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DIDACTIC STRATEGIES AND CONCEPTUAL SYSTEM OF STUDENTS IN PARTICIPATORY EPISTEMOLOGY

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Abstract

The text considers instructional approach to research on cognitive correlates and components, as guidelines for new methodological approaches. Possibilities have been considered to encourage metacognitive abilities through didactic instructions, as well as the contribution such an approach could have for insights into didactic incitement of meta-components. The aim of the explorative research is to consider the relation between didactic instructions and metacognitive abilities, along with the influence of this relation on the efficacy in problem solving in teaching, i.e. learning effects. The research was undertaken on a deliberate sample consisting of 365 students enrolled at Teacher Training Faculty (1st to 4th year of undergraduate studies) and Preschool Teacher Training College “M. Palov” in Vrsac. Didactic instructions, intellectual abilities, metacognitive and creative reactions were predictive variables, the effects shown at problem tasks solving was a criterion variable. The method of the research refers to the systematic non-experimental observation. Intentional varying of the variables has not been undertaken, while statistical replacements have been done for experimental control. The following instruments have been used: protocol for metacognition self-observation (MK1 – done for the purpose of previous research and); problem tasks, Urban-Jelen’s creativity test, Domino D-48, mostly saturated by G-factor; on the other hand it has been found according to inter-correlation that each item explicates specific part of the variance; it differentiates the above-average well; non-verbal-perceptive material.

Basic findings refer to the following:

- The relation between intellectual and metacognitive abilities and problem solving has confirmed the interdependence of the variables, leading to the conclusion that the success in problem solving is followed by high abilities. At the same time, meta-components have significantly influenced the success in problem solving ($r=0.45$ with 0.01 as significant).*
- It is possible to notice the differences in metacognitive abilities according to the analysis of introspective protocols. They are preserved even when intellectual potentials are controlled. The importance of non-cognitive elements and the possibility to view metacognition as some form of personal complex (even as one of the aspects of individual’s cognitive style) explicates the fact that the integrity of metacognition seems to be impossible to seize.*

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- *Significant difference has been confirmed in favour of those with the highest scores in meta-statements. The differences have been manifested in intellectual potential, success in problem solving and creativity.*
- *According to the factor analysis of didactic instructions efficient in provoking meta-statements, 10 factors have been found within which the following observed instruction are classified: classification, information control, error analysis, flexible approaches, encouragement, explication formulation, getting back to given pieces of information, analysis of important moments, evaluation of the possibility reach the aim, overview of previous strategies and patterns, additional reflection on relations in a given situation.*

Key words: *didactic instructions, participatory epistemology, metacognition*

Introduction

As a contemporary epistemological-theoretical conception in pedagogy, constructivism, along with participatory epistemology, as an important turning point in comprehension of knowledge, is nowadays considered to be the grounds of postmodern didactics. Constructivism goes beyond the former traditions of learning with some of its elements as precursors of modern concepts. Having in mind that the traditional concepts of learning and didactic models have already been discussed in other writings (Gojkov 2009: 208), it seems useful here to remind the reader only of participatory epistemology, as a pattern of comprehension of learning viewed as predominating ontology in pedagogy and having a set of accepted practical endeavours based on this learning concept, i.e. in accordance with this epistemology (Stojnov 1998: 98).

The appropriateness of theoretical-methodological groundedness of pedagogic, before all didactic research is another moment significant for the context which would enable understanding and subsequent instalment of practical consequences of participatory epistemology, as a foundation of the decision made in order to manage modern tendencies of changes in modern Europe. Serbia, among other countries, has also been trying to understand those decisions and to accept them in accordance with its tradition and limitations. Pedagogy has on its way gone through various conceptions: from normative, empirical and hermeneutic to the system theory. According to judgements of numerous authors in regard to the importance of these methodological concepts, it seems that there is a consensus that their contribution has not been adequate for their intentions. In other words, they have not to the right extent explicated the phenomena in the field of education and schooling. New chances are seen in the theory of chaos and constructivistic paradigm, but there are also statements emphasizing the outcomes of the researches finding that constructivistic procedures do not develop active, constructive, self-organized processes during learning in the case of all students and regarding all the contents and aims; therefore voices are heard advocating the acceptability of “moderate constructivism” i.e. coexistence of construction and instruction (Wienert 1997: 45).

Instructional approach to research on cognitive correlates and components, as guidelines for new methodological approaches

Former theoretical traditions and their epistemological-methodological reaches could not completely ensure the possibility of questioning the efficacy of learning models in teaching. At the same time, they did not offer solutions which would take into consideration both the students with their conceptual mechanisms and the interdependence of self-organization of learning and circumstances. A great deal of issues have remained vague which could lead to better understanding of conditions influencing learning, i.e. cognitive mechanisms as those which are significant, but insufficient. In other words, part of the context has not been explicated – the nature of didactic strategies encouraging conceptual systems of learning. Pedagogy is still to empirically validate the standpoints already accepted at theoretical level.

In spite of the fact that the positions of well known constructivists, with E. Glaserfeld (Wienert 1997: 57) as one of them, might seem as diminution in regard to innovative importance of participatory epistemology and constructivism for didactics in general, when we relate them with contextual approach to intellectual abilities (Sternberg), i.e. to instructional approach to research on cognitive correlates and components, they might become guidelines for new methodological approaches.

The paper will consider the possibility to empirically validate constructivism and participatory epistemology, or at least some of their elements, creating a space for making attempts to gain insight into reaches of their practical use. Furthermore, efforts will be made to empirically validate previously outlined theoretical-epistemological grounds in order to get to the elements for argumentation in favour of the need to use some of theoretically conceived elements as starting points for certain changes of education strategies.

Methodological framework

The way to do this seems to be an explorative research aiming at answering the following question: to what an extent constructivism can be considered a new paradigm in didactics and can it be taken as a step further and a principle of change in the system of education?

The explication of this issue indirectly gives answers to the following questions:

- do the changes of the roles of teachers and learners, as well as the nature of learning activities have to imply a curriculum based on activities through which a pupil looks for the elaboration of initial answers;
- to what an extent does the pluralization of didactic scene give the teachers competences of a conductor, an associate, a co-researchers who incites the creation of ideas;
- where is the line where the curriculum based on activities is transformed into research activities by the means of attempt and error;

- do and in what sense tolerated attempts, as a part of learning, contribute to the development of learner's autonomy;
- to what an extent are the didactic views on the models of learning in teaching in confrontation with constructivism as epistemological ground of didactics and what consequences does this have for the curriculum;
- can Sternberg's triarchic theory of intelligence be considered sufficient to "cover" psychological substance of metacognition, which would be regarded as an important element of metatheoretical ground of curriculum;
- does the constructivistic definition of learning as a process of personal construction of meanings mean what has until now been seen as a solution...

The explorative research, of course, cannot give answers to all these questions, but its outcomes might be in a sense used to provoke reflection on them. Our intention was to see to what an extent the instructional approach to the research on intellectual processes, together with the effects of metacognitive components (built into neo-Vygotskian courses of process diagnostics) can be considered adequate for gaining more certain picture on learning process and functioning. According to this, we could make conclusions on the extent metacognition can be encouraged by didactic instructions (Gojkov, 2002b).

Our standpoint is that didactic instructions can encourage metacognitive abilities contributing to overall knowledge on didactic encouragement of meta-components (Benito 1996: 26). Let's mention here the fact that metacognitive abilities are a field where psychology and didactics have recently been brought significantly closer together. We would also like to turn to the statements arising from fundamental research on learning process and learning instructions in a classroom paying special attention to the context (Brown 1987: 39). So, "contextual approach" has shifted the focus from studying abilities, learning and results to studying the capacity of a learner to regulate his/her learning, as well as to the capability of a teacher to create a suitable learning setting (Gojkov 2002a: 24; Levkov 1995: 79).

The reason we have chosen such an approach to the issue we are dealing with is incited but the fact that cognitive system and its development has in the last few decades been viewed as a self-modifying system. At the same time, it is often the case that learning is viewed from the same angle - self-regulated learning (Carver & Scheier 1998: 56). This perspective of pedagogic psychology has, along with the acceptance of contextual approach to intellectual abilities (Sternberg), encouraged those dealing with didactics to search for new mechanisms to enable gaining of knowledge on abilities and to develop abilities into cognition (Gojkov 2001: 125).

What was also the incentive refers to the outcomes of the researches claiming that specialized knowledge of learners, the use of cognitive strategies and self-regulation have significant influence on academic learning (Gojkov 2009: 223).

At this point the aim of the explorative research can be perceived. Its essence refers to the attempt to empirically validate (by the means of critical consideration and theoretical

analysis) the frames emphasizing a new vision of postmodern didactics as an omen of contemporary transformation of educational systems.

The ideas of participation, autonomy, communication, etc. in education are integrated in the systems of education in entire Europe. We are interested in what principles would be significant for the strategy to be used to implement changes in our system and to build models for real processes of decision making.

Metacognition is important for the issues the paper is dealing with since it has a key position in the entire cognitive development. Even though it has been acknowledged that its explanatory potential has only been guessed, yet to be found out (although it is connected with the key segments of personality: self, self-perception, self-awareness), it still is a challenge for didactics, too (Cates 1992: 72).

It is a fact that psychology, aware of the complexity of the nature of cognitive functioning and intelligence has come closer to instructional approach, i.e. didactics. Through Sternberg's analysis of intellectual processes, cognitive correlates and the analysis of cognitive components, psychology has given the cognitive training approach the status of a new methodological approach, having characteristics of didactical approach with the transfer paradigm in its grounds. This leads us to didactical space where intellectual processes are to be decided upon according to the ways of subject's thinking during problem solving.

The previous statement includes a possibility to reflect on the outcomes of the research from the angle of instructional approach in order to give more certain picture on functioning and processes of learning. Our intentions here are not directed to so far-reaching conclusions. Our task is far more modest. We are to consider a relation between didactic instruction and metacognitive ability, in order to come to a conclusion to what an extent metacognitive abilities can be encouraged (Kovac-Cerovic 1990: 68).

We have already dealt with the problem in our previous studies. The underlying issue here is a possibility to use instructional approach in the study on learning process. A step closer to the practical aim is a search for metacognition identity and possibility to encourage its development. Practical consequences are numerous. Some of them are integrated in the documents guiding the first steps of educational reform in Serbia.

Educational strategy of the republic of Serbia until 2020 is based on participatory epistemological approach to learning, i.e. constructivism, as epistemological theory, is an underlying point here, i.e. meta-theoretical grounds of the development of future curricula. Suggesting the principles to be built into educational process, the same document, among other things, states the need for education to be grounded on participatory, active and cooperative methods of teaching and active forms of learning... These and other details give arguments in favour of the assumption on previously stated theoretical-epistemological grounds underlying the changes in educational system in Serbia, i.e. our aspirations. The undertaken research indirectly comes to the findings which could serve as a drive for further thought on the extent the principles derived from the contemporary

trends in postmodern didactics (and in pedagogic psychology before it) that can be seen as certain guidelines for making practical decisions in the endeavours of introducing changes into our system of education.

The direct aim of the explorative research was to screen the relation between instruction and metacognitive ability. Our previous studies have proven the existence of a significant correlation of these variables and the influence this connection has on the efficacy in problem solving in teaching, i.e. on its effects in learning.

The research has been undertaken on **an intentional sample** consisting of 365 students of the Teacher Training Faculty (1st to 4th year of studies) and the Preschool Teacher Training College “M. Palov” in Vrsac. Student population has been chosen due to the fact that the outcomes of our previous research have shown advantages regarding the ability of introspection at older age. Didactic instructions, intellectual abilities, metacognitive and creative reactions were predictive variables, the effects shown at problem tasks solving was a criterion variable.

The method of the research refers to the systematic non-experimental observation. Intentional varying of the variables has not been undertaken, while statistical replacements have been done for experimental control. The following instruments have been used:

- the protocol for metacognition self-observation (MK1 – done for the purpose of previous research and modified to a degree);
- problem tasks;
- Urban-Jelen’s creativity test;
- Domino D-48, mostly saturated by G-factor, even though the inter-correlation has found that each item explicates a specific part of variant; differentiates the above average well; non-verbal, perceptive material.

Findings and interpretation

Due to the limited space only basic findings will be given here, without graphs and tables. What attracted our attention in the first place was the number of meta-statements the observed students made. The presence of metacognitive abilities could, according to number of reactions classified as metacognitive, be qualified as weak. Namely, the insight into administrative protocol and the tables shows that the in the case of the observed students there are statements which could be qualified as meta-statements, but their number most often ranges from 1 to 5. The average number of creative reactions in the whole group is 5.7%. Regarding metacognitive reactions, the students have been most successful in the case of following abilities:

- the awareness of the level of understanding and problem analysis (3.8%);
- considering the problem situation as a whole and perceiving the link between what is known and what is being discovered (3.1%);
- elaboration and the awareness of the ways prior-knowledge is used (2.9%);

- finding the optimal structure in the contents to be solved and its organization in the activities of primary and secondary importance (2.8%).

Understanding and supervision of one's own work and activities has been manifested in relation to the manifested metacognitive reactions in the following activities:

- awareness of the aim to be reached (1.9%);
- ways according to which the aim is intended to be reached (1.8%);
- deeper analysis of problem contents (1.7%);
- content and material manipulation, i.e. experimenting (1.6%);
- frequent raising of new questions and checking (1.5%);
- strategy of meaningful organization of the material (differences, similarities) (1.5%);
- reconsideration after having done the task, i.e. dealing with other possibilities, ways and importance of the discovered and the ways of fitting in into the existing knowledge (0.8%).

The awareness of the procedures of problem solving, of its course and mechanisms has been rarely manifested, as well as the levels of consciousness where decisions have been made while the inner mental operations and processes were in function (0.5%).

The average success of students regarding the problem tasks to be solved ranges from 1.9 to 5 tasks.

Having in mind that metacognition is considered to be a specific manifestation of processes of control and that, according to Sternberg, as well as other authors, it plays an important role in intellectual functioning, while, according to other research, it significantly corresponds with the "G" factor, the research in question has focused on the nature of relation between these two variables. The relation between intellectual and metacognitive abilities and problem solving has confirmed the interdependence of the variables, leading to the conclusion that the success in problem solving is followed by high abilities. At the same time, meta-components have significantly influenced the success in problem solving ($r=0.45$ with 0.01 as significant).

The elements of meta-components "knowledge on cognition" and "strategies decision making" are viewed as significant meta-components, having in mind that they have been used to monitor one's own cognitive activities and that, according to the observed students, they have been decisive for further steps in problems solving, as well as for the final outcome. According to Sternberg, these are executive elements, elements of the control process. Introspective reports show the awareness of students and their dealing with the selection of components contributing to problem solving and the ways pieces of information are presented, which served its purpose in the attempts of making versatile combinations. The decisions most often referred to the following:

- the procedure of problem solving;
- sequence and order in the choice of procedures;

- the awareness of subjective experience of the problem and the arising difficulties;
- self-awareness on the efficacy of procedures and ways leading to further levels of problem solving (compare to: Gojkov 2009: 124).

The ways students have experienced the problems are also interesting. The reports of introspection show a great number of activities which one person was going to carry out in the course of solving of various problems. It seems that there are no problem patterns. The ideas how to solve the problem have, according to the statements made by the subjects, imposed themselves with no clear notion where they came from, i.e. without intention to undertake certain activities, while meta-components have been succeeding, disappearing and combining in various ways and different phases of problem solving. The explanation for this most frequently given by the students is found in their statements that the problem, i.e. the context imposed, provoked different metacognitive reactions. Our analysis has not succeeded in identifying the ways of combining; the reasons for this are seen in the conceptualization of the research frame, i.e. in the entire methodological support found in theoretical orientations they belong to and the theories the term of metacognition is based on. Metacognition, as a composite and multidimensional term has once again in this finding proven its complexity, while the “new spirit” in theorizing and research on cognition in the outline of the findings given so far has remained inadequate in the recognition of metacognition in relation to other phenomena. Namely, the entire number of subjects’ reactions has not offered a clear picture differentiating between the cognitive phenomena referring to problem contents and those directed to cognition. In other words, the reactions of the subjects directed to the content of the problem through which the problems were supposed to be solved have mixed with those directed to cognition, changing their course, not showing clear dividing lines, finally contributing to the outcome.

It is possible to notice the differences in metacognitive abilities according to the analysis of introspective protocols. They are preserved even when intellectual potentials are controlled. This is another confirmation of earlier impressions we had on the importance of non-cognitive elements, as well as external influences on the development of metacognition. The importance of non-cognitive elements and the possibility to view metacognition as some form of personal complex (even as one of the aspects of individual’s cognitive style) explicates the fact that the integrity of metacognition seems to be impossible to seize.

The previous finding could lead us to the following comment: no matter in what way it is conceived at theoretical level, in its practical expression metacognition is a reflection of personal cognitive maturation. In other words, it is constantly developing, with an important role to be played by didactic instructions in teaching in the nurturing of metacognitive functions. The special place here belongs to didactic instructions encouraging the subjects to identify the problems, to explicate their meanings, to consider the sources of dilemmas, to explain the sense of confusion and tension, provoked by controversy, to come to the ways actions are regulated and controlled, behaviour is planned and other circumstances, leading to the solution of a problem (see also Gojkov 1995: 24).

In those previously undertake studies that have been mentioned this has been confirmed by the established differences between different ages of observed subjects.

One of the significant outcomes of the research is a link between metacognitive reactions and intellectual abilities ($r=0.56$). It has manifested itself in the efficacy in problem solving, as well. The link between the two variables, i.e. the significant difference in efficacy of problem solving in favour of intellectually superior has also been considered from another angle. According to the number of manifested metacognitive reactions, the subjects are classified into three categories. The first category includes the students with 5 and more than 5 meta-statements (the best ones; $n=76$; 23%), the second those with 3 to 5 meta-statements ($n=165$; 40%) and the third included 124 students with less than 3 meta-statements (38%). The difference between those with the highest and those with the lowest scores in meta-components has been studied by the means of T-test for independent samples. Significant difference has been confirmed in favour of those with the highest scores in meta-statements. The differences have been manifested in intellectual potential, success in problem solving and creativity.

The share of meta-components in the variance of scores has been checked according to regression analysis. It has been found that metacognitive components explicate nearly 21% of score variance. It is interesting that the percentage of the explained variance in this one, as well as in previous researches on various samples is similar. Intellectual abilities have explained about 29%, while the contribution of creative reactions has not been statistically significant. Creative reactions are interesting having in mind that the problems to be solved demanded divergence. Therefore, the relation between correct solutions and students' creativity is thought to be relevant. The interdependence of the link is statistically confirmed ($r=0.39$ at 0.01), in spite of the fact that creativity was lost in regression analysis. I am inclined to believe that this link has cohered with intellectual potentials, i.e. that that creative reactions have amalgamated with intellectual activities.

This leads to a conclusion that, apart from the observed, other variables are hiding as significant ones for problem solving. This opens up a possibility to view metacognition as self-consciousness which has a significant place in cognitive behaviour, but not autonomously.

Having conducted the research, i.e. having come to an end in our search for the identity of metacognition, we cannot distance ourselves from the definition of the term, "cognition on cognition", although it still leaves us a space for objections claiming that such determination is nothing more but a basic identification of metacognition as cognitive phenomenon. Unfortunately, more precise determination of its substance, even having identified several basic contents and having made an attempt, was not possible for me to focus even after this attempt.

As one possible explanation there is a fact that the problems the students were supposed to solve were open, i.e. they allowed originality in solution, meaning intuitive approach, which might cause the situation in which students could not control their own cognitive strategies, with cognitive reactions having automatic character.

The findings on the positive correlative relations between metacognitive statements and didactic instructions encouraging and leading to greater effects in solving criterion tasks lead to a conclusion that didactic instructions are significant for provoking of meta-statements. According to the factor analysis of didactic instructions efficient in provoking meta-statements, 10 factors have been found within which the observed instruction are classified (67 instructions have been used). Their contents could be sorted according to the following headings: classification, information control, error analysis, flexible approaches encouragement, explication formulation, getting back to given pieces of information, important moments analysis, evaluation of the possibility to come to the aim, overview of previous strategies, patterns, additional reflections on relations and given situation.

At the end of the overview of the basic findings we would like to once again turn to theoretical grounds, i.e. Sternberg's triarchic theory of intellectual abilities which was thought by us and many others to be able to explicate combining of intellectual abilities. Unfortunately, the mentioned theory is not sufficient and cannot allow us to precisely consider the ways cognitive abilities combine. Students are very often not aware of them, they were vanishing and coming back, succeeding one another with an order, combined themselves in various ways, while it seems that they significantly depended on the context, the problem, once again confirming the unrepeatable complexity of cognitive process and the lack of power of undertaken methodological approaches.

Conclusions

Having outlined the empirical part of the paper, a conclusion could be reached that metacognitive abilities, as one of the elements encouraging students' autonomy, resist research and the complexity of problem solving does not allow simplification. The interaction between the elements and multiple relations, i.e. regulations, creates new features, and pausing at one moment leads to a change of meaning of what is being studied. We hold that this is a significant reason explaining why we have still not come to more precise determination of psychological "substance" of metacognition; furthermore, this research has not made a significant step ahead in this sense. Sternberg's triarchic theory of intellectual abilities as theoretical was not in this case sufficient and could not allow us to precisely consider the ways cognitive abilities combine: context – problem has caused various metacognitive components, i.e. varies activities students intended to carry out; metacomponents were interwoven, succeeding one another, they were vanishing and coming back, making metacognition as cognitive phenomenon almost impossible to reach.

Another conclusion, which viewed from the angle of postmodern didactics could also be considered an argument in its favour refers to the fact that the research has come to a statement that there are different approaches to problem solving. Some of them have at one point been complementary and at others conflicting. This has directed our reflections towards the importance of external pieces of information a student interprets. A student has, in our case, construed, but the pieces of information coming from the setting have also been significant (interaction with new data, encouragements to modify one's own mental structure, to elaborate (reformulate), as well as the awareness of the importance of all this for the activity to be undertaken (metacognition). In other words, there is a conclusion

appearing beyond all this insisting on respect of conceptual mechanism of students and interdependence of self-organization of learning and circumstances. Neither the existing didactical models, nor models of learning process study could succeed in grasping the importance of metacognition and its influence on the mobility of one's knowledge. We have in this research dealt with the aspect of conditions facilitating the modification of the existing network of conceptions. We have been searching for the elements which enable efficient self-regulation. Radical transformation of student's concept at some points was automatic, while in others it proceeded slowly, deteriorated by obstacles (previous knowledge...); at other points a whole range of convergent and redundant elements has appeared, difficult to coordinate. Consequently, the mental network, mobilized at those moments, connecting student's conceptual framework with the pieces of available information, did not go in a simple sequence of order (compare Gojkov, Gojkov-Rajic & Prtljaga 2002a: 29). We are ready to accept the standpoints of those who advocate the allosteric model, according to which internal conditions encountered and combined with the external ones, not leading to the simple accumulation of new pieces of information (knowledge). Learning is not a simple accumulating process; new meaning is rather produced through mental transformations with emphasised motivational note (for more details, see: Freire 1972: 56; Gojkov 2002b: 76).

The conclusions above are in favour of constructivistic approaches, theories which are in the grounds of changes in educational system. In the beginning the need to focus on individual student has been emphasised. However, we are under the impression that this research has pointed to the need to pay more attention to the setting. We have seen that the conditions facilitating learning play a significant role in problem solving. **Ten types of didactic instructions have been defined which can effectively encourage mental abilities.** We are not sure that the list of factors is exhausted, as well as the factors participating in the construction of new knowledge. Knowledge does not simply depend only on general cognitive structures, but the process of learning includes strategies, construction and deconstruction, which, being interactive processes, cannot ignore the fact that there are student's prior-conceptions and that they are, according to some views (allosteric models) an obstacle for new levels of organization of ideas; apart from this, the process of problem solving involves numerous multifunctional and multi contextual activities, resulting in mobilization of more levels of mental organization, the student is not aware of. Existing didactic models have not succeeded in explaining the underlying currents and processes (for more details see: Gojkov 2004: 24). I even think that it is not possible to succeed in an attempt to describe the courses of knowledge construction according to certain models, i.e. theories and to explain the flows underlying them. Some of the new attempts, mentioned as so called allosteric models of learning, are actually a try to go beyond constructivistic models, which do have respect for the importance of didactical setting, but its role is considered from the angle of interference with the prior-concepts. What comes on the scene at this point refers to contemplations on practical attempts at intervening in the changes in the sphere of education in Serbia.

If we accept the previous findings and their interpretation as a ground for establishing of principles to have influence on consequences in teaching, the following ones could be outlined in the narrowest sense:

- learner is the one who elaborates, integrates, learns, doing all this through his/her own system of thinking; therefore he/she has to find himself in a situation which demands a change of conceptions;
- a teacher has to pay more of his attention to didactical setting, for it to provoke interference with student's prior-conceptions (to arrange heuristic environment which can bring to interference with the conceptions of students...);
- didactic setting should take into consideration learner's prior experiences (knowledge), as well as learning context, to show significant respect for both individual differences (cognitive style) and significant parameters which have to appear in didactic setting (authentic confrontations, being intrigued, conceptual imbalance should all provoke a learner to go deeper, to check, to search for new data...);
- metacognition is an important parameter, facilitating the process of learning;
- network integration (organization of concepts) should encourage the elaboration of more adequate concepts.

All what has been said regarding the practical aspects of the mentioned findings, their interpretation and conclusions certainly highlights the need for more serious reconsiderations of the following question: is this the right way to reach the answers to the questions raised in the beginning of the text? Instead of providing an answer, the following question is raised: have some of the solutions which are noticeable in the changes introduced in education (advocating of removal of boundaries between subjects, neglecting of the time-table, as an organizational aspect of time structuring, extreme tolerance of attempts as expression of autonomy encouragement...) comprehensively understood the grounds of constructivistic intentions and reaches and will through their transfer into practical currents they manage to contribute to their own validation? As it has already been stated in the text, extreme negligence of didactical context is not a consequence of constructivism.

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TEACHERS ON STUDENTS' TIME. A STUDY ON TIME AS LEARNING RESOURCE

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Abstract: *The current study represents a synthesis of a hands-on research carried out among primary and secondary school teachers concerning the way in which students' time is shared among learning activities and other activities that that students carry out outside the school programme. By tackling time as a resource of school learning, and by underlying the predominantly limited character of this resource, the present study raises the issue of competition between school learning and other activities that students carry out. The investigation among teachers is focused on two aspects: the former being the dynamics of the time that students set aside for individual study and doing home assignments, the latter pertaining to extra-curricular activities that occupy students' time, diminishing time resources allocated for school learning.*

Key words: *time as resource, school learning, learning time, individual study*

Introduction

The current study represents a synthesis of a hands-on research carried out among primary and secondary school teachers concerning the way in which students' time is shared among learning activities and other activities that that students carry out outside the school programme.

We tackle time as a *school learning resource* in the context of the relationship between resources and needs. We start from the assumption that the special issue of time management is the issue of *concurrent needs*, i.e. those needs which require the same resources and therefore cannot be satisfied simultaneously. Hence, *satisfying some needs hampers or postpones the satisfaction of others*. From this perspective, *all human needs are concurrent in relation to time resources*. This is motivated both by the fact that *time is essentially a limited resource*, and the fact that any human need, in the process of being satisfied, entails a smaller or larger time consumption.

School learning does not overlook this competition for the time resource, since *school learning is not the only activity that consumes students' available time*. This activity is concurrent with other activities that students carry out, so that managing rationally the time required from students for school learning is not possible without knowing the way in which the time students have at their disposal is allocated from the global perspective of school and extracurricular activities. We opted for circadian and weekly rhythms since the school day and the school week are time units with which we operate unmediatedly in the educational process and which represent the main element of learning time management.

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Research methodology

Concepts, dimensions, indicators

The central concept of our research is that of *structure and dynamics of active time* that students have at their disposal and which they allocate daily and weekly to different learning, working or recreational activities. Two dimensions considered significant for the diagnosis of the current situation and as database for rationalising time management:

1. *Structure and dynamics of active time* (daily and weekly), with the following indicators:

a) institutionalised learning time, with its components:

- time for collective learning activities (school timetable), which entails the students' physical presence in the classroom;
- time for independent/individual learning activities;

b) optional / elective learning time;

c) working time (not connected with school learning);

d) free time.

2. *The structure of activities* (daily and weekly), with the following indicators:

a) compulsory activities intrinsically linked to the institutionalised school programme:

- participating in the compulsory school programme (timetable);
- doing homework and preparing lessons;

b) optional learning activities (school-related, but not imposed by the school);

- private tuition for certain school subjects;

- other optional learning activities;

c) optional recreational activities (entertainment):

- TV programmes watching;
- working on the computer (INTERNET, games, etc.);
- freely chosen recreational activities (sport, music, etc.);

d) family-directed activities (tasks).

Research sampling

The sample of teachers involved in the research was established in direct consideration of the samples of students that the teachers teach. Therefore, the first step of our research was to establish the students' samples.

In selecting students' samples, we opted for *stratified sampling*. This technique was decided upon because in schools we come across a natural stratification of students' samples by age and classes, each class potentially being a representative sample for all the classes at the same level, from institutions with the same profile and that function in similar, or at least comparable, contexts. Taking as criterion the *school age*, three types of samples were selected, each sample consisting of three classes of students:

a) samples of VIIIth grade;

b) samples of Xth grade;

c) samples of XIIth grade.

As concerns the teachers' sample, the same technique of stratified sampling by classes was used. As a matter of fact, paired sample (teacher-student) were set up, with the mention that each teacher sample included all teachers that teach the same class of

students. We opted for this solution since the research objective was to investigate the way in which time is allocated to students per all curricular subjects, through computing all the requirements that all teachers teaching the same class have of their students.

Research instruments

The research bears mainly the character of a sociological research, in which, in order to collect data by samples included in the research, the questionnaire technique was used. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of the dimensions and indicators of the concept of *structure and dynamics of active time*, to each indicator being assigned one or more items in the structure of the questionnaires. In particular, the questionnaire focused on two topics: one related to the time required of students to do their homework and individual study, and the other one pertaining to extracurricular activities which compete with the learning activities. The questionnaire is presented in the Annex.

Data analysis and interpretation

Individual study – between necessity and possibility

From the perspective of learning time management, the issue of time needed for learning through individual study and by doing homework bears a special relevance. This is due to the fact that more or less of this time, as well as the degree of burdening with learning tasks, represents the main lever through which teachers and the school can control and ensure rational time management of all students' programme. Indeed, while the time allocated to the school timetable is almost inflexible, both as duration and programme, the time allocated by students to do homework and for individual study, is variable, fluctuating, both as duration and programme.

Every time there exist concurrent extracurricular activities, the first and the most affected one is particularly the time allotted to individual study. The very overcharging of students is most of the times considered as a result of the excess of learning tasks outside the school classes and the non-existence of *class study*. The solution to the problem of overcharging practiced by both teachers and students is, most of the time, the diminishing of time allotted to individual study and doing homework.

In order to investigate these aspects, the questionnaire for teachers included several successive questions. Thus:

- Question no.1 required of teachers to assess how necessary individual study is;
- Questions nos.2 and 3 asked teachers to reveal whether they are in the habit of assigning homework and how much time they reckon students need to do the assigned homework;
- Question no.4 asked teachers to show the type of assignments and tasks for individual study are required of students.

The results of processing teachers' responses are presented in Tables nos. 1 and 2.

Table no. 1 Frequency of answers to Question no. 1

Classes	No. of teachers	No. of answers	Frequency of responses variants					Non answers
			Very necessary	Necessary	Partly necessary	Not very necessary	Unnecessary	
VIII	58	56	38	16	2	-	-	2
X	62	62	39	16	6	-	1	-
XII	48	46	32	10	2	-	2	2
Total	168	164	109	42	10	-	3	4

Table no. 2 Frequency of answers to Questions nos. 2,3,4

Classes	No. of teachers	No. of answers	Question no. 2 (Homework assignments)		Question no. 3 (How much time?)					Question no. 4 (What type of assignments?)			Non answers
			YES	NO	Below 30'	1/2 hour	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	Assignments that entail written solutions	Assignments that entail study (reading)	Assignments that entail practical works	
VIII	58	58	38	20	14	10	10	2	2	26	38	10	-
X	62	62	48	14	8	18	18	4	-	37	35	7	-
XII	48	48	39	9	6	15	13	5	-	32	26	9	-
Total	168	168	125	43	28	43	41	11	2	95	99	26	-

In the case of the first question, the conclusion is self-evident: the majority of teachers (66.5%) consider individual study as *very necessary*, while 25.6% appreciate that individual study is *necessary*. Few answers that appreciate individual study as *partly necessary* or *unnecessary* belong to teachers of physical education or other disciplines, which, through their nature do not entail individual study. This conclusion is also confirmed by the answers to Question no. 2, out of which we learned that most teachers, (74.4%), out of which we draw the conclusion that most teachers frequently require of students to do homework and individual study.

