45,25	2
empathy	179	33,20	3	203	37,80	3
kindness	100	18,55	4	105	19,55	5
discretion	74	13,72	7	122	22,71	4
respect	83	15,39	5	88	16,38	6
correctness	75	13,91	6	74	13,78	7
sense of humor	74	13,72	8	62	11,54	8
communica-tivity	57	10,57	9	54	10,05	9
Total number of students in areas...	539			537		

The analysis of the data in Table 3 allows us to make the following observations:
• No significant differences are observed in the places occupied by the qualities found in the first three positions, and the last two, out of the nine qualities analysed by us. The differences in percentage points are within the range (0.52% - 4.6%).
• The differences by area of residence are found at the qualities occupying positions 4-7. The highest difference in percentage points is observed in "discretion" - 9% for the students residing in rural areas. This is understandable given the affiliation to small communities where people know one another and interrelate stronger than in the city. Moreover, the percentage obtained by the qualities supporting discretion, such as trust, respect, and kindness has higher scores than for the urban students. For them, honesty is the most important value, including the urban-rural analysis.

Table 4

Table of the percentage of the qualities that have a frequency higher than 10%, according to the age of the students

Age / Quality	14	15	16	17	18	19	Total
honesty	50,9	60,69	50,55	53,63	59,6	60,86	336,23
trust	54.54	41,79	43,95	45,67	47,36	39,13	325,9
empathy	34,54	41,29	38,82	31,83	33,08	43,42	222,98
kindness	16,36	18,40	23,8	19,03	15,03	13,04	105,66
respect	21,81	12,93	16,48	16,26	15,41	21,73	104,62
discretion	18,18	15,42	15,01	14,53	23,20	0	86,34
corectitu-dinea	23,63	16,91	12,45	12,45	11,27	0	76,71
communica-tivity	21,81	12,43	7,69	9,68	11,27	0	62,88
sense of humor	5,45	14,92	13,18	15,57	10,15	0	59,27

The data in Table 4 allow the following observations based on the age of the students, starting from the three qualities of friendship mentioned by the respondents:

• The overall calculated percentage for honesty placed this quality in first place (336.23 percentage points). This quality is ranked first by the students aged 15-19, the highest percentage being recorded, with values approximately equal, at the students aged 19 (60.86%) and 15 (60.69%). The percentage average for the students aged 16, 17 and 18 is 53.69%, similar to the percentage obtained by this quality calculated for all students (55.2%), as shown in Table 4. The same trends are recorded for empathy, which is in third place as total percentage.

• If we analyze the percentages obtained by trust, which ranked second in the top of a friend's qualities, we observe some differences: among the surveyed students having six different ages, the highest percentage is found at students aged 14 (54, 54%), with almost 20 percentage points more than the value referred to the total number of students (37.2%). This quality has the highest percentage referred to the other values for the age of 14. The lowest percentage for this quality was registered at the students aged 19 (39.13%).

• The fourth place is occupied by different values, depending on age, the differentiation is evident at the extreme values of the six stages: correctness, at the age of 14 (23.63%), discretion, at the age of 18 (23.30% - the highest value recorded by this quality) and respect, at the age of 19 (13.04%). In the 15-17 age range, the fourth place is occupied by kindness, with percentages ranging between 18.40% and 23.8%.

• For the ability to communicate, the highest value is recorded at pupils aged 14 (21.81%). At this value, the percentages calculated for students aged 16 and 17, they are below 10% (the percentage for the sense of humor are below this limit, at the students aged 14).

If we synthesize the observations recorded at this item, we draw the following conclusions:

► The most popular qualities of a true friend are: honesty, trust, empathy, respect, kindness, discretion, correctness, sense of humor, communicability. With some exceptions, the hierarchy of the first nine attributes identified as having the most proposals from the students is the same regardless of gender, residence, and age.

► If we analyze these qualities in terms of how they contribute to the construction of the characteristics of friendship: reciprocity, constancy, self-sacrifice, sharing thoughts, feelings and emotions, communion, one confirms the fact that the foundations of true friendships are laid during high-school, and they will develop in time.

► For students, regardless of gender, residence, and age, the most important quality for engaging in a friendship with someone is honesty - more important for girls than for boys, in urban areas than rural ones, for the students aged 15 and 19 than for the other four age stages 14-19.

► Small percentages recorded by issues such as beauty (2.9%) and wealth (0.8%) show, on the one hand, the sincerity with which students filled in the questionnaire, and on the other, the complexity of their developing personality. At one point, students can make choices by pursuing issues that, from the perspective of adults, aren't within the characteristics of true friendship. From our point of view, more analyses are required related to the fact that 6.3% of students state that they do not choose their friends based on certain criteria.

► The large number of qualities that are found in the list which was made based on students' responses reveal the needs of young people, especially those linked with the main qualities: the need to live in truth, to feel safe, to be accepted as you are, to be respected, to live among good and generous people whose company creates soul tranquility etc.

2. Constancy of friendship in time

A second item asked the students to indicate the duration of friendship with their best friend. We aimed to identify the manner in which the durability of a friendship is found at high school students, with the passing of time. Specifically, we were interested to know whether there is a relation of proportionality between the grade of the students and the duration of their friendships.

The data in Table 5 show a distribution by grade of the responses (in number and percentage) of the durability of the students' friendship with their best friend.

Table representing the number and the total percentage of the students with the grade distribution and the duration in years of the relationship with the best friend *Table 5*

Grade	Duration of friendship (in years)						No	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	> 5		
9th	67 22,71	167 56,61	32 10,84	18 6,1	4 1,35	4 1,35	3 10,16	295
10th	149 62,34	41 17,15	27 11,29	14 5,85	3 1,25	1 0,4	4 1,67	239
11th	55 18,15	198 65,34	32 10,56	6 1,98	4 1,32	2 0,66	6 1,98	303
12th	21 7,83	42 15,67	178 66,41	10 3,73	8 2,98	4 1,49	5 1,86	268
Total	292 25,90	448 39,75	269 23,86	48 4,25	19 1,68	11 0,97	18+ 22 3,54	1127
No	22							1127

The analysis of the data in Table 5 reveals the following:

• If we refer to the total number of students, the two-year period recorded the highest value of the respondents' answers: 39.75 % of the students gave this response; most students who gave this answer were 9th and 11th graders. Then follow the one-year friendship (25.90%) and the three-year friendship (23.86 %).

• Friendships with duration longer than 4 years can be found at a small proportion of all students, less than 5% with a decreasing tendency.

• The analysis of the results according to the students' grade show a repetitive distribution of the percentages for each grade: percentages over 50% for a period of time followed, at a difference in the range of 30-50 percentage points, by the following two values of the duration of friendship and by small percentages for a friendship longer than 4 years.

• Analyzing the data by gender, as shown in Table 6, it follows that we cannot talk about a greater constancy of the girls or the boys in a friendship, the differences between the percentages for each period of time being below 5%.

Table representing the number and the total percentage of the students and the distribution based on gender and duration in years of the *Table 6* *friendship with the best friend*

Grade	Duration of friendship (in years)						No	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	> 5		
girls	145 25,5 2	220 38,7 3	147 25,8 8	31 5,45	11 1,9 3	6 1,05	8 1,40	568
boys	135 24,3 2	228 41,0 8	152 27,3 8	17 3,06	8 1,4 4	5 0,9	10 1,8	555
Total No	22							1127

• If the analysis takes into account the students' responses according to the area of residence (Table 7), we notice that there is some additional scoring only for the two years' friendships of the adolescents in the rural areas.

Table representing the number and the total percentage of the students and the distribution based on the area of residence and the duration in years of the friendship with the best friend *Table 7*

Grade	Duration of friendship (in years)						No	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	> 5		
urban	148 27,4 3	213 39,5 1	142 26,3 4	19 3,52	9 1,6 6	4 0,7	4 0,7	539
rural	98 18,2 4	235 43,7 6	156 29,0 5	29 5,40	10 1,8 6	7 1,3	2 0,3	537
Total No	51 + 6							1127

The conclusions that can be drawn from the observations made on the duration of the friendship with their best friend are:

► For the high school students, friendship is a value that is being rebuilt. A small percentage of students (6.9%) of all respondents stated periods of time over four years for the friendship with their best friend.

► The maximum value of percentages obtained for the two years' friendship reveals that the students are looking for new relationships, including matters relating to the maintenance of an option, to identify the best opportunities. We notice this aspect due to the 10 percentage points' difference in favor of the highest percentage - the 12th grade vs. the 9th grade.

► More than three quarters of the 9th graders maintain their friendships from the secondary school, but new friendships also appear for a year, without being able to mention if high school mates are included. A new dynamics of friendship follows along with the admission into a new cycle of education, which is more obvious at older students.

► The building and the stability of friendships beginning with the tenth grade is obvious due to the high percentages in the 1-3 years range, in an upward dynamics from the 10th grade to the 12th grade. This fact indicates, on the one hand, the transformation of a fellowship relation into one of friendship, the maintaining of the older friendships and the building of the new ones.