As concerns *the time necessary for doing homework and individual study*, if we

calculate the weighted average of responses provided by teachers to Question no. 3 (see Table no. 2), we obtain an amount of time equal to an hour per day / school discipline. This means that in the case of a regular timetable, which comprises 3-4 disciplines for which students have to do assignments and / or individual study, the average daily time required of students 3-4 hours.

From the perspective of the type of requests, the research data reveal the following frequencies:

- assignments that entail individual study (reading) – 45%;
- assignments that entail written solutions – 43%;
- assignments that entail practical works – 12%.

In order to clarify aspects concerning the minimum time necessary for lesson preparation, the questionnaire contained two more questions:

- Question no. 5, which asked teachers to mention the minimum time necessary to students in order to prepare their lessons (learning through study), provided they have no written assignments to do;
- Question no. 6, which asked teachers to mention how often it happens that students do not do their homework, or they do them superficially.

The results of processing the responses are presented in Table no.3.

Table no. 3 Frequency of responses to Questions nos. 5 and 6

Classes	No. of teachers	No. of answers	Question no. 5 (Time needed for preparing lessons)								Question no. 6 (Students' not doing homework)					Non answers
			- 20'	20-30'	40'	50'	60'	1.5 hours	2 hours	Over 2 hours	Frequently	Quite frequently	Often	Rarely	Never	
VIII	58	58	-	28	3	6	16	4	1	-	5	10	30	12	1	-
X	62	53	5	25	11	2	8	1	1	-	1	9	30	10	3	9
XII	48	44	7	15	8	3	6	-	3	2	-	11	22	9	2	4
Total	168	155	12	68	22	11	30	5	5	2	6	30	82	31	6	13

By calculating the arithmetic weighted average of responses concerning time spent on doing homework, we obtain a duration of approximately 40 minutes per day/discipline, and if we take into consideration that the daily timetable consists of 4-5 disciplines that require a minimum preparation of lessons, we find out a daily average time necessary for lesson preparation of approximately 2.5-3 hours. This may be considered as a minimal time, since written assignments were not taken into consideration, only the study necessary for preparing lessons for the next day.

The question that arises is whether students really allot time to lesson preparation. From this perspective, most of the answers provided by teachers (52.9%) are situated under the variant sometimes, which means that the phenomenon of not preparing lessons is real,

but not very frequent. However, there are teachers (23%) who declare that not preparing one's lessons is a frequent or quite frequent phenomenon, which confirms, from teachers' perspective, the fluctuating character of the time spent by students on learning outside school classes.

In order to obtain supplementary information about the real situation of learning time through doing homework and individual study, Question no. 7 from the Questionnaire asked teachers to appreciate the concrete situation of the classes they teach. The question provided 5 variants of responses, and teachers were required to appreciate in percentages the weight of each variant out of the students' total. The results of processing the responses are the following:

	Student categories	Frequency
1	Students who fulfil completely, systematically and thoroughly the home assignments and learning tasks	43.51%
2	Students who do their homework and learning tasks at an acceptable level, sometimes better, sometimes more superficially	28.51%
3	Students who do their homework and learning tasks occasionally, generally rarely and only if they are warned or forced by a certain circumstance (to avoid an F grade).	13.28%
4	Students who do their homework and learning tasks sporadically, partially and selectively (only from time to time and only for certain disciplines)	9.13%
5	Students who frequently do not do either their written assignments or the learning tasks, usually coming to school unprepared	6.04%

Data reflects a quite optimistic situation, teachers appreciating that 43.51% of their students are *students who fulfil completely, systematically and thoroughly the home assignments and learning tasks*. We obviously need to take into consideration the percentages, quite significant, of those other categories of students, as they result from the table. However, as they are presented, the data in the table lend themselves to different interpretations, to a large extent, dependent on the concrete situation of each classroom. For example, we may assume that classes with a high level of school performance in the case of "good" classes, the data in the table reflect correctly the reality. We need however to see to what extent the configuration of data in the table corresponds to reality in the case of classes of students with low school performances, especially the percentage of students who prepare thoroughly and systematically.

Complementary information concerning the real situation of preparing lessons is given by the teachers' answers to Question no. 8, which required them to mention the causes/reasons for which some students do not do their homework. The results of processing responses are presented in Table no.4. The data in the table is significant in itself, and does not need any supplementary considerations. The only mention we need to

make is that the highest percentage (52.6%) is held by *student-related causes*: laziness, carelessness, disinterest from the student or the family, and less related to some objective conditions, including school.

Table no. 4 Frequency of answers to Question no. 8

Classes	No. of teachers	No. of answers	Causes (reasons)									Non answers
			carelessness, unconsciousness, disinterest, low of motivation	Lack of supervision, disinterest from the part of teaching (too many home extracurricular activities and tasks other activities, and leisure preoccupations (TV, (slow rhythm, accumulated	Health state	Other causes						
VIII	58	58	20	30	24	14	8	18	6	2	12	-
X	62	59	17	26	7	18	11	15	4	1	5	3
XII	48	47	14	27	8	13	2	14	2	1	6	1
Total	168	164	51	83	39	45	21	47	12	4	23	4

School learning versus other activities

A more faithful image on allocated time effectively on school learning may be obtained if we take into consideration all the activities carried out by students and in particular those activities that compete directly with the school learning activities. We state that the term concurrent activities refer to those activities (school related or unrelated) which, through distributing a set of common time, the time allocated to some activities cannot increase or decrease but on account of the increase or decrease in time allocated to other activities. The idea is that we cannot either know or control the time allocated in real terms by students to school learning if we do not know which are the concurrent activities that limit in fact the time available for school learning.

In order to investigate these aspects, the questionnaire included a question (no.14) which asked teachers to show, according to their information, whether there exist students who perform different works in the family and if these may be considered as a reason why students come to school unprepared. Moreover, we requested teachers, through Question no. 15, to show whether they identify states of tiredness, of fatigue among students, and if yes, what are, in their opinion, the factors that generate such states.

The results of processing the responses are presented in Tables nos.5 and 6, with the mention that in Table no.6, the factors that generated the stated of tiredness are listed in the form of a scale, according to the teachers' appreciation concerning the intensity of each factor.

Data collected reveal that a significant share of teachers (57.7%) appreciate that there exist students who, on family's imposition, perform certain household chores or other school-unrelated tasks. 16.7% of teachers consider that this situation does not exist in the

classes they teach.

However, more important is the percentage of 25.6% of the teachers declaring that they „don't know” whether such situations exist in the classes they teach. This percentage is important since not knowing the „extracurricular” activities that occupy students' time, to the detriment of the school time, is one of the causes of the lack in rationality or unrealism in didactic design, with reference to designing learning tasks outside classroom hours. In extreme situations, the tasks imposed by the family may affect even students' presence in the compulsory school programme (timetable).

Table no. 5 Frequency of responses to Questions nos. 14 and 15

Classes	No. of teachers	No. of responses	Question no. 14 (if there are students who, on family's request, perform different household chores or other school-unrelated tasks)						Question no. 15 (If teachers notice tiredness, fatigue in students)		Non answers
			YES	NO	I don't know	If YES:			YES	NO	
						YES	NO	I don't know			
VIII	58	58	38	12	8	12	26	-	50	8	-
X	62	62	35	7	20	14	18	3	49	13	-
XII	48	48	24	9	15	10	12	2	42	6	-
Total	168	168	97	28	43	36	56	5	141	27	-

Table no. 6 A hierarchy of tiredness-conducive factors for students, on the basis of responses to Question no.15

Factors	VIIIth grade		Xth grade		XIIth grade		Total	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Very busy school programme (timetable)	154	2	148	1	114	2	416	1
Time spent in front of the TV	164	1	134	2	115	1	413	2
Large amount of school homework (assignments, study)	144	3	113	3	91	4	348	3
Excessive work on the computer (unrelated to school learning)	118	4	107	4	113	3	338	4

Private tuition (numerous and for many disciplines)	68	5	75	5	70	5	213	5
Works performed for the family (household chores)	4	6	50	6	44	6	98	6
Family issues (misunderstandings, fights)	18	7	4	8	2	8	25	7
Time spent on parties, discos, etc.	4	8	6	7	5	7	15	8
Medical problems	2	9	1	9	1	9	4	9

Useful information is also offered by the answers given by teachers to the question referring to some states of fatigue in students. As results from Table no. 5, the majority of teachers (83.9%) confirm the existence of such states. In order to study the factors that generate or contribute to the installation of fatigue in students, teachers were required to make a hierarchy, in accordance with their intensity, a series of factors mentioned in the questionnaire, but having the possibility to add other factors that they consider significant. The results of scaling the factors are presented in Table no. 6, both by school classes and by the teachers sample in its entirety. The hierarchy of factors is relevant in itself and would not impose supplementary considerations.

However, we deem that some accents and underpinnings are necessary in the end of this study. It is noteworthy in this sense that, even if there are some differences from one class to another, *the very busy school programme* is situated at the forefront of tiredness in students. The unmediated applicative conclusion of this remark is that rationalising the management of learning time is not possible without a substantial reduction in the quantitative burden (in number of hours) of the compulsory school programme. At the same time, if we consider that a superior rank is held by the high number of school home assignments (tasks, study), it results that a *curriculum contents restructuring* is necessary, under the perspective of the volume and difficulty / accessibility of knowledge provided for by the school curricula. At the same time, private tuition may also be added up to the category of *school factors* of tiredness in students.

Annex
QUESTIONNAIRE
For teachers teaching class _____

Please answer some of the questions concerning the way in which you use independent individual study in the realisation of the objectives of the discipline you teach.

Your answers are necessary for an investigation on the topic of didactic design. Thank you for your collaboration!

We mention that through students' individual independent study we refer to the activity carried out by students outside classroom hours, mainly through doing homework and preparing lessons.

It is obvious that your sincerity will be decisive for the value of the research.

Thank you for your collaboration!

1. How necessary do you appreciate that students' individual independent study is in assimilating knowledge and capacities provided for by the school curricula of the discipline you teach?

- a) Very necessary
- b) Necessary
- c) Partially necessary
- d) Not very necessary
- e) Not necessary.

2. Do you usually assign homework to students?

- a) YES
- b) NO

3. If YES, how much time do you think students require in order to do their assigned homework for your discipline? Think of an average, common situation. The answer may be given in hours or/and minutes.

4. What type of assignments and individual study tasks do you usually assign students for homework? (You may choose as many options as you want, including all).

- a) Assignments that entail written (answers) solutions.
- b) Assignments that entail study (reading).
- c) Assignments that entail practical works (objects, drawings).
- d) Other types of assignments, such as:

5. Supposing students do not have to do, for your discipline, neither written assignments nor supplementary study for home, how much time do you think they still need to learn (prepare) a topic / a lesson for the next class, at an acceptable level.

Answer in hours or minutes.

6. Does it happen that an important number of students do not do their homework, or do

them superficially (carelessly)?

- a) Frequently.
- b) Quite frequently.
- c) Usually.
- d) Rarely.
- e) Never.

7. Obviously, the way and the extent to which students do their homework and prepare the next lesson differ from one students to another, and from classroom to classroom On analysing the concrete situation in your classes, which is the percntage of students in one of the following situations?

Please answer in percentage (%), ensuring that the sum of percentages for all variants be 100%.

Student categories	Percentage (%)
a) Students who fulfil completely, systematically and thoroughly the home assignments and learning tasks	
b) Students who do their homework and learning tasks at an acceptable level, sometimes better, sometimes more superficially	
c) Students who do their homework and learning tasks occasionally, generally rarely and only if they are warned or forced by a certain circumstance (to avoid an F grade).	
d) Students who do their homework and learning tasks sporadically, partially and selectively (only from time to time and only for certain disciplines)	
e) Students who frequently do not do either their written assignments or the learning tasks, usually coming to school unprepared	

8. Which are, in your opinion, the causes or reasons for which some students do not do their homework, do them superficially or do prepare themselves for the next lesson?

9. As far as you know, between which hours ranges your students' daily programme

- a) I believe that usually they wake up at about _____
- b) I believe that usually they go to bed at about _____

10. Now please think about the real situation existing at present in the classes you teach. How much time do you think students allocate effectively, on a regular school day to doing homework and preparing the lesson for the next day, for your discipline?

You may answer in hours, minutes or, if the case may be, with "not at all".

- a) Good students allot on average _____
- b) Average students allot overall _____
- c) Weak students allot on average _____

11. The same as above, only with reference not to week (school) days, but to free days (Saturday and Sunday) therefore, how many hours do you think students allot to doing homework and lesson preparation on their free days?

- d) Good students allot on average _____
- e) Average students allot overall _____
- f) Weak students allot on average _____

12. In retrospect, on analysing the evolution of time spent by students on doing homework and preparing lessons, over the last 6-7 years, which of the following statements do you think is closest to reality? (Mark one option only).

- a) Students spend more time than before.
- b) Students spend less time than before.
- c) No significant change has been registered.

13. In your opinion, to what extent, not doing one's homework and the lack of individual study represent a cause of students' school failure or of mediocrity?

- a) To a very great extent.
- b) To a great extent.
- c) To a smaller extent.
- d) To a very small extent.
- e) It is not a direct cause of school failure.

14. Given the information you have, are there in your classes, students that perform, on family's request (imposition), different household chores or other school-unrelated obligations?

- a) YES
- b) NO
- c) I don't know

If YES, do you think that the time required by these family-imposed obligations are a cause for which students come to school unprepared?

- a) YES
- b) NO
- c) I don't know

15. Se întâmplă să sesizați o anumită stare de oboseală, de surmenaj la elevi ?

- a) YES
- b) NO

If YES, try to evaluate the extent to which the following factors contribute to this state. Write against each factors one of the variants: *very much, much, not too much, little, not at all*.

- a) Vey busy school programme (timetable) _____
- b) The large amount of school-related homework (assignments, study) _____
- c) Time spent in front of the TV _____
- d) Excessive work on computer (unrelated to school) _____
- e) Household chores (for the family) _____
- f) Private tuition (a lot and for many school subjects) _____
- g) Other factors, i.e.:

- h) _____
i) _____

16. From the perspective of school performances, in the case of your subject, your class's level, in its entirety, is:

- a) very good;
- b) good;
- c) medium;
- d) low;
- e) very low.

You teach the school subject _____ at class _____

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THE INNOVATION OF LLL TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODOLOGIES IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

The concept of lifelong learning has, in Romania, certain ambiguities naturally generating certain consequences on the educative practices in schools and outside them. In opposition, we note that, at the level of educational policies there is a constant concern for assimilating the recommendations of the Commission of the European Communities regarding the promotion of lifelong learning principles even before Romania becomes an EU member, in 2007.

The analysis criteria we propose regarding the manner of application of the Memorandum for lifelong learning and the creation in Romania of the favourable framework for integration in the European Area of Lifelong Learning are the key concepts launched by the two important documents.

The critical approaches have no absolutist nature but extract their essence from several assumptions with an optimistic content starting from the idea that the new knowledge society needs: a. New people for a new world; b. New educational contexts for new learning people; c. New teaching methodologies for new learning needs; d. New teaching instruments for new learning results.

Appreciation is given to the Romanian latest Law of National Education (2011) and to new curriculum reform it proposes. In the framework of deep changes announced by the new law, a special attention is given to the innovation of teaching and learning methodologies.

Key words: *lifelong learning, principles, concepts, teaching methodologies*

Forward

Adults' education is a field which witnessed an unprecedented development in Romania in the period that followed the anticommunist revolution of December 1989. Before the reminded event, the educational programs destined to adults were made especially in enterprises when workers had to learn how to use new and unknown technologies or when, for the performance of certain professional tasks, an increased qualification degree was necessary.

The trainers who performed lifelong training programs at that time were experts in a certain activity field and had no psycho-pedagogical background, not to speak of a background in the adult psycho-pedagogy field.

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However, although during the communist regime psychology and education sciences were not at all valorised, in the academic environments the interest for increasing adults' creative potential through training programs adapted to such age categories generated reference productions, with an authentic theoretical and practical value.

Adults' education in a new social and cultural context

In the period immediately following the anticommunist revolution of December 1989, in Romania, ample movements to reform the education system began to manifest themselves, at all levels.

Such movements had – on the one hand - a profound *recovering nature* through the attempt of re-discovering and re-valorising the creative energies of the Romanian people and the Romanian educational traditions, and on the other hand – a *liberating nature*, as a natural reaction against the ideological servitude imposed in the last 50 years.

At the time of adopting the famous document *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, in October 2000 by the Commission of the European Communities and of launching the call for *Making a European Area for Lifelong Learning*, the spirit of change and innovation had already manifested itself in Romania also in the adults' education field. Although not yet a member of the European Union – the event occurred in 2007 - at that time, there was an increased receptivity both in political circles and in cultural environments as to all that promised a rupture with the communist past.

Reforms began to occur in such rhythms which today many individuals consider to be much too alert, creating the risk that the generated changes are only in form and not in substance.

The need to change deeply affected not only the production environment but all segments: social, political, cultural...

Under such conditions, many adults had to review and rebuilt their professional behavior, adopting new attitudes to learning.

Lifelong learning became not only an educational desiderate but a stringent reality.

New people for a new world

History demonstrated that, when a society changes dramatically, the people that resist are those who know how to quickly adapt to change. Serge Moscovici – a reputed French psycho-sociologist of Romanian origin – highlights, in this regard, the role of those assuming the initiative and the risks of the consequences produced by the change. He names this category of people “active minorities” (Serge Moscovici, 1997).

In the post-December Romania, a series of *active minorities* were established, who understood how important education is and how urgent is to support adults in their personal and professional reconstruction process. Some people made it with more, others with less, skill, but all of them were aware that passing from the socio-economic communist organization to the capitalist organization generated a predictable state of inadaptability.

This is the explanation for the fact that, while, at an international level, it was announced that mankind passed to a new development stage: *the knowledge society*, the Romanians – like many other nations liberated from the communist camp – discovered in the direct

confrontation with life that the only solution for resisting the avalanche of changes was to *learn continuously*.

People became very quickly aware not only of the fact that they had to learn permanently but that they had to learn *differently*.

New educational contexts for new learning people

In the period that followed the adoption of the Memorandum on LLL, the promotion, in Romania, through all the means, of the lifelong learning concept and strategies was largely supported from a political and administrative point of view. Education experts also brought an important contribution to opening the complex meanings of the concept to practice.

It was more and more obvious that education was not limited to a simple interaction within which one *offers* and another one *receives*, but that the most important function it has is to *endow the individual with a complex of methods allowing it to self-develop its cultural and intellectual horizon* [Al. Darie, 3].

For revolutionizing the adults' education field, a necessity was felt to create an updated, flexible and coherent normative and legislative framework establishing the rules for the organization and functioning of this subsystem – as a distinct dimension of lifelong education.

From this point of view, starting with 1998, important progress was made in Romania, first through creating the identity in the *adults' education* field. Almost in every year that followed, important legislative documents were adopted which promoted the application of the new vision and of the new methodologies for adults training, for creating institutions with explicit tasks in organizing adults' programs, for the authorization and accreditation of the training programs destined to adults, for the evaluation of the learning results obtained in formal, non-formal, informal contexts.

A crucial moment in the development of the adults' education field was the issuance in 2000 of a Romanian Emergency Government Ordinance which instituted the obligation of adults' trainers to run through special psycho-pedagogical training programs.

In relation to this legislative document, the *Trainer's status* – document detailing the personal and professional qualities a trainer should have – was subsequently prepared.

Consequently, in the next period, the trainers in the network of state institutions started to feel the competition created by the trainers in the private environment. If the trainers in state institutions (especially those in higher education) tend to maintain a rigid behaviour and continue to focus on the *transmission* of contents, the trainers in the private environment are much more dynamic, more flexible, more non-conformist. So many times the curricula forming the object of adults' training programs from the state institutions network are identical to those of some programs promoted by private suppliers. However, what makes the difference between the two categories of programs refers to the used teaching methodologies. The methods used in state institutions have a preponderantly traditional nature, while in private institutions the innovative teaching methodologies are dominant. On the background of the deepened economic crisis and recession, the suppliers of adult programs in the state network succeed in 'collecting' several trainees only due to the low costs of courses. In exchange, the private suppliers offering more expensive programs, but higher from a qualitative point of view, are seriously affected by the crisis.

The new context of the crisis also generated some dishonourable practices among trainees. Many of them started real certificate hunting. Consequently, graduates' files become more and more voluminous, while the competences they held are more and more 'narrow'.

New attitudes and new learning needs of adults

The certificate hunting is directly related to the placements on the labour force market. Generally, the employers in the network of state institutions are still influenced by the many certificates a person may submit upon employment.

However, the employers in the private system are quite reticent as to the too big volume of the documents acquired by a job seeker. They appreciate more the *attitudes* that adults have to learning.

From this point of view, we distinguish three distinct categories of adults:

1. The adapted adults: very flexible, dynamic, independent and with a lot of initiative, attempting to keep up with changes and times. They are very receptive to what is new, focus on success, are willing to learn always something new, understand the mechanisms of functioning of the new competitive context.
2. The conformist adults: they do something new only if necessary, they indulge themselves in their behavioural habits, are inert, without initiative, wait to be offered jobs and solutions to problems, are good executants. They launched and maintain the certificate hunting practice.
3. The non-adapted adults: rigid, do not take risks, are always dissatisfied, consider victims each time: of their colleagues, chiefs, of the legislation..., they are not willing to learn. They complain about being too "old" for this. They continue to be contaminated by communist practices when occupying a job position was mandatory, and competition for acquiring it was conjectural.

The attitudes to learning adopted by adults are also influenced by the geographical area in which they live and perform their activity. For instance, in the areas which are active from an industrial point of view, adults are more active from the point of view of the receptivity to lifelong learning practices.

The situation is also heterogeneous among the sectors of the economic, social, cultural life.

New teaching methodologies for new learning needs

The Romanian education science experts have been concerned with the problem related to the optimization and innovation of pedagogical methodologies for some time.

In 1996, Ungureanu, D. proposed the abandonment of traditionalist pedagogical interventions – which proved to be irresolute in „knowing“, modest in “doing“ and sterile in “knowing to do“) and their replacement with inciting interventions – favouring personal development – penetrating social „needs “ (Ungureanu, D., 1996).

In the author's opinion, the *method* concept itself is worth being subject to important reconsiderations. Its main role in the didactical process – „is to put contents in motion, supporting on education means, under the imperious incidence of pre-established objectives, with intentions and efforts to compatibilize the entire process with the age peculiarities“ (Ungureanu, D., 2005).

The Romanian expert papers drafted in the last decade make often references to the numerous paradigm changes which occurred in the didactic methodologies field: the movement of focus from the product to the process (Păun, E., Potolea, D., 2002), from the teacher /trainer, to the learner/trainee; (Joița, E., 2010; Cojocariu, V., 2010 ; Radu, I.T& Ezechil, L; 2009) from the content – to competences (Manolescu, M., 2005; Panișoară, O. I., 2009) etc.

Much less numerous, adult psychology and pedagogy papers illustrated, on the other hand, the characteristics by which the new teaching methodologies, which have a higher impact force on adult trainees, distinguish themselves:

- the accent on the stimulation of adults' motivations for learning (Neacșu, I., 2010)
- the necessity to stimulate reflective capacities, critical thinking (Dumitru, I., 2000)
- respect for adult's independence and autonomy in learning (Negreț, I.D& Panisoara, I.O., 2005)
- the challenging of the lateral, non-conventional thinking and of creative capacities (L. Ezechil, 2007; L.Ezechil et al., 2011).

Generally, we note that the problem related to the necessity of applying certain new, innovative methodologies in adults' education is approached either *globally* – as a natural effect of reform movements in all the sectors of the social, economic, cultural life – or from the *perspective of the basic subcomponents of the didactical process, i.e.:* teaching, learning, evaluation.

Global approaches ensure a continuum between Romanian cultural traditions and the recent trends to modernize didactic methodologies. From this point of view, it was highlighted that Romanian education was always concerned with school performance, even if, in the avant-garde of the values promoted by this system, *cognition* - understood as an ensemble of gathered knowledge - had a constant position.

For more than a decade, didactic methodologies started to be approached mostly from the perspective of the sub-components of the didactical process: teaching, learning, evaluation..., which led to the identification of new ways to make the educative intervention more efficient.

Regarded from this perspective, the three sub-processes (teaching, learning, evaluation) are valorised either in terms of their specific potential, or as a continuum, as correlated sequences of an integrated whole within which *connections* are at least just as important as the *parts*.

Thus, if “until recently, the characterization of teaching was made more from a technical, instrumental point of view, now, in addition to the technical dimension, other two aspects determining an efficient teaching are taken into account: the didactic style of the teacher and its teaching philosophy” (Sava, S., 2007, p.173).

New teaching methods for new learning results...

1. Psycho-pedagogical tools

In our opinion, the most important instruments which may influence the quality of adults' training programs and which can develop life long learning opportunities are the psycho-pedagogical tools.

Most of the times, psycho-pedagogical tools are not new. *New* are only the modalities of using such tools in the adequate contexts and for the adequate subjects.

For the Romanians, the problem related to the psycho-pedagogical training of adults' trainers continues to be a sensitive aspect.

Due to the ideological exaggerations in the communist period when *psychology* and *pedagogy* were considered "dangerous" sciences, today there is also a certain deficit of psycho-pedagogical training among teachers /trainers.

Here it is, for exemplification, an opinion reflecting a thinking manner which has been obsolete for a long time:

You lose too much time with interactive activities! You no longer have the time to teach all the other very important things that must be taught!
(from the confessions of an adult trainee, economic background, 49 years old – upon the finalization of a lifelong training program cantered on the use of interactive methods)

The results of the different studies and research made in this field, and the experience we have in delivering adults' education programs, determine us to estimate that the main weakness in managing adults' training policies consists in the (still!) low concern for the manner in which adults' trainers are trained. Our opinion is also confirmed by a study made in 2008 in the context of a Grundtvig project with the theme *Cultural organisations as communication and learning environments*, coordinated by Romania (partners: Bulgaria, Italia, Turkey, Lithuania) on which occasion it was highlighted that adults' trainers continue to resort to the traditional forms of organizing training activities: lectures, frontal activities, lectures combined with self-didactic learning. Non-formal learning and the application of the new methodologies of ensuring individual consultancy in learning through tutoring, coaching and mentoring only represent 10-20 % of the preferences of the questioned adults' trainers. Such methods as: the role play, the group work, practice-based exercises, brainstorming... are almost unknown or are used in an unprofessional manner.

2. New ICT in Adults' Education

The problem of using computer for didactical purposes constitutes a constant concern both for the educational policy makers in Romania and for the trainers in all the learning environments: formal, non-formal, informal.

Starting with 2003, in the national curriculum for the training of future teachers, the Computer-Based Instruction course was introduced as a mandatory discipline. Consequently, the computer was introduced in the usual environment of classrooms for the learners of all ages.

The attitudes of the experts in education sciences, of teachers/trainers, but also of students/trainees to these new informational technologies are, however, quite different.

Some authors are quite suspicious as to the advantages that might result from the use of computer in the didactical process. Through the intermediation of inter-human relationships by the computer – as Albu G. (2009, p.24) states - "we lose the biggest gift mankind ever had: the national and international contact among people, ideas, information, opinions, creative works and connections".

Other authors (Cojocariu, V., M., 2010, p.137) also have certain doubts that they synthesize in analytical questions:

- By interposing computer between the trainer and the trainee, isn't the formative part at an inter-human level neglected?
- Aren't the trainer-trainable learner relations becoming too technicized?
- Have the trainers working with the computer higher professional satisfactions as compared to those not using it?
- Do the trainers working with the computer obtain better results in adults' education as compared to those not using it?

A satisfactory answer for this kind of questions could only be obtained based on a wide study still waiting to be made.

Adult trainees do not have a constant attitude regarding the advantages of using computer in the didactical process, either. Some of them are enthusiastic:

I cannot stop wondering how efficient the educational software that may be used in the classroom became!

(The comments of an adult trainee: higher studies in the engineering field, 45 years old)

Others are more sceptical, considering that only the trainer is advantaged by the use of such didactical means:

Teaching by means of computer is advantageous only for the trainer. Using power-point presentations, the trainer makes less teaching effort.

(The reflections of an adult trainee: higher studies in the socio-humanist field, more than 48 years old)

Beyond the attitudes which trainers or trainees have to the use of computer in the didactical process, it is important to highlight that, through the use of the new media technologies; many real problems encountered by the learning adults were solved:

- the supply of distance training programs, in remote geographical areas;
- on-line learning for the adult trainees completing their studies while already having a job;
- the creation of possibilities of individualizing training;
- the facilitation of understanding processes and phenomena to which there is no direct way of access;
- creating learning opportunities for people in their own communities.

As a result of becoming aware of such advantages, the process related to the preparation of learning software adapted to various didactical purposes is in continuous progress and gains more and more adepts day by day.

Is there added value brought by the new teaching methodologies?

Comparing the didactical methods and strategies traditionally used in Romania in the activities with adults to the innovative ones that were introduced as a consequence of applying educational reform programs and as a positive reaction to the Memorandum for Lifelong Learning, we note several essential differences:

The period preceding the adoption of the Memorandum on LLL	The first decade of the XXIth century (post-Memorandum on LLL)
The adults' education field only started to create its own identity	The adults' education field indubitably acquired identity and status
Adults' training programs were usually made in enterprises by trainers not having any pedagogical training	Special focus on the trainer's qualities (the necessity of the special training of the adults' trainers was established by law and the trainer's status)
Adult trainees were treated as pupils	Special interest for adapting the pedagogical intervention to the specific nature of education for adults
Learning contents - prescribed, learning – of theoretic–reproductive type	Tendency to process contents to be centered on the learner and on the <i>development of competences</i>
Expositive pedagogical methods	Efforts to innovate didactical methodologies with focus on the active participative learning
Didactical means: traditional, especially the blackboard and the chalk	Accentuated trend of using the new informational technologies and multimedia means
Training space: either poor in learning means and materials, or exaggeratedly crowded with useless tables and charts	Modernized training space: adapted, ergonomic furniture
Educational relationship: rigid, dominated by the teacher /trainer	The educational relationship tends to become more flexible, more dynamic, more interactive
<i>Overall assessment</i> Pedagogical rigueur: reproductive learning style, domination of the pedagogical relation by the trainer, excessive authoritarianism	<i>Overall assessment</i> Innovative pedagogy. New paradigms: focus on the trainee, interactive methodologies, cognitive and social constructivism, focus on the process (not only on results), focus on the practical training and less on theoretical training

The obtainment of the results illustrated in the right part of the table was possible as a result of introducing truly reforming measures in the adults' education system:

- national policies for encouraging investments in human resources;
- the drafting of occupational standards, among which: occupational standard for the adults' trainer, for the trainer of adults' trainers, for the training facilitator, etc;
- policies to encourage adults to participate in permanent education;
- the creation of the normative framework for the professional training of adults and for authorizing professional training suppliers;

- the authorization of professional competence evaluation centres and the certification of the evaluators of adults' professional competences;
- the creation of communitarian permanent education centres;
- the establishment of the mechanisms and methodologies to recognize and validate the learning results obtained in non-formal and informal environments;
- the professional training of adults at the workplace, through apprenticeship;
- the monitoring, evaluation, accreditation and control of non-university lifelong training suppliers;
- the accessing of European funds to solve strategic, methodological problems or problems related to financing adults' training programs;
- the development of partnerships putting education suppliers in a direct relationship with training beneficiaries.

Of course, the series of successes and progresses made in Romania in the last approximately 10 years in the adults' education field could continue.

The educational policy makers and the adults' trainers involved in the implementation of these new orientations are however aware of the fact that some success is apparent and that there are quite many reasons to analyze it with circumspection.

From among the quite numerous critical aspects which could be illustrated on the occasion of performing a rigorous analysis of the adults' education field, we only retain a few, which are waiting to be solved in the near future:

- the activation of an authentic pedagogical reform in higher education;
- the increase of the importance of practical training at the level of all the institutions making professional training;
- the evaluation, through practical tests, of the psycho-pedagogical competences Of adults' trainers – especially of the teaching-learning methodologies they use;
- the use in the adults' training process of new modalities of professional training and development of the tutoring, mentoring, coaching type;
- the democratization of the trainer – trainee pedagogical relationship which continues to be dominated by the trainer's authority;
- the training, through special programs, of the evaluators verifying the learning results obtained by adults;
- the valorisation of the psychological and pedagogical functions held by the new media technologies for making learning processes more efficient;
- focus of the learning programs on well-defined competences corresponding to different professional profiles.

Conclusions

In the last decade in Romania, but especially after its integration in the European Union, we can see the intensification of the efforts to assimilate/adapt/implement the most innovative didactic methodologies usable in adults' education.

Although the progresses that have been registered in this field so far are considered insufficient sometimes, other times – little relevant, they inspire optimism about the possible evolutions in the very near future. Adults' trainers are, generally, aware of their

weaknesses in terms of their training as trainers, but are willing to develop these specific competences.

In our opinion, such mutations occurred at the conscience level constitute the most surprising results of education reforms, all the more so that they developed in a dominant culture which was, until recently, a culture of totalitarianism and disregard of differences.

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PRAXEOLGY OF CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The paper outlines the general structure of managerial actions and of their efficiency conditions. The praxeology of Curriculum Management is seen as an interconnecting activity within managerial and curricula dimensions, and is presented through dominant functions of diagnosis/ conceptualization, conception/ planning, organization/ implementation, monitoring / evaluation.

Keywords: *curriculum, management, conceptualization, praxeology*

Concept and praxeological specific to management curriculum is characterized by two interrelated approaches: 1) identify and implement management actions, 2) identifying and implementing the teaching / curriculum actions. Defining curriculum management as a subsystem of educational management and as an interconnected activity in managerial and curricular dimensions we identify its dominant functions: conceptualization, design / planning, implementation / deployment, monitoring / evaluation.

In accordance with the principles praxeologic the efficiency of any activity is decisively conditioned by a preliminary thorough preparation with regard to actors and conditions process. The more the action is better prepared earlier, the better solution emerges. In this context, the design in education is "a coherent set of operations and actions, norms and rules and ways of thought and action through which is conceived and conducted a process. S. Cristea believes that pedagogical design is the work of structuring activities and operations that ensure system functionality and the learning process.

Curricular design (instructional design) is a complex systemic approach to anticipate the conduct of business training. Design action may cover either the macro - the educational process as a whole or, either at the micro level - that of themes, training sequences, performed within a teaching school subjects.

In modern view, design actions, consist in thinking, anticipation and prefiguration of training, teaching strategies and technologies.

Curricular approach of educational process involves designing interdependencies between component elements of teaching: objectives - content - methodology - evaluation. These interdependencies engage achieving a formative educational priority based entirely on resources (self-) training and (self-) education of each student.

Curricular design records the leap from organizational structure based on explicitly defined content ("what to learn?") organizational structure value oriented through explicit and implicit objectives and methodology ("how we learn?") with macro-structural effects

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(education plan developed at system level) and micro-structural (curricula and textbooks developed at the trial), assumed at psychosocial scale.

Therefore, designing curriculum involves:

- general concept design;
- product design and curricular structures (syllabus, curriculum subjects, textbooks, methodological guides, etc.);
- designing the educational process itself (teaching, learning and assessment).

Curriculum design presents a complex activity that has its methodology and strategy, specific methods and procedures of elaboration. Curriculum development methodology is a set of concepts, benchmarks, action settings of a general physiological governing process of identifying, selecting and organizing the aims and content of education. It is, in other words, about the system of indicative criteria which operates the action plan of designing the actual curriculum. Curriculum design strategy is directly subordinate to the overall methodological conception and considers the preparation, planning and concrete completion of design operations. Strategy determines curriculum development in different phases of manifestations. The method presents a practical and systematic manner which is used in determining the aims, content selection and organization; each method in turn contains a number of procedures and ways of working themselves.

Schematic representation (Fig. 1) of the proposed terms hierarchy and actions designated by them

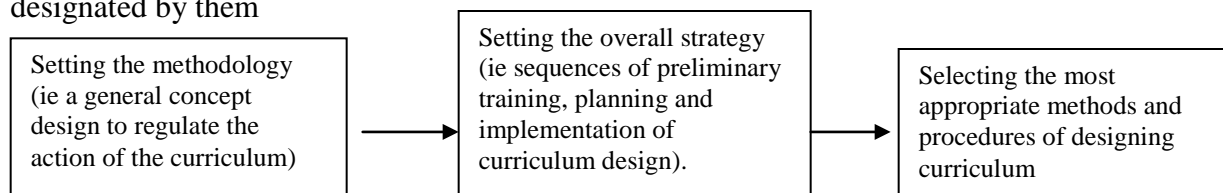


Fig. 1.

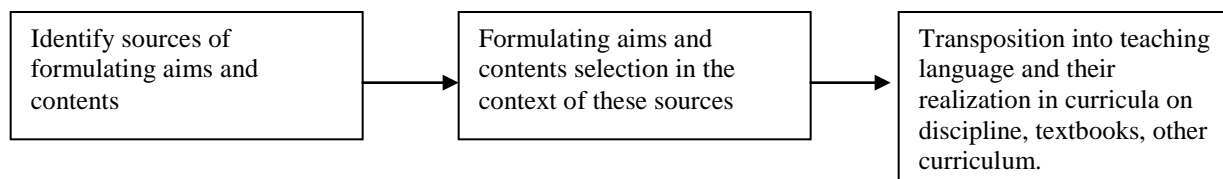


Fig. 2.

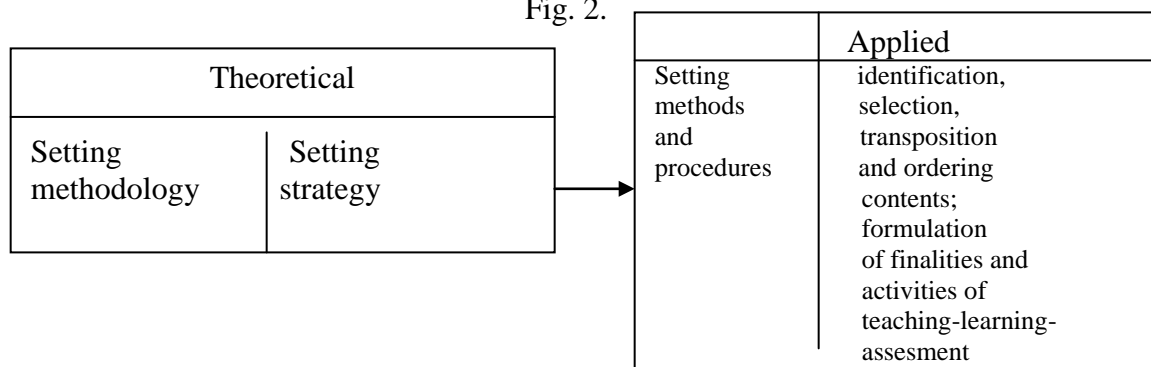


Fig. 3.

If the methodology and overall strategy has determined certain methods and procedures option becomes a purely technical operation. In essence, the methods and procedures involved only in phase to realize the general the methodology and strategy related to it, that is the following successive stages.

So, curriculum of designing concept can be presented in two aspects:

Curriculum design concept include in itself and other methodological perspectives:

- *First*, it is the overall logic of design that involves the following steps: diagnosis, conceptualization / design of curriculum, the design itself, the organization / implementation of curriculum, assessment / monitoring curriculum.

- *The second* sequence related to product design curriculum: educational standards → framework plan for education → curriculum for each subject → textbooks → methodological guides → other teaching materials.

- *The third* is the procedural realization of curriculum:

- developing long-term teaching projects;

- developing and implementing educational lessons projects focused on the learning units.

Diagnosis / initial assessment of the curriculum is another activity of curriculum management cycle quite extensive and includes activities related to the stages of development of structural components of the curriculum. Content diagnosis involves a series of actions aimed at:

- Analysis of curriculum modernization strategies, existing practices in the country and abroad;

- Elaboration of methodology for diagnosing the condition of school curriculum in secondary education;

- Making complex diagnosis of curriculum in secondary education;

- Analysis and statistical processing of data obtained under evaluation in general secondary education curriculum;

- The preparation of reports on diagnosing curricula in school subjects;

- Elaboration of recommendations for curriculum development.

Diagnosis also involves determining target groups: We have given priority:

- Students in secondary education;

- Directors of schools, teachers, parents;

- National experts in diagnosing curriculum.

The state curriculum diagnosis is made by several well-defined stages. Planning as a stage emphasizes objectives and methodology diagnosis of curricula, provide evaluative study based on an action plan that determines convergence between objectives, findings, recommendations and conclusions and conceptualizing information gathered to design curriculum development strategy.

Diagnosis methodology of curriculum status included:

- analysis of educational policy documents (including curriculum);

- analysis of curriculum as educational program, the organizational context, normative and the actors needs who generated this design;

- determining beneficiaries and evaluative study objectives;

- determining the valuation assumptions and lines of action;

- determining the conceptual framework and methodology for evaluation;

- time estimation, cost and resources required;
- determining the evaluative model, criteria, indicators and evaluative questions that may answer research hypotheses.

These actions determine the quality of the diagnostic process.

Diagnosis requires and selection of evaluation criteria that acquire meaning through qualitative assessment specifics, are appropriate to evaluation object includes clear directions, valued in the evaluation process and are a measure of quality curriculum designed by networking with indicators and evaluation questions. Indicators translate each evaluative criterion in landmarks, guide action towards curricular component that aims to be evaluated and explicitly describe the content of the assessment.

In the methodological approach of curriculum status diagnosis were included actions of:

- determining the balanced load of components level of core curriculum, in order to establish whether it provides formation of skills and acquisition of sufficient and appropriate knowledge, both in relation to the time spent, as well as with the development level of students who are targeted;
- identification of possible rupture between primary and secondary, both in terms of content as well as teaching methodology;
- identification of difficult understandable concepts for students at each discipline level;
- determination of methods of teaching specific to each subjects prevalent in didactic activity;
- determine the impact of textbooks on teaching methodology;
- determining the extent to which the curriculum uses active methods of teaching and learning;

In the process of curriculum diagnosis for a better operationalization and implementation of results, carry out the analysis of following dimensions:

- o conception and her reporting of holistic approach provisions and hexagonal of curriculum;
- o constituent elements and their reporting to the number needed / recommended by items;
- o types of objectives / competencies and establishing the coherence / incoherence between them;
- o the degree of complexity of the general objectives / frame in relation to their formative and informative potential;
- o the number and typology for the benchmarks / undercompetences with content unit structure;
- o frequency of benchmarks within the study of units of content;
- o curriculum content in relation to existing principles;
- o content units in terms of scientific approaches;
- o content units in terms of their accessibility;
- o curricular content in formative and educational terms;
- o teaching strategies proposed in curriculum in relation to modern approaches of training;
- o curriculum evaluation strategies in relation to modern approaches of assessment.

Following implementation of the state curriculum diagnostic methodology were established advantages and disadvantages of existing curricula and were formulated some conclusions and recommendations for conceptualizing/ reconceptualization of curriculum.

Conceptualization/ design of curriculum in the context of design is based on the following approaches:

1. Postmodern approach to curriculum.
2. Approach the functioning of education in postmodern society.
3. Approach globalizing dimension in the educational system.

At postmodern stage curriculum is seen as organized educational project based on principles that highlight the importance priority to assumed objectives determining the choice of certain learning experiences, organizing learning strategies, assessment tools.

The above statements are symptomatic for trends and current developments in curriculum interpretation, present synthetic work of scientific documentation. It is not difficult to see that most definitions - explicitly or implicitly - relates to the curriculum and discipline of study, as core elements of the national curriculum.

Within these approaches have emerged several conceptions of curriculum.

1) Concept of systemic learning of academic subjects

This vision is characterized by clarity and greater accuracy of the content. Definition of curriculum in this regard is as follows: “a general plan of contents or specific material of instruction, which the school provides the student”.

Disadvantages of this approach:

- The student is viewed more as an object of the educational act;
- Dominance of skills over knowledge;
- Domination of the reproductive methods over active and participative ones.

2) The concept of student-centered learning

Curriculum in the context of this approach has in the spotlight the student with particularities, needs and interests. The curriculum provided must be relevant, generator and facilitator or life experiences, building the sense through each will finds its development way.

3) Concept focusing on comprehension and society improvement

The curriculum guides the student to integrate skills training fast, efficient and creator of the student in social and professional field - the quality of the social and professional integration is a synthetic indicator of curriculum effectiveness.

4) The concept focuses on development process (curriculum development)

In this approach, curriculum design is of particular importance because, after this effort will shape the formal curriculum.

Curriculum is a “education program” to be designed in such a manner as to enable students to achieve certain learning objectives.

5) The systemic - holistic concept of curriculum

The curriculum of systemic-holistic perspective focuses on the many components of educational processes, their articulation fully achieve educational outcomes which represent the starting point that triggers a true circular reaction in the curriculum. Not lose sight and the student-subject of the educational act. Teaching is characterized by dynamism and constant and continuous interaction of constituent components.

6) The concept centered on objectives

Curriculum in this concept is based on a system of general objectives, transdisciplinary on curricular areas and disciplines (general, reference and operational).

Design of objectives is guided by a set of principles and taxonomy of objectives. The curriculum, in this context, is reflected in two documents: basic curriculum and subject curriculum. In fact, this approach to curriculum focus on "inputs" in the system and report the finalities achieved to the expected objectives.

7) The concept curriculum focused on competences

Within this approach, the emphasis is on the final product expressed in "form" of competence - integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes).

Concept of curriculum centered on skills can be argued in the following:

Pedagogical – it is intended to that they fosters values that have to promote contemporary school with an opening to multi-inter-trans disciplinary content.

Psychological – aims that the manifestation of competence means adequate domestic resource mobilization and fundamental knowledge acquired, cognitive and psychomotor skills, attitudes and behaviors that teenager applies them to solve some problematic situations. Responsible action of the student is to mobilize the mind resources (knowledge, skills, abilities, action schemes etc.) in right place and time.

Teaching and learning – as a process of forming gains through a permanent acquisitions acquired gradual and permanent in concrete contexts. In the process of teaching increases teacher freedom that organizes widely used problem-solving, discovery, investigation, working on projects, scientific communications and so on, and learning becomes a clear process through action-oriented motivations.

Evaluation - becomes clear formative at each stage of training and competence is centered on final purchases of the educational process offering the students freedom in expression and use of personal intellect.

Social - competences, in their microstructural finalities, determined in response to the needs of current practice and valid to wide training process, express the social dimension of education so that graduates endowed with functional skills can successfully solve the problems of daily life.

Moving from a curriculum on objectives at one centered on skills does not mean denial of the category of objectives but on the contrary, determine clear objectives functions (input) and competence functions (outputs) within curricular.

Table 1 Objectives vs. skills: comparative analysis

Educational objectives	Competence
Represent intended educational aims/ expected / projected level macrostructure and microstructure.	Represent educational aims achieved/ attained at macrostructure and microstructure for specific skills.
It is the "input"	It is the "output"
It is defined for immediate context (operational objectives and reference) on medium and long term (curricular objectives and general)	Not defining in terms of type, usually define long-term
Express value norms and axiological manifestation of the aims	Express value rules and axiological aims of manifestation
Provide orientation of didactic activity in	The orientation function of didactic activity

the learning process: identifying methods and teaching strategies, methods change, correlation curricular components, etc.	occurs insignificant.
It is operationalized	It is not operationalized
Fulfill the evaluative function: Initial; Current; Final.	Fulfill the evaluative function: Initial; Final.
Objectives can be made / reformulated by the teacher	The skills have a standardized form.

Therefore, setting the conceptual component of the curriculum lies with the conceptors / experts in the field. The logic conceptualizing of curriculum takes into account relations between modern conceptions of curriculum, between curriculum products and between functions / approaches curriculum management.

Curriculum design requirements impose managerial and pedagogical activities located in explicit hierarchical order, decisions made in terms of reference to the specifics of each product curricular.

Core curriculum documents - standards, curriculum, curriculum on subjects textbooks - are determined by:

1. Objectives, general and specific, which directs values, pedagogical, psychological and social at the level of interdependence of the components targeted and basic content experimentally validated.

2. Organizational structure of the education system, by level / school stage, they create the achievement center during the general education (which corresponds to the common curriculum / core).

Logic of design curriculum documents takes into account interconnections that exist between educational standards - curriculum - curriculum on subjects - textbooks.

Curricular design in procedural terms concerns of two main issues:

- achieving operational staff design long and short term (of the lesson) by teachers under which is conducted directly the teaching-learning-evaluation process;
- the actual implementation of the teaching-learning-assessment in the classroom.

In this context, designing operational teaching as a part of the national curriculum has been less dealt with under management curriculum. Design education is a curricular construct that requires a consistent set of actions and operations of anticipation and preparation of educational activity in all its components: objectives, content, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, means and methods of teaching, learning and assessment.

From the perspective of management, design education is regarded as a collaborative and flexible and consistent decision making.

Micro-level algorithm teaching design includes the following methodological validated theory and practical training and which should be taken into account by the designer professor.

Praxeology of implementation and monitoring of school curriculum focuses on two dimensions: managerial and pedagogical. Managerial dimension involves: creating motivational and organizational conditions regarding the implementation and monitoring of

school curriculum, organizing training of human resources for the implementation and monitoring of school curriculum, organizing and monitoring the actual implementation of the curriculum. Pedagogical dimension involves: training of school managers and teachers in order to implement and monitoring of school curriculum, developing a system of indicators on the effectiveness of the implementation of the school curriculum and in particular the curriculum documents.

Implementation and monitoring of school curriculum are dependent on the system conditions. The first condition related to creating the motivation for all participants involved in the implementation and monitoring of the school curriculum. The second condition related to organizational aspects of the implementation process of school curriculum (G.Kelemen, 2013). This aspect is divided into three levels: national, district / municipal and institutional. The third condition with reference to the preparation of the school curriculum implementation / training of teachers and the leading staff. No less important is the condition relating to materials resources that largely determine the effectiveness of implementing the school curriculum.

Praxeology of implementation and monitoring of the school curriculum in the context of pedagogical dimension aims to answer the following questions:

- To what extent curriculum is appropriate for students?
- To what extent curriculum is effective?
- To what extent curriculum is effective?
- What improvements can be made to the curriculum in response to the above questions?

Opportunity of a curriculum is a first aspect that seeks to highlight the evaluation of curriculum management. Effectiveness of a curriculum is the second aspect followed by the praxeological model management of curriculum implementation. And finally the effectiveness of a curriculum is the third aspect of its management.

Research results have shown us that for a more accurate understanding of how the role of management in the context of changes taking place in the school curriculum must be reviewed at least three perspectives: pedagogical, social, managerial. Pedagogical perspective, establish the factors involved in proper development of educational processes, namely: detailed knowledge of school ambiance, relations in the school between protagonists of teaching, school resources, teacher-student relations, communication content etc. Particular attention should be given to professional development of teachers for their experience and training that would leave their mark on the development and quality of education.

Presenting the synthesis of the highlights of praxeological approach we can say that the general structure of management actions and their effectiveness lies in diagnostic conditions/ conceptualization, planning/ design, organization/ implementation, monitoring/ evaluation. Achieving these functions is based on the general theory of curriculum management, a set of strategies and specific methods analyzed phenomenon and identifies application of curricular teaching, managerial, social actions.

Managerial dimensions of diagnostic methodology/ conceptualization, planning/ design, organization/ implementation, monitoring/ evaluation of curriculum are focused on effective education and consist of: comparing the situation with perceptions of stakeholders in changing curriculum, balanced distribution of all components of the curriculum, organization optimal content, ensuring the conditions psychological, physiological,

functional and ergonomic to establish adequate working capacity of students, integration of structural elements of the curriculum; accumulation of proposals, solutions to improve the curriculum, organization of time required to achieve the objectives and competencies designed as a final allocation of human resources in design, etc.

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SOCIAL INCLUSION OF CHILDREN FROM VULNERABLE GROUPS IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN MIGRATION – A CHALLENGE FOR THE CHILD- CARE SYSTEM

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“Rather than expect everyone to participate equally in formal governance, structures of governance in a way that taps into the informal spaces of community life that they routinely inhabit” Skidmore, P., Bound, K., Lownsbrought, H., Joseph, H., - Community Participation, Who benefits?, Rowntree Foundation, 2006

Abstract

The increasing “mobility” of the labour market and the increasing “flexibility” of social life induced in the last decade an abrupt exacerbation of the issues of social inclusion (social integration).

Most of the East-European countries and specifically Romania and Bulgaria are newly intensively confronted with the problem of the disadvantaged populations (marginalised ethnic-groups). The improving of the living conditions and the social inclusion of the most disadvantaged/vulnerable people (Roma, persons with disabilities, children at risk, and victims of domestic violence) are the main targets of a large number of international projects and programmes. The Roma population for example focussed in the last decades intensively the public opinion. The debates on the political level and the concerns of the specialists increased in the last years, and this not only in the countries of origin but also in almost all West-European countries.

Despite the impressive amount of support programs, aid projects, activities, initiatives, actions on the national, regional and local level, initiated and implemented with the aid of an impressive logistics and financing, the social inclusion of the vulnerable groups remain one of the unsolved problems of modern Europe. In most of the cases the results of such projects remained less relevant and the impact (the gap) between the profoundly different and not compatible cultures also remained significant.

Key-words: social inclusion, care work in social informal areas (social spaces)

Visionary the inclusion can be defined as a socially inclusive society, a society in which all people feel valued and have the opportunity to fully participate in the life of the

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community.

Achieving this vision means that all people will have the resources, opportunities and capability to:

- **Learn** by participating in education and training;
- **Work** by participating in employment, in voluntary work and in family and caring;
- **Engage** by connecting with people and using the resources of the communities; and
- **Have a voice** so that they can influence decisions that affect themⁱ.

On the contrary, the social exclusion has multiple impacts. In most cases it is related with a combination of linked problems – unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, bad health, family breakdown and characterised by the inter-relatedness of problems that are mutually reinforcing. They create a fast moving, complex and vicious cycleⁱⁱ.

The challenge of temporary migration. “Those who remain” – excluded groups?

The labour force has intensively migrated in the last three decades. The exact migration-routes are difficult to follow, but the axis from East to West is predominating. There are also controversial data about the real dimensions of the migration in each East-European country. The modern migration is mostly only a temporary one and represents anyway a phenomenon that still has to be intensively investigated.

In the case of Romania and Bulgaria for instance some family members (one or in many cases even both parents) leave their country of origin in order to work in some other areas within the European Union. Only the children and the grandparents remain at home. The grandparents are supposed to play a role that overstrains them (exceeds their capacities and competencies). As some recent studies published in Romania indicate, the phenomenon in some areas (the North-East region of Romania for example) is an overall one and the resulting problems regarding the school performance and the social integration of the children became extremely acute. The extension of the temporary migration initially surprised the responsible authorities. An important role in the impact of the phenomenon also played the lack of appropriate responsible bodies, organisations and associations directly responsible and having the necessary logistics and competencies. The schools and the local child care authorities still cannot deal properly with the problem of the “remaining children”, partly because of the dimensions of the so-called collateral effects (regarding schooling, level of participating in the community life, etc.) and partly because of a certain tendency to avoid taking responsibility for a category of population having de facto better financial possibilities as some other categories of population.

Assisting the families at home represents a solution, but the system is costly and the necessary infrastructure simply does not exist or is not functional enough.

The children having their parents “at work abroad” are also in numerous cases confronted with specific social disadvantages and exclusion. Strongly associated with social and educational disadvantageⁱⁱⁱ proliferate between adolescents and young people conduct disorders (considered as „a persistent and pervasive pattern of antisocial behaviour in childhood or adolescence“^{iv}).

Antisocial behaviour in childhood can be considered as a major predictor of how much a person will cost society. The cost is large and falls on many agencies, yet few agencies contribute to prevention, which could be cost effective. Antisocial behaviour in childhood can also often lead to lifelong social exclusion^v.

Temporary migration or simply temporary “re-location”?

The temporary migration is more and more “tolerated” in Western Europe. Each year a large number of people are simply “relocated” and this only for a definite period of time. Despite the political discussions, the underpaid labour force continues to move from country to country, benefiting of professional aid (labour-force agencies, other informal structures operating at international scale).

The high rate of migration in some countries like Romania and Bulgaria is not only an economical problem but also a social one. For instance less than 40 % of employers in these countries would recruit people from vulnerable groups (Roma). Many young people deterred at their turn from applying, especially because of fear of unfair treatment.

In most of the cases the temporary migration cannot be turned into a “permanent migration” because of the restrictive legislation in many of the destination-countries and because of the fluctuations of the labour market.

There are not really coherent efforts to integrate (to include) this labour force, respectively the short-term migrators into the local community. In most of the cases the momentary hired workers are less accepted in the local communities, are in fact isolated and they also do not show very much interest to integrate themselves. They show diminished interest and not much of genuine desire to be in interrelation with a society living on other bases and having for its own communities a differently structured system of rules.

The many and sometimes ingenious ways to avoid such customs, rules, laws, regulations and behavioural models are in most of the cases well known. The changing of the own identity for instance means anyway to remain in fact well integrated in the group of origin. Most of the proposals, projects and implemented programmes have to deal with social groups rejecting the values and local offers of the “destination areas”.

The Roma population developed in the last decades their own “migration itineraries” (routes) and “migration connections” all over Europe.

They also developed their own organisational structures, supporting nets and hierarchies.

New social spaces. Rediscovering the ghettos

There was constantly reported in the mass-media that the “grouping” of Roma people and other categories of population generates new “social areas” (social spaces) in different areas of Europe, mostly in the urban agglomerations. In some big cities for instance appeared rapidly streets and neighbourhoods populated with “temporary migratory population”, acting and living according to their own unwritten rules. The reports are numerous and the phenomenon seems to constantly increase and to aggravate the already existing social problems in these urban areas.

As a matter of fact we are confronted with parallel systems, not compatible but forced to act, to operate together.

In some cases, this form of grouping can dilute the local cultures and traditions and deny context specific realities.

Insecurity and fear of some individuals of an unknown future and instability can result in a forced assimilation into a dominant group, group that takes more and more control and imposes a system of unconditioned submission of each member.

This way of ghettoization has become a strong relevant phenomenon in Europe in the last decades. As intensity and dimensions it can be compared to the similar development of the urban agglomerations in the third and the fourth decades of the 20th century in America. "Isolation is common to almost every vocational, religious or cultural group of a large city. Each group develops its own sentiments, attitudes, codes, even its own words, which are at best only partially intelligible to others."^{vi}

The new ghettoization is in many ways simply a consequence of the desire not to participate, almost a conscious self-exclusion and adherence (inclusion) only to a smaller informal peer-group.

New social areas. Rural ghettos

Driving through some villages in Romania and in Bulgaria might be in many ways an interesting experience. The most surprising is simply a part of the new rural architecture. Some extremely big houses, richly decorated with small towers, balconies or porches and verandas, with ornamented windows and over-dimensioned doors. A new "architectural style" has been born. It is a mixture of oriental, European and stylised "folklore" architectural elements. In a way it indicates a tendency of a part of the "migratory population" to settle but also represents a constant tendency of establishing a new type of rural ghettos.

The dilemma consists in trying to include a population that is moving most of the time and has also no intention to change this relatively profitable way of living.

A latent conflict develops almost inevitably between the residents, evidently with less material possibilities and the "intruders", respectively the new inhabitants.

The previously acquired professional social-care knowhow does not always seem to be able to find the appropriate ways to deal with the phenomenon of the temporary migration.

In the last years the problem has been increasingly discussed in terms of "social inclusion" or "social exclusion"^{vii} and not "integration". Exclusion defines contemporary forms of social disadvantage and refers to processes in which individuals or entire communities of people are systematically blocked off rights, opportunities or resources. It is also interesting to notice that there has been more written about "social exclusion" than about "social inclusion".

"Our life, our care, our say"

Inclusion programmes in social areas (informal life spaces).

"The places with which people are already familiar – the school gate, their place of worship or their local newsagent or post office – hold the key to engaging them in governance activity. These places and the organisations that occupy them act as the everyday bridge between ordinary people and more formal governance activities".^{viii}

Combating social inequality and exclusion of the children and adolescents can be more efficiently done by direct interventions in predetermined social informal spaces and by using the existing human and material resources, potentials, respectively integration, education and other kind of structures with core elements like low_threshold, integration, education (schooling) and direct interventions (programmes) in "areas-at-risk" (neighbourhoods in the city, some rural areas).

The good-practice models and approaches are based mostly on the following principles:

- **Practical orientation** instead of theoretical concepts. Direct confrontation with the specific practical aspects (“social realities” of each area). Development and improvement of projects ideas which are already available through experience and resources.
- **Quality orientation.** Learning through positive experience of other projects and the permanent review of its own effectiveness.
- **Linking practice and research.** Transfer of professional knowhow between child care research and care promoting practice^{ix}.

The most successfully implemented strategies in the care work oriented towards informal social areas take into consideration following aspects:

- participation
- networking and personal contacts
- conferences and other forms of exchanging professional knowhow on the intra- and inter-institutional level
- adequate communication and confidence
- acceptance
- recognised und also informal established rules and limits
- non-formal education
- axiology, mentality, resources of the community

An evaluation of the socio-spatially oriented child and youth inclusion programmes based on relevant survey results^x, revealed that the inclusion programmes (projects) are maximum efficient in following key-areas (key-issues):

- care, help and support provided by specialised institutions and organisations
- creating participation opportunities for disadvantaged children coming from vulnerable populations
- delivery of training courses
- reduction of prejudice
- strengthening of self-confidence
- improving the social climate
- Identification with the district and the values developed and promoted inside informal groups and certain social areas.

Social cartography and the evaluation of the social inclusion.

Social cartography has lately become an imperious necessity. To develop coherent social policies and programmes and to successfully face the challenge of including Roma and other categories of vulnerable population, especially in the context of globalisation, of cultural changes and of strong and irreversible axiological restructurings of the fundamental values and life-goals, there is also needed a new evaluation policy and a new understanding of the existing social trends and movements. And this can no longer be only empirically achieved.

Almost all the politicians, social workers, representatives of different NGOs, others organisations and associations, schools we contacted strongly expressed the meaning that they know the real situation of the areas they work in, but admitted that the empirical knowledge is not always enough and suitably relevant.

They also revealed the fact that the specialists and the authorities in charge have not succeeded to properly map the areas-at-risk and to plot in an adequate way the vulnerable groups and their characteristics. Under these circumstances some of the decisions that have to be taken in order to implement or to run programmes and actions are entirely based on subjective perceptions and on empirical know-hows, mostly disseminated by mass media. More objective data and comparative studies were desirable and doubtlessly advantageous, especially for the specialists and the practitioners working in the field and being directly confronted with the implementation of different inclusion projects and programmes. The empirical methods still predominate in evaluating the social inclusion. The descriptive methods are mostly preferred because of the complexity of the numerous qualitative aspects which have to be taken into consideration and of the difficulties of converting them into standardised quotients. We can talk at the time being about a really “inflation” of different types of reports (sociological, psychological, medical, development reports, school reports, etc.) and procedures of qualitative analyses (like for instance charts, behavioural and personality inventories, socio-surveys). Despite of the efforts on regional and national levels to elaborate some standards and standardized methods and procedures, the practitioners have to face an “avalanche” of heterogeneous documents that have to be meticulously fulfilled.

Inclusion Evaluation Scale (IkES)

Inclusion Evaluation Scale (IkES) was developed in order to facilitate an objective evaluation of the degree of social inclusion of a person in its social proximate environment (social informal area, social space). Original software has also been developed in order to support a very quick final interpretation of the data and to plot an “easy-to-read” evaluation graph.

Characteristics

- a. The Scale is based on a multiple-choice questionnaire containing 80 different evaluation items (“questions”), designated to analyse and to quantify (to evaluate objectively through a standardised scoring system) the position achieved from a person inside its “immediate social environment” (in a community, in different peer-groups, etc.).
- b. The questionnaires (IkES Items Inventory) are structured in a way that allows including in a comprehensive final evaluation almost every relevant information about a person, independently from sources, for instance:
 - (a) direct answers of the interviewed persons (opened-answer questions) or
 - (b) all previously accumulated data and all kind of heterogeneous preceding information, delivered from different sources (social workers, medical, psychological and social reports, school evaluations, etc.), and this independently from their structure and form
- c. The data are graphically presented in the Inclusion Evaluation Charts (IkES Charts). These socio-diagrams (see Diagram) are easy to be “read” and the delivered information is objective, presented in an accessible form.