► The presence of some differences depending on the students' grade, in conjunction with the observation of the absence of any significant differences by gender and area of residence of the parents, show that students tend to maintain less friendships from the secondary school and to build new friendships in high school.

*
* *

Major changes in cognitive level of the high school adolescents are associated with important ones connected to emotionality, specifically to the reconstruction of friendships with new colleagues. The values that support these new emotional ties deserve great attention from the policy makers in education, so that future curriculum documents have the opportunity, not only to capitalize the desirable aspects which are relevant to teenagers, but also to support the formation and the development of the others. Even if in Romania, such practices have no tradition, the offered chance cannot be neglected.

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PROBLEM SOLVING CENTERED LEARNING, A POSSIBLE MODEL FOR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

Letiţia Simona Trif Muntean, PH. D.
University 1 Decembrie 1918 from Alba-Iulia
trifletitia@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The importance of learning refers both to explaining and understanding the complex process of learning, and especially the applicability of research results into educational practice. Psychological theories of learning that are descriptive, not prescriptive, can be exploited by converting them into models of learning and instruction with functional-pragmatic meanings. Some of these theories have attempted to verify experimentally implicit theories of learning - those experiencing concepts, beliefs and popular opinions about learning, scientifically unjustified (V, Negovan, 2007). Therefore, learning models focus more on what the learner does , while teaching models focus on what the teacher does to facilitate student learning. Meanwhile, the teaching models interpret psychological theories of learning and are prescriptive, including rules for achieving the objectives and normative, meaning that they propose criteria for objective achievement.*

Keywords: *learning, problem solving, training models*

The problem of learning broadly defined as universal phenomenon in the life of organisms, is the process of acquiring personal behavior experience with the purpose of adaptation (E, Bonchiş, 2004). Learning covers the entire existence of the human being, therefore it is a multidimensional phenomenon and therefore plurilevel with its own structures, which exert a strong influence and permanent inserts on the development of adaptive behavior. Deciphering the learning process and understanding the role of learning in human life, Golu mentions (2001) are operations that depend to a large extent on specific psychological theories of learning on "variables introduced in the experiment and how the experiencewas carried out, on basic theoretical concepts of the schools from which's points of view the data interpretation was made "(p.25).

Constructivism sees knowledge as a building the person accomplishes in his attempt to make sense and meaning of their own experiences. The constructivist paradigm facilitates understanding how learning is facilitated by engaging in "constructive" activities, because it is no longer regarded as a mere conduit of information from teacher to student toward being received and stored by the latter, but knowledge is built on what a person already knows, the new learning is shaped by prior knowledge. A fundamental shift occurring in constructivism "movement" of the locus of control on learning from the teacher towards the student.
The learning environment must provide multiple representations of reality in relation to its complexity, authentic tasks, significant for the person's experience and encouraging work and reflection on experience, fostering collaboration and social negotiation between those involved in the construction of knowledge. *The teacher's role* is not to convey information, but he becomes a facilitator of learning, providing opportunities for active engagement in the discovery and construction of knowledge. The *student*, actively involved in learning, is encouraged to think

independently, to interpret, analyze, make predictions, develop ideas and concepts, the entire training being focused on them (Driscoll, 1994).
In designing a learning experience one needs to take into consideration the fact that:

- *The way of information processing* is influenced by the student's cognitive processes, becoming important not only what is taught, but how this is done:
- *The Cognitive level* reached by the child requires the use of specific methods and a certain organization of content, a certain manner of reporting and so on;
- *The logical structure of information* facilitates learning, forming connections with what is already known with what is familiar, making learning more effective and lasting;
- The student should be helped in his approach of *"learning how to learn"*, to form the metacognitive strategies that would improve cognitive performance.
-

Problem solving-based learning (PBL)

Problem solving is considered a crucial cognitive activity both in the academia and in the context of work or daily activities. The type of problems can range from those with a well-defined structure (which can be solved by using algorithmic strategies) to the poorly defined (which involves heuristic solving strategies). Poorly defined problems are the most often encountered in everyday life (Bulu and Pedersen, 2010). Trying to bridge the gap between real-world requirements and academic requirements (content of classroom activities), educators have developed teaching strategies to facilitate the empowerment of students to solve real-life problems. One of these strategies is "problem solving-based learning (PBL)."

PBL is a learner-centered approach, with a very high degree of structuring. The starting point for learning experiences is represented by real issues. The teacher encourages students to be actively involved in learning, exploits their experience and prior knowledge, stimulates initiative and provides guidance for problem solving. (Reynolds and Hancock, 2010). Although the method has undergone various forms, the basic steps are to (Barrows and Kelson, 1993; Duch, 1996, as cited in Reynolds and Hancock, 2010):

- Presenting a real problem to *student team - which assesses the extent to which members are ready to solve the problem using the knowledge they already have*;
- *Redefinition and restructuring of the problem, followed by outlining those aspects of the problem that they do not understand*;
- *Prioritization, by mutual agreement of the issues and planning about who, when, where and how will investigate these issues in the group*;
- Collective attempt to resolve the issue exploring prior uncertainties and establishing new ones - as progress is made in *solving the problem;*
- *Synthesizing collective ideas and deciding on the best solution;*
- *Assessment and self-assessment of team members after completion of the work, but also an assessment of the training process in order to identify what needs to be improved in the future.*

Trying to provide a conceptual framework destined to underpin the design proper issues for any student. Hung (2009) developed a PBL design pattern called **Model 3C3R** (Figure 1.) It is composed of two types of components: ***core*** (*content, background and connections*) and ***processing*** (*researching, reasoning and reflecting*). *The core components* are designed to structure the content of knowledge to contextualize the field and build the conceptual framework around the topic of study. The role of *processing components* is to guide the student towards the learning objectives, to adjust tle level of cognitive processing required in current cognitive skills and reduce the initial discomfort experienced by the student in this type of learning.

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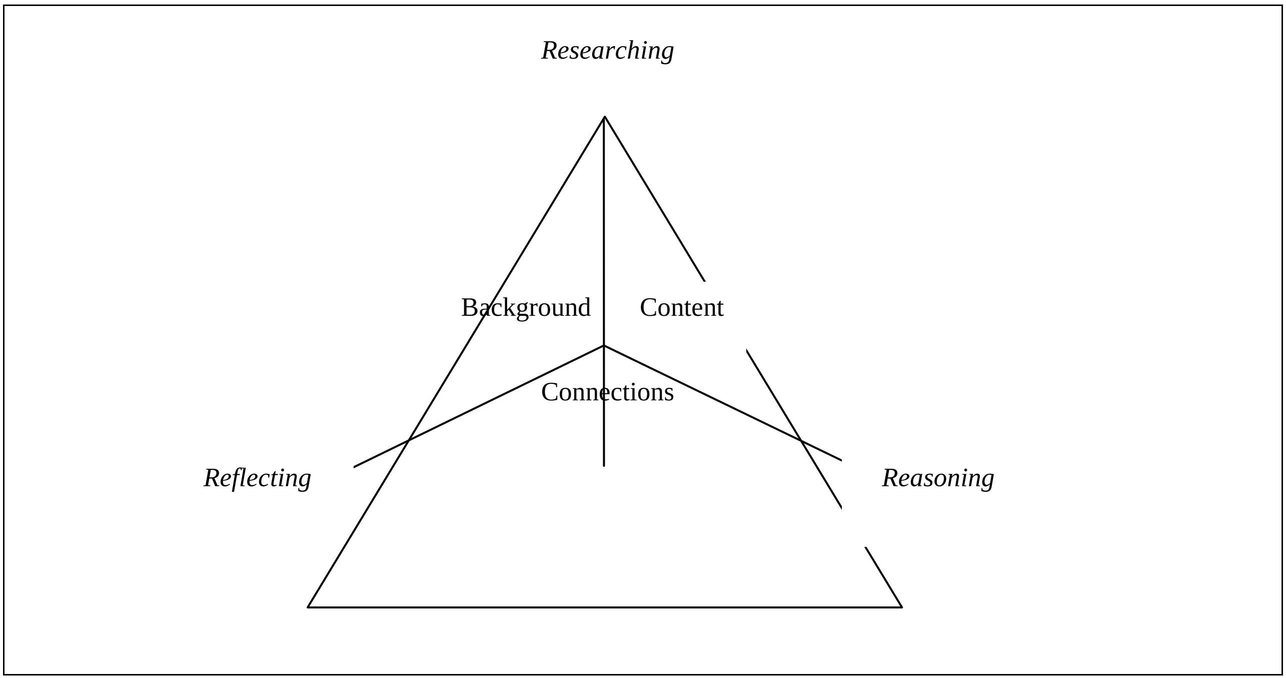

Fig. No. 1. Design of the 3C3R Model
(*Paloş, R., as cited in Hung, 2009, p. 122*)

The new steps taken in the design of this model are (Hung, 2009):
1. *setting goals and learning objectives*, which is achieved depending on the area of knowledge addressed, the difficulty level of problem solving skills that the student would develop and self-directed learning skills;
2. *content or task analysis* - in terms of concepts, principles, procedures - to determine which training methods can be used;
3. *Specific background analysis* to find problems drawn from real life;
4. *selection or generation of the problem*, after the analysis in the first stages, the problem must be motivating for the student, relevant to his interests, his career, the situations he faces; 5. *Analyzing problem possibilities* - needed to identify: to what extent it allows achievement of the learning objectives, if key information involved in solving the problem are consistent with the content of knowledge, if the problem's contextual information is sufficient to place learning in an authentic context or whether relationships between components of the problem have been designed accordingly;
6. *consistence analysis*, which aims to determine if the problem corresponds to the content covered and the level of student skills development;
7. running of the *problem calibration process* after the consistence analysis, concerned with content, background, research and reasoning;8. *building the component of reflection* that aims to cultivate the student's self-directed learning skills, it can have a formative or summative form;
9. *examining the inter-support relationships for the 3C3R model components*, thus ensuring mutual support between the 3C and 3R.