The items are structured considering eight components of the immediate social environment:

1. Family (including the large family and relatives not living together with the family)
2. Neighbourhood (peer informal groups, other social contacts and nets)
3. Services (health and care services acting in the social area)

4. Leisure 1 (belonging to a club - sport, dance, concerts)
5. Leisure 2 (arts and culture)
6. Education (schooling, different forms of vocational training and professional training or qualifications on-the-job, other forms of permanent learning)
7. Employment (social acceptance and inclusion at work)
8. Volunteering (NGOs activities and programs, for instance)

d. There was also developed a specific software, that permits the simultaneous analysis of the existing IkES Charts belonging to different people (which can be selected according to multiple criteria) and the creation of social maps, respectively the social cartography of groups of population, determined with the help of target oriented selection criteria.

This makes possible an ad-hoc targeted mapping of small social groups, for instance as a result of a social inquiry or of a collateral investigation (similar to some market investigations – SINUS behavioural patterns for example).

The items of the evaluation scale refer to eight principal components of the social life of an investigated person. For each of these considered components there are allocated ten items (called inclusion indicators). The complete set contains:

- (a) a “list of items” – basically an inventory of direct questions (open questions) to lead an interview and
- (b) a “Glossary” containing a description of each item and its sub-components, practically a description of the way certain behaviours, attitudes, reactions or episodes of the personal history could be understood and interpreted according to the main component items of the inventory .

The software can establish, based on the analysis of several questionnaires and criteria of selection determined by the coordinating specialist, a complex social map. This kind of social cartography was less implemented, despite of the fact that such an investigation can be extremely useful to social workers, social-pedagogues, pedagogues, psychologists and therapists and also to care institutions and NGOs working with relatively small groups of vulnerable people living in small areas (rural and urban “ghettos” for instance).

Conclusions

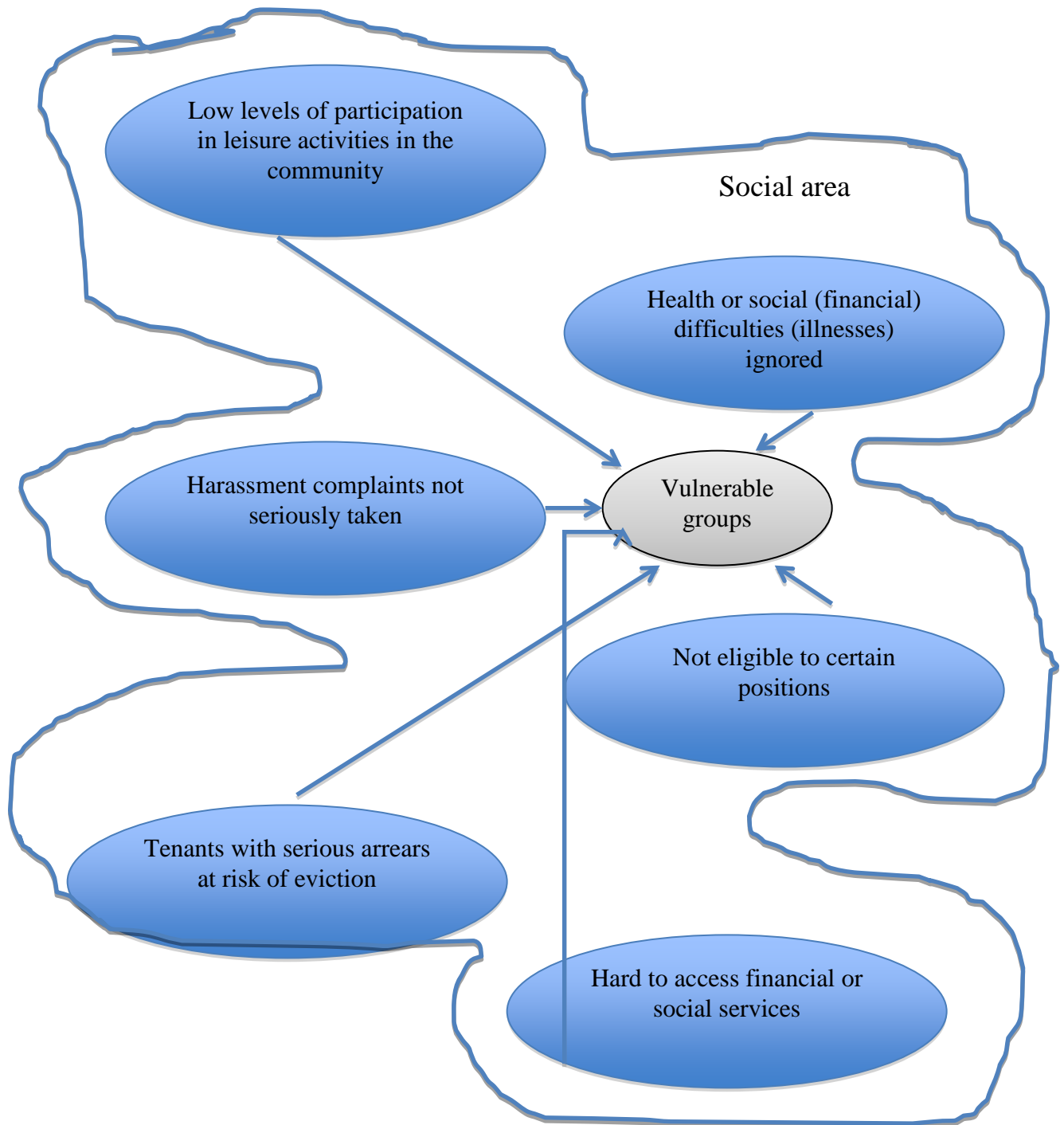
A real inclusion of vulnerable groups is possible only in a certain political context. Some needed policies:

- Provider pluralism, community governance
- Local or government legislation; local area agreements and sustainable communities
- Focussing on health and wellbeing specific problems at the local and regional level
- Individual budgets and self-directed care

Organisational routines, prejudgments and know-how barriers prevent effective service organisation. Many agencies are simply not aware that the non-inclusion during childhood leads to high costs for them. Among agencies working with children (health, education, social services, and voluntary agencies) none is primarily responsible for social inclusion and only a few consistently use evidence based interventions.

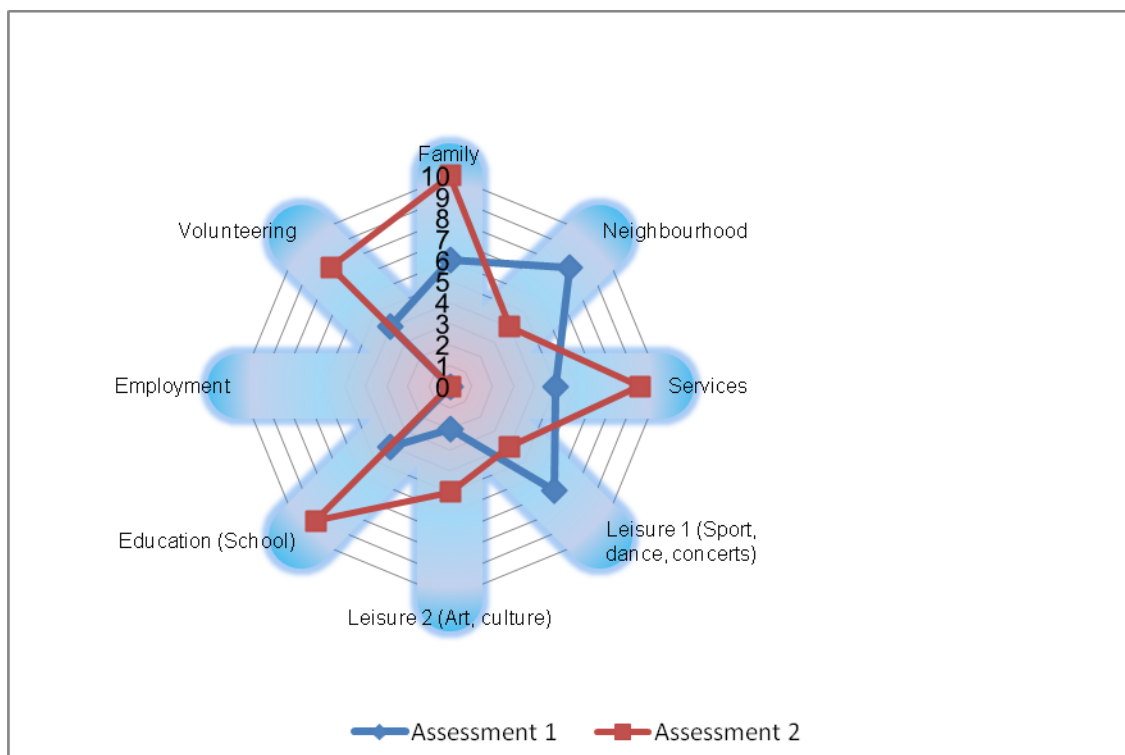
The intergovernmental cooperation and the “working together” between different national and international agencies, organisations and formal and informal bodies contributing to the inclusion of varied “populations at risk” function only sporadic and not entirely based on coherent macro, regional and local strategies.

Different ways of exclusion⁶



⁶ after Morris, D., - National Social Inclusion Programme, SCIE/NSIP Mental Health Social Care Leadership Symposium, p. 8

Inclusion Evaluation Scale (IkES) – Assessment chart



It is more efficient to build the capacity of target groups and disadvantaged communities and to let them play a more important role in the development of strategies that will create real and effective changes in the quality of their lives and the opportunities available to them.

Typical actions and programmes might include development work with vulnerable (target) groups in order to build their capacity and organisational structure, © *DraKa* : work with the most marginalised groups, promotion of community participation in partnerships with other local development structures, needs-assessment training and supports for small-scale improvements to the local environment and to community facilities.

An important component of the inclusion refers to the community based youth initiatives, especially those targeted to complement and add value to mainstream educational provision for youths whose needs are not adequately fulfilled within mainstream education or who require additional supports.

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INTERACTION PUPIL-LITERARY PRODUCTION IN THE CONTEXT OF LITERARY AND ARTISTIC EDUCATION

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Abstract

The article approaches the matter of attitudinal development in the literary and artistic education context. It presents the limited attitudinal demonstration of the primary level students in relation with a literary production and its phenomena in traditional didactic situations and the qualitative changes as a result of the formative experiment.

Keywords: *attitude, motivational system, object-connection subject, principles of literary and artistic education, teaching strategies and forms of organizing.*

1. Introduction

Interaction represents a condition of human life, or, the school must offer the maximum possibilities to act according to the others' needs and interests providing psychological skills of communication and tolerance. In the context of literary and artistic education, interaction orients the didactic process and its participants to an individual attitude in relation to literary production. The main objective of the interdisciplinary course Romanian Language and Literature is to *form the pupil reader as receiver of literature and art principle, as well as amplifier and communicant of phenomena, works and literary creations; owner of literary aesthetic instruments and subject of its own humanistic, cultural, literary and artistic performances.*⁷ The contact of the primary school reader with literature generates his self development through a range of activities that require creativity. The Mission of the teacher is to treat the pupil as *the subject of its own literary and artistic formation, evaluating the students' results not only as immanent values, but also as values produced through the learning and communicative activities as well as the literary production of the pupils.*⁸

In any domain interaction consists in solving a complex problem. It also requires fluidity (associative) and flexible thinking from the human factor (the ability to adapt to new situations, to find unusual solutions), as well as sensitivity, analytical and synthetic thinking (the ability to abstract and synthesize), the coherent organization of his ideas and projects. The student must also be able to transform, change the function of the object thus making it useful. *At the Romanian Language and Literature subject, interaction aims at*

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⁷ *Limba și literatura română. Curriculum pentru învățământul liceal. Chișinău: Univers Pedagogic, 2006, p.3, 51p.*

⁸ *Vlad Pâslaru. (Introducere în teoria educației literar-artistice, Chișinău, Editura Museum, 2001, 312 p.)*

"forming a personality able to read and interpret literary texts of different genres and species, being able to delimit the value from non value and value, to interpret literary phenomena according to the data of philosophy, history, sociology, psychology, ethics, aesthetics, as well as through the axiological universe of student-reader".

2. Methodology

2.1. Objective

One of the premises which determined this research deals with the fact that literary and artistic education is doubtful. The teaching stereotype of the Romanian Language and Literature still persists in methodology of many teachers. Scientific knowledge can't be valid in the context where the instruction is subject to education. "Literary-Artistic Education"⁹ consists in the formation of literature reader, through immediate knowledge of works and literary phenomena, and by engaging the student in producing, editing of literary and interpretive texts¹⁰. In this context it should be mentioned about the invasion of methods, processes, learning techniques that are used at random at the lesson. The teachers being attracted by pathetic text titles, of the unusual way of organization, uses new strategies, those being often unjustified and unsystematized. The technology chosen by the teacher is taken as a stereotype itself. Or, the frequent use of one and the same procedure, without adapting to the field of artistic knowledge or creative adjustment, will not produce the expected effect. Therefore, there is no interaction between student and literary work than the reproductive level like a fable retelling, the characterization of the characters following a learnt algorithm, ...

Thus, according to C. Șchiopu, a researcher in the domain, *in the teaching of literary works are observed many lacunae like: the literary text comment is reduced either to translation or language paraphrasing and content retelling, either to the discovery of the theme, main idea and artistic resources that highlight this idea (in the case of the lyrics), either to the sociological interpretation of the literary text, to the classification of the characters in positive and negative, main and secondary characters Students are guided to reproduce literary topic, to find a passage, to characterize the characters, to investigate the action through main moments. Moreover, the text is understandable only in one way, only one interpretation is allowed, the latter being simplistic most of the times. Everything or almost everything is reduced to the answer of the question "Why did the author want to tell through this work?"*¹¹

Another dilemma concerning this interaction is theoretical and methodological studies of a number of researchers (Constanta Bărboi, Cristina Ionescu, Constantin Parfene, Paul Cornea, Georghe Lăzărescu, Vlad Pâslaru, Constantin Șchiopu, Stela Cemortan, G.Kelemen etc.).They approach the matter of literary and artistic education of pupils from various perspectives: theoretical, methodological, and sociological. Treated more than tangential, student interaction and problem of literary production from the perspective of literary and artistic attitudes remain unresolved, the fact which profiled the purpose of our

⁹ * În continuare în locul sintagmei *Educația Literar-Artistică* va apare abrevierea ELA.

¹⁰ Vlad Pâslaru. (*Introducere în teoria educației literar-artistice*, Chișinău, Editura Museum, 2001, 312 p.)

¹¹ Constantin Șchiopu. (*Metode și procedee de interpretare a operelor lirice*. (în: *Limba română*, 2006, nr. 11-12, p. 104))

research: to emphasize the principles and mechanism of development of student's attitudes towards the literary production in the context of literary and artistic education. The object of the research is the development of pupil's attitudes towards literary production.

According to the experiment of the research, it must be noted that the development of pupils' attitudes towards literary production is based on the valuation of art and literature principles as well as literary and literary-artistic education that ensures the freedom of imagination and personal opinion-their priority as receptors of artistic text. It stimulates cognitive interests and updates the reading and life experience, being created a context in which the formative potential of literary work is carried out in the framework of activities on the basis of teaching strategies determined by the principles held in a particular system.

The analysis of this problem needs more investigation from the part of researchers including setting the pedagogical, psychological and artistic-literary reference in the development of students' attitudes toward literary production. It also needs some research of *Curriculum of Romanian Language and Literature* in relation to the objectives which emphasize the pupil's attitudes towards the literary production and highlights the correspondence of the school textbooks and the Curriculum. The author emphasizes the pupils' interaction peculiarities toward the literary production through an analyses of the pupil's attitudes towards literary in a real experiment; *elaboration of theoretical Model of attitudinal development of student's towards literary production*; validation by experiment of the *theoretical Model* worked out; formulation of general conclusions and recommendations on the development of student's attitude towards the literary production; elaboration of teaching materials (books, reading guides, reading books, reading diaries, notebooks of creation etc.) in the research process.

2. 2. Participants

Experiment: in the experiment were involved 120 students from grade IV, George Călinescu Lyceum, Chisinau, Moldova.

2. 3. Instrument

The research methodology included the following types of methods: *pedagogical:* scientific documentation, observation, conversation, analysis of pupils' works, comparison, students' activity survey, pedagogic experiment (finding, training, control); *Statistical:* processing data and statistical interpretation of the data according to quantitative, qualitative, and graphic variation indicators.

2. 4. Procedure

During the research I deduced that the student's attitude towards the literary production is qualified as a complex construction of affective reactions of the student based on comprehension, reading experience, interest, motivation, selectivity, aesthetic taste, valuable judgments of the subject. These are reported to the artistic ideals, artistic creed, the general-human values, guiding the student to a particular behavior for knowing himself.

Synthesizing the psychologists' definitions about the attitude¹² it is seen that one of the features of the attitude *comes from a result of direct contact with the object/situation with*

¹² Paul Popescu-Neveanu, (*Dicționar de psihologie*, București, Editura Albatros, 1978, 784 p.)

other people or as a result of an indirect contact with them. The Formula implies a generalizing character but does not apply in the case of literary and artistic education. The attitudes generate in the condition of direct literary contact. A genuine attitude will appear only in this condition and the receiver will not have a false attitude. A reader will have a direct, real contact and the attitudinal idea will project in his mind. For this reason it is necessary to establish a condition that grounds the development of the attitudes, *that of direct contact of the receiver with the literary.*

The event develops the student's critical, polemical attitude. The student has the opportunity to affirm as a personality and to launch creative ideas. The attitudes' formation is a continuous process. The Student gathers literary experiences trough his discernment activities. Thus, the positive personality acquires positive traits of character. The student overcomes shyness and insecurities, being invited to express himself, to formulate opinions, to argue some statements. Obviously, the attitudinal actions must be built on flexible, acceptable points, taking into account the peculiarities of age, levels of perception of literary reading experience, life, motivation towards the examined product.

The theoretical foundation of the development of attitudes towards literary work can be viewed in Figure nr. 1:

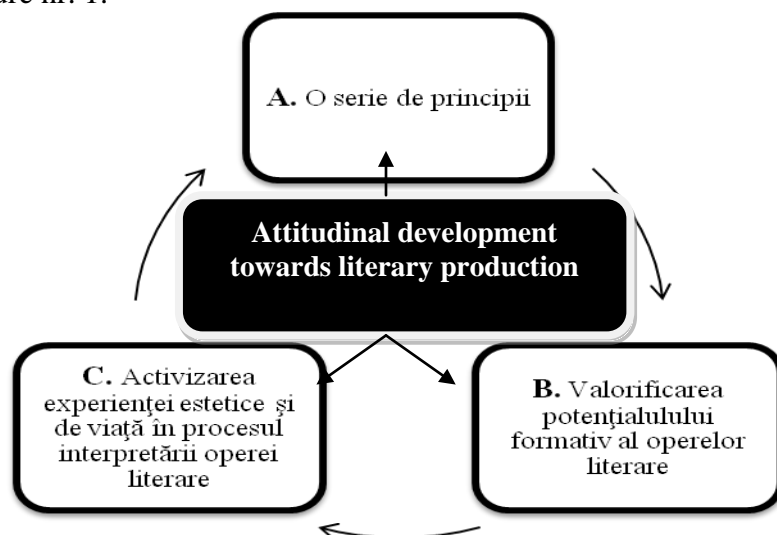


Figure 1. *The development of attitudes towards the literary production*

Here is the argumentation of the above chart with every component

A. The A point offers students the free expression of imagination and of opinion, student's priority as receptors of artistic text. It stimulates interest in knowledge, updates the reading and life experience.

B. It is more enlightening if students are given an opportunity to examine a fact/case, to make and to argue the decisions and to prevent the consequences. The exchange of ideas, opinions, feedback between colleagues and other work partners, finding a solution, the abilities of achieving a common task ,the use of various ways of learning are appropriate here-all these contribute greatly to the development of the attitude towards literary production;

C. Students are placed in a situation of recollecting of the knowledge and previous life experience, to compare the values, ideals, visions with others. The moments of correlations not only generate a rational analysis of the ways of solving, but also creates an emotional attitude toward these ways. In this analysis process the student get to understand that life experience is not sufficient to solve the problem. Moreover, he feels the need to seek a more appropriate solution. Thus, decision making becomes a personal approach being one of the reasons of knowledge achievement. Gradually down the reason stands out first in his motivational system, and then "moves" and reinforces in the other learning activities.

Of all listed above, it should be emphasized the following principles:

1. the principle of stimulation students' interest for reading
2. the principle of updating the life experience of the student
3. the principle of creativity.

Except all these principles mentioned above there is a number of other secondary principles. Here is an overview of the essence of these principles:

- the principle of **operating** .It suggests more thinking tasks -analysis and synthesis, vertical abstraction -to reach the categories or the system of integrators, qualities or abstract relationships (which can be common, general, essential). It represents an information model meant to designate a class or category of objects and phenomena (this is a generalization as a way of operating) ¹³.
- principle of **stimulation** of the creative thinking involves the use of questions, that offers the possibilities of simplification of the problem, the reorganization of its parts. Through tries and errors are built and reconstructed patterns of the situation with a different degree of abstraction¹⁴.
- The valuation principle of the receiver in the process of decoding of an artistic text is always an act of valuation (strictly ideological, emotional, etc.) ¹⁵. The valuation of the artistic text is mentioned by A.Burov, E. Kviatkovski, M. Vulcănescu (1991) ¹⁶.
- **The principle of aesthetic experience and life experience** develops the pupils' creative potential¹⁷. Thus the student uses the aesthetic experience in new situations, new relations between new and old information and knowledge are established, the problems of the literary become close to their own. Information processed trough new operational schemes generates new information, develops creativity. Aesthetic principle shows that the proposed model will be effective if the teacher will take in account the essence of literature and art¹⁸.

J. Mukarovsky and C.Radu (1989) formulated the philosophical-aesthetic and educational concept giving full priority to the art and literature receiver. The principle promotes the idea "in Art the main object is not the author, but the receiver itself"¹⁹. It means that he is the literary reader; the object-connection subject being given

¹³ Constantin Şchiopu. (*Creativitatea la orele de literatură română*. în *Limba română*, 1996, nr. 3., p. 93)

¹⁴ ibidem

¹⁵ Cezar Radu. (*Artă și convenție*. Bucureşti, Editura *Ştiinţifică și Enciclopedică*, 1989, p. 129.)

¹⁶ apud: Vlad Pâslaru. (*Introducere în teoria educaţiei literar-artistice*, Chişinău, Editura *Museum*, 2001, 312 p.)

¹⁷ Hans Robert Jauß. (*Experienţă estetică și hermeneutică literară*, Bucureşti, Editura *Univers*, 1983)

¹⁸ Constantin Şchiopu. (*Creativitatea la orele de literatură română*. în *Limba română*, 1996, nr. 3., p. 94)

¹⁹ Jan Mukařovský. (*Studii de estetică*, Bucureşti, Editura *Univers*, 1974, p. 181)

privilege²⁰. The philosophical-aesthetic concept, applied in the education field defines the literary and art receiver the reader of literature. At first the readers' capacities seem to be doubtful, but the priority principle of praxeology receiver of literature and art reveals the idea according to which every reader can recreate images originating through this *re-creation/processing*, thus obtaining the status of privileged. Another question that appears is: should student's idea prevail in a situation of reception? The answer is presented by Vl. Pâslaru²¹.

- **The principle of free artistic image²²** (S.Lupascu) makes the receiver to recreate the images created previously by the author. The recreating process is being identified with the reception. The free imagination depends on the attitude, because he develops the subject according to the taken attitude. The recreation is original if the attitude is subjective and comes from the literal acquired experience of the student.

According to all established facts it must be outlined the concept of classification of the theoretical strategies of the formation of attitudes towards literary production:

1. literary production generates attitudes;
2. literary production serves as reason to self-development;
3. types of attitudes toward literary provide developing strategies appropriate to the contents and type of attitude;
4. principles of the esthetical-literary will help to elucidate appropriate strategies for development of attitudes towards literary production;
5. attitudinal objectives will contribute to the revealing of the special strategies;
6. development of motivational system and interest will facilitate the elaboration of a set of processes that will contribute to the development of attitudes towards literary.

The teaching strategies towards literary production needs an introduction in the educational process of a mechanism of development of attitudes as well as adaptation of the teaching techniques which will correspond to cognitive level, interests, students' motivation; the flexibility of adapting the various techniques for achieving an individualized, differentiated approach.

Development of student's attitude towards the literary production requires selection of technologies and didactic activities according to the principles established. Thus, the didactic model includes technologies/strategies, activities and forms of organization of the educational process.

In the experiment were used such techniques as: Reading, The Journal of Reading and of Attitude, Pair Reading, The Booklet of attitudinal expressions, "Eu an" Pro "reading" Literary Correspondence, Book Exhibition, Book Launch, The Storm of Ideas, Press conference, Literary Film

Momentul de lectură, Calendarul de lectură și atitudine, Jurnalul de lectură, Lectura în doi, Decada lecturii, Glosarul de expresii atitudinale, Caietul de lectură și creație „Eu și cartea”, „Pro lectura” Corespondențe literare, Prezentarea de carte, Lansarea de carte, Licitația de idei, Târgul de idei, Conferința de presă, Ecranizarea operei literare²³.

²⁰ Cezar Radu. (*Artă și convenție*. București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1989, p. 156, p. 171.)

²¹ Vlad Pâslaru. (*Introducere în teoria educației literar-artistice*, Chișinău, Editura Museum, 2001, 312 p, p. 85.)

²² apud *ibidem*.

²³ Tatiana Niculcea, Mariana Marin. (*Limba română, clasa a IV-a, Ghidul învățătorului*, Chișinău, Editura Cartier, 2008, 80 p.)

(*Reading, The Journal of Reading and of Attitude, Pair Reading, The Booklet of attitudinal expressions, "I and the book", "Pro reading" Literary Correspondence, Book Exhibition, The Storm of Ideas, Press conference, Literary Film*)

Their success is due to the various organizational forms, adapted to the individual curriculum of educational institution or teachers' option. So, we are for the optional reading hours, reading circles, and extracurricular activities which stimulating reading a lot. Among such Extra-curriculum activities can be mentioned *round tables, thematic conferences*, etc. Of great importance are *Ghidurile învățătorului, Limba română* for the IIIrd and IVth form^{24, 25}. They are used as didactical material (based on textbook) and include more than 130 tasks which contribute to the attitudinal development of the primary school children. Other didactic materials like *Cartea de lectură, Limba română* also stimulates the interest for reading through a range of activities placed at the end of the book. The booklet *Tainele cărții* is an important instrument in the experiment of attitudinal formation of students towards literary production^{26, 27}.

The purpose of teachers is to awaken an interest in reading, and then to motivate reading activity, so that from the exploration the literary text, the student should be able to launch the views, opinions, what is the result of taking an attitude towards literary phenomena. It is appropriate to create certain conditions to ensure qualitative formation and development of student's attitude towards the literary.

Here should be mentioned the dimensions and stages of literary production in the conditions of attitudinal development:

- *initial interest*, which focuses attention on the receiver;
- *durable interest* that insists on further cooperation with the object;
- *intrinsic motivation* that appears with the reading experience;
- *motivated behavior*, centered on the attitudinal dimension;
- *the attitude itself*.

2.5. Research validation

The theoretic model of the development of students' attitude towards the literary is a didactic approach validated by experiment, being useful in planning teaching activities from the perspective of curriculum. The research results may be useful for school teachers as well as to the authors of the curriculum. At the same time, different teaching materials can be made on this very *theoretical model* as to contribute to the development of student's attitude towards optimization of literary works.

The experiment results are presented in Figure 2. Here is seen that the level of attitudinal experiential school students has grown considerably in relation to the attitudinal formation of pupils-witness.

This fact confirms the validity of the research hypothesis and the efficiency of the methodology of development of students' attitude towards the literary production. The results presented in Figure 2 shows a decrease the reproductive responses in proportion 85%: 10% (experimental class) which represents a visible trend of expressing the attitude

²⁴ Tatiana Niculcea, Mariana Marin. (*Limba română. Clasa a III-a. Carte de lectură*. Cartier, 2007)

²⁵ Mariana Marin, Tatiana Niculcea. (*Limba română. Clasa a IV-a. Carte de lectură*. Cartier, 2008.)

²⁶ Mariana Marin. (*Eu și cartea. Agenda de lectură și creație. Clasa I și a II-a. Chișinău, Lyceum, 2010*)

²⁷ Mariana Marin. (*Tainele cărții. Agendă de lectură și creație, clasele a III-a și a IV-a. Chișinău, Cartier, 2010.*)

of students towards literary and scientific. In the experimental process 85% of the responses and arguments in fourth grade matched the reproductive level, 15%-the productive and 0%-the creative level. At the final stage of the formative experiment (control stage).

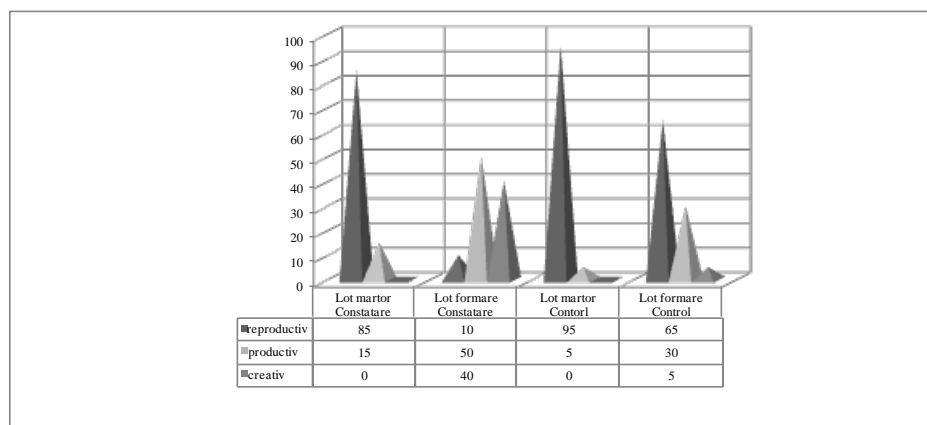


Figure 2. Contrastive aspects of experimental values of argumentation of post reading impressions

Thanks to the application of theoretical model developed by us, only 10% of pupils' responses matched the reproductive level, 50%-productive level and 40%-of the creative. The students gave creative and productive answers thanks to the overcoming of the cognitive barriers (knowledge gaps, lacunae,) as well as emotive barriers (fear of failure, fear of mistakes, shyness, etc).The creative answers prove the value of work. You can talk about modeling through highlighting traits of character. The original expression appears. The students can express the attitude towards a character "I'm delighted, I drew my attention on, I ask myself a question, I was amused, I enjoy the fact etc."

The implementation of activities in the pre-university education, theoretical and practical seminars for teachers is also an experimental research innovation.

3. Results

Based on the theoretical and applicable approach of the mechanism of development of student's attitude towards the literary production it has been proved that the problem itself depends on the valuation of artistic-aesthetic principles, literary and literary-artistic education that ensures the freedom of imagination and personal opinion- students' priority as receptors of artistic text. It stimulates cognitive interest towards the reading, updates life experience. Thus is created a context where the formation role of literary production is done through teaching strategies common to a particular system. It was also found that literary production generates attitudes, the idea being fully justified by the principles of literary and artistic education. The results of the research have demonstrated the qualitative impact on practical approaches which calls to the need of the implementation of some teaching strategies and forms of organization of teaching activities in pre-university education in order to develop students ' attitude towards the literary production.

4. Discussions

In agreement with the results obtained in the process of the investigation, we recommend the following: to implement the *theoretical Model of development of student's attitude towards the literary production* not only at the lesson-while working with a literary text, but also within extra-curricular activities, ensuring continuity at all levels of education (primary, secondary). Another idea in order to offer the development of student's attitude towards the literary production consists in including in school textbooks, guides for teachers of a range of activities that target the attitudinal component.

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PASS THROUGH EXAMPLES OF INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN - I

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Abstract

The paper presents different kind of examples for instructional design, applied into the learning process without the intention to be exhaustive or to promote a hierarchy.

Keywords: *Instructional Design, ADDIE model, ARCS model, ASSURE model*

Instructional Design (ID) is concerned with factors that influence how well a person will be able to acquire, recall, and use new knowledge and skills. These are the factors that together with effort, the outcome of motivation, have a direct influence on the quantity and quality of a person’s performance in learning.

From other point of view we can find different kind of expressions for **Instructional design** (also called **Instructional Systems Design**) such as:

- a. is a technology for the development of learning experiences and environments which promote the acquisition of specific knowledge and skill by students.
- b. is a technology which incorporates known and verified learning strategies into instructional experiences which make the acquisition of knowledge and skill more efficient, effective, and appealing;
- c. is the process by which instruction is improved through the analysis of learning needs and systematic development of learning materials

On the other hand, ID is a process followed by the teachers/professors for predicting, describing and realising, in a rationale and motivating way, the curriculum for the students for accomplish the learning outcomes.

With a view of conducting learning activities by the teachers/professors we can present a list of instructional design examples which provide some milestones to organise and structure the process of creating learning situations, for benefit of the students which gain learning experiences. These examples can be used by all the educators which want to approach to the art of science of education.

Examples provide guidelines and frameworks to organize and structure the process of creating instructional activities and can be followed or not, choose or not, depending of each educator who wants to design learning processes.

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Below are dotted examples of ID considered accepted by the vast majority of educators:

- ADDIE
- ALGO-HEURISTIC THEORY
- ARCS
- ASSURE
- BACKWARD DESIGN
- COGNITIVE APPRENTICESHIP
- CONDITION OF LEARNING (R. GAGNÉ)
- CRITERION REFERENCED INSTRUCTION (R. MAGER)
- DICK & CAREY
- DISCOVERY LEARNING
- ELABORATION THEORY
- EMPATHIC INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN
- GOAL-BASED SCENARIOS
- INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS DESIGN
- INTEGRATIVE LEARNING DESIGN FRAMEWORK
- ITERATIVE DESIGN: RAPID PROTOTYPING AND SPIRAL MODEL
- KEMP DESIGN MODEL
- ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS MODEL

In this part we will briefly present some of the mentioned ID models as follows:

ADDIE Model

Consisting of five phases: *Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation and Evaluation*, this model represent a dynamic and flexible guideline for building effective training situations.

In the **analysis phase**, instructional problem is clarified, *the instructional goals and objectives are established and the learning environment and learner's existing knowledge and skills are identified*. Some of the questions that could be raised during the analysis phase are as follow:

- Who is the audience and their characteristics?
- Identify the new behavioral outcome?
- What types of learning constraints exist?
- What are the delivery options?
- What are the online pedagogical considerations?
- What is the timeline for project completion?

The **design phase** deals with *learning objectives, assessment instruments, exercises, content, subject matter analysis, lesson planning and media selection*. The design phase should be systematic and specific. Systematic means a logical, orderly method of identifying, developing and evaluating a set of planned strategies targeted for attaining the

project's goals. Specific means each element of the instructional design plan needs to be executed with attention to details. The steps used for the design phase:

- Documentation of the project's instructional, visual and technical design strategy
- Apply instructional strategies according to the intended behavioral outcomes by domain (cognitive, affective, psychomotor)
 - Create storyboards
 - Design the user interface and user experience
 - Prototype creation
 - Apply visual design (graphic design)

The **development phase** is where *the developers create and assemble the content assets that were created in the design phase. Programmers work to develop and/or integrate technologies. Testers perform debugging procedures.* The project is reviewed and revised according to any feedback given.

During the **implementation phase**, a procedure for training the facilitators and the learners is developed. *The facilitators' training should cover the course curriculum, learning outcomes, method of delivery, and testing procedures.* Preparation of the learners include training them on new tools (software or hardware), student registration. This is also the phase where the project manager ensures that the books, hands on equipment, tools, CD-ROMs and software are in place, and that the learning application or Web site is functional.

The **evaluation phase** consists of two parts: formative and summative. *Formative evaluation* is present in each stage of the ADDIE process. *Summative evaluation* consists of tests designed for domain specific criterion-related referenced items and providing opportunities for feedback from the users.

ARCS Model

The ARCS model (created by J. Keller, 1983) – *Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction* - is an instructional design approach that focuses on the motivational aspects of learning environment having **two major parts**:

- **The first** is a set of categories representing the *four components of motivation: arousing interest, creating relevance, developing an expectancy of success, and producing satisfaction through intrinsic/extrinsic rewards.*
- **The second** part of the model is a *process that assists instructional designers in creating appropriate motivational elements for the intended learners.*

ARCS categories are following:

Attention		Relevance	Confidence	Satisfaction
Arousing interest	Perceptual	Goal orientation	Learning requirements	Intrinsic reinforcement
	Inquiry	Motive matching	Success opportunities	Extrinsic rewards
	Variability	Familiarity	Personal control	Equity

ity			
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The ARCS motivational design process is a systematic problem solving approach that requires knowledge of human motivation and progresses from learner analysis to solution design and includes:

- Knowing and identifying the elements of human motivation,
- Analyzing audience characteristics to determine motivational requirements,
- Identifying characteristics of instructional materials and processes that stimulate motivation,
- Selecting appropriate motivational tactics, and
- Applying and evaluating appropriate tactics.

Thus, motivational design includes a systematic process that contains these steps and results in the preparation of learning environments that contain tactics, or activities, that have a predictable influence on the amount and direction of a person's behavior. Motivation consists of the amount of effort a person is willing to exert in pursuit of a goal; hence, motivation has magnitude and direction. Consequently, motivational design is concerned with connecting instruction to the goals of learners, providing stimulation and appropriate levels of challenge, and influencing how the learners will feel following successful goal accomplishment, or even following failure.

ASSURE Model

The ASSURE (Heinch, Molenda, Russell, Smaldino (1996)) model incorporates Robert Gagne's events of instruction and emphasizes:

- Teaching to students with different learning styles and
- Constructivist learning where students are required to interact with their environment and not passively receive information

The ASSURE model is helpful for designing courses using different kinds of media. This model assumes that instruction will not be delivered using lecture/text book only. It allows for the possibility of incorporating out-of-class resources and technology into the course materials. This model is especially helpful for instructors designing online courses.

The acronym ASSURE means:

A — *Analyze learners*

- General character
- Specific entry competencies
- Learning Style

„First, ASSURE starts with looking at the learner in detail. Nothing we plan or design is effective, unless we have taken the time to look at the learners. Teachers must assess their students' knowledge and skills prior to instruction to ensure that they differentiate instruction. That means that by understanding where the learners are at the start of instruction, a teacher will make every effort to assist all learners to be successful in their learning endeavors.” (S.Smaldino, 2008)

S — *State standards & objectives*

- Learning outcomes
 - Conditions of performance
 - Degree of acceptable performance
- S** — *Select strategies, technology, media & materials*
- Select available materials
 - Modify existing materials
 - Design new materials

The educational developers should to „know the intended outcomes or expectations. No instruction should begin without everyone having a clear understanding of what is supposed to happen in the instruction. This does not preclude the possibility of additional learning taking place, but without a road map, some of your learners may well be "lost." Learners need to know what they are to do” and we „cannot assess learning without knowing what was expected.” (S.Smaldino, 2008)

U — *Utilize technology, media & materials*

- Preview the materials
 - Prepare the materials, environment
 - Provide the learning experience
- R** — *Require learner participation*
- In-class and follow-up activities so learner can process the information
- E** — *Evaluate & revise*
- Before, during and after instruction
 - Assess learner, media methods

„Once we have completed the design and instruction and gathered the data about the outcomes and impressions from our learners, we need to take the time to consider what went well and what could be changed in that particular instructional event. This information will help us re-design that instructional event for future opportunities. But, this information also guides we on how to better address our learners in instruction beyond this particular instructional event.” (S.Smaldino, 2008)

The ASSURE model is an ISD (Instructional Systems Design) process that was modified to be used by teachers in the regular classroom. The ISD process is one in which teachers and trainers can use to design and develop the most appropriate learning environment for their students. We can use this process in writing our lesson plans and in improving teaching and learning.

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EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL AND CULTURAL PLURALISM IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract: *The term ‘underachievement’ is widespread in modern educational discourse, invoked most frequently in relation to a perceived failure to reach ‘potential’. In this paper, it is suggested that such terms, though widely used, are highly problematic, masking ideological assumptions which concern socially constructed, culturally sensitive, subjective, and relative matters. In fact, underachievement is most often used to mean low academic attainment and the paper argues that this is already better understood in terms of well-known factors such as prior attainment, socioeconomic disadvantage, and systemic biases.*

Keywords: *education, pluralism, culture, discourse*

Introduction

The issue of educational ‘underachievement’ is one which seems to recur as a crisis every so often in public discourse. Quite apart from these more spectacular eruptions of media or political concern, ‘underachievement’ has, in fact, been described as the ‘predominant discourse’ in education in recent times. Whitmore (1980) argues that it was the post-Sputnik self-excoriation that transfixed American society in the late 1950s which first brought the term to prominence. The shock of Soviet technological superiority had a significant impact on education in the USA, most notably through Rockefeller Brothers (1958) and Gardner (1961), and through reactive initiatives such as the 1959 Woods Hole Conference from which came the seminal work of Bruner (1960). That is not to suggest that the notion of ‘underachievement’ was previously unknown.

One can easily see how such a concept should have been of particular interest to the post-Sputnik soul-searching. Gardner (1961, p.137) refers to the impression of a general failure to make the most of young Americans’ potential as ‘waste on a massive scale’ and called for a major rethink about public education. The implications seemed to be clear: the USA could not maintain its position of global pre-eminence if so many of its population failed to reach their ‘potential’. This ‘crisis narrative’ of underachievement in the USA has recurred since: *A Nation at Risk* in the early 1980s, *Years of Promise* in the mid-90s, and *No Child Left Behind* at the start of the new century can be seen as variations on this theme.

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Although the position of the gifted underachiever remains an educational topic of some interest, underachievement has been examined lately more in relation to other factors such as social class, gender, and ethnicity. For example, a recent white paper in England (DfES, 2005, p.58), in picking out several groups whose schooling outcomes are deemed to be problematic, commits the government ‘to target underachievement of young black people; and focus on driving up the attainment of Muslim pupils’. Similar concern is expressed at the ‘underperformance in Gypsy and Traveller communities’ and at the fact that ‘many white working class boys can also fail to fulfil their potential’. Recent research has also focused on quite specific groups identified as, or at risk of, ‘underachieving’: a typical example is Datar and Sturm (2006) who looked at gender, age, and obesity as factors in ‘underachievement’ in US elementary schools.

While ‘underachievement’ can be used in a variety of ways, it is common in educational discourse for this to be related to the concept of ‘potential’. Underachievement thus means a failure to achieve potential, particularly in terms of specific educational outcomes. It is the position of this paper that there remain many conceptual problems with the notions of ‘potential’ and ‘underachievement’ and these can be summarized in three key ways: firstly, that identifying the criteria for achievement and potential is an immensely complex and contested field; that, consequently, identifying underachievement or failure to reach potential is similarly problematic; and thirdly, that judgments made about potential and achievement are socially constructed and thus need to be applied with due attention to cultural norms, difference, and pluralism.

Despite these problems, educational discourse continues to make use of such terminology with a combination of ubiquity and confidence. A Google search for ‘education + potential’, for example, will generate no fewer than 90 million hits. Typical of the pre-eminence of the concept is the logo of England’s Department for Education and Skills (since superseded by the Department of Children, Schools and Families) – ‘Creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence’ – all of which would present considerable challenges to define, far less measure.

Foucauldian critique

The approach employed in this paper to a critique of the discourse of underachievement is one related to the work of Michel Foucault (1926-1984). Foucault (1991, p.50) points to his critique as a ‘permanent’ attitude of questioning the given and testing the ‘limits of the necessary’. His method of archaeology is to examine and unpick discourse at a particular period and in a particular field of humanity, in such a way as to uncover its presuppositions. This is done by probing *énoncés* – serious statements – which can be found most readily in texts. Foucault’s discourse analysis thus tests discursive practices and hopes to point to tensions and contradictions which render the discourse problematic (Jäger, 2001). His second - genealogical - method probes discourse in terms of its relationship to power structures, tracing its descent and emergence in the context of history.

Foucauldian methods would involve subjecting the discourse of ‘underachievement’ to an analysis which both probed the assumptions inherent in the ‘system of thought’ upon which

it rests, and seek to trace its emergence in terms of the practices which have given it birth. This would also examine the way in which ‘underachievement’ has been problematized, how the ‘difficulty’ has come to be formulated, how its 4 4 framing has served to constitute the subject in a particular way.

This paper, however, is necessarily narrower in scope, seeking rather to critique terminology – in this case, educational ‘potential’ and ‘underachievement’ – in a more limited way, to render it questionable and dubious, to make its continued use the subject of debate and contention, but also, where appropriate, to suggest that the way the issue has been problematized rests on certain assumptions and ways of thinking. Foucault’s approach to critique is ostensibly non-utopian and non-idealistic (Olssen, 2006). In other words, he presents no ‘better alternative’, has no normative object to whose end the critique is directed: ‘Critique doesn’t have to... lay down the law... It is a challenge directed to what is’ (Foucault, 2002)

One central issue which needs to be tackled is to attempt to distinguish between achievement and attainment. This is important because in many cases the two seem to be conflated. At a simple level one could differentiate the two by limiting attainment, as is often done, to level of academic performance, often expressed in quantifiable terms. In many cases low attainment is what is actually meant by underachievement. The concept of ‘boys’ underachievement’, for example, is generally evidenced by reference to academic performance (attainment scores) in one, some, or all school subject disciplines (Carrington & McPhee, 2008). Similarly, concerns about ‘working class underachievement’ are based on evidence of attainment in national examinations (Gazeley & Dunne, 2007). What is in question here, therefore, is actually attainment, the interpretation of these cases being that a higher level of *attainment* should have been reached by the groups in question.

Achievement is a much broader concept than attainment. Recent Scottish Government developments in education have highlighted this very point in that attempts are now being made, allied to a revised school curriculum, to try to broaden the scope of assessment beyond academic/scholastic attainment to encompass a broader range of students’ experiences and performance (Scottish Executive, 2004; 2006, p.17–18). The need to understand ‘achievement’ in a broader sense, in terms of the whole person and the full breadth of their lives, is evident when one considers data beyond raw attainment scores. Is underachievement an appropriate label for a student who scores lowly in academic tests but is the main care at home; for the student who struggles with academic demands but who is a keen and committed musician or sportsperson; for the student who seems uninterested in scholastic targets but who is a community or political activist; for the student whose school attendance is patchy, and whose coursework is incomplete, but who is a loving and supportive parent?

Achievement in this broader, holistic sense, therefore, is something which transcends schooling and would appear to be both beyond the remit of, and the ability of, school staff to evaluate. Under-attainment would appear to be the issue which is really in question most of the time when ‘underachievement’ is referred to. It almost always relates to exam results of some sort.

Underachievement, on the other hand, really relates to something far more profound. The quotation from Mill as this paper's epigraph is a classic example of the clash of values which faces anyone attempting to define such a key socio-cultural term: on what grounds are the lives of Socrates and the fool to be compared, and why, and what notions of, and criteria for, 'satisfaction' are to apply, and why? The example of George Best also, though facetious, is illuminating. He is often referred to as a footballer who 'underachieved' in a spectacular way and yet, as his provocative quote shows; a different perspective produces a very different evaluation. The concept of underachievement clearly depends on one's definition and understanding of achievement, on one's views on life, and it is by no means transparent that one person's values and criteria are better than another's. This essentially personal, cultural issue is one which will be revisited.

Such a commitment to 'potential' invites us into an ideological view of human development, a concept for which there are no objective criteria and so a term over which there will be little prospect of consensus or agreement. What would 'fullest potential' involve: access to a high-paying job; access to a personally rewarding job; happiness; a sense of fulfillment; educational success at doctoral level or beyond; a rich and satisfying personal and social life; a developing role in one's culture; religious commitment and spiritual contentment; the procreation and nurturing of children in a loving environment? The list is – potentially – endless, the means of measurement unclear, and the process undermined by necessarily subjective relativism.

How does one tell if one has fulfilled one's potential? Potential *for* what, or *as* what? If it is considered, say, in terms of employment potential, then there are various value-laden assumptions which will guide evaluation. For example, is there a hierarchical distinction to be made between manual and professional occupations, and, if so, on what grounds other than cultural preference? Is there a hierarchical distinction to be made on grounds of pay? Is there a hierarchical distinction to be made on grounds of the promoted nature of one's post? Is an unpromoted person always to be seen as having fulfilled less of their potential than a promoted person? Even as few and as simple questions as these alert us to the extreme difficulty of using 'potential' in any useful way.

Redefining 'underachievement': differential attainment

Underachievement is a term, as has been argued, which requires some refinement and a better term for the concept as it is used in education today would be under-attainment. What is meant by underachievement most often refers to academic performance in public examinations, processes which are susceptible of quantitative analysis. 'Achievement' is a much more subjective term, dependent, as has been noted, on profound issues of values, culture, and lifestyle choices. To accuse, or label, someone as 'underachieving' seems to be a subjective value-judgment, monologists, and grossly presumptuous thing.

However, 'under-attainment' is itself value-laden as there must be implicit, understood criteria of some sort against which the person and/or their performance is being measured.

To be rid of this, we need to use the term ‘differential attainment’ which merely seeks to describe the factual position of some students attaining x while others attain y and so on. What the underachievement concept seeks to suggest, therefore, is that such differential attainment can, in some way, in certain circumstances and for certain students, be seen as out of line with a ‘true’ level of ability or performance, that the level attained does not meet expectations. Plewis (1991) makes a helpful, general distinction in this regard (still focused on attainment scores, however) between this psychological understanding (where a student is deemed to have fallen short in an ipsative sense) and a sociological understanding where a certain group in society is said to ‘underachieve’ when its mean score on an educational test is less than the mean of some other (control) group. This then is a relative sense as opposed to an ipsative sense. Examples of this have been already noted above in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, and many other factors. Gorard and Smith (2004), in a study to be considered later, detail and criticise the ways in which such claims of relative underachievement are made at international, national, group, school and individual levels.

Ford (1996, p.54) identifies one of the key problems: ‘underachievement is a multidimensional construct that cannot be assessed with unidimensional instruments’. Certainly it is counter-intuitive at the very least to suggest that some form of IQ test is going to provide global predictors for performance across the full range of curriculum subject areas. This seems to be a particular issue in the very complex area of ‘gifted underachievement’ where inadequate IQ models are used as the basis for the claims of underachievement being made. Sternberg’s triarchic model (1985) – involving contextual, experiential, and componential elements - provides a much richer picture of intelligence and its use would make it harder for underachievement to be claimed as it specifically involves the practical and the social in its range. In other words, intelligence is seen to involve the performative and not simply the logical and the mathematical and these matches much better the nature of attainment which is displayed in the performative – in sitting tests, for example. Similarly, Gardner (1983) has exposed the inadequacies of the old IQ model of intelligence. Concern with this problem of matching somehow perceived ‘ability’ with assessed ‘performance’ has been dubbed the ‘assessment conundrum’ (Lazear, 2004) and there does not seem to be any ready solution.

Despite these problems inherent in the dominant conception of psychological underachievement, it remains hugely influential and used with remarkable confidence. For example, many have pointed out that *overachievement* must also be a phenomenon in that some students must outperform their predicted levels of attainment. Yet this is rejected forthrightly by many in the field: ‘Overachievement - Performance that exceeds ability. Because this is not possible, overachievement does not exist’ (Nordby, 1997-2004). The position gets murkier, however, when one reads things like this: ‘Overachievement is within the reach of every man, woman, and child... I want to show you how overachievement really happens and arm you to get there yourself - free of the psychological hocus pocus (sic) - to become, at last, the consistent overachiever you always knew you could be’ (Eliot, 2004). Fortunately, this outlook remains very much on the more exuberant fringes of performance psychology.

Differential attainment - group

One way to avoid being drawn into the assessment conundrum is to do what many sociological analysts have done, as was recognized above, which is to address themselves to the *post facto* reality that there is differential academic attainment and that these differences are not spread evenly throughout society's various perceived groupings, which suggests that there is an inequality at work which is not simply a feature of human variance. This would not suit the case of 'gifted underachievers' as their reputed 'giftedness' relies on some (psychological) tests, the results of which are then measured against academic attainment. Recent work by Gorard and Smith (2004), Smith (2003), and Gorard (1999, 2000a, 2000b) have all cast serious doubt on the 'underachievement' narrative. At the international level, the difficulty of comparing attainment scores and thus declaring one country as 'underachieving' relative to another is highly significant. The problems raised 'include the comparability of different assessments, the comparability of the same assessments over time, using examinations as indicators of performance at all, the different curricula in different countries, the different standards of record-keeping in different countries and the competitiveness (especially) of developing countries' (Gorard & Smith, 2004, p.208). They argue, therefore, that small differences in such an unreliable measure render any claims made on their basis as dubious. Similarly, in terms of the so-called gender gap, they argue that once other key factors, such as home background, are attended to, 'a simple gendered explanation of achievement does not work' (p.212). They also argue that differential attainment by ethnic group, region, or sexes is largely accounted for by these same factors and the nature of the assessment system (G., Kelemen, 2013, p.132). The same story emerges with schools: 'once levels of poverty, and other background factors, are taken in to account in regression equations then there is no evidence that any type of school performs any better than any other... the overwhelming majority of variance in school results is predicted by the nature (or prior attainment) of the intake' (p.216). In other words, claims of underachievement really refer to low attainment largely accounted for by socioeconomic factors, the nature of the assessment system, and low prior attainment. A different question may legitimately be asked, if this low attainment seems unevenly spread amongst social groups, as to why certain groups should be particularly affected by these determining factors. In no way, however, could they be said to be 'underachieving' in terms of *these tests in these circumstances*. What it would mean, and require, is a change in all of these implicated factors.

Cultural dominance

As has been already noted, notions of, and judgments about, achievement, underachievement, and potential are socially constructed. These social constructions will vary internationally, nationally, regionally, from cultural group to cultural group, from ethnic group to ethnic group, from religion to religion, from community to community, from family to family, from person to person, and even intrapersonal over time. What one views as achievement as an adolescent, one's view of one's potential, one's notional view of fulfillment and happiness, will not necessarily be the same a few years later, a decade later, and beyond. There can be no fixed standards to apply.

The dominant discourse in society at any time will shape its values and beliefs, reflected in policy, and, ultimately in the education system and its goals. These will probably suit a majority of the population, or in Foucauldian terms, they will have 14 14 been assimilated as 'givens' according to the prevailing *episteme* (Foucault, 2002c, p.211). They will map

out for society both the ends of education and the elements of the system and its operations which are to be given particular value and importance. This creates tensions, especially for groups who do not share this dominant ideology. Meighan and Harber (2007, p.434) itemize the ways in which unquestioned assumptions, emanating from a particular, dominant cultural perspective, will determine the nature of educational provision and its purposes and priorities, a provision which may well run contrary to other, legitimate ideologies and belief systems. Boyd and Bee (2006, p.251) point out a particular case of this where the dominant individualistic social paradigm clashes with those groups who adhere to more collectivist cultural views. As a result, notions of personal achievement, of attainment, of potential will differ considerably, but if there is a monologist view presented in official discourse then, clearly, such social groups and the individuals within them will be seen to ‘underachieve’.

Jeffcoate (1984, p.73) bemoans the fact that even where the idea of equality of opportunity has been addressed in liberal society it has been ‘perverted into a preoccupation with the academic destinies of an intellectual elite’, and there is considerable literature on the way in which measuring achievement has retreated into this narrow focus on academic attainment. Indeed, it is odd to make such an issue of underachievement within a system which is specifically geared to differentiate and separate, to select and reject, to reward and promote, on the grounds of attainment. Were there not low attainment, the system would be abandoned as failing to produce the results for which it was designed (Gorard & Smith, 2004). To justify itself, the system specifically requires creating and identifying low attainers.

This clash of cultures is made all the more intractable when the system is seen to operate according to the rules and mores of one specific cultural group. In Britain, in the USA, in Australia, and across the world, are countless examples of minority or marginalised groups who have faced, been immersed in, and judged by, educational systems at best ignorant of, and at worst inimical to, their way of life, their values, and their perspectives. The issue of class is well known in this respect: it is often argued that the system in the UK, at least, reflects middle class values and priorities, middle class constructions of knowledge and worth, and so renders it extremely difficult for 15 15 working class learners to succeed, and certainly difficult to succeed without abandoning their class roots (Reay, 2001). As Jeffcoate (1984, p.46) suggests, the principal issue may be that, by accident or design, the education system creates, for the working-class and the marginalised, a situation whereby they face, and are disadvantaged by, ‘a discontinuity between the values of home... and the values of school

This normalizing tendency can be seen in one example in Scotland where a universal, Anglophone, monoglot system, reflecting in the main Lowland, middle class, urban values came to suppress Gaelic culture, the language and way of life, almost to the point of extinction despite its (largely) well-intentioned aim of social ‘improvement’ and individual opportunity. Hutchinson (2006), for example, quotes the 1973 views of the Raasay crofter, Calum MacLeod, highly critical of an education system, designed in the ‘best interests’ of its users, but which threatens their very way of life:

The tyrannous system of centralised education... compels every pupil on attaining $\frac{22}{22}$ years of age to leave home and be boarded elsewhere for the rest of their education – about $\frac{22}{22}$ years. The result is that homes in rural areas are systematically emptied and, in fact, all rural areas and especially the islands reduced to a skeleton of aging population while villages and towns are crammed by youngsters outwith parental supervision and growing up urbanised to such an extent that they become practically alien to home environments or participating in agriculture or fishing. In fact, industrial or manual work is frowned on.

MacLeod goes on to compare the architects of this centralised education system as having the same effects as those of the Highland Clearances ‘harassing and driving their less fortunate fellow-countrymen out of their homes’ (p.109). Indeed, he claims the outcomes to have been worse: ‘This demonic system of education caused far more devastation on Raasay (so far as depopulation is concerned)... for now the young were taught and trained in city style, alienated from rural life and swept off the island in the name of progress’ (MacLeod, 2007, p.47). In terms of the dominant 16 16 educational discourses, continuing in thecrofting tradition would be seen as ‘underachievement’.

Thus, we can see far greater and more serious issues of cultural difference than that represented rather flippantly by the case of George Best. What is deemed achievement, what is viewed as potential, is culturally relative and even where the concept is narrowed to attainment, the value put on academic attainment, the value put on scholastic performance, is very much open to cultural interpretation.

In a world still beset by wars, by famine, by poverty, by gross inequalities, by religious and ethnic divisions, it would take either a very bold, or a very blinkered, person to claim to be able to establish any fixed conception of achievement or potential, a conception which was both culturally and globally sensitive.

Conclusion

The concept of ‘underachievement’, thus, can be seen to be far from the rather simple issue presented so often in modern educational and political discourse. It is centred on the issue of academic attainment, and at the personal level remains highly problematic, given the difficulties in predicting and defining individual academic potential. At group level, the issue of differential attainment can largely be accounted for by the well-known educational predictors of socioeconomic disadvantage, prior attainment, assessment instrument bias, and structural or institutional issues.

In broader terms, the use of words such as ‘potential’ and ‘achievement’ enters highly charged areas of ideology, religious and cultural difference, and lifestyle choices. It does not seem appropriate for educationalists to be making judgements in those terms about any fellow human beings.

The issue of differential and low attainment is hugely important in a democratic society. But many of the likely solutions are already well known, involving fairer assessment systems, socioeconomic change, and culturally sensitive educational provision in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.^{17 17} From a Foucauldian perspective, perhaps a

more important issue may be to challenge the dominant paradigm which identifies academic certification as the prime individual and institutional goal of schooling. In this sense it is both individualising and totalising (Foucault, 2002d): each person is interpellated to construct an identity as a self-actualising individual, acquiring the personal academic credits which further that identity, within an overall system which promotes the idea that without such credits only an impoverished, diminished, and incomplete personal future is in prospect; it is totalising as such a universal system of educational assessment creates a manageable totality of so categorized individuals – educated/certificated ‘subjects’. The person without evidence of academic attainment becomes just that – no longer able to be defined except in the negative, as the person ‘without qualifications’, as the person ‘not in education, employment, or training’, as the person without prospects.

Tomlinson (2008) argues that the discourse promotes a one-dimensional view of schooling, contending that the narrow promise of success associated with exam results entices parents and students to embrace this unequal chase for educational credentials and certification and, by so doing, to subject themselves to ‘permanent oppressive educational competition’ (p.64). Paradoxically, such a concept depends on low attainment for its continuation: if there were not low attainment, the promise of individual success for the few would vanish. ‘Underachievement’, the attainment gap, far from being problems for such a system, are features which give it strength.

A consequence, therefore, may be that questioning how the concept of ‘underachievement’ has been problematized, questioning the discourse in terms of its goals for schooling, questioning what it purports to measure and what it purports to reward, is the key task if a more rounded, a more complete, a more enriched, and a fairer view of human achievement, human aspiration, and potential is to flourish. The move within the Scottish school system towards recognising broader achievement beyond academic attainment, while welcome, must also be probed to ensure that this does not have the related result that more and more claims of ‘underachievement’ simply come to be made as more and more elements of children’s and young people’s lives are opened to evaluation of this sort.

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THE REGGIO EMILIA METHOD, A MODERN APPROACH OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract

The concerns of pedagogues over the years focus on an effective training of children to face social life, to cope properly with the challenges of the world they will live in and carry out their activity, starting with the preschool period, then school age etc. Several researchers have dedicated their lives to discover the most effective and proper methods of education and training. One of these researchers was Reggio Emilia and in this article we will highlight the strong points of this method in order to educate properly children of young age.

Key words: high scope, environment, efficiency, the 3rd teachers

Introduction

The Reggio Emilia method stands for a philosophy that approaches preschool pedagogy, namely preschool and early school children`s education in a different manner, where community and environment play an important role in child education. This methods joins child education, child well-being, children`s fundamental rights with the support given to families. But where does this method come from? After the World War II when the whole society was suffering, in a small Italian town, called Reggio Emilia, the community led by Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994), teacher, philosopher and poet, set the basis of an association that would support children. They built schools with their bare hands and set the bases of a new philosophy on child education where community would play an important role. The Reggio Emilia Method is centred on the community and its culture but a fact worth mentioning is that its ideas are based on preschool education principles developed by researchers like John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, David Hawkins, Jerome Bruner, Howard Gardner.

Over time, Reggio Emilia approach developed and came to be known throughout the world as a viable method with high formative qualities for children. Thus, in 1994 a non-profit organization was founded, called *Friends of Reggio Children International Association*³¹ aiming at continuing Loris Malaguzzi ideas. At the annual conference *National Association for the Education of Young Children*, in Chicago, the USA, *North American Reggio Emilia Alliance*(NAREA)³² was founded, aiming at: “*Education and*

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³¹ <http://zerosei.comune.re.it/inter/amici.htm>

³² <http://www.reggioalliance.org/>

research to improve the lives of people and communities, in Reggio Emilia and in the world.³³

2. LorisMalagutti philosophy

In his philosophy, Loris Malaguzzi started from the belief that a child`s education should start from the idea that each child is curious and creative. The child is not an individual with an empty memory that waits to be filled up with facts, data, figures and information. According to Reggio Emilia Method, the curriculum for early education and young schooling should be flexible and focused on child`s needs. The curriculum design should be centred on child`s needs and should be adjustable. The Reggio Emilia Method has as main objective the development in each child`s consciousness the desire to learn and explore reality throughout his life.

3. Principles of Reggio Emilia method

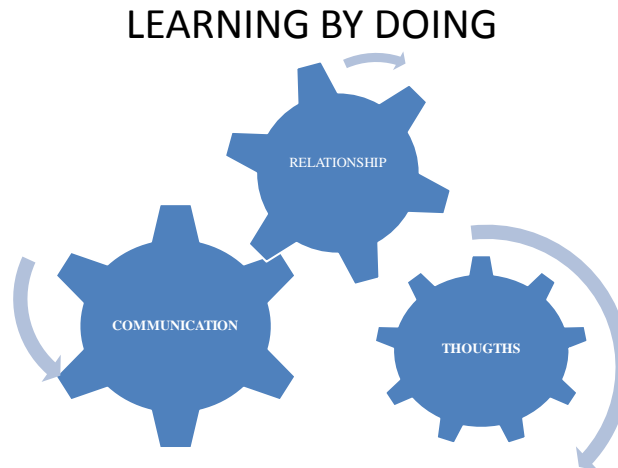
The Reggio Emilia Method promotes the community`s involvement in child`s education. In some respects this method has similarities with Montessori and Waldorf alternatives. For many parents, the moment the child starts school, preschool or primary school is an important but also concerning moment. Family will move to the second place while education will be taken over by an educational institution. This fact brings about a lower involvement of family in child`s education, a separation within which different responsibilities are passed on from the family members to the pre/school institution. Hence the idea of community involvement to improve conditions for educating children.