The 3C3R offers, besides the necessary conceptual framework for designing problems, a framework for research into the effects that adapting the amount of information contained in the problem has on: understanding the problem, identifying learning objectives, achieving logical

connections between different milestones in solving the problem and appropriate solutions (Hung, 2009).
From a design perspective of a learning experience that is based on the 3C3R model, were explored the views of 78 teachers, holding tenured positions, part of the body of mentors of the University "1 Decembrie 1918" of Alba Iulia, for Pedagogy of primary and preschool education. They carry out practice educational activities with students, offering *teaching / learning models* specific for traditional education.
Without disseminating the model proposed by Hung, we obtained the following information on the design of learning activities based on problem solving, following the application of a questionnaire covering the following areas:

- **Design/ correct formulation of a given problem taking into consideration**: setting learning goals based on the level of difficulty (Fig. 2), it highlights the correlating the objectives with the difficulty level; establishing appropriate procedures and methods of training for the learning task, it is carried out to a large extent at a rate of 65%, the analysis of the context of the problem, only to a lesser extent, 56% and 44% to some extent, the selection of the problem to stimulate the interest and motivation of the learners is followed a little or 55%;

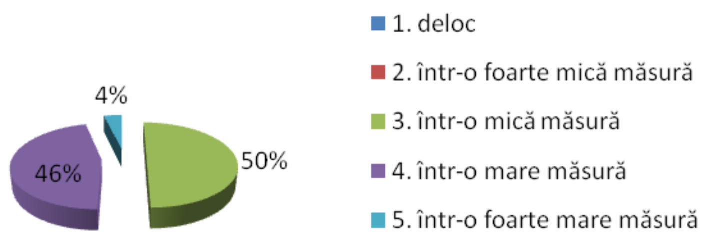

Fig. No. 2. Establishing learning objectives based on the level of difficulty

- **Linking the scientific content of the unit plan, with the requirements of the problem by**: identifying relationships between components of the problem and the content covered by the unit (fig. 3) is a priority for 44% of the teachers, analyzing consistency between content matter and level of development of the student's skill, it is realized to a large extent, only 14%;

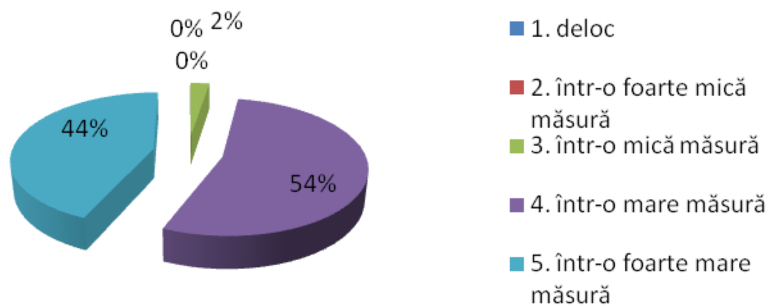

Fig. No. 3. Identifying relationships between components of the problem and content of the unit

- **Monitoring the learning situation based on problem solving, by**: analyzing the elements of content, context and reasoning in solving the problem is a huge concern of 14% of teachers, identification of reflection, with the role of cultivating the students' self-directed learning skills (Fig. 4), is considered important to a large extent, 58%, and 4% of whom consider it to be very important.

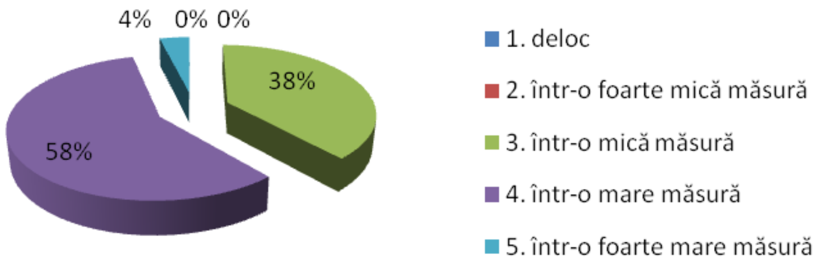

Fig. No. 4. Identification of reflection, with the purpose to cultivate in students self-directed learning skills

Thus, *the learning environment* must provide multiple representations of reality in relation to its complexity, authentic tasks, significant for individual experience and to encourage individual work and reflection on experience, fostering collaboration and social negotiation between those involved in the construction of knowledge. Meanwhile, the teacher's role is not to convey information, but he becomes a facilitator of learning, providing opportunities for active engagement in the discovery and construction of knowledge. And, the student actively engaged in learning, is encouraged to think independently, to interpret, analyze, make predictions, develop ideas and concepts throughout the training being focused on them (Driscoll, 1994).

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COUNSELING NEEDS OF THE MILITARY STUDENTS - LANDMARKS FOR COUNSELING PROGRAM OFFERED BY ACADEMY

Ştefania BUMBUC, PhD
„Nicolae Bălcescu" Land Forces Academy, Sibiu
stefanabumbuc@gmail.com

Abstract: *This paper brings up a topical issue of higher education, student counseling, addressing this specific activity in the context of military educational environment. Starting from some theoretical explanations and conceptual clarifications in the educational counseling field, the paper lists several principles, counseling techniques and tools considered by experts to be effective. Some characteristics of military university are further detailed in terms of its dual determination: the academic and military environment. The subjects of investigation are military students, which are addressed related to their future profession as officers, both at individual as well as the group level. The data processed after a questionnaire administration reveal some sensitive issues that stand out in the whole of educational counseling needs of the students and require specific educational counseling. The main purpose of this survey is to identify the milestone of develop an educational counseling program in the military academy, that meets the utmost military students needs of counseling.*

Keywords: *educational counseling, group counseling, counseling needs, military students*

1. Introduction

From the perspective of the person-centered approach theory of Carl Rogers, Ion Dumitru describes the counseling as "the action of support and credit a person as being able to assume their own personal development, to prevent various disturbances and psychical dysfunctions, to develop their own strategies for solve problems, develop a positive self-image, to form proper attitude towards others and to value their own personality resources"[13].

Counseling is one of the essential components of the way in which universities implement a student-centered formative process, in order to highlight the different types of students and their abilities, to respond to the community needs and to provide competent people for social and professional life. Through the steps involved, counseling facilitate the people effort to deal more effectively with stressors and tasks of daily life, thus contributing to the establishment of well-being and improving the quality of life. An important feature of counseling is the concern for prevention of the problems that might hinder the development and normal functioning of the person. The prevention strategy consists in identifying the risk groups and situations and acting on them before they have a negative impact and trigger personal or group crisis.

The specialized literature mentions the main categories of counseling, depending on the nature of subjects that are covered, such as: *psychological counseling, educational counseling, career counseling*. In the psychology of commonsense, *psychological counseling* is done routinely by persons from the entourage, which are subjectively invests by subject with trust, with some qualities and skills. In fact only a psychologist can make authentic, consciously and responsibly counseling, based on professional competences acquired. The content of *educational counseling* varies depending on the age of the subject and on the context in which he cross the various forms of education, the topics coming from psycho-pedagogical, vocational or

[13] I. A. Dumitru, *Consiliere psihopedagogică,* Editura Polirom, 2008, p. 73

aptitudinal field. On the other hand, *career counseling* means ”the process of full compatibilization between resources, requirements, aspirations, values and interests of an individual, and the real offer of education, training and socio-professional integration.”[14].

Educational counseling activities involve a formative approach focused on harnessing the capacities and availabilities of the person. Essential task of the educational counselor “is not to teach, but rather to help people to solve problems on their own concerning educational matters”[15], ensuring thereby the development of the personality. At this point a learning process of appropriate attitudes and behaviors going on, and that is effective for solving problems a person face on and make optimal decisions, achieving functional balance, psychological comfort and feeling of self accomplishment.

Educational or psycho-pedagogical counseling is a type of counseling that aims at the same time, psychological and pedagogical objectives, based on a psycho-educational model of training and development of human personality. It aims “customers acquiring/learning how to modify cognitions and behaviors to adapt to requests, to manage their emotional experiences and solve their internal conflicts, to improve their relationships with others, to make decisions and take responsibility, that is, in summary, to acquire healthy life skills, reaching optimum performance of self”[16].