Reggio Emilia school has a leader that informs the local council about all school`s problems and objectives. All members of the teaching staff lead the educational act according to the children`s interests which are carefully considered through different methods. In order to achieve this desideratum, there are two teachers in each classroom who complement each other in everything that education means: care, supervision and work with children. There is also a trained art teacher (at least two art branches) that is responsible for a workshop. In a workshop, children find many and different materials from those found in nature to the ones in the media. They are free to make experiments with them, to use them as they want to because their aim is to develop the child`s creativity and imagination. The teachers, the workshop responsible and all teaching staff are a team that works together for the child`s benefit. The main orientations of Reggio Emilia Method are:

- child centred education;
- the need to prepare children for a free and democratic life;
- social responsibility towards the uniqueness of each child and openness towards his educational needs;
- emphasize the importance of triple relation: family, school, community;
- stimulation of communication and interrelating;
- progressive thinking;
- openness for research and experimenting performed by dedicated teachers;

³³<http://reggiochildrenfoundation.org/>

- workshop activities;
- the need to maintain a real and mutual collaboration between school and community;
- stress on metacognition;
- conscious learning based on acceptance of the need to improve performance.



Reggio Emilia Method places great emphasis on the child's ability to recognize his/her formation, by developing innate potential and by revaluing the child's aspirations. The child is not an empty entity that waits for the educational factors to fill in that hole, the child is a personality in development, with interests, aspirations and a certain, non-recurring individuality, capable of following his own path in life, if helped by parents, teachers and society. In order for the child to achieve something, it is necessary to put an emphasis on child's communication and socializing abilities, to show affectionate care and to build confidence in their own forces.

VISION ON GAMES



Parents, school and community must create an educational environment where the child has the opportunity to communicate and relate to other children. They should create an environment that develops the communication and relating abilities, where s/he feels free but at the same time protected and loved, stimulated to explore and learn.

The three educational factors: parents, school and community collaborate and take part in children`s education. Parents are actively involved in the life of the educational institution and participate in everything that means improvement and development of a proper educational environment. Therefore, they are encouraged to participate effectively in indoor and outdoor school activities. Family is regarded as a partner not as a consumer; it is part of the school`s educational activity.

The teachers are those who set the contents of learning, the objectives that would be followed and fulfilled and the context in which they will be carried on. The main goal is the child`s benefit and the observance of his interests and fundamental rights.

The educational institution is designed to be an educational environment adapted to the requirement of child education according to his needs for exploration and learning, where special architecture is conceived as functional, challenging and open to exploration and learning. As Reggio Emilia Method lays emphasis on the learning space, it should offer children a feeling of safety and well-being and then be a cognitive stimulus that gives them the opportunity to interrelate, to motivate and develop their desire to explore new learning opportunities. Reggio Emilia Method aims at promoting speech development under a cognitive, symbolic ethical, metaphorical imaginative and relational aspect. The educational environment has to contribute to the promotion of these objectives, therefore we can compare the educational environment to a community in miniature that highlight culture and social ethics, prosocial attitudes and standards promoted by school curricula, as stated by the founder of this method: Loris Malaguzzi: *The environment should act as an aquarium which reflects the ideas, ethics, attitudes and culture of the people who live in it. This is what we are working towards.*³⁴

Children are individuals with different paces of development, with different action and information process paces, with different pace of world understanding, therefore educational factors have to take into consideration these aspects and respect them Adults mostly regard children as their equals in what concerns world understanding and act consequently. They put too much pressure on their shoulders, rushing them all the time, not having patience to listen and guide them, making them grow up too fast.

The Reggio Emilia Method focuses on the community, that is why it is so important that all educational factors: parents and teachers to communicate with children in all possible manners, to contradict each other, to argue and share their emotions through games: to laugh, to cry, to fight. Socializing and communicating in this way, children and parents will develop relations based on mutual trust, where everyone feels safe and not in a strong competition. Children feel good in a warm and harmonic environment. It leads to the development of positive feeling, animated by empathy. The preschool and primary school teachers` role is to give children the opportunity to take part in activities that make them aware of their capacity to acquire new knowledge. Educators must encourage children in being creative, to constantly learn even when facing error, to help them make connections between information, between what they know and want to know.

In each classroom there are two teachers, one of them registering observations on children`s activity and the other one is the partner, the supervisor. The teacher`s role is to coordinate children`s activities, being:

³⁴http://www.reggioemilia.org.nz/pdf/PRINCIPLES_OF_REGGIO_EMILIA_APPROACH_TO_EARLY_CHILDH, p.33, (accessed on 24th April 2013).

- the child`s co-partner in discovering the surrounding world;
- to challenge children to find answers, to solve the problem and to relate friendly;
- to elaborate educational projects starting from the child`s ideas;
- to organize the educational environment in a pleasant and useful manner;
- to lead children towards new explorations and a proper understanding of the surrounding world.

As an important educational factor in a child`s education, the teacher has to follow certain principles regarding child education. S/he will team up with the parents and they will follow the child`s evolution and progress. The teacher will record on sheets, video or audio support the child`s progress, will maintain a close and open relation with the parents, all in the child`s best interest. These documents that will contain observations, recordings discussions, deficiency in knowledge are a basis for the teacher in planning his future educational objectives. The whole teaching staff along with the parents will discuss the educational projects necessary for the children`s proper development and they will decide together their educational path. The teacher will be the link between the institution, family and community. The idea of unity in educational requirements is challenging, this aspect of co-work involves responsibility from all factors.

*The Reggio Emilia Method does not want to set a model, as Millikan stated in 2003: The preschools and infant-toddler centres of Reggio Emilia do not provide a model, but rather the opportunity to reflect on our own educational theories, practices, and methods of organization*³⁵.

It is desirable to be an aspiration for teachers, parents and society in creating a better school for children, an educational environment according to the child`s nature that would follow his best interest and desire to acquire education, a place that would reflect the ideals, beliefs and ethics of the society we live in.

The philosophy of Reggio Emilia Method raises some questions that we need to reflect upon. One concerns the amount of information that we take from this educational philosophy, how we adapt it to the Romanian educational system and how will we be able to apply it. The ideas advocated by Reggio Emilia Method are worth to be followed because they aim at the child`s best interest and progress³⁶:

- it promotes everlasting values of society;
- it promotes the best ideas for education;
- it applies the child`s right to education, like children with special educational needs that have the right to education in any institution they want to;
- it encourages games and team activities;
- teacher and child are viewed as partners in playing and learning;
- learning is not seen as a lineal process but a curl one, as a progressive process where teacher supervises the child`s interests and assures necessary resources for a proper exploration and learning.

³⁵ Ibidem, p.34

[Lella Gandini](#), [Lynn Hill](#), [Louise Cadwell](#), [Charles Schwall](#), *In the Spirit of the Studio: Learning from the Atelier of Reggio Emilia (Early Childhood Education Series)*

It is worth reflecting upon the Reggio Emilia Method that managed to create a real connection, a partnership between pre/school institution, family and community and which asserted the educational environment as the 3rd teacher.

The Reggio Emilia Method is an example on how teachers can involve children in their own formation through creative and motivating activities. Adults and children can learn together in a pleasant and useful manner, where everyone takes part in his/her own pace, using the resources s/he wants to. Children are regarded as members of the community with full rights and are encouraged to think freely and act autonomously.

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CIVILIAN TEACHERS IN A MILITARY ACADEMY. STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE ROLE OF CIVILIAN TEACHING STAFF IN THE LAND FORCES ACADEMY OF SIBIU

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Abstract

This paper presents the results of a study whose aim is to analyze the way in which civilian teachers from the Land Forces Academy of Sibiu are perceived by their students. In a first stage, the students were asked to rate to what extent their civilian teachers contribute to activities that are essential for the academy, listed in a questionnaire consisting of 24 questions. In the second phase of the study the students were asked to make a brief characterization of the civilian teaching staff. The results indicate that the students consider the influence of the civilian teaching staff on the quality of the academic environment in general and on their intellectual training in particular as being positive and significant. They also appreciated the high level of the teaching staff training in the areas of their specializations.

Keywords: *military educational system, civilian teaching staff*

1. Introduction

The military education system is a component of the national educational system and, at the same time, an important component of the Romanian Armed Forces. The *Training Doctrine of the Armed Forces* states that the process of military education primarily aims to the development of the military leader with the specific competences, established by the beneficiary, correlated with the training and the functional responsibilities of the personnel, with the operational needs of the Army and with the requirements of interoperability with the armed forces of NATO member states.

Military education has gone through multiple transformations especially after Romania's integration into NATO. A. Rațiu (2011) highlights a number of factors that acted as sources of pressure towards the transformation of the military education institutions:

- The reform of the Romanian Army in areas such as doctrine, structure, actions, training and education;
- The transformation of the national educational system according to the new paradigm of *education for transformation*;
- The need to ensure the complementarity between military schools;

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- The series of mutations and transformations of human resources in the army as a result of accession of Romania to NATO;

- The need to achieve the compatibility between Romanian military schools and those of other NATO member states in terms of organization, timing, content, purpose, competences, etc.

Roman și Giurcă³⁸ enumerates five key actions designed for integration through education of the Romanian army into NATO structures:

- Documenting Western military educational systems in order to identify patterns and trends of evolution;
- Assessing the current state of Romanian military education system and identifying its potentialities;
- Establishing a philosophy of the system in line with evolution trends and developments in the army and in the global society;
- Identifying pressures for adaptation that are coming towards the military educational system from the military institutions and national and international environment;
- Identifying possible and desirable courses of action for modernization of education in such a way that compatibility with Western systems of training military personnel is ensured

The result has been materialized in designing an educational system corresponding to both present and future interests of the Romanian Army and to requirements for compatibility with the armies of NATO members. The base from which to start in designing this system is represented by the model of the modern officer - the result of judicious combination of elements from its human, social and professional model. Starting from the roles and functions of military actions, this socio-professional model specifies the basic and specific competences which become strategic milestones for the design of the military educational system.

The Land Forces Academy aims at: *“Formation of command officers of all arms/services/military specialties belonging to the Land Forces, as well as for other beneficiaries, licensed in accredited/approved study areas and university specializations, able to access, according to the needs of the army and their own options, the specialization stage, able to take responsibility for specific missions and to exercise, in their close connection, the following roles: military leader, warrior, military specialist, educator, citizen in service of the nation, devoted to supreme values: Homeland, Honor, Duty.”*³⁹

As military higher educational institution, the academy has also assumed the following mission: *” to generate and transfer knowledge by means of.....research, development, innovation and technology transfer, through individual and collective creativity, in science, and exploitation and dissemination of results”*⁴⁰

The duration of studies is 3 years – 6 academic semesters. The academic component of the curriculum includes fundamental and specialized disciplines and provides the basic

³⁸ Nicolae Roman și Florin Giurcă, „Exigențe formative induse de exercitarea profesiei de ofițer în contextul funcțiilor ocupate la baza carierei universitare”, în Ghica-Radu, Grigoraș, C., Florișteanu, E. *Dimensiuni calitative ale curriculum-ului pentru formarea ofițerilor*, Editura Academiei Forțelor Terestre, Sibiu, 2010, p.19-33

³⁹ <http://www.armyacademy.ro/conducere/misiune.htm>

⁴⁰ ibidem

scientific preparation as well as specialized military training. The competencies that are formed are those of a military leader, educator and citizen.

The specialized military training component is carried out in a modular way and aims the training and skills development associated with the hypostasis of fighter/military specialist of the graduates. It consists of general military training targeting skills training and development of combat skills and of military training which form the initial military branch specialist competences.

Therefore, the instructive – educative process in the academy has a dual character generated by the need to design the activities both from a psycho-pedagogical and military point of view. Military training must be combined harmoniously with academic activity in order to prepare the cadets as future officers and to educate them in accordance with the requirements of the beneficiary.

This is the context in which activates, at the present time, the teaching staff of the academy, composed of 25 civilian and 16 military full time teachers.

In a military academy, the military teachers provide role models for the cadets with which they can identify themselves. To this is added their operational experience which enables them to create and present courses and seminars with a high degree of applicability in military contexts. Military teachers are familiar with the problems encountered by the cadets as future officers and are aware of the role that the Academy has in their development and that is why they can provide, formally or informally, career counseling.

But what is the role of the civilian teachers in a military educational establishment? If we rely on the principle that it takes a specialist in a particular field to form experts in the same field - a physician for physicians, a lawyer for lawyers, an officer for officers etc. – then a civilian teacher has no place in a military academy. But if we analyze the socio-professional model of the modern officer we find that it specifies certain competences which does not require the imperative presence of teachers with military ranks but with a high level of training in the their discipline.

As shown by Dughi și Roman, the teacher is not just an *organizer and leader of teaching and educational activities* in accordance with specific objectives, but also an *organizer of learning*, a *model*, a *partner*, a *counselor* and, not the least, an *educator* of students. In universities, teachers are also *members of the teaching staff* who are in continuous interaction and collaboration. All these roles are exercised simultaneously, formally and informally. Is thus created a favorable environment for training and education which will be perceived by the student and from which he will benefit without reflecting too much about the suite of actions, efforts and relations involved in its proper functioning.

This paper aims to open a series of studies that will outline the role and place of civilian teachers in the military educational system of Romania. We will present in the following the results of a study whose aim is to analyze the way in which the civilian teachers of the Land Forces Academy of Sibiu are perceived by the cadets. In a first phase, 450 cadets – representing 63.85% of the total - were asked to assess to what degree the civilian teachers contribute to a set of activities that are essential for the academy, listed in a questionnaire consisting of 24 questions. The answers to this questionnaire are shown below in a graphical form.

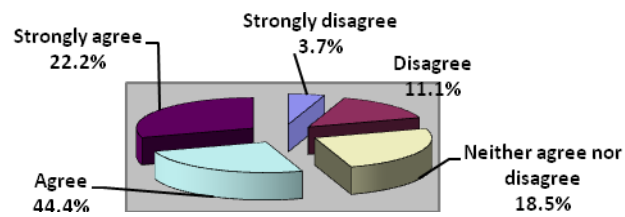


Figure no. 1. The civilian teachers contribute to ensuring the continuity and stability of the educational process of the Land Forces Academy

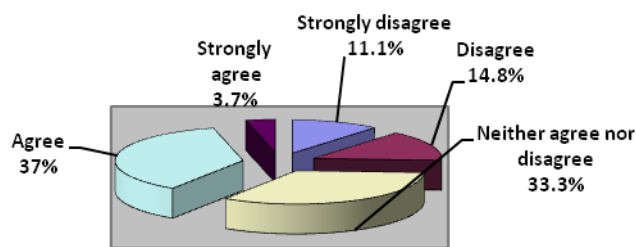


Figure no. 2. The civilian teachers contribute to ensuring academic rigour of the educational process of the Land Forces Academy

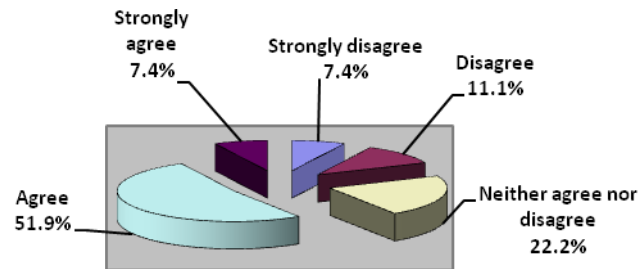


Figure no. 3. The civilian teachers contribute to ensuring pedagogical rigour of the educational process of the Land Forces Academy

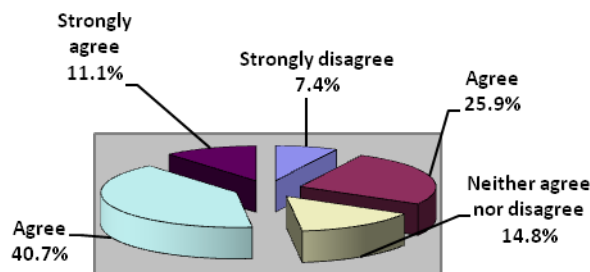


Figure no. 4. The civilian teachers contribute to connecting with other military academies and civilian universities

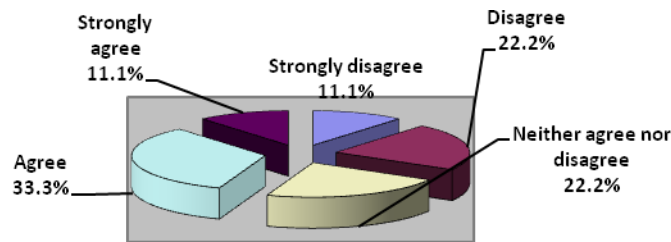


Figure no. 5. The civilian teachers help connecting with the national and international research community

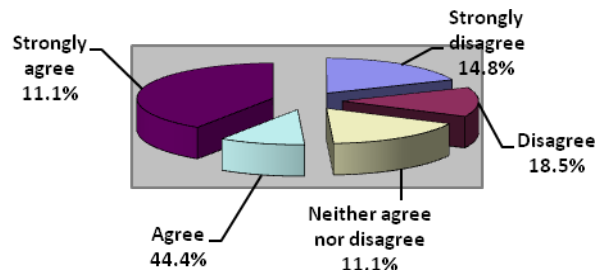


Figure no. 6. The civilian teachers contribute to diversifying prospects for development of the Land Forces Academy

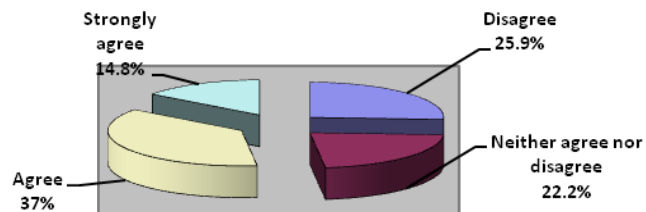


Figure no. 7. The civilian teachers contribute to military-society relations improvement

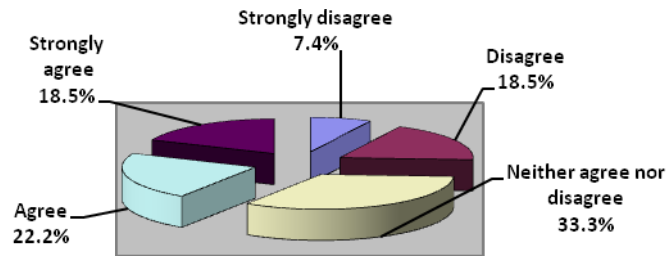


Figure no. 8. The civilian teachers contribute to openness towards civilian environment of the military academic community

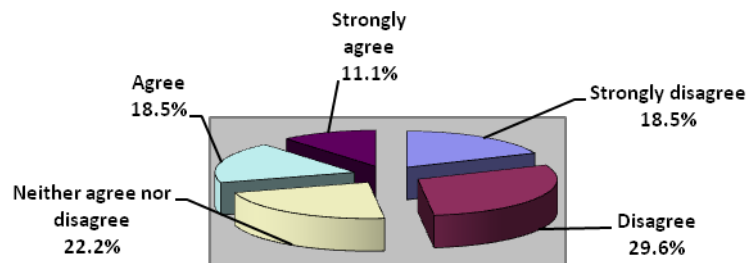


Figure no. 9. The civilian teachers contribute to openness towards foreign military universities of the military academic community

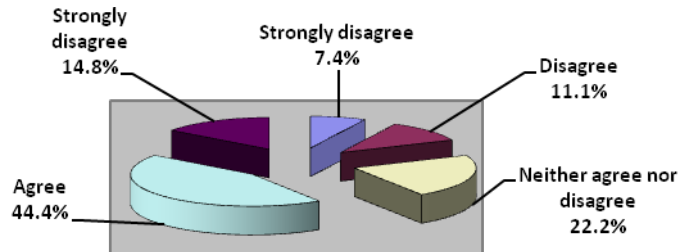


Figure no. 10. The civilian teachers contribute to achievement of the general and specific purposes of the Academy

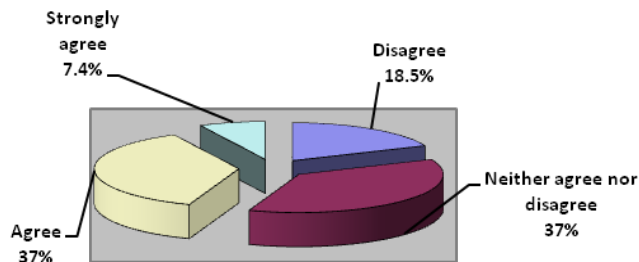


Figure no. 11. The civilian teachers make connections between the key concepts of their fields of expertise and the concepts specific to military domain.

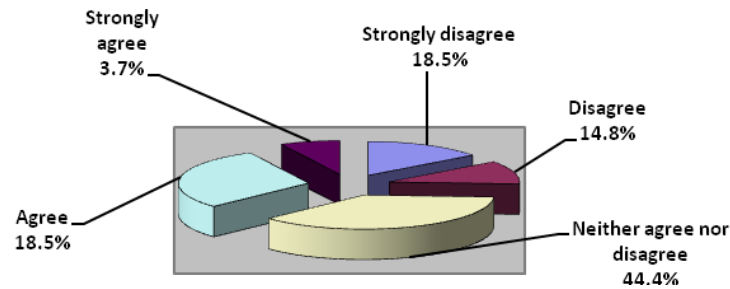


Figure no. 12. The civilian teachers use relevant examples from the military experience in their courses and lectures

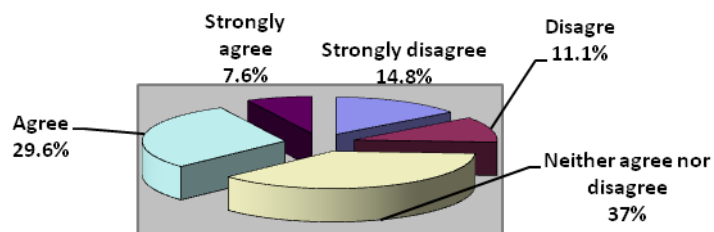


Figure no. 13. The civilian teachers explain how the information presented in their lectures and seminars can be applied in military contexts

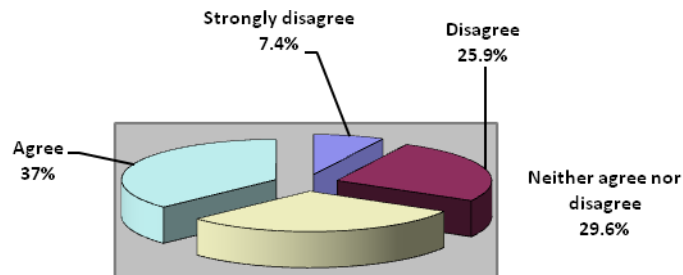


Figure no. 14. The civilian teachers explain in class the latest developments and changes in their fields of specialization

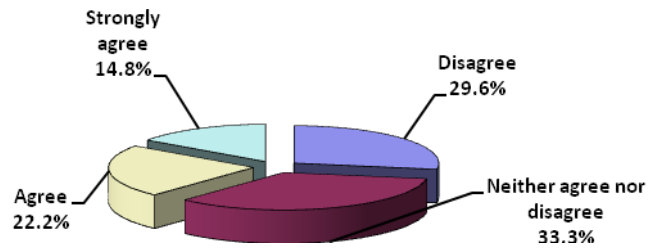


Figure no. 15. The civilian teachers have a significant influence on the development of students as future military leaders

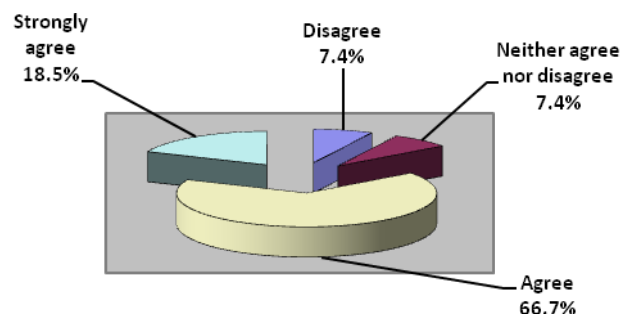


Figure no. 16. The civilian teachers have a high level of professional training

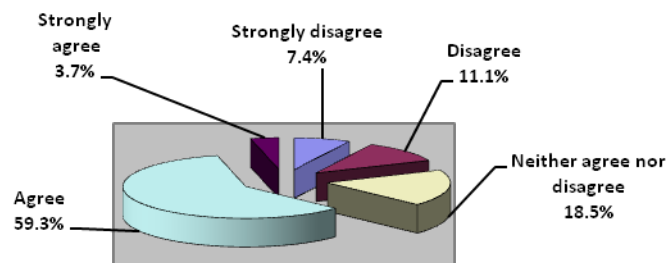


Figure no. 17. The civilian teachers have a positive influence on the psychosocial climate of the academy

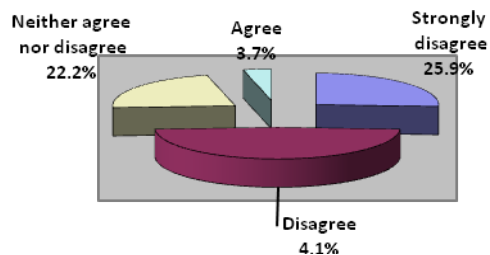


Figure no. 18. The civilian teachers have a significant influence on the development of students as fighters

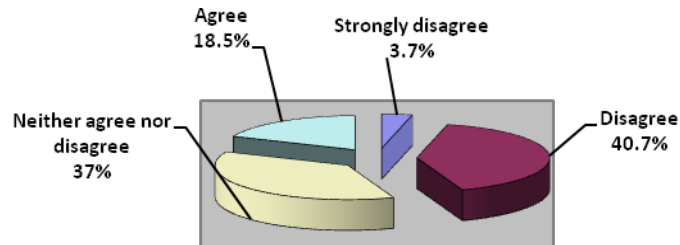


Figure no. 19. The civilian teachers have a significant influence on the military organizational culture

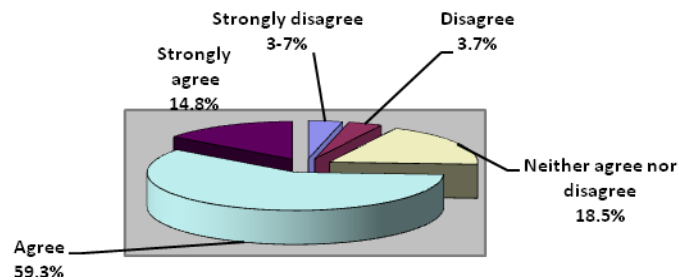


Figure no. 20. The civilian teachers have a high level of pedagogical training

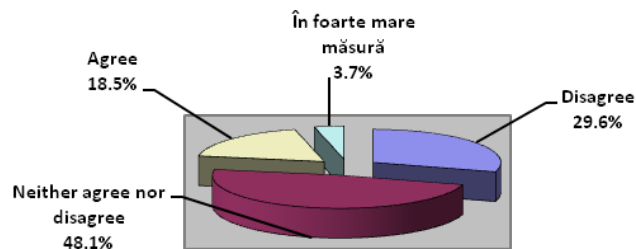


Figure no. 21. The civilian teachers have a positive influence on the development of students as military specialists

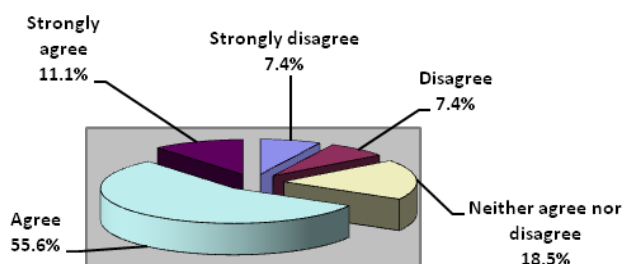


Figure no. 22. The civilian teachers have a significant contribution to the development of the intellectual abilities of the students

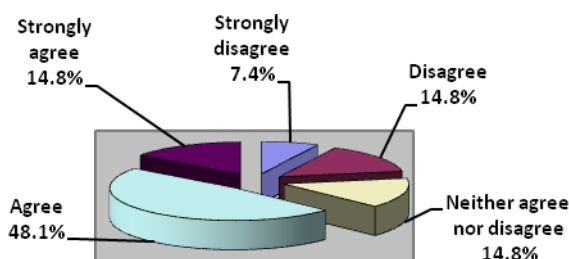


Figure no. 23. The civilian teachers have a positive influence on the development of students as citizens

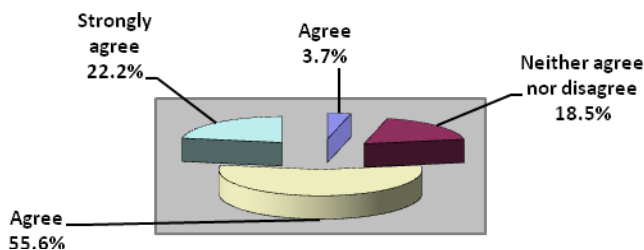


Figure no. 24. The civilian teachers have a positive influence on the development of students as educators

The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire allows us to sketch a characterization of the civilian teacher staff as perceived by the students. Therefore, they believe that:

- civilian teachers strongly contribute to ensuring the continuity and stability of the educational process of the Land Forces Academy and to the achievement of the general and specific purposes of the Academy;
- they have a high level of professional and pedagogical training;
- they have a positive influence on the psychosocial climate of the academy;

- they have a significant contribution to the development of the intellectual abilities of the cadets and on their formation as citizens and educators

We list below those actions of civilian teachers to which the students have responded with „agree” and „strongly agree” at a rate of only 48% - 55%: ensuring the academic rigour of the educational process of the academy, connecting the academy with other military academies and civilian universities, contribute to diversifying prospects for development of the Land Forces Academy and to military-society relations improvement. They also have a positive influence on the development of students as military specialists.

Answers to the following characteristics are highly dispersed between the five possible options, indicating that, according to students’ perception, civilian teachers have to improve some aspects of their activity in courses and seminars: to make more connections between the key concepts of their fields of expertise and the concepts specific to military domain, to use more relevant examples from the military experience in their courses and lectures, to explain in class the latest developments and changes in their fields of specialization and the way in which the students could use that information in a military context.

The students also evaluate on the full scale – from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” – the degree of influence of civilian teachers on their formation as future military leaders and on the military organizational culture. But 74% of respondents considered that the influence of the civilian teachers on students’ development as fighters is very low.

The analysis of the results of the T test for independent samples indicates that the students who graduated from civilian high schools gave higher scores to civilian teachers for almost every aspect of their activity compared to the students who graduated from military high schools. The only aspect in which the difference is not significant is related to the influence of teachers on connecting with other universities academy civil, military and research community. The female students too gave higher scores to civilian teachers for almost every aspect of their activity compared to male students, except those related to the influence of teachers on the training of the cadets as fighters, military specialists and future military leaders.

Also, the students were asked to make a brief characterization of civilian teachers. This task triggered, automatically and involuntarily somewhat, the comparison with military teachers.

The civilian teachers were described as follows: malleable, understanding, indulgent, relaxed during courses and seminars, open to new ideas, calm, objective and fair especially in evaluation. Compared with military teachers, they are more flexible about the attire and posture of the students. They accept questions and suggestions and create a pleasant atmosphere in classrooms. They are people *"who enjoy when students are interested in their discipline"*. A student writes: *"They create a greater cohesion among students because they encourage teamwork. They are effective because they ease the tension and allow free expression"*. Another student said: *"They change their teaching styles according to the type of students; they know what qualities to seek in a student and what expectations they should have from him. They offer us easily the right to reply and to personal opinion."*

Generally, they are described as being close to students, relaxed in relationships, sociable and communicative. One student summed up as follows, to the amusement of the researcher: *"(Civilian teachers) are much indulgent with us than military teachers probably*

because they pity us somewhat. They are nice and they understand our problems even if they never lived after a program such as ours to know how it is."

Civilian teachers have higher expectations from students regarding the level of knowledge and they are perceived to be highly trained in the discipline they teach. The students perceive them as being devoted to their work. They are not so punctual like the military teachers and also are not as authoritarian and do not appreciate as much the discipline.