Fundamental purpose of counseling is the optimal psycho-social functioning of person or group. Following the statement of Ovidiu Pânişoară, this goal can be achieved by reaching aims of counseling process as:

a) *Promoting health and well being*

Refers to optimal functioning of the human in terms of somatic, physiological, mental, emotional, social and spiritual matters. Health of a person is not conditioned by the absence of disease and dysfunction, but refers to a complex and multidimensional process, in which subjective well being is central.

b) *Personal development*

Refers to self-knowledge, self image, responsible decision-making capacity, harmonious interpersonal relationships, stress management, effective learning techniques, creative attitudes, realistic vocational options.

c) *Prevention*

It focuses on preventing negative emotional mood, self-distrust, risk behaviors, learning disabilities, social inadaptability, psychosomatic dysfunctions and crisis situations.

Analyzing the main goals of counseling, Adriana Băban states that, according to documents elaborated by the World Health Organization, ”well being” of individual is given by the following interlinked elements[17]: (1) *self-acceptance* (positive attitude toward themselves, acceptance of personal strengths and weaknesses, positive perception of past and future experiences); (2) *positive relationships with the others* (trust in people, sociability, intimacy, need to give and receive affection, empathic attitude); (3) *autonomy* (independence, determination, resistance to peer pressure, evaluation after personal standards, lack of excessive concern about others expectations and evaluations; (4) *control* (sense of competence and personal control on the tasks, creating opportunities for valuing personal needs, choices in accordance with own values); (5) *meaning and purpose of life* (goals medium and long-lasting, positive experience of the past, the joy of the present and the relevance of the future, curiosity); (6) *personal development* (opening towards new experiences, sense of valuing its own potential,

[14] M. Jigău (coord.), *Consilierea carierei adulţilor,* Institutul de Ştiinţe ale Educaţiei, Bucureşti, 2003, p.7, online: http://www.mevoc.net/publik/4Adult_Career_Counselling.pdf
[15] Idem, *Consilierea carierei,* Editura Sigma, Bucureşti, 2001, p.16
[16] Ibidem, p.14
[17] A. Băban (coord.), *Consiliere educaţională*, Imprimeria Ardealului, Cluj Napoca, 2001, p.18

capacity of self-reflection, self-perception of positive change, feeling of own efficiency, flexibility, creativity, the need of constructive challenges).

Moreover, the quality and efficiency of education are closely linked with psychological peculiarities (psycho-individual and psychosocial, relational) of persons involved, so we can say that the success in an activity is determined by how each person converts the educational influences to their own purchases, with remarkable effects in terms of training and personality development. The principles underlying the true educational counseling, or relationship that is established between the student who needs or require counseling on the one hand, and the person (specialist or not) who provide counseling, on the other hand, are the follows: pedagogical optimism, mutual confidence, following the evolution of the counseled person, forwarded by counsel of information and experience, orientation, adaptation, integration of the subject of counseling. Since educational counseling activity is carried out deliberately and consciously programmed, developed with groups of students, following an official time schedule, as is the case in the military academy, the persons responsible for these activities acquire the role of counselor for students. These educational counselors should consider the importance and implications of these activities over the military students and take the responsibility for repercussions.

Among the group counseling techniques with high success rate, authors mention: playful character activities, discussions and debates, completing worksheets and self-assessment scales, watching videos and commenting on them, completion of tests[18] and images, making collages and posters etc.

Adriana Băban[19] suggests some ways to intervene in order to solve possible problems in the individual or group counseling activities.

PROBLEMS	SOLUTIONS		RESULTS
Who? … What? … Where? ...	Possible: 1. ... 2. ... 3. …	Consequences: 1. ... 2. ... 3. ...	Conclusions: ...

Table 1: Worksheet for counseling activity

Counseling techniques mentioned above are applicable through specific procedures that can be combined and adapted by counselor according to the subject addressed and the specific context. The category of counseling procedures detailed by the author mentioned before included the following: *reflection* (expressing in words, by the counselor, of affective and cognitive states of the subject, in a common language, to help him realize his particular condition), *argumentation* (awareness of the problem, identifying strong evidence, coordinating the judgment of subject toward rational and simple arguments), *drawing* (graphic expression of emotional state), *the list of problems* (hierarchy of problem), *the list of solutions* (identifying several types of action), *active listening* (eye contact with the subject, neutral language, without using terms as good-bad or right-wrong), *empathy of counselor* (short and clear answers, focus of attention on the subject messages, using an appropriate voices, avoidance stereotype answers), *unconditional acceptance* (counselor not acting on objective reality as it should be, but on subjective reality, on the way of thinking, beliefs and behavior of subjects), *congruence* (correspondence between thoughts, beliefs and personal values of the counselor, on the one hand and his behavior on the other), *paraphrasing* (rewording the messages in order to clarify its

[18] A. Neculau, *26 de teste pentru cunoaşterea celuilalt*, Editura Polirom, 2010, p. 58.
[19] A. Băban (coord.), *Consiliere educaţională*, Imprimeria Ardealului, Cluj Napoca, 2001, p.112

essential aspects and to avoid subjective interpretation designed by counselor), *summarization* (relative concluding with the aim of clarifying the stage reached by the counseling process and establishing the next phases), *feed-back* (positive, specific and concrete, focused on the behavior, offered by the counselor immediately after the discussion).

Educational advisor has not pre-established solutions whose success is guaranteed unconditionally, on the contrary, in a given situation, it helps the person during the counseling process to find alone the best solution for solving their own problems.

2. The general framework of educational counseling of military students

Military students operate in a strong individualized environment in society that requires to a great extent their adaptive resources. In this context, adapting to the lifestyle, to the requirements of the educational process and to military missions is not only a matter of physical and mental balance for each individual, but also a social act. From the way it is designed this phenomenon in the context of a military activities arising a series of practical measures concerning the application of psychological and pedagogical knowledge and skills, as well as counseling for dealing with the educational process in the army. Adapting to the military means, at the individual level, the way in which each student is integrated in the social space of the barracks (academy) or training field; in relation to the pace of military training and utilitarian activities; in incorporate into units and subunits which it belongs, in the military hierarchy and values of the organization.

The need for rapid and effective adaptation of military students, as well as the severity of the consequences, in the case of failure to adapt, requires finding ways for preventive and ameliorative intervention for the purposes of facilitating student - military environment relationship, especially because it is easier to prevent a malfunction than to correct it after it has occurred. Vasile Armașu[20] believes that although failure to adapt in the military environment is not a social issue, its consequences not exceeding affected groups and individuals, usually there are difficulties of adjustment for the people that faced such an environment the first time. These difficulties are expressed through frustration, alterations in behavior, tension, stress and so on, marked by a series of crises outward symptoms and aggressive excito-motor behavior, depression, violations of regulations, lack of discipline, poor performance at work etc.

Specialists have found also the increase of the adaptability coefficient, in the case of prioritization of the adaptive structures related to different areas of military environment, such as[21]:

- order and discipline;
- materials and living conditions;
- military service dysfunctions;
- deprivations imposed;
- knowledge of arms and military equipment;
- physical and psychical effort;
- interpersonal and hierarchical relationships.

Factors involved in the adaptation process and also the complexity of this process make not be possible to provide universally valid solutions to this matter, especially since military environment may be at the same time an excellent framework in which individuals achieve personal maturity (true "school of manhood", as traditional), but also a source of tension and frustration, sometimes solved by a behavior harmful to himself and those around him. On the

[20] V. Armaşu, *Dimensiunile sociologice ale adaptării la mediul militar*, în „Spirit Militar Modern", nr. 6/2000

[21] I. Radu-Tomşa, *Psihologie militară. Eul, imaginea de sine şi comportamentul în luptă*, Editura Academiei de Înalte Studii Militare, Bucureşti, 1999

other hand, the academic studies lay the foundations of psychological training of future officers for participating in missions in the theaters. Analyzing major psychiatric disorders associated with armed conflict, C.M. Macovei believes that "it is necessary to displace attention and concern of specialists toward mental health component of the services provided to the military"[22], since "inner experience of a soldier directly or indirectly involved in a terrifying event is extended well beyond time when this event ended"[23].

Summarizing the assertions of Octavian Tartar, adaptation to military environment is a unitary process, aimed at three main aspects [24]:

- *physical* and *physiological* - the ability to withstand all kinds of strictness and privations, strenuous trainings, aggressiveness, to compliance a rigorous program, a long lasting physical effort, heavy requests in any weather conditions, terrain, day/night, lack of food and appropriate clothing etc.
- *psychological* – forming skills for specific military activities (handling weapons and military equipment), capabilities to give up personal freedom and subordinate to superiors, capacity to control impulses, fear, emotions etc.
- *social* - leaving by the individual of its regular universe: family, friends, etc. and integration into an imposed community, which requires full and continuous participation, promoting other value structures, which are sometimes in contradiction to value system of the civil society, that the student was familiar.

In order to help support the students in the process of adaptation, in order to facilitate their access to useful information in the academic community and in order to establish a closer and less formal relationship between students and teaching staff or academic leadership, over the past three years were organized the counseling activities for group of students. This educational counseling activity, called *tutoring*, was formally established in military academy, and takes place weekly for 30 minutes, after a set schedule. For each group of students was assigned a tutor among teachers (military or civilian) or officers which are not teachers, but auxiliary teaching staff.

But in the military academy longer are a lot of people who assume responsibilities and tasks that can be cataloged, to a greater or lesser extent, as educational counseling for students, even if these people were not formally invested with this kind of duties. Things usually happen spontaneously, students calling for counseling people who they had developed closer relationships over time or those they respect and give them confidence in the ability to provide counseling in various situations. From the category of such persons, which contributes to the "well-being" of students in military academy, are part the following: military and civilian teachers, tutors of student groups, military psychologist, military priest, commanding officers of military students, graduated students responsible for platoons of young students from lower years of study and, of course, all colleagues. Each of these persons meets at a time the role of adviser to the military students on various issues, psychological, educational or strictly professional matter. We shall present some aspects of the activity of the specified persons, matters which highlights them as possible counselors of military students.

Military psychologist has the responsibility to objectively assess the psychological condition of individuals or military groups, in order to foster well being of military, to anticipate and prevent potential psychological crises, to indicate the optimal actions to recover the psychical capacity and to contribute to overcoming the psychological dysfunctions that occurred.

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[22] C.M. Macovei, *Consecinţe psihologice postcombat ale războiului modern*, în M. Pateşan, C.M. Macovei, „Confruntarea civilizaţiilor în teatrele de operaţii internaţionale", Editura Academiei Forţelor Terestre, Sibiu, 2013, p.32

[23] Ibidem p. 35

[24] O. Tătar (coord.), *Perspective contemporane în didactica învăţământului superior*, Editura Academiei Forţelor Terestre, Sibiu, 2003.

”The task of psychological counselor is to teach the person/group to adopt new behavioral strategies, to valorize their potential, to develop new attitudes and adaptive behavior” [25].

In the literature dedicated to the issue of training future officers to become leaders in the military organization, says that “to be a leader, a commander appreciated by subordinate implies: to prove a broader general culture, and also knowledge in military specialty, to be worship, to have prestige, authority, to be empathic, modest, honorable man, demanding, self-confident and confident in subordinates, to have the ability to recognize their own mistakes, to have the power to fight with their own weaknesses, to know, recognize and defeat them”.[26] By his statute, *the commander* must be able to form teams, but also to cultivate individualities, to supervise and motivate their subordinates' actions. Pedagogical and psychological training of the officer is essential in leadership and for support this assertion may be listed a series of desirable aspects of an officer personality such as[27]:

- Readiness to understand person as it really is, not as he would like to be;
- Sharing with the subordinate both their joys and failures;
- Close relationship to subordinates, but without falling into familiarity, detachment as needed to maintain a good relationship, but also the prestige of leader;
- Avoidance of duplicity: overly polite with superiors and excessively harsh with subordinates.

Because of their personal qualities and daily formal and informal activities, and because they show availability for communication, empathy and involvement in solving problems faced by military, officers are often required to counsel the subordinates. In the military academy, students often require the support of officers, of their directly commanders, in order to overcome the difficulties of adapting to the military, the lack of family and friends, the activities with high physical and mental stress, and preparation for activities characterized by uncertainty and risk, specific to the modern battlefield.

Spiritual assistance provided by the *military priest* has not only religious implications, but also is a permanent formation in the field of human values, both in the light of ethics and Christianity. As Sebastian Şebu says, “Nowadays our army attaches great importance to the priest in any military structure, allowing him to assume the role of spiritual counselor”[28]. The mission of the priest in the military, both in peacetime and in wartime, is to provide the religious life of all categories of staff, by religious service and pastoral activity at individual and collective level. Priest is expected to initiate activities or programs with religious character, ethical and social, to stimulate the responsibility of military, their care for others and to prevent acts of immorality or insubordination. In addition, calling the most intimate spiritual resources of military, correlated with the religious message, military priest can prevent or diminish states of depression (created by the separation of military from their family and society) and any deviant behavior caused by high requests and stress.

Regarding educational counseling of students, conducted by *military or civilian teachers*, the formal expression of this activity is conducted mostly in the classroom, with groups of students, under the name mentioned above, *tutoring*. The successful implementation of this initiative in the academy requires a rigorous pedagogical foundation and a judicious selection of military and civilian teachers who can fulfill this kind of responsibilities. Not any officer or any civilian teacher can be an effective counselor, at least not for any student who requires counseling. We support the need of conscious and authentic tutoring, as an activity complementary to formal education of students. Teachers responsible for advising student

[25] S. Sava, R. Paloş, D. Ungureanu, *Educaţia adulţilor*, Editura Polirom, 2007, p. 57
[26] M. Cosma *Formarea ofiţerului modern*, Editura Academiei Forţelor Terestre, Sibiu, 2006, p.61
[27] O. Tătar, *Etică şi deontologie militară*, Editura. Academiei Trupelor de Uscat, Sibiu, 2000, p.68
[28] S. Şebu, M. Opriş, D. Opriş, *Metodica predării religiei*, Ed. Reîntregirea, Alba Iulia, 2000, p.17

groups can guide and support students in its efforts of adaptation and integration in military academia by establishing open communication and good relationship with them, by showing willingness to find out the problems faced by students, by facilitating the relationship of students with staff from various structures, by sharing personal and professional experience.

Educational counseling of military students is a special relationship between teacher and student, developed with the aim of helping the latter. Although psychological approach is used in pedagogical counseling, the teacher is first and foremost teacher, so educator and manager of the group of students. Thus, counseling is a secondary tool in hand, heart and mind of the teacher, for developing educational demarches that are their responsibilities. During the initial training for the military profession and professional skills achieving process, military students may face obstacles related to the military environment, in which they live and develop in the present, but also to the social environment of origin or to itself. Therefore, educational counseling activities can address individuals or groups of students, depending on the subject and the context created.

Military group may be described as the social framework in which people with this profession forms and affirms its personality. Interpersonal relationships, cooperation and competition in activities often raise problems whose solution depends on efficiency of work and on psychological comfort of participants. Therefore, military need help, support and guidance not only as individuals, in personalized way, but also as members of a social group to which dynamics contributes to the building the personality of each. ”Unproblematic networking with other and collaboration during professional activities can be also supported by educational counseling group, which aims valorization of the sanogenetic potential of the group”[29]. This potential is determined by the existing social climate and atmosphere, based on equality and socio-emotional support that its members can give it to each other.

3. Methodology and results

On the theoretical basis the above, the present study has the following objectives: to identify students' perceptions about the counseling activities offered in academy; to identify and prioritize the counseling needs of military students for each of the main categories of counseling mentioned in the literature: psychological, career and educational. This kind of investigative approach is the first step mandatory in order to develop a program of group counseling for students of Land Forces Academy, depending on the counseling needs identified.

Will present next the results of a survey based on questionnaire. Investigated population consists of military students who studied undergraduate in Land Forces Academy from Sibiu between February and April 2013. Research sample consists of 120 students, girls and boys from all three years of study (out of 630 students) and it is representative, being constituted by simple random sampling. The questionnaire used as data collection instrument consists of 22 closed items, some with choice answer, and some opinion questions, with answers graded on the Likert-type scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. After data collection and primary processing with statistical methods have been obtained some results, which are presented synthetic.

First we will present the students' perception regarding counseling activities offered in the academy, as are reflected in responses to specific items.

Persons from AFT to which military students would request advices, if they would face problematic situations:

[29] I. A. Dumitru, *Consiliere psihopedagogică,* Editura Polirom, 2008, p.158.

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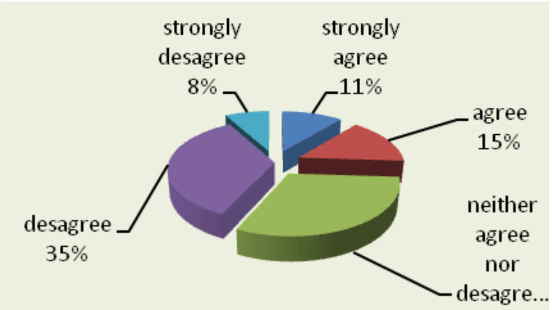