The students do not appreciate the civilian teachers who tend to take over the behavior of the military: "(Civilian teachers) *have a close and warm relationship with students compared with the military teachers, which is due to a relaxed atmosphere which is unrestricted by the commander-subordinate relationship. Sometimes they try to emulate the behavior of the military and behave like them in order to gain some authority, but by doing so they alienate the students.*"

One student summarizes the opinion of all his colleagues: "(Civilian teachers) *are perfect for this environment because they managed to relax the atmosphere. If we had only military teachers it was something less good for the academy.*"

Many students agree with the statement of two of their colleagues: "*Even if they do not live in the military environment, some teachers are trying to understand the differences between a civilian student who has some free time and a military student who has to fulfill many additional activities.*" and "*Although they are not military they succeeded to fit here and they follow certain rules of conduct, asking forms of report, uniformity, respect and preparation so they are well trained.*"

One student shows a main cause of the difference in the attitude of students towards civilian teachers: "*A cause of this difference would be that teachers who have military ranks are at the same time the cadets' superiors and they tend to be more demanding and harsh in the way they teach and evaluate the cadets. Most students are reluctant to submit their ideas and opinions related to education or other aspects of life in the academy.*" Another student noted: "*I can say that students have more fear of the military cadres than civilian ones because military cadres have more power - for example, a student cannot afford to comment before a major or colonel. But civilian staff is much more understanding and more objective.*"

Nevertheless, the students realize that: "*In short, compared to the military cadres, I can say that I prefer to have contact mostly with civilian teachers, but my status as a military student makes me realize that I have more need of military cadres.*"

Conclusion

The model of the modern officer proposes the formation on five coordinates: leader for peoples and organizations, fighter, specialist, educator and citizen. Therefore, the education of the military students must integrate elements from areas of human life in general and of the military activity in particular and must achieve the harmonization between the military training needs and the needs of the liberal university education. This is accomplished by creating a military university that exposes the students to a variety of ideas, perceptions, analyzes and perspectives designed to form them intellectually, socially and professionally. The future officers must receive not only specialized training but also the general education that develops critical thinking and analytical skills, enabling them to

exercise the capacity to compare and analyze, to ask the right questions about what is happening around them, to show initiative, elements that are absolutely necessary to any person who wants to develop and advance in his/her profession. Such a university avoids indoctrination and unilateral socialization, builds a general culture which turns out to be the best support for vocational or professional training that, in turn, does not have to be separated from the scientific, moral or social education. We believe that, through their work in military universities, civilian teachers create, maintain and enrich an environment that is favorable to the development, research and innovation in a field considered until recently as rigid and less open to transformation.

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PROMOTING EDUCATION FOR VALUES IN THE SCHOLAR CURRICULUM

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Abstract:

The paper starts from the axiological dimension of education and places under analyses the possibility of curriculum integration for the education of values as a pedagogical solution that gives responsibility to all participants in education towards the reversion and correct reporting of the young people to the permanent values of humanity. There are present some studies and researches from previous years on the young Romanians' values. Nowadays the young are under the threat of assimilating false values just because they are „in vogue”. In this context, the education for values as an integrated curriculum project can offer real answers to the young people's issues: „How should I live my life?”, „How should I be?”, „What kind of person I would like to become?”. In creating situations of integrated learning the integrated curriculum models are very useful, as they serve the practitioners to this project in creating the educational design for training/development of cross-curriculum competences.

Keywords: *education for values, integrated curriculum, cross-curriculum competences*

Education is a value *per se* if it spreads values, shapes the individual through values, the value content of education, shapes the creator through values, stimulates and valorises creative capacities. The concept of education has a certain value significance meaning that refers to that help offered to peers so that they may raise to the authentic existential status of the individual and the acquirement of the authentic human nature.

In terms of educational action, it is not the imposition of values that is the most advantageous strategy, but results are much better when indirect action is made: *by creating and stimulating the needs for values*, so that the pupil adheres to them naturally. Values are not imposed, but looked for, welcome. The waiting space and the need horizon are shaped through certain educative means. The shaping of an axiological knowledge, characterized by the *aspiration for values*, and the availability for valorization, seem to be priority objectives for achieving quality education nowadays. The values infused in education maintain veritable reactive and prospective dimensions in the front of the present and future.

The initiation in culture and the acquirement of cultural instruments are the most important demands which school meets now and in perspective. School is the institution transmitting and setting a certain system of values. Learning in school, made through curricular and

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extracurricular activities, supposes the complex interaction among knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviors. School is attributed an extremely important role in the articulation among education, professional competitiveness and democratic citizenship.

The German philosopher and pedagogue Spranger, the founder of the culture pedagogy refers, in one of his important works [12], to the 3 aspects of a quality education: receptiveness to cultural values, living/vibrating the subjective spirit in contact with supra-individual values and creating own values. Spranger thus highlights the fact that true education performs with priority the transformation of objective values into subjective values and thus the construction of the veritable personalities among the young starts.

Trained in Spranger's school, the Romanian pedagogue Bârsănescu conceives education in a value-based perspective "*...is the activity of modeling the individual, orienting its evolution in the direction of vibration and creation of values through a threefold work: of caring, guidance and cultivation*" [1]

Understood as a mood, as a power of understanding and living values, culture is neither a means nor an action but becomes the purpose of education.

In his famous work, *Democracy and education* (1972), the American pedagogue John Dewey identifies the criterion to appreciate the value of school education, *i.e.* "*the extent to which such education arouses the continuous growth desire of the individual, which is based on the assimilation of cultural values*" [6]. Referring to the educational context, Dewey distinguishes between the *extrinsic values*, clarified by the school curriculum, and the *instrumental values*, those which mediate immediate, intrinsic values. Professor Marga believes that is necessary to "*coming back to firm values is the veritable solution. How can it be made? First of all it is a matter of curriculum: learning grammar, logic, rhetoric, moral, religion is indispensable*". [9]

In promoting education for values through the school curriculum, we need to start looking for answers to natural questions raised by the specific nature of educational activities: What? What for? How much? How? Who will put these educational syllabi into practice? What specialty should the educator launching such a project have? What kind of competences should such an educator have in its professional profile? Let's try to reflect in detail over such essential questions for organizing an efficient educative demarche.

Stipulating that education has as its finality the *shaping of human personality*, the National Education Law establishes the reference framework of the education for values, its main dimensions and means: referring pupils to the values of the national and universal culture (our note: European culture), shaping and developing pupils' intellectual capacities, affective availabilities and practical abilities, in the lifelong training and self-training perspective, their education in the spirit of respecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, dignity and tolerance, free exchange of opinions.

Education for values constitutes the answer of the current educational system to the imperatives of contemporaneous world: ecologic education (related to the environment), education for change and development, education for technology and progress, education for communication and for mass-media, education related to population (demographic), education for peace and for cooperation, education for participation and democracy, education for health, sexual education, nutritional education, education for quality work, education for private life, intercultural education, education for spare time, special education, education for a new international economic order, modern household and economic education.

The methodology of valorizing education for values targets all the general contents (moral, intellectual, technological, esthetical, psychophysical) and the general forms of education (formal, non-formal, informal).

Education for values has in view not only the pupils' knowledge of the values on which social norms are founded at a certain time but it allows pupils, at the same time, to critically reflect on values and norms, in the perspective of supplying their creative contribution to community life. Education for values allows pupils to understand and accept value pluralism, value conflict, but also the advantages in exploiting (beneficially for the individual and for society) their progress potential, when societies are based on consensual values and practices established on them, such as democratic values and principles. An efficient education for values allows the individual to refer to various cultural stimuli, other than those specific to immediate insertion culture.

Education for values is approached today in school as optional themes/disciplines from the curriculum at the school's decision by curricular areas (mostly the *Man and society* curricular area), as optional at the level of the study discipline or optional as an integrating theme, and can also be found at the level of the *Counseling and orientation* curricular area, as one of the components of the educative activities being performed in the classroom during educational classes. The introduction in syllabi in the form of optional disciplines, complementary training modules, guides, methodological guides constitutes strategies for implementing the education for values in the current school curriculum.

Also, it is necessary to reconsider the systems for selecting and organizing information within the school, allowing the introduction of: specific modules, integrated as new disciplines, distinct in the curriculum, specific disciplines with a leading role grouping several of the new disciplines (for instance: education for democratic citizenship, global education, international education) and contents specific to a new education in the sphere of several disciplines through an infusional approach.

The research "The Young Romanians' Values" made in 2006 by the "Oricum" Foundation and the British Council established the young Romanian's profile between 15-25 years of age after investigating a group of 99 young people from 5 important cities in the country. According to the values system, the participants in the research placed on the first positions, the family (82.3%), friends (51.1%) and school (47.4%), then money and social values.

Leaders Foundation made during the school year 2010-2011. Within the national education program for high schools, Leadership Authentic, a research that shows which are the main values that young people with ages between 14 and 18 years old have and how their auto portrait looks compared to their own values, beliefs and attitudes. There were 600 high school students involved and the research was made on the bases of 3 interactive exercises. One of the most relevant instruments used in order to collect data for this study was the exercise of choice- which are those values that define me? From a list of 45 values, the participants in the study were asked to choose those 3 values that represent them the most. on the first places the most frequent values chosen by the respondents were: family, friends and respect, followed by optimism and trust. There were no major differences between the urban and the rural areas. Another drill was "the values stock exchange" which had at its bases the principle of selecting and comparing between the value that is present in their life and the value that is wished for their behavior in the future. In the category of values that high school students think they possess there were values as respect and family, and the

most desired values were trust and optimism. The last drill had as its purpose selecting those filters values in order to explain the connection between a set of beliefs and a series of attitudes. The most often used values in order to explain some attitudes were: trust, optimism, courage and respect. The least used values, in this drill, were: will, sociability, responsibility, respect for the environment and patience.

What those studies revealed is a proof of the fact the young man nowadays, indifferently of his background, considers family and friendship are first rang values in a personal values hierarchy. Family is the most important affective, moral and financial support. Friends are also considered important, as they are close confidants among whom the young prefer to spend most of their free time, but sometimes they are disappointed by their own friends whom they trusted and they were betrayed. School still has an important role in the young people's hierarchy of values, but for the students school has a secondary and third place after their job and extra school activities. This result of the previous researches invites the pedagogues and the practitioners to reflect: *What should school do in order to realize an authentic education for values and in the same time to be closer to the young persons' values?*

The integrated approach of the curriculum, specific to the inter disciplines, centered on curriculum themes that puts close school and real life is the pedagogical solution to this question. The integrated curriculum introduces as new subjects disciplines structured around some themes for a certain curricular area or more curricular areas studied through the valor of the contents of some disciplines.

The cross- curriculum themes represent study units that allow the exploration of some significant problems in real life. In order to be successfully introduced in school, the cross-curriculum themes elicits the creation of some diverse learning experiences and experimenting learning acquisition in real and wide contexts. According to L. Ciolan (2008), we can distinguish at least 3 types of cross- curriculum themes:

- *pretext themes*-used as a platform in order to create connections;
- *support themes*-used in order to sustain the development of some integrated competences;
- *context themes*-in order to explore problems of real life.

Professor L. Ciolan presents 4 structural models (p.176-178) of integrating the cross-curricular themes in the school curriculum:

- *the infusion model*- centered on objectives/competences/thematic areas common to many school subjects;
- *the hybrid model*- centered on the appearance of the hybrid as an independent subdomain of integrated type, that articulate many school subjects;
- *the satellite model*- centered on the multi-disciplinary approach in which each subject contributes;
- *the insertion model*- introducing some present and interest themes under the form of some new subjects or optional subjects.

In projecting the educational designs based on curricular integration and in building integrated learning situations, M. Bocos and V. Chis (2013, p.351) recommend to the practitioners 6 models of curricular integration:

- *Curricular integration around a pole (scientific, practical, personal, social);*
- *Curricular integration at the level of didactic activities and of lessons;*
- *Curricular integration at the level of one day didactic activities;*

- *Curricular integration at the level of a system of didactic activities over a period of time;*

- *Curricular integration within the thematic projects;*

- *Curricular integration within the integrated optional subjects.*

Integrated learning experience projected like this can create the formative and simulative context for developing the cross-curriculum competences. The recent pedagogical literature talks about three cross-curricular competences, each with a number of sub-domains:

a. Thinking Competency: critical thinking, creative thinking, reflective thinking

b. Personal and Social Competency: positive personal and cultural identity, personal awareness and responsibility, social awareness and responsibility

c. Communication Competency: language and symbols, digital literacy .

By introducing the integrated curriculum and the cross-curricular competences, one can make a change that is not without difficulties in projecting, realizing and evaluating integrated activities.

The teaching staff directly involved in the promotion of such educational syllabi are aware that shaping attitudes and learning values represent a complicated and time consuming demarche. For this reason, the following aspects should be considered:

Within the common ensemble, the potential of each discipline must be revalued, in terms of education for values, and the adequate didactical strategies.

The adaptation of the school curriculum to interculturality coordinates and also the reexamination of the weight of information and knowledge with a general-human nature in the current school curriculum, the content decongestion of narrow value elements, without affecting the weight of those particular elements which carry high, perennial values. From here, the necessity to review the syllabi by imprinting certain intercultural directions to some disciplines in curricular areas *Man and society, Arts, Language and communication, Counseling and orientation*, but also the existing school manuals so as to highlight the development of the critical-reflexive thinking, the capacities to distinguish between the primary information and its interpretations, which may be different depending on certain values, faiths, perspectives, interests, and of empathic capacities.

The clarification of the value hierarchy, the order of their proposal in the school curriculum must be made depending on the ontogenetic age stages and the psychological and behavioral characteristics of children, so that value promotion is made proportional to assimilation capacities, specific to the children's age.

In the case of pre-school children, the shaping of habits and customs on which morality shall be later based is required. A certain form of *value inculcation* should not be excluded and for this reason the educator shall encourage the pupil's positive attitudes while acting to reduce or avoid its negative attitudes.

In supporting the efficient assimilation of education for values at the pre-school level and the primary cycle, it is preferred to preponderantly use such didactical methods as: ***narration***-presentation of certain stories centered on European values in order to develop the spirit of cooperation, respect and mutual aid; ***learning through play /toy exchange method***-valorizing special occasions to concretize the idea of solidarity; ***directed observation*** of certain materials allowing the understanding of the negative consequences of racial/any discrimination;

Ensuring the quality of such first values set in the incipient stage of education shall prepare and facilitate the acquirement of future values. For this reason, for the gymnasium and high

school level, the following interactive didactical methods are adequate to education for values:

- **exercise** for learning tolerance and responsibility (for instance drafting with the pupils' contribution an internal regulation of the classroom including rights and responsibilities for the pupils of such classroom);
- **learning by discovery**-discovering universal values (for instance drafting certain rules governing the relationships among people, then comparison to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights);
- **historical analysis**-the historical evolution of the individual's fight for defending its fundamental rights, persons and personalities;
- **case study**-breach of the fundamental human rights;
- **simulation**-governing activity (for instance: Mayor for one day);
- **utopia exercises**-the characteristics of a school/city/country/world in which human rights are fully observed;
- **brainstorming** (for instance: 4 teams shall be established; each team shall establish a set of responsibilities of an adult and freedoms of a young individual and finally a portrait of the child of today-adult of tomorrow shall be made) and others.

The school environment, the mechanisms of school organization and functioning tend to become more and more a model of social practices compatible to the ideals of a democratic society in which the first values are exercised: honesty, honor, mutual respect, tolerance, responsibility etc. The program of each school is based on a school project which is public, known by the pupils' families and the community members, meant to valorize the human and material potential of the school and establish a balance between curricular and extracurricular activities. Local traditions shall be revalorized mostly within the curriculum upon the school's decision, so that pupils know the contribution of their forerunners to the enrichment of the spiritual and material patrimony of the community.

Learning education for values is also facilitated by the presence of an affective-positive, stimulating framework, generated by the teacher's behaviour. The educator itself carries a value system, which in the teaching-learning act shall find the educational levers which are indispensable for cultivating its pupils' values, starting from the personal example. Maybe for this reason, the teacher showing respect for its pupils' personality, promoting in the didactical act a balanced speech, without stridence or sentimentalisms, succeeding in establishing democratic relationships with children starting from their sincerity and availabilities, from their imaginative resources, shall covert with didactical skill but also by means of the all methodical instruments, through operable strategies, the educational values, in the pupil's own value code.

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ASPECTS OF THE INFLUENCE OF SUBJECTIVE FACTORS IN SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

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***Abstract:** The study approaches the problem of the interference of subjective factors in school assessment and recommends a change of the classic attitude that qualifies the subjective intervention as a negative one, which leads to lack of objectivity and incorrectness and therefore should be eliminated. The study supports the assumption that a strictly objective, impersonal, indifferent and completely neutral assessment, that is an non subjective evaluation is not only impossible, but also hardly significant, less relevant and finally, less objective than an assessment that explicitly involves the subjectivity, the values, the attitudes including or especially the personal approach of the evaluator and of the evaluated person. Emerging this hypothesis the study operates with the distinction between two aspects of the subjective influences in the assessment act: a positive one which must be encouraged, called “subjectivity” and a negative one which should be limited called “subjectivism”.*

Key words: school assessment, subjective factors, subjectivity, subjectivism.

Most specialists agree that one of the important issues of the school assessment is generated by the intervention of the subjective factors, factors that emerge either from the teacher’s action, or from student’s action, or, sometimes, from the influences of the social and pedagogic context of the assessment. It is often considered, explicitly or implicitly that the intervention of the subjective factors is negative, as it distorts the assessment and can lead to a non objective and unfair assessment. Therefore it is considered that the solution to the problem is to eliminate or at least diminish the intervention of the subjective factors. However, is this the best solution? And moreover, is it a possible solution?

Of course, the problem of the subjective influences on the school assessment cannot be denied. If we consider that the school assessment is, most frequently, a “face to face” assessment, during which, both the evaluator and the evaluated person know each other, and the assessment relationship has the value of an interpersonal relationship with psychosocial implications, then it becomes even more obvious that the subjective contribution becomes substantial. In this case, the problem is not of minimizing or exaggerating the contribution of the subjective factor, but of analysing in what range, in what direction and in what way the subject or the subjects involved in the assessment can influence the accuracy of the assessment. Because at a closer analysis one can ascertain that the intervention of the subjective factor is not only the „necessary evil” of the assessment but also the human condition without which the assessment loses its meaning, its value of inter human relationship that involves attitudes and axiological systems.

1. Values and limits of the subjective intervention in the assessment

Regarding the sense of the subjective intervention in educational assessment, we support the hypothesis that *a strictly objective, impersonal, indifferent and absolutely neutral assessment, which is an assessment without a subject is not only impossible, but also less significant less relevant and finally less objective than an assessment that explicitly involves the subjectivity, the values, the attitudes, including or especially the personal approach of the evaluator and of the evaluated one.* We believe that this hypothesis can cover the whole field of assessment, but definitely it is or must be applicable to educational assessment. This is backed by an elementary reason: that the school assessment is an inseparable piece of the educational process, and *education means, above all, interaction between subjectivities*, it means transfer and assimilation of experience which engages completely the personalities involved, teachers and students.

Therefore, considering that the issue is not to eliminate the intervention of the subjective factor, but to control its intervention, we believe that some questions would be necessary, for the purpose of elucidation:

- *In what limits the intervention of the subjective factor, be it related to the teacher, to the student and to another influent person can divagate, plus or minus, from what is defined as a fair assessment?*
- *In what degree the influence of the subjective factor can be distributed between the two main „agents”: the teacher and the student?*
- *In what degree the influence of the subjective factor works in the direction of non-objectivity? Or, from the opposite side of view: In what degree the objectivity is diminished by the subjective contribution of the persons involved in the assessment exercise?*

It is not hard to notice that all these questions lead to a very delicate and also very up-to-date zone, that of the debates in the socio-human field. It is the zone of the objective-subjective relationships in establishing the social processes, and the new approaches in this field substantially modify the old perspective regarding the dissociation and the objective versus objective relationship. However, some pertinent answers can be given to the questions above.

1. First of all, it is obvious that, as powerful as it were, intentionally or unintentionally, the intervention of the subjective factor can not excel some limits of deviation from the correct level of the assessment, even if this level is the „common sense” level. A performance whose real level is that of a seven grade can not be graded neither with ten nor with four, even if the evaluator’s intention is to over assess or under assess a student. The exceptions, if there are some, cannot but uphold the rule, because in this case the subjectivism becomes obvious, and the discussions on it should be directed elsewhere. Yet, if we give up the presumption of intention, it becomes certain that *the deviations (errors) of a subjective origin can not exceed – and do not exceed in reality – some limits.* These limits are the ones that must be taken into consideration when we establish the intervention zone, through special evaluation methods and techniques, for diminishing the subjective contribution and the distortion of the assessment. Any excess in substituting the personality of the evaluator and of the evaluated student through impersonal and strictly objective techniques – to the possible extent – may lead to at least two negative consequences: diminishing the degree of significance for the assessment, by reducing it to a

measurement of “physical” features; eliminates from the assessment the complex qualitative aspects that can’t be observed but by examination, through a direct relationship between the evaluator and the evaluated one, between teacher and student.

2. The basis of the second question is found in a circumstance noticed by many teachers, but also by students: that frequently the subjectivism of the teacher is being emphasized, and the fact that, in school assessment, *the student, too, has a contribution in one way or another to the subjective conditioning of the assessment* is being ignored. The student’s approach on the assessment, his personal criteria, his attitudes are at least as influent as the teacher’s. Moreover, the experiences of using the auto evaluation techniques or of students’ evaluation by the students underlined the manifestation of some subjective assessment effects which are similar to those noticed to the teachers (halo effect, contrast, logical error, personal equation etc.). The most important subjective factor is, without doubt, *the student’s attitude to the school assessment system*. That is why acknowledging the attitude of the students and taking it into consideration for the improvement of the assessment act is one of the most important conditions for the general improvement of the school assessment system.

3. The third question to which we will try to recommend an answer refers to the extent in which intervention of the subjective factor works in the direction of non objectivity, and alters the objective, impersonal nature of the assessment. This question opens, in fact, the discussion on the existential status of the subject, of the subjectivity in the process of knowledge and action, with implications that exceed the strict frame of the assessment, involving the epistemological issues of the subject-object duality in the socio-human field. Still, maintaining the discussion in the field of school assessment, we consider that the problem approached here has two significant aspects:

- a) One of them refers to the subjective influence and the objective nature of the assessment and can be rephrased as follows: *Is the subjective influence an influence that definitely undermines the objective nature of the assessment?* And it can be answered in terms of how much, how, and in what circumstances this influence is exercised.
- b) The other aspect refers to the relationship between the *objective/subjective nature* of the assessment on one side and the *accuracy* of the assessment on the other side. This aspect of the problem can be expressed in two ways: *Is a strictly objective assessment necessarily fair? Does the subjective intervention definitely work in the direction of incorrectness of the assessment?* Of course, a pertinent answer would assume, as a preliminary condition, a well defined concept of correctness in assessment. At this level of the analysis we believe that the most plausible hypothesis is that *a strict relationship between the objective-correct, subjective-incorrect pairs of attributes can’t be drawn* and that, probably, the correctness of the assessment is ensured by an optimal combination of the subjective and the objective.

2. Subjectivity and subjectivism or between relevance and error

Going on with the analysis regarding the action of the subjective factors in the act of the assessment regarding the nature and the direction of these factors on the results of the assessment, we consider that the best approach is to distinguish, from the beginning

between two kinds of subjective influences that can be identified in the act of the assessment:

- a) *a positive influence*, constructive, that is a consequence of the subjective involvement of both the teacher and the student, led by motivations and positive attitudes, by which the capacity of the subjects to notice what is significant, to give a meaning to the objective data is valued;
- b) *a negative influence*, a distorting one, which produces deviations with an error meaning, of deviation from the objective nature of the assessment, an influence that can occur *unintentionally* – having its origin either in the level of competence of the evaluator, or in the subjective effects that „naturally” accompany the assessment act –or *intentionally* – having its origin either in the educational objectives of the assessment (the use of the grade a carrot and stick approach), or in the use of the assessment as a mean of favoring/disfavoring some students (with implications, of course, in the field of morality and legality).

Working in this direction we will name the positive influence of the subjective factors (teachers, parents etc.) by the term *subjectivity*, and the negative influence by the term of *subjectivism*. We consider that this distinction creates a better frame for a pertinent analysis of the contribution of the subjective factor to the assessment, and consequently can offer adequate solutions to the control of the subjective influence in the act of the assessment.

1. In this context, **the subjectivity** of the teacher or of the student operates as a subjective influence that not only must not be rejected but represents a condition, often decisive for a significant assessment, with a pedagogic relevance, and, finally, fair. This constructive contribution of the subjective factor is possible and can be exploited on three levels:

- a) *Through its cognitive components*, that is through the capacity of the subject to understand, explain, interpret, and anticipate, to observe the essence in the multitude of the concrete facts. In this aspect, the influence of the subject is not, in its essence, a distorted one, but one that both as possibility and as reality correctly reflects and builds the real, imposing to the behaviour the attribute of *reason*. In this level, the favourable influence of the subjective factor embodies the shape of *competence*, as a decisive condition for the quality of the assessment.
- b) *Through its affective-motivational components*, that is through the subjective, energizing and directional engagement, which gives the assessment the significance of internal resort, behaviour factor, making the assessment an efficient mean of guiding and self guiding the behaviour. On this level, the influence of the subjective factor contributes to the *humanizing of the assessment*, to the assuming, especially by the students, in terms of motifs, interests, yearnings, of the criteria and norms of the assessment, ensuring that *convergence of the cognitive with the non cognitive*, which is essential for the level of performance reached or accessible to the students. From this point of view, an assessment is incomplete if it limits itself to the evaluation of the obvious performances, without taking into consideration *the motivational and emotional background* that generates them, since the performance is never a direct and exclusive consequence of the capacity, but, mostly – sometimes to a great extent – the consequence of the “motivational vectors”.

c) Through the **relational-attitudinal** components, which means through the placing the assessment in the context of the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, of *the attitudes* that both the teachers and the students have and manifest in the process of the assessment. The subjective contribution at the attitude level gives the assessment value, axiological significance it puts it the sphere of the real psychosocial interactions that are always guided, implicitly or explicitly by values, norms and principles. On this level, the influence of the subjective factor contributes to the *socialization of the assessment*, it places the assessment in the context of the status and role relationships, involving *the dynamic of the expectations* (of the students from the teacher, of the teacher from the teacher), and of the *psycho-social influences*. In this context, an assessment is incomplete if it doesn't take into consideration the attitudes and if it doesn't generate attitudes, ment to prepare a student for *the integration into a society in which the assessments are a part of the social mechanism*.

2. **The subjectivism**, which we define as a *negative manifestation of the subjective influences*, present without doubt a much higher interest than the positive side of the action of the subjective factor in the act of the assessment. Otherwise, the majority of the studies related to the influence of the subjective factor on the assessment underline exactly this type of influence, most of the techniques of control of the subjective factor being lead in this direction. We will not insist here neither on the classical subjective effects of the assessment nor on the modalities of restricting their effects. We will try however to analyse the negative influences of the subjective factor from the perspective of the causes that make the action of the subjective factor – which is or should be, in its essence, a positive, constructive one – work in a negative direction, on the route of error or incorrectness. In this context we consider that the best approach is to distinguish between two types of negative influences: *intentionally and unintentionally*, these types of influences being otherwise significant for the types of effects generated by the subjective distortions: *errors or incorrectness*.

a. **The unintentional subjective influences and the effects** are the most frequent, and the studies on assessment approach them almost exclusively. It is natural to be so, as the majority of the teachers do not intend on purpose to assess unfair or to alter the results of the assessment. Commonly, the subjective assessment errors have their origin in the complexity of this activity, in the lower or higher degree of uncertainty that accompany any appreciation of human qualities. Particularly, the subjective distortions of the assessment can be grouped according to specific causes, out of which the most important are:

- the insufficiency of the basic information that are the background of the assessment;
- inadequate methods and techniques of evaluation reported to the object of the assessment (what is being assessed) and to the objectives of the assessment (for what purpose it is being evaluated);
- some peculiarities of the direct relationship between teacher and students, with its emotional-attitudinal components;
- indirect influences of the psychosocial context in which the assessment is being done (the statute of the student's family, some pressure indirectly practiced by the didactic collective, by the management of the school or by the families of the students);

- the influences of the pedagogic context of the assessment (the general level of the class of students and its structure, elements of school policy in terms of assessment, for instance reaching some promovability, the stimulation of the success or the decrease of the school failure etc.).

The effects of the unintentional manifestation of the subjective in the assessment are the imperfections or the errors of evaluation, they have a cognitive and not a moral significance, being, in a way a part of the normality of the assessment act. The existence of these errors is also a motif for which the improvement of the assessment must be a constancy of the educational process. In this context each of the causes enunciated request specific way and means of improvement for the assessment act, which are mostly handy for the teacher. The direction for diminishing or the elimination of this kind of errors is that of *control* and *self control* of the subjective influences, through a better knowledge and use of the assessment methods and techniques.

b. In what *the intentional intervention of the subjective influences* is concerned, it has a complex causality, including social-moral implications. In the context in which the teacher intentionally modifies (increases or diminishes) the results of the assessment, two typical circumstances can be identified:

- one is that when *the assessment and especially the grading are used as carrot and stick means with pedagogic function*, for the guidance of the learning behaviour of the students, situation in which the assessments of the teacher may deviate in one direction or another (plus, or, rarely, minus) from the real level of preparation of the student;
- the other one is that when the distortion of the assessment is intentional for the favoring (or disfavoring) some students, upon extra pedagogical criteria, having social-moral connotations, which are associated to the moral conduct of the teacher.

Regarding the first case, it does not rising any special issues. Most of the times, the teachers give higher or lower grades in order to value the pedagogic function of the assessment, but this way of use of the grade is made during the educational process, as intermediary assessments, that are brought to reality by the final grades (that end a period of study or a school discipline). There is still left for analyse what are the frame limits of these deviations.

Of course, the second case is much more complicated. On one hand, it is harder to notice, and on the other hand it is even harder to prove. Intentional over or under assessment, with a value of favoring/disfavoring some students do not usually occur very obvious, as they are camouflaged by using sometime excessively rigorous criteria, methods and objective techniques, on the background of a hard to question „fairness”. Even if they are less frequent and can not be considered typical for the teachers, these subjective interventions exist and can have very important consequences. We must underline that these influences don't always pursue direct benefits for those who make them. They can occur in the context of condolence relationship (preferential) between teachers and parents or between teachers (for instance the reciprocity of the support when teachers are in the examination committees, a sort of „guild solidarity”).

The intentional distortion of the assessment can also be made by the students, through peculiar students' techniques: the prevision of the examination data, the ability of the

students to guess the „style” of the teacher, and to adapt themselves to it, including the cheating (with the various „techniques”) more or less tolerated by the teachers.

3. Manifestations of subjective factors influences in the assessment

The analysis done so far has shown not only that the action of the subjective factors of assessment is manifested through a variety of effects, but also that the subjective factors appear by the contribution of all parties involved in the act of assessment. This means that the obsolete misconception which states the teacher is the sole subjective influence in the assessment act needs to be overcome. The subjective influence must be searched also at the level of the student, the family and any other persons involved in the assessment act. Thus there is a need of identification of the various ways through out which the subjective factors emerge and manifest themselves.

The most suitable course of action in analysing the ways the subjective factors of school assessments seems to be the one that starts from the causes which make these factors to be, in the given circumstances, a deforming effect, that lead to errors in evaluation. In a certain degree, the causes which generate the alteration of grading are related with the subjective nature of the evaluation process, which involves the personalities of the assessor and assessed, depending on a series of conditions and certain circumstances. The conclusion is that the sources of errors are gravitating around the subjects involved in the assessment act (teachers and students), but these are also related to the targets and the content that evaluation depends on, of the methods and the techniques used in the assessment.

1. In the respect of the *teacher*, the factors that alter the grading are those which generally appear in the evaluation process and are related to the subjective nature of the process. The acknowledgment and the control upon these factors are useful for the realization of a correct evaluation, as objective as possible.

In this direction, the docimologic studies are useful, also those from the field of the *human assessment and performance evaluation*. The *psychosocial aspects* of the assessment relationship, as interpersonal relation, can be also valuable for a better understanding of the phenomena that accompany the evaluation process, including those phenomena that generates evaluation errors.

Most of the time, the evaluation errors do not hold responsible only the teacher, as individual or as „assessor”, but the teacher as social person, as member of a social group (the teachers group), as vector or representative of interests and bearer of certain responsibilities. Without the knowledge of the psychosocial climate, of the inter human relationships, of the cognitive processes within these manifest themselves (and which often generates) the errors in evaluation, are not possible, nor the their correct understanding or their effective control.