Figure no. 1. The officially assigned tutor

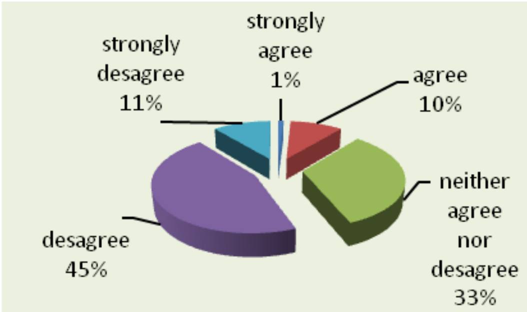

Figure no.2. The psychologist of academy

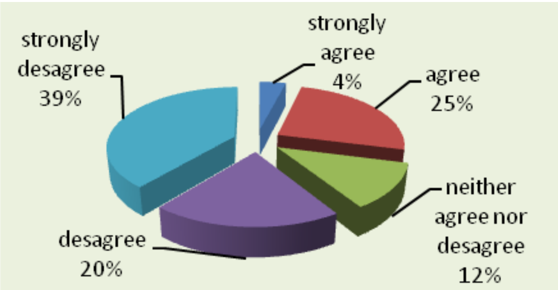

Figure no. 3 The military priest

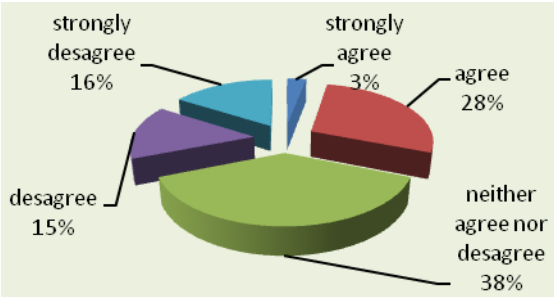

Figure no. 4. A civilian or a military teacher, other than the tutor

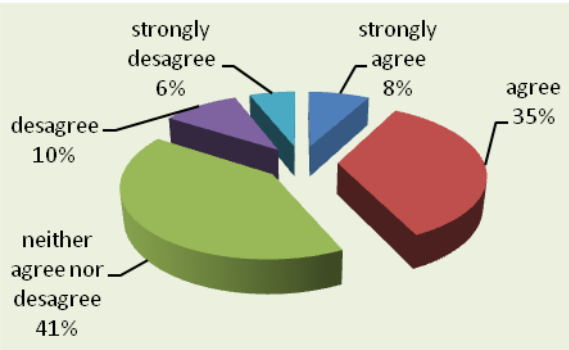

Figure no. 5. A military commander

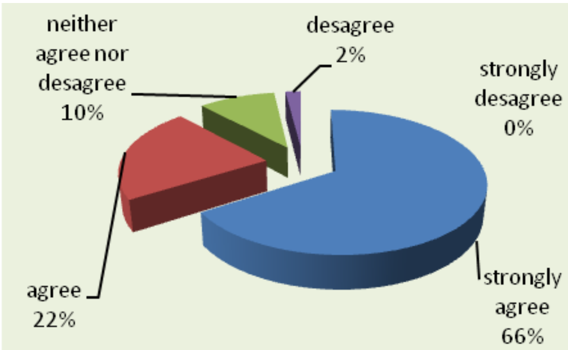

Figure no. 6. A colleague

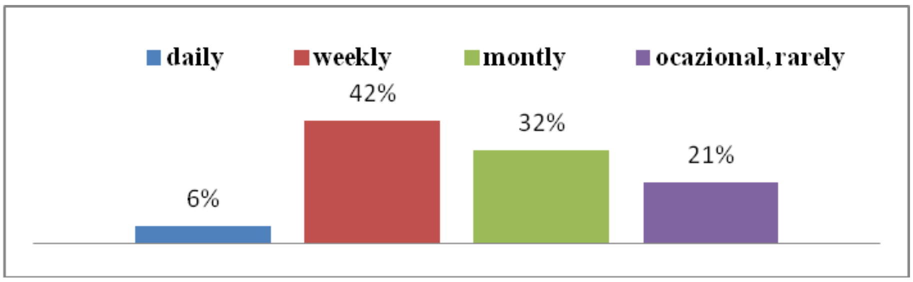

Figure no.7. Frequency of request for counseling

Other students' opinions about the counseling are shown in the graphs below.

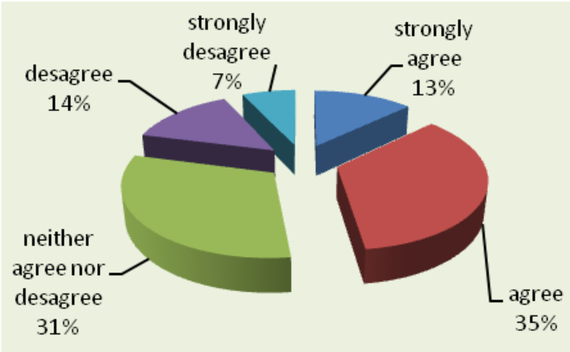

Fig.no.8. It is necessary to setup weekly tutoring for each group of students

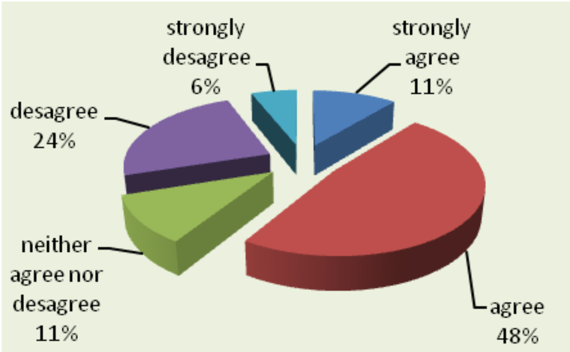

Fig.no.9. Group counseling is as useful as individual counseling because military students' problems are typically

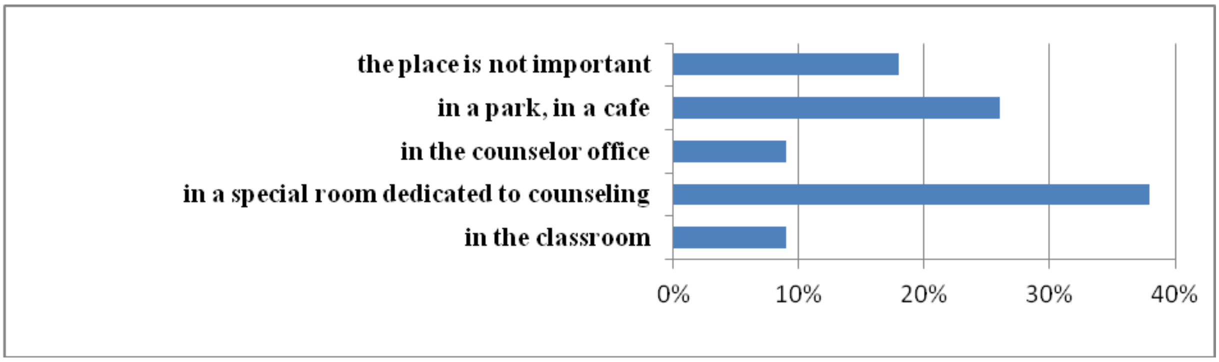

Figure no.10. Location where counseling should take place

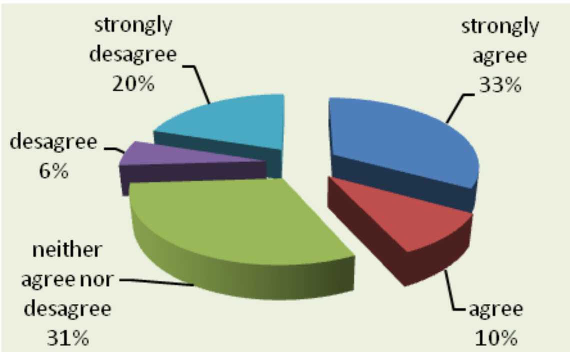

Fig.no.11. Overall, the tutoring organized in military academy meet expectations/needs of students

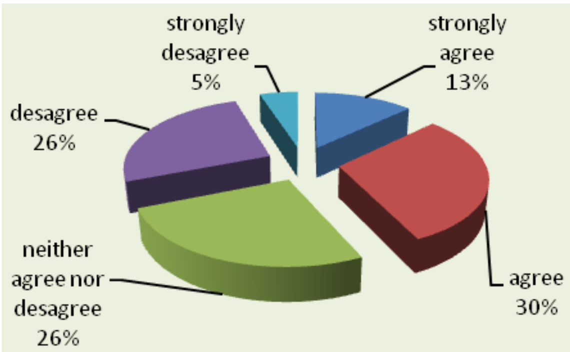

Fig.no.12. The relationship between students and tutor is friendly, open, based on trust

The most significant effects or outcomes of tutoring activities mentioned by students and ranked in order of frequency are:

- more information, better understanding how things work in academy;
- identification of a trustworthy person, willing to find out student problems;
- identification of a person willing to provide support for solving problems;
- better understanding colleagues;
- better understanding own person.

Counseling needs of students were grouped around the main areas of counseling and ranked according to the scores obtained.

In order of importance granted by students, topics of interest for the group counseling sessions belonging to the following categories:

- career and professional counseling;
- psychological counseling;
- educational counseling.

According to the scores obtained, topics considered important to be addressed in a group session in the field of career counseling are:

- career plan;
- international military missions;
- moral profile of the officer;
- teamwork;
- professional stress.

Topics considered by students being important to be addressed in a group session in the field of psychological counseling are:

- effective communication methods and techniques;
- developing skills;
- emotional control and self-control;
- discrimination;
- resistance to manipulation.

In the field of educational counseling, topics that obtained highest scores, according to students' opinion are:

- effective learning techniques;
- time management;
- academic standards;
- Lifelong Learning;
- moral education of the military.

4. Conclusions and discussions

Following processing and interpretation of the survey results, we can see that in situations where they need advice, the academy students call to a great extent to the advice of colleagues, medium call to group tutor and relatively rare to their military commanders. A total unfavorable image, in terms of counseling potential, have other people involved in, like the psychologist, priest, and teachers who are not tutors to those groups. The students answers indicate that group tutors are not very well perceived as having counseling abilities, although their rank is the second; his score is much lower than the score of "a colleague". It is known that the "body spirit" and the camaraderie specific of military groups positively influence students' interrelations. These assure the increasing of mutual trust and contribute to the psychological balance, but we still noticed that students avoid some people from which might expect a genuine counseling, in a professional manner. Hence the need to make a meaningful analysis of the situation by the management team, pursuing both those features of the persons and characteristics of the activities mentioned before, for adopting some measures to improve the situation and to enhance for these persons the role of counselor for military students.

Independent samples T-test indicated no significant differences between the answers of students from the three years of study in respect of their favorite people to ask for advice. In this regard are also no differences between boys and girls.

Regarding the organization in academy a weekly tutoring sessions after a set time, this practice is considered useful by students, both in terms of frequency and in terms of the extent to which it meet their expectations. However, the classroom is perceived as an inappropriate location for carrying out counseling, probably because it is automatically associated with teaching activities. Students and teachers feel constrained by their usual professional roles of educator-educated, and that cannot be ignored altogether. But counseling activity requires a relationship based on other roles and functions and compliance with other principles than school. Therefore students like the idea of carrying out a counseling session not in the classroom, but in a dedicated room or even outside the school, in a space where they can better manifest itself. Percentage of students from the III year is higher than those from I or II year who would like to conduct meetings with tutors outside the academy.

The fact that a third of investigated students perceive the relationship with tutors as close, open, trusting, and another third of the students disagree with this characterization has several possible explanations: part of the tutors do not know exactly what to do in this position and have a superficial approach of tutoring; part of the tutors have not the necessary attributes to carry out this activity; by implementing a random distribution of tutors can occur incompatibility between them and students. On the other hand, even if the students state that topics of interest and problems faced by are similar in military environment, however, group counseling is less oriented to individuals, hence the polarized opinions of students. The informative dimension of tutoring is very valuable, because of the easy access for students to information related to academics, coming from reliable sources. A positive assessment received the availability of tutors to listen the students' problems and their involvement in solving them. It is remarkable, finally, students' positive perceptions in respect of some elements from counseling field. It was, in fact, the main reason of management team for implementing mandatory tutoring in academy.

T-test for independent samples showed differences in the perception between girls and boys in respect of the relationship with the tutor, the girls having in a greater extent the opinion that the relationship with the tutor is open and friendly. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of tutoring activities, one of the key elements is the awareness of boys' expectations and concern to meet these expectations.

Counseling needs identified in the survey indicated high scores of topics in the career counseling area, with clear focus on specific elements of the military profession (international missions, officers' moral profile etc.). Definitely the tutors from among officers are much more experienced to address these issues than civilian's tutors. This deficiency is a possible causal explanation of students less favorable perception of tutoring, since there are topics of general interest that cannot be discussed due to the lack of competence of the tutors. On the other hand, issues related to psychological counseling or educational counseling is more accessible to all tutors, and addressing them could be very appropriate for students' expectations.

Also in terms of psychological counseling needs, independent samples T test for boys and girls show that girls give a greater importance to discrimination issues. It's about the perception of belonging to a disadvantaged group, minority group of girls in the whole military student population, composed 86% of boys. In case this particular issue it is not known and explicitly addressed, it may become a problem that affects directly and indirectly academic success and well-being of students.

In conclusion, an initiative with ameliorative purpose would be a training session, led by a professional counselor, bringing together tutors and other people from the academy that can perform in different contexts as advisers. The purpose of this training session would be awareness the participants of the significance and the implications of counseling activities and to provide them some ideas and suggestions for tackling activities with students. For some topics indicated by students as being interesting, attendance at tutoring activities of experienced officers, particularly those who have participated in international missions, is also of great importance. For application in the tutoring of a group counseling program, tailored to the needs of military students identified at counseling, is necessary to develop an activity plan, after the all specific requirements of career counseling, psychological counseling and educational counseling.

This counseling program will be the subject to a further study, because it requires the development of an initial version that needs to be experimentally applied, and subsequently improved, according to outputs. Good practices, outcomes achieved, successes and failures shall be discussed afterwards and analyzed during the meetings with tutors, so these activities to increase qualitatively and become an authentic support for academy students.

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PROFESSOR MIRON IONESCU`S ACTIVITY AT THE SPECIAL SCHOOL FROM ȘIRIA IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 1956-1957

Angelica Bencheu
Kindergarten No 1 Șiria, Arad County
angelica.bencheu@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Teaching is a profession that comes from the heart, a voyage in the adventurous childhood of some many generations. The teacher has been and is light, warmth, purity, goodness, a path breaker and a unexhausted seeker for the treasures of the human soul.*

Key words: *vocational professor, school dedication, a model*

These words define Professor Miron Ionescu. He was born in Izvorul Rece, Vaideeni village, Vâlcea County. After the graduation of primary school in Izvorul Rece, he moved to Ardeal where he continued his studies. He attended secondary and high school at the Pedagogical High school ”Andrei Șaguna” from Sibiu, between 1945 – 1952, and then completed his university education in Cluj, at the Faculty of Pedagogy – Psychology of ”Victor Babeș” University, between 1952 – 1956. He graduated as a valedictorian, being awarded a Bachelor`s degree in Pedagogy – Psychology. He worked for a few years as a teacher in Arad County. He taught pedagogy and Romanian language and literature at the Special School in Șiria (1956 – 1957), and, later on at the Secondary School in Șiria, where he held the position of school principle (1957 – 1960).

The school of Siria is for Professor Miron Ionescu the place of the most beautiful memories, the place where he always comes back gladly.

He always wanted to develop a functional school, an objective that was fulfilled due the respectful attitude, cherish and love for each child.

Research was done in the Archives of Special School in Șiria because Professor Ionescu started his career there. Information related to his activity in the school year 1956 – 1957 were found, as well as information on the organizational system of this institution highly impacted by the professors contribution.

The General Plan of Work for the school year 1956 – 1957 was found in the school archive. The decisions and regulation established in the district discussions, settled the following tasks:

1. General education
   a) The accomplishment of the school plan;
   b) Monitoring and maintaining attendance at 100% throughout the year;
   c) Assuring school supplies for pupils;
   d) The preparation of the first school day.
2. Management and control
   a) Planning the teaching staff`s work;
   b) Control over the teachers` preparation for lessons;
   c) Quality assessment of pupils` knowledge;

d) The development of conscious and consented discipline at pupils;
e) Control and guidance of work with pioneers;
f) Monitoring and accomplishment of administrative and household tasks;
g) Active extracurricular control;
h) Control and guidance of work in the methodological area.

3. Pedagogic counsel

a) Organizing work in the pedagogical counsel;
b) Support for changes in the agriculture;
c) Affinity with the pupils` parents,
d) The establishment of work groups within the school;
e) Discusses and executes Party and Government orders related to school;
f) Examines the plans and the reports on school activity;
g) Discusses the reports in detail and draws fair conclusions on the teachers` demonstrative lessons;
h) Determines the most remarkable teachers;
i) Discusses the pupils` behaviour grades and in serious cases decides upon their disposal;
j) Discusses and tries to increase the teachers` ideological, professional and political level;
k) takes measures for the opening and closing of the school year;
l) Follows closely the school`s equipment with didactic material;
m) Establishes the teachers` annual leave.

4. Organization of instructive-educational work

a) Fulfilment of syllabi stipulations, according to subjects and classes;
b) Pupils` control and grading;
c) Teaching thorough knowledge;
d) Fight against learning drawbacks.

5. Methodical activity and improvement of teachers` qualification

a) Ideological and political work with teachers and preschool teachers;
b) Organization of work in the pedagogic corner;
c) Acquiring and using the experience of soviet school and of our highly ranked schools;
d) Organizing help for young teachers;
e) Preparing teachers for teachers` counsels held in January and August 1957.

6. Teachers work in the classroom

a) Keeping trace of attendance and grades;
b) Helping students with learning difficulties by organizing tutoring classes;
c) Organizing spare time, control over schedule overload;
d) Organizing trips and visits with other teachers;
e) Support workshops organized by the pioneer organization;
f) Close link to the students` parents;
g) Close connection with the schools` principle;
h) Helps experience exchange between teachers;
i) Follows the development of a conscious and responsible attitude towards work that brings about the development of socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism.

7. Work outside the classroom

a) Organizing pupils` activities at workshops;
b) Students` involvement in patriotic activities;
c) Organizing work at school library;

d) Encouraging pupils to support different activities organized by the local council and the socialist sectors from the villages.

8. Pioneers organization
a) Elaboration of the general work plan of the school`s pioneers organization;
b) Strengthening the pioneers organization;
c) Support for the educational process;
d) Development of collective and patriotic spirit;
e) Organizing thematic meetings.

9. Sanitarian and physical education measures
a) Permanent connection with the school`s doctor and nurse;
b) Organizing sport events and competitions between classes;
c) Organizing Red Cross work in school.

10. Administrative and household work
a) Adjusting school inventory;
b) Completion of didactic-instructive equipment;
c) Finishing interior repairs;
d) Acquisition of printed books and school supplies;
e) Termination of pupils` enrolment;
f) Keeping registers in order;
g) Keeping the pupils` enrolment registers in order;
h) Cleanness of school, schoolyard and outbuildings;
i) Material preparation of the new school year;
j) Food supplies
k) Equipment and bedding for children;
l) Building a household annexes for the improvement of pupils` food services.

School organization

A. Classes and pupils

Preparatory classes	5	(?) pupils
1st Grade	2	19 pupils
2nd Grade	2	19 pupils
3rd Grade	2	16 pupils
Total no of classes	11	

B. School manning

Preparatory classes
- Rona Gheorghe
- Pavlov Valentina
- Vuia Gheorghina
- Faur Stela
- Popii Gheorghe

1st Grades	Vintilescu Doina
2nd Grades	Popovici Dumitru
	Ionescu Miron
3rd Grades	Drăgoi Teofil
	Huzău Maria

Preschool teachers

1st Group	Căpitan Zenobia
2nd Group	Groza Felicia
3rd Group	Apostolescu Ileana
4th Group	Vacancy
5th Group	Vacancy

School workers

I. Team of good workers

Cîlbu Nicolae responsible
Groza Felicia
Drăgoi Teofil
Kenil Mihai

Tasks:

a) Care and maintenance of water supplies in good conditions;
b) Sanitary maintenance and use of toilette;
c) Cleanness of schoolyard and school paths;
d) rational use of fuel;
e) Daily cleaning and dusting of classrooms, bedrooms and school`s outbuildings.

II. Small repairs necessary throughout the school year

a) Immediate repair of involuntary damages caused by pupils;
b) Repair, cleaning and fencing of the two wells in the schoolyard;
c) Thorough cleaning in the summer holidays;
d) Disinfection and wall repairs.

III. Material preparation of school for the new school year

a) Repairing interior and exterior walls, doors, windows and furniture;
b) Inside and outside whitewashing.

IV. Arrangement collective

Tasks:

a) Caring for the arrangement of classrooms. The responsible will be supported be the tutoring teacher;
b) Exterior arrangement of school for different events like anniversaries and celebrations. This work will be done by a team consisting of teachers and preschool teachers.

V. Internal order in school

For pupils:

- creating a conscious and consented discipline;
- development of good skills through daily drilling practice;
- understanding the duty to parents, teachers, school and local council;
- obedience to schools and classroom`s decisions;
- Knowledge and enforcement of behaviour rules.

For teachers

- Thoroughness in lesson preparation;
- hard work with left behind pupils;
- Punctuality in the classroom and arrival to school 10 minutes before the lesson begins;
- Fulfilment of tasks from the general plan of the school;
- Compliance with the schedule and pupils` breaks;
- Keeping the didactic material in good conditions.

VI. Library:

Responsible: Comerzan Eugenia

Tasks: Keeping the library`s inventory and catalogue; readers` registration; book distribution in the classrooms, according to pupils` level of understanding; keeping record of books required as private reading at different school subjects.

Teachers` working and living conditions

School has taken all measures to assure proper work and living conditions for teachers according to Central Committee`s, PMR and CM`s decision of 16 August 1954. All teachers are provided adequate housing, fuel and the right to be supplied with manufactured goods and food from the socialist sector. They also received salaries at the due date and new teachers received also a settlement allowance. No delays were signalled. Teachers could serve the meal in the canteen built near the boarding school, thus saving some money and improving their financial wellbeing. All teachers were enrolled in the course The History of Romanian Working Party, which they regularly attended and obtained good results. Teachers enrolled in distance learning courses received support from the school, being excused from other extracurricular activities.

No exchanges were made between schools in the school year 1956 – 1957, due to restrictions related to travelling expenses.

Teachers obtained satisfactory results at the end of the school year due to their involvement in the educational act, to the improvement of their teaching methods and to advice given by experienced teachers. Professor Miron Ionescu had a remarkable activity, obtaining very good results in the didactic activity. Consequently, he was appointed principle of Secondary School of in 1957 having the position until 1960. He remained in the teachers` and pupils` memory as a good colleague and exquisite pedagogue.

Each time Professor Miron Ionescu had the opportunity, he visited Șiria and the two schools were he started his activity as a teacher. It is impossible not to see the bound between Professor Miron Ionescu and Siria with the people he supported so much. Therefore, we pay him great respect.

BOOK REVIEW,
LIZICA MIHUŢ, *FONETICS AND FONOLOGY*,

by Voica Radu, Ph.D.
Aurel Vlaicu University from Arad
voicaradu@yahoo.com

Abstract: *In this article I would like to underline the importance of the book Phonetics and Phonology, for our students. While preserving the general structure of Romanian grammar, the author has substantially expanded its scope to introduce several topics that is very important to know in order to use a correct language, and to take account of new developments in linguistic rules over the past decade. The resulting work is an invaluable guide to the subject, offering clarifications of its specialized terms and explaining its relationship to formal and contemporary grammar. With its clear and accessible style it will appeal to a wide student readership.*

Keywords: *Phonetics and Phonology, Romanian grammar, contemporary grammar.*

In the context of current Romanian linguistic research, the book *Phonetics and Phonology*, published by University "Aurel Vlaicu" of Arad, responds to an increasingly acute requirement for Phonetics works, appeared in the horizon of expectations, both of linguists and of general public, too.

Based on an extensive current bibliography, the book is divided into six chapters that describe the defining aspects of Romanian Phonetics, in an outstanding synthesis including: language as a system of signs, general aspects of sound and phoneme, the vocalic and consonantal Romanian language system, and, also, spelling key issues that regard the recent changes occurring into Romanian language as a result of new trends, of new rules imposed by *Dicţionarul ortografic, ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române* (2005), and, of course, due to the English influence.

The first chapter, *Language as a system of signs*, focuses the whole approach in Saussure's theory of language vision, operating with classic dichotomies like *langue/ parole, conceptual image/acoustic image, synchronic/diachronic, sound/phoneme*.
However, communication is seen as complex semiotic process in which Phonetics and Phonology represent the first level of language study, the presemantic one.

The different types of Phonetics (generic, descriptive, synchronic, diachronic and experimental) are treated distinctively, but among these, functional Phonetics or Phonology owns a special place. The theoretical approach continues with the analysis of sound, the vocal tract operation in producing speech sounds and with the mechanism of perception of sounds. All these issues bring into discussion important theoretical aspects which the author is taking into account, finding enlightening explanations that are necessary, both for philologist and for philology student who cannot find such specifications in similar works of synthesis.

The presentation of the Romanian language phonological system opens with a deep insight into human speech sounds research, indicating significant stages in research process, from the nineteenth century P. J. Rousselot's experiments to the golden age of Phonology when

Sausssure's disciples founded language schools. The author highlights the synchronization of Romanian language studies in the twentieth century with those from abroad, taking into account the importance and the modernity of Sextil Puşcariu or Al. Rosetti contributions.

The matter of accent in Romanian language and of its shifts as a result of borrowings from Romance languages, but also from Turkish or Slavic languages represents another exciting chapter of the book.

Spelling and its changes that are in an organic relation with Phonetics occupies an important space in the paper, the author highlights the essence of current trends related to the new rules contained in the second edition of *Dicţionarul ortografic, ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române.* The section focused on orthography is comprehensive, covering issues related to the development of Romanian literary norms with reference to the dynamics of the twentieth century.

Orthographic issues are dealt with from the perspective of changes caused by the emergence of newly adapted neologisms according to *Dicţionarul ortografic, ortoepic şi morfologic al limbii române.* The overall vision is a constant of each issue treated that is why the author places these orthographic issues in the framework of the main directions of Romanian spelling from the beginning to the present days. Meanwhile, the issues covered make this chapter to be a section of language cultivation, the author noticing deviations from the norm and some errors made in the current language.

The basic principles of Romanian spelling and the types of orthographic systems that have marked the evolution of writing in Romanian language are presented with nuanced explanations that establish bridges between synchronic and diachronic aspects of Romanian language development. The spelling and punctuation marks are presented with detailed explanations that are supported with examples from Romanian classical writer's works.

Fonetică şi fonologie by Lizica Mihuţ is a work of high scientific rigor, a single appearance in the series of contemporary Romanian linguistics works that proves a special utility.

The high scientific altitude and the philological accuracy characterizing the work are doubled by the practical dimension of the paper that consists in a set of tests and exercises, which transforms the book into a useful contribution not only for linguists but also for teachers and students.

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Arad, str. E. Drăgoi, nr. 2-4● Telefon: 0257-219555 ●E-mail: editurauav@yahoo.com

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