2. Another group of errors in grading *are on the student's behalf*, not in reference with the level of the quality of the preparation, but aiming treats and capacities which influence the degree of which the *student can demonstrate the level and the quality of this preparation*. The students can be more or less emotive, can have a higher or lower verbal influence, o different speed in writing, different intellectual paces, particularities which can influence the performance *during the examination* and thus the grade with which he is appreciated. If in the case of written paper these aspects are difficult to reveal (which often

explains many cases of ineffective selection through written exams), in the didactical process there is the possibility of diminishing of negative effects of these personality characteristics or psychomotor abilities which have no significant influence in the results of the leaning process.

3. The third group of error sources in grading is closely related with *the content and targets of the assessment process*. Some disciplines or parts of their content are difficult to be submitted to an objective assessment, rigorously and differentiated. The grading criteria are established and applied easier for concrete performance, noticeable, which imply the reproduction of some notions, the usage of some habits and algorithms. The difficulties appear when the pedagogical objectives and thus the grading criteria aim for complex capacities, potential, which dot explicitly manifest in the behaviour, which imply the processing and the interpreting of the information, the creativity and the critical analysis. The docimologic studies has shown that, for example, that the assessments are more exact for mathematics, physics, chemistry, grammar and more relative, less rigorous for literature, philosophy , arts.

The improvement in evaluation cannot and shouldn't be schematised or lack its subjective content of the assessment act. In the end, the school assessment is an inter-human relationship with multiple affective and moral connotations, an act of intercommunication and inter-knowledge which engages both teacher's personality and student's, the official norms and regulations, the informal representations and appreciations, the attitudes and mentalities.

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CONTEMPORANEOUS ORIENTATIONS IN THE SCIENCE PHILOSOPHY AND THE HISTORICAL EDUCATION RESEARCH

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Abstract:

Our study interprets some of the contemporaneous orientations in the science philosophy, asserted and disputed in the second half of the 20-th century and the beginning of this century. The purpose of this approach consists to derive those connotations on the reflection and the epistemological substantiation of the pedagogy, as a field of the socio-human consciousness. This paper assesses and presents four relevant contributions to the science philosophy from the view of their connotations on the theoretical and methodological orientations concerning the importance and the specificity of the historical research in education.

Keywords: *science philosophy, historical education research, paradigm, research program*

1. Introduction

An adequate vision of the scientific research in education based on the integration and updating of some historical research strategies has to become receptive to the debates and controversies of the science philosophy concerning the research theory and methodology. In order to achieve a real understanding platform for the education events, from the view of their temporal configuration and development, the controverted war of the science philosophy offers a complex field of comprehension. In the last years, the science philosophy passed through a continuous process of changes and metamorphosis, marked out by numerous uncertainty moments, by options and opinions labyrinths, by controversies, debates and sense decantation.

A large part of the science philosophy developed in the 20-th century was looking to capture and to describe a logical science structure. Many philosophers consider the scientific theory as an abstract structure, similar to an ensemble of interconnected sentences. They intend to offer a description of the logical connections of the theory sentences and the observational proofs. Unlike to *the Scientifics*, *the philosopher releases himself of the tyranny of the materiality and the pressing of the reality*. The defining note of the philosophy is the disinterestedness, *the „contemplation”, the most pure expression of the theoretical spirit*. [Mircea Florian, 2002, p.50].

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While citing A. Meinong, M. Florian stresses an important aspect for the epistemology of knowledge. The real objects compose a small part of that what an „object” is or could be. It is a long-time unnoticed fact, because there is „a particular strong interest for the real, lying in our nature, favouring the exaggeration to treat the no real as a simple nothing, more exactly as something the conscience finds any or any interesting contact point in.” [A. Meinong, în Mircea Florian, 2002, p.50]. Despite their beginning phase, the contemporaneous research in the reference fields of the nature and society are exploring aspects at the edge between the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual. The research methodology cannot and must not remain prisoner of the materialist-positivist canons, over bided during more than two centuries.

Defined as an action aiming to reach a certain purpose, according to the Dictionary for Science and Technology edited by the Academic Press, the science is „the systematic observation of the natural events and their causing conditions in order to discover facts and, based on that, to set rules and principles. The professor Sheldon F. Gottlieb, from the South University Alabama USA, defines the science as „an intellectual activity unfolded by individuals, in order to discover information about the natural world, they live in and to discover the way this information can be organised in significant patterns.” An interesting definition considers that the science consists purely and simply in setting and testing hypothesis based on observational proofs: “the experiments are important where appropriate, but their function is only to simplify the observation through imposing several controlled conditions.” [Dott, Jr. Robert; Roger Batten]. The science aims mostly to find out the truth. Knowledge means seeking for truth and explanative in a real way true theories, considers Karl R. Popper. He specifies also that the science does not offer absolute certitudes: knowledge may be also subject to errors. This philosopher opines that science is not an infallible “body of knowledge”, but rather a system of hypothesis, presuppositions or anticipations we work with as long as they resist the tests.

Likely to any other human act or product, the science started a philosophy, the frames for a mind logical structure were set and science took a decisive role in the social life. Accordingly, there is the *science philosophy*, *the science logic and methodology* and *the science sociology*, composing together *the epistemology*, a general science theory. In this comprehension framework, the general research is defined as an „active and systematic process, aimed to discover, to interpret or to review facts, events, behaviours or theories, or to achieve practical applications with the help of this kind of facts, rules or theories.”[Pisoschi, A., Dobrescu, Emilian M.].

2. Paradigms – research programmes and traditions – freedom and creativity in the creating process

„Any person who didn't pass through the philosophy is irremediably incomplete.” J. Piaget

The relation between science and philosophy was in the decades of the 20-th century the object of several large analyses and of some loud and interesting discussions. It is well-known that cause of this situation was the science. Through its resounding in those period successes, the science was imposing a basic review of the world image in the 19-th century. Illustrious philosophers like Nietzsche, Poincaré and Bergson took a strong

sceptical attitude, setting doubts and even categorical denials concerning the value as truth of the scientific theories, by affirming that they were relative, subjective and even false. Philosophy and science concerns are mutually subordinated. Aiming to be objective, the philosophy cannot ignore the science. Although, during the history of the knowledge development, the philosophical thinking anticipated ideas later confirmed by the science, the philosophy always was supported by the science and the science took for investigation and solution numerous problems belonging previously to the proper field of the philosophy.

The very dynamic picture of the scientific changes described by **Th. Kuhn** remarkably modified the science philosophy. A considerable Romanian scientific community supports any speech in the matter, invoking concepts and vision he proposed. His contribution is, for sure, remarkable. The author of the *Structure of the scientific revolutions* assigned the success and the power of the science to a delicate balance between several factors in a complex and fragile mechanism. *The scientific paradigm*, as defined by T. Kuhn, represents an exemplary scientific achievement, succeeding to orient the scientific theory and practice through its content: rules, concepts, preferences, philosophical presuppositions, and a problem source whose solutions are prefigured like in a puzzle game.

In an epistemological view, the paradigm is an explanation pattern, dominating a scientific community, in a certain moment of the historical development of a particular discipline. As an organised body of logically or empirically satisfactory conceptions, it has a heuristic function: to generate operational hypothesis, methodologies and validation criteria. In Kuhn's opinion, the central specificity of a science consist in the fact that fundamental ideas associated to a paradigm are not a controversy subject, because the basic principles are isolated towards the denial. Starting from this point of view, the researchers in a certain scientific field are seeking to theoretically and experimentally extend the paradigm in order to approach new cases. Despite that, Kuhn concedes that theories are sometimes denied by the observation. The paradigm containing the research model will provide the grounding principles for the future adopted decisions concerning the research development and completing. Inside the development of each discipline, there is a certain "orbit", corresponding to each paradigm: it may start in a deterministic way (directly connected to the reality and the experience and having the status of a logic hypothesis sum) and, after the constitution of a theory family associated to a general program, if placed in the abstract "generator" nucleon, it can become a structural paradigm.

According as the theory is evolving, one or more theory families ("nets") appear, leading to the relations with the experience. It will be much more difficult to give up to an entire paradigm. Only the identification of a critical mass of anomalies and the appearance of a new paradigm, rival of the first, can lead to the avoidance of a paradigm. In this context, we admit that a certain paradigm – including an educational recognized paradigm – may accumulate, during the time, some anomalies. The education science is supposed to consider them as *challenges* and to open, in this new space, coherent research programs in order to solve the dysfunctions due to those anomalies in the reality of the studied phenomenon. The accumulation of several anomalies can release the phenomenon of education science crisis, representing a special period of time in the development and the evolution of the scientific field. During this respite, the present paradigm is losing its

capacity to inspire and guide the Scientifics, but no new paradigm is born, in order to revitalise and enlighten the research field.

In Kuhn's opinion, the decline of a paradigm represents not a denial moment of the scientific status of the field itself, but it is a part of the "*adequate functioning of the science*", although, in most of the cases, the implied Scientifics don't feel/perceive things in the same way. The relations of the paradigms with the evolution of the theoretical and applicative investigations represent a distinct layout concerning the role of the paradigms in the knowledge evolution. Thus, the paradigms are not abstractly developed, but indispensable according to the study of some applications in a troublesome space, by using the practice of problem solving.

The author of the *Structure of the scientific revolution* puts in discussion another aspect: the relation between the paradigm and some inconsistent evolutions of the scientific investigations. When the research arrives to experimental findings contradicting the paradigm presumptions (and thus its expectations), the approach has to treat them as problems or difficulties to remove and not as problems trying to invalidate that paradigm (in Kuhn's language – counter examples). According to Kuhn, the conclusion is that the progresses in grounding and implementing the paradigm do not represent confirmations and the anomalies were not invalidations of the paradigm, but solutions to puzzle problems. The research continuation aims to solve these problems and not to test or to not credit the paradigm.

The secret of a science depends on the remarkable balance it succeeds to preserve between to be too resistant to changes in its fundamental ideas and to be not enough resistant to it. Kuhn concludes that this balance cannot be described in terms of explicit rules. An important observation aimed to ground the messages of our paper derives from Kuhn's emphasis concerning the Scientifics' caution regarding the critical interrogation and the denial of the fundamental science ideas based only on simple observations. Any science history provides conclusive data in this matter. The denial moments of a fundamental idea, treated in an historical view, appear as insignificant, at the scale of the whole science development process, regardless of the waves aroused in a certain moment.

If Kuhn deeply trusts the ordinary standards implied in the paradigms and in science capacity to overcome the crisis beyond the obstacles and the failures, there are opinions that his point of view were less productive if not even dangerous. The perseverant commitment to paradigm fundamental ideas may stagnate the science development. The scientific education appears as a way „to indoctrinate”, leading to the result that Scientifics prove a deep „faith” in their paradigm.

Imre Lakatos, a Hungarian philosopher, popper's contributor, less known in the Romanian epistemology of the education science, is one of the most ardent remonstrators of Kuhn's theories. Kuhn itself made from the beginning a summary inventory of his agreement points with Popper: „we both are more preoccupied by the dynamic process leading to get the scientific knowledge then by the logical structure of the scientific research products. ... We both reject the outlook that the science is cumulatively progressing, we both stress out the revolutionary process leading to reject a theory and to replace it by a new one, incompatible; we both strongly stress out the role in this process of the incapacity of the previous theory to face the difficulties of logic, experiment or observation.” [Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, pp. 1-2].

Beyond this common points, it was clear that the two conceptions are fundamental different. The main disagreement refers to the image they have about the science and the way to get this image. Kuhn takes into account *the science-as-it-is*, and Popper and his disciples, *the science as-it-has-to-be*. The Kuhn method appeal to the science history and sociology and after that to the current scientific practice. The Popper method relies on the science logic and methodology.

Lakatos was considering that the foundation of Kuhn's theory is an undesirable one and that „it has an destructive effect upon reason and finally is dangerous for the society”. (apud Imre Lakatos in Godfrey-Smith, p. 165). For this purpose, he builds his creation in order to save the science rationality from the appreciate damages it suffered because of the Kuhn perspective. Lakatos wants the entire research approach to be guided by clear methodological rules. The assessment of the scientific changes as a fundamental irrational fundamental process – a matter belonging to the crowd psychology – is for Lakatos a dangerous way to get. Lakatos considers the relation between the science history and philosophy - the epistemology – from the perspective of the support and the assessment of the philosophical/scientific conceptions: through *historical case studies*. He is stressing out the fact that only „rational reconstructions “of historical episodes have to be taken into consideration, where Scientifics decisions and work should presented be as rational as possible. These rational reconstructions are in fact intentional distortions of the events - admitted and mentioned in the footnotes of the historical papers – aimed to explain a field evolution. From his point of view, the history is not only a description of events as they took place, but an events interpretation from the view of their potential of becoming and rational importance. In his work *Science philosophy*, Peter Godfrey- Smith was asking why, at the time of its affirmation and even later, this idea was not welcomed „with more philosophical astonishment and criticism.” (p. 166. cit. paper) Lakatos' contribution to the science epistemology is connected to the development of a unitary conception regarding the science organization, very influential under the name methodology of scientific research programs. For Lakatos a research program is a model analogous to the paradigm theorized by Kuhn, in its large sense. The obvious difference results in the fact that, for Lakatos, each field usually has more than one research program at any moment. From his point of view, the science – any science – including the pedagogy (our note) – has actually to integrate a competition between the research programs. It is an essentially appreciated fact for rationality and progress. The idea of concurrent programs represents clearly a useful perspective to base the educational research in Romania!

A research program is an historical entity developing and evolving during the time. The program refers to a corpus of related theories. Later theories are built as an answer to the problems generated by the previous theories. The fundamental theories of a program are not immediately rejected if anomalies of the empirical data can infirm them in a primary form. A research program has two main components: *a hard core*, represented by a set of fundamental ideas, indispensable to the research program and a protection belt ring – conceived as a set of less fundamental ideas capitalized in order to apply the hard core to the real phenomenon.

Lakatos's perspective is an important one for the development of the educational research programs. The necessity to identify the hard core of these research programs – the fundamental ideas of the educational sciences – in order to validate the message of the empirical data bring to our attention the studies for historical research, the content analysis,

the hermeneutics, the comparative approaches etc, needed to validate the scientificity of the pedagogical knowledge and to crystallize the axiomatic set of defining scientific ideas. The detailed and specific versions of a scientific testable educational theory include ideas from the hard core combined with ideas from the protection ring! The research program is a progressive one (influenced by Popper), constantly expanding his applicability to a more and more bigger set of cases, capable to enhance its predictive capacity. A research program is degenerating if the changes acting on cover only the existent problems and have not the necessary opening capable to include new cases/situations.

Despite that, a research program seeming to degenerate has to be a while protected in order as well to decant the significations of the primary conclusions as to reflect on the applied methodology and the entire research approach. Estimated as Achilles heel of his theory (Feyerabend, 1975), or „high risk situation” (Lakatos, 1971), this perspective allows us to retain as important the meta-rational detachment in the process of the education research, aimed to see beyond the denials/validations of the empiric data.

In 1977, **Larry Laudan** was publishing his paperwork *Progress and Its Problems* and was developing a conception similarly to Lakatos’s conception, admitting although the power of Kuhn’s discussion concerning the social structure of the science and the historical examples. Likely to Lakatos, Laudan wanted to develop a conception about entities similar to paradigms capable to coexist and to compete in a scientific field. His phrase is not „research program”, but „*research traditions*”. The difference is not only a terminological one. If for Lakatos, the hard core of a research program never changes, for Laudan the theories representatives for the research traditions are not too closely related. The hard core allows ideas mobility, their declination according to the evolutions noticed in a socio-historical and scientific perspective. The theories sustained at a certain moment may leave a research tradition and be absorbed by others. Another new element in Laudan’s theory refers to researcher’s attitude towards the scientific theories and implicitly towards the science. If Kuhn and others before Laudan were admitting and describing researcher’s attitudes in terms of faith and adhesion, Laudan distinguishes clearly between the theory acceptance and practice. If the acceptance supposes and implies a certain degree of faith, the practice means a new attitude. It implies the decision to work with a certain idea and to explore it for some reasons, practically or theoretically, for other reasons than the confidence in its value as truth. Laudan considers that the theory or idea acceptability is measured by the general level of its capacity for problem solving and not for the rate of changes in other theories.

Paul Feyerabend, an Austrian philosopher, is one of the most controverted and adventurous personalities in the post-kuhnian debates. In his paperwork *Against Method*, edited in 1975, he is arguing and sustaining the so called „epistemological anarchism”. In his view, an epistemological anarchist is opposing to all rule systems and constraints in the science, for reasons regarding the assessment and the valorisation of the science researchers’ creativity. Setting up methodological rule in science will limit their creativity. From an historical research view, his perspective gains in sustainability. To discover the truth, to ground the science axiomatic core was achieved in very unusual ways. The contemporaneous expression freedom imposes the opening of some novel perspectives in the knowledge process, precisely in order to win and not to waste the time on beaten track paths, not always fertile. One of the strongest convictions Feyerabend had is that „*science is representing un aspect of human creativity*”! In this ideate universe, he is criticising

Kuhn for his appeal to the Scientifics to be organized, ordered, mechanistic; these aspects will encourage the worse tendencies in the 20-th century science: the professionalization, the horizon restriction and the exclusion of neo-orthodox ideas! [Godfrey-Smith, p.179]. Although sometime presented as “science enemy”, Feyerabend wanted to transmit an important message to the science: Scientifics have to present themselves as defenders of the freedom and creativity. At the end of his book, he states strongly that “the present society must be set free from the stifling authority of an scientific dominating establishment, in the same way as yesteryear it had to be set free from the authority of the True and Unique Religion” [Godfrey - Smith, p. 180].

3. What is important to be recorded from the contemporaneous orientations of the science philosophy for the epistemological grounding of the pedagogy through the appeal to the historical research?

The perspectives treated in an accentuated comparative way, in the opposition Kuhn – Lakatos – Laudan – Feyerabend, become, from our point of view, beneficent in the educational research space, in an historical methodological vision. In his paperwork *The Logic of the scientific research*, K. Popper was valuing the fact that the experimental verification confirms nothing about a theory *truth*. A theory means a sum of daring „conjectures” and hypothesis with an infinite number of *consequences*. Even if someone takes a theory as being true, no one could prove it in an experimental way, precisely because the infinite number of its consequences. In order to refill this methodological gap and to surpass the deadlock, Popper considers that it would be better to emphasis the falsehood of a theory. In other words, he sustains that it is easier to find reasons in order to demonstrate the falsehood of a theory that reasons to demonstrate that generalization are true. Such reasoning leads him to his famous *falsifiability or contradiction criterion*. Popper concluded that the scientist and science role is to permanently formulate daring “conjectures” and to find, after that, the criterion in order to emphasis and eliminate errors this research priority implies necessarily an historical methodological approach.

In Einstein’s revolutionary opinion about the universe, „for the ideas and cultures history, it is obvious that phenomena appearing in a temporal random sequence belong to another reality (...); in its own dimension, this reality composes a whole (...) and the historian’s purpose is to perceive it like a whole.” In other words, the ideas history will perceive the link between ideas as a *synchronic* one, for instance, as a result of their belongingness to the same *system* which can be represented according to some rules. The results of the mental processes are the processes of thinking: systems deriving from the same premises and existing in their own (logical) dimension, a dimension non identifiable with the history of humanity. They interact in each moment with the history and the chronological sequence they compose is a sort of sequential *puzzle*. The ideas historian has to propose the study of the systems of thinking in their own dimension and a system of thinking has to be admitted as such: „an object coming from *outside*, traversing our space in an apparently discontinuous way, having a hidden logic we can discover only if we succeed to get out from *our space*. In other words, the history is the sequential result, incredible complex, of the interaction on a large scale of several systems of non-sequential thinking.”

- The educational research programs have to interrogate, in a temporal perspective, in an accentuated critical way, the recognized paradigm/paradigms in order to identify the

fundamental ideas, their hard axiomatic core and the protection ring enough flexible, able to open new approach possibilities for the problems/puzzles generated by the studied phenomena. A cautious attitude towards the paradigm organising the scientific activity represents a necessary condition for the rationalization of the research in its whole and for the enhancement of the conclusions objectivity.

- The educational paradigm synergic subordinates various models and methods and opens to the pedagogy the possibility to be considered as a modelled science/thinking as well from a theoretical as from an applicative point of view. In this way, the models permit to identify and understand the relations between the action logic and the ideas logic. For instance, the attempt to crystallise a real educational community and several axiological and pragmatic solutions regarding the education brought face to face theorists and practitioners, concerned about the education fate “today and tomorrow” and the crisis generated by the multiple theoretical and practical educational options, defining the movement *New Education* and all its waves. The *New Education* can be considered as an historical socio-historical phenomenon, aiming to achieve a breach in the educational field, subordinate to the conviction that human are perfectible and generating a possible reform in the organization of the social life, of the specific educational theories and practices. The *New Education* doesn’t appear as a linear or unitary movement. It doesn’t represent a doctrine body: it has a centre and peripheries. Thus, it is possible to define it as a system of socio-educational values divided and disputed in identifiable thinking and practicing groups, having established, in the time, the representative characteristics of the *New Education*. From this perspective, the New Education can be considered as a socio-cultural production, varying in time and space. For this reason, we appreciated and supported *the interrogation in a localized manner of the existent ideas filiations* in the space of the movement *New Education*, the more or less anti-establishment convergences and actions aimed to achieve an educational renewal manifested during the 20-th century. [Csorba, pp.42-44] Each educational paradigm bounds an exclusivist scientific practice, enough resistant to the novelty. All these restrictions, sometimes considered as defects, prove to be necessary to the science development; “by concentrating the attention on a restraint problem area relatively esoteric, the paradigm constraints Scientifics (researchers in education) to investigate a part of the nature in details and deepness hardly to be reached in other conditions” [Kuhn, pp.67-68].

- Kuhn proposes and argues for a stage approach of the interrogation in every knowledge field. In his opinion, the knowledge interrogation should include a pre-paradigmatic and a paradigmatic phase. The interpretations we assign to the human capacity to process information make possible a more nuanced analysis. In the pre-paradigmatic phase, the epistemological analysis (and not only) are passing from *empirical to philosophical interrogations* and later to scientific interrogations; the interpretations produced in the scientific ways of interrogation make possible to contour the first paradigm and lead to the entrance in the paradigmatic phase. The historical research can clarify the image of those stages, by permitting to differentiate the fundamental ideas from the less relevant ideas, from a temporal perspective, proper to an authentic scientific approach. The signification of recourse to the history of the pedagogy derives from the necessity to understand the educational characteristics of our times, in order to develop, restore and reanimate the educational reflections, to

recover and revalue the rediscovered pedagogical thinking and culture. “An historic-hermeneutic analysis of the educational contexts, historically defined, may determine the derivation of some important aspects of a problematic ... The historical analysis of the educational reality offers support to solve the big pedagogical problems, by updating the origins of these questions in the context of the present problems”. [Wulf, pp. 26-27]

- Recomposing historically contextualized „ages”, crystallized in paradigmatic sentences, with a metaphoric echo, means to appeal to an expanded documentary field. The revaluation of the numerous written or iconographic documents, even records, requires, certainly, much erudition. Each specific history can be object of a relativity accusation. However, the history relativity is itself historically determined. In fact, the requirements concerning the internal coherence of a historical speech relay essentially on the way the proofs and documents are treated, in a verticality effort placed at the border separating science and fiction. The use of a history research instrument, scientifically validated, may reduce the hazard and arbitrary part in collecting, inventorying, exploring and valuing documents. Documents interrogation has to avoid, also, the „distance excess” of P. Bourdieu [Bourdieu, p.11] and to cultivate a proximity relationship – to sit face to face with the educational facts, in an historical perspective – in order to increase the objectivity of our conclusions.

- Being philosophy, the epistemology of pedagogy is always returned to its own past. That’s why, taking in consideration that „the best introduction in a discipline is, always its history” [Mircea Flonta, p.3] we shall admit that, for the epistemology as for other cases, in order to understand the present issues, the solutions proposed by the big epistemological currents for the development of the pedagogy as a scientific field, it is indispensable to know the manner it was established. We are not interested in details and nor in the ensemble of the historical development of the epistemology – viewed in his whole continuous extension. We want to know only its „focal” points: the decisive moments, the acquisitions of the past having a present value.

- A surprising aspect for a coherent epistemological analysis of each paradigm its hat facts and phenomena included by the educational theorists can be satisfactorily explained only through the appeal to theoretical constructs and to methodologies belonging to other fields also (psychology, sociology, philosophy, neurophysiology etc.). This perspective is a result of the relative new orientation in the field of the scientific research; the integrity and interdisciplinary of the approaches, of ideas discovery and justification. It is also useful to mention that, in the science philosophy; two other important objections were derivate and are furnishing to the educational scientist a new reflection, doubt bur also certitude space: „the individual paradigms rarely present the influence type Kuhn is describing and major changes can happen without crisis.” [Godfrey-Smith, p. 158]. Kuhn’s remarkable attempt to achieve a new approach for the science philosophy by discussing the social structure of sciences and the basic mechanisms of science change and becoming continue to represent for the pedagogical research a fertile even flowering road.

- The research traditions, recognized as well worldwide as at the national level, by the currents of pedagogical thinking include in the *tradition* syntagm the temporality pattern: the historical research in education science appears thus as having priority and being relevant, by offering rational-objective grounding perspectives to the on-going

research programs. Obviously, for each pedagogical research school the moment to objectively identify, admit and notice the research tradition is one having priority. The circulated theories between specific research traditions, paradigmatically recognized or not, have to be, in time, noticed and dated; it is an aspect the historical research has mostly to take in consideration.

- Laudan's recommendation to practice the research tradition having the highest progress rate in solving the problems the school of a certain epoch has to face proposes, for the history of the pedagogical institutions and doctrines, new research and development areas. We consider the tradition of the Romanian and universal pedagogical research, in an analysis comparative context. The acceptability of a theory or of an idea, measured through the general capacity level to solve education problems reminds us the perspective of the pragmatic instrumental philosophy, promoted by Dewey at the beginning of the 20-th century which influenced worldwide, in the last 100 years, more or less obvious the philosophy schools.
- The assessment of the science and the importance of the historical research in the education field from the perspective of Feyerabend's conception – according to which the science is a defining aspect of the human creativity – allow us to appreciate the reopening of several education research areas from new points of view. We consider an fundamental historical research approach capable to reveal and enlighten, according to new interpretation and explanation principles, several areas insufficiently explored and theoretically valued, due to the absence of systematic concerns in the matter, or to the perpetuation of paradigms by value declaratively affirmed and reaffirmed without chances for new research roads in the innovation of the education practices.
- Feyerabend offers an important observation to the understanding of the development process for each science by demonstrating that in most of the cases „the science is a matter that belongs more to the manner of discussing it than to the adoption of the observation lessons.” The author disputes the empirical exaggerations and the grounding of the scientific theories on elementary observational descriptions. Obvious, observational things are mentioned, things Galileo had to face at the beginning of the 17-th century, in order to demonstrate Earth's movement. Our daily experiences related to the movement are suggesting that Earth is stationary. But, how many of the lecturers of this article doubt that the Earth is moving? Of course, willing „to reconcile” Feyerabend with Laudan, we could follow the evolution of some research programs, based on research traditions and rules capable to enhance the rate of the problem solving capacity.
- When Feyerabend is proposing and supporting the idea that the science is taking benefit from the existence of alternative ideas and perspectives, he is launching another interesting idea aimed to support open research programs and to harness the history methodologies. The interpretation of the phenomena in a historical perspective has to take in consideration the multiple points of view for the understanding and explanation, in an ideate and action dimension. It is important to find out if the sources/documents we base our study were noticed by „defeated” or „victorious” individuals! To accept and to value alternative explanations is not damaging, on the contrary it allows large openings to the knowledge understanding, to the identification as well of the depth and clarity areas as of the still cloudy areas, by proposing new research areas in the future.

- The competences specific for the researcher are interrogated in a new perspective: the opening to ideas proliferation and to the diversity of the life and existence styles. Feyerabend suggest that it is the only way we can perceive the limits of our present perspective, by stepping outside it, even if only for the moment. Things we consider established, observational facts, are in many cases loaded with old fashioned prejudices and experiential taboos. Despite that, there is a strong need for prudence and for an evaluation or rejection or acceptance mechanism on the “ideas market”, capable to enhance the science and to innovate the practices. Feyerabend’s perspective brings to the science a piece of the arts savour. It is a fact to be taken in consideration, if we see in the scientific creation process the artistic consuming fire capable to resurrect human enthusiasm, freedom and creativity in its sublime and gifted part! Imagination and creativity are, for sure, one science part, but not the only one.

Conclusions:

An important characteristic of the science concerns its *multidisciplinary character*. *The scientific knowledge is more and more rapidly applied* in the practice and in many cases the fundamental research is interpenetrating the applicative one. The scientific research activity *interferes with education and instruction activities*. The research itself has to be considered as an active learning process. The lessons of the past are important if integrated in coherent research and learning programs. The education science needs of course important material, financial and human resources and the scientific information becomes more and more expensive. On the other hand, the globalization imposes international cooperation in educational science, materialized in information exchanges and the creation of strong scientific communities, capable to offer auxiliary opportunities in the knowledge process and the results valuing. The historical and comparative perspective, philosophically grounded, can provide added rigour and coherence to any investigative observational-experimental approach. The science philosophy is capable to offer, in an integrated vision, the needed epistemological support in order to ground some education research methodologies able to open new research areas in the education field, from the perspective of their evolution and maturation in an epistemological and social dimension. The conscience of the fact that pedagogy – the base for all education sciences – has to be involved in a defining and redefining process of the specific object and methodology according to a normative background, mostly controversial and unsure, appears in the epistemological dimension as a pressing priority. The poverty of the historical-theoretical and meta-theoretical synthesis in the education field stresses out the fact that pedagogy is still looking for concepts decantation and explanations, in order to facilitate the rigorous and valuable epistemological reflexion. For the pedagogy, such an epistemological reflection is a very important necessity, the more obvious that the scientific communities appreciate the need for clarification and delimitation of the explicative extension for some theories and recognized educational paradigms.

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EDUCATION OF THE DISABLED IN NIGERIA: ACCESS AND PERCEPTION

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Abstract

Grappling with various elements of development, Nigeria has not been well placed to tackle problems confronting the education system in general and those of the disabled persons in particular. To find out the state of affairs of education of the disabled in Nigeria and students' perception of inclusive education, among other issues, an exploratory study was carried out. The study indicates that Nigeria has limited facilities for the education of disabled children, many children apparently lack access to education and learning aids and equipment are extremely inadequate. It is obvious that Nigeria needs to address the issue of access to education while working towards achieving inclusive education.

Keywords: *disability, poverty, segregation, facilities, education*

Introduction

A significant number of Nigerians are disabled and without access to education. The National Television Authority (NTA) reported on 10 August 2008 that the Federal Office of Statistics estimates that 30% of 150 million Nigerians are disabled. The same medium informed the next day that 14 million disabled persons inaugurated a disabled people's group. ASCEND (Association for Comprehensive Empowerment of Nigerians with Disabilities), officially launched in 2006, claims that 19 million Nigerians live with disabilities, (<http://www.ascendnigeria.com/aboutusascend.html>). However, until recently, this set of people had largely been ignored, partly because their voice was not being heard. Their number, predicaments and needs are only just beginning to get into public consciousness as the disabled persons pushed for the passage of a Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities Bill in the National House of Assembly.

Prior to this time, they were only on public consciousness as street beggars; that is, disabled people were, as a norm, expected to beg to meet their basic daily needs, while those able-bodied people that beg are scorned. Poverty and limited level of development have militated against the disabled people of Nigeria: families scarcely can provide the needs of other members, including basic education, and are therefore not in the position to take on the additional more demanding responsibility of a disabled member. Similarly, since the country is behind in the provision of basic infrastructural facilities for the larger

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society, the needs of the disabled could not be attended to by a country grappling with the pains of evolution from its primordial state into a modern society. Specifically, the public education system today has failed because governments at various levels are yet to get on top of rudimentary issues surrounding the provision of quality education to the ordinary Nigerian child at any level. Therefore, dedicating needed attention and resources to developing a system of care for little-known portion of society whose need however is enormous can understandably not have come to the front burner of national policy design, especially considering that disability was yet to attract enough sympathy from communities. Again, providing for the disabled is a learning process; and integrating them into mainstream society requires creativity, all of which can take place when the disabled are very visible. Fortunately, Nigerian government is beginning to give them recognition.

Having accepted that every citizen is entitled to formal education, the government must now provide functional education to the disabled people of Nigeria so as to liberate them from excessive dependency and despondency. Education is important for the wellbeing of the individual and enables a person to function in society. In fact, the ramifications of education as a human right continue to unfold as efforts are being made to realise education for all. Today, education is not only the gateway to meaningful living, but in addition, life-long learning has become crucial for survival and progress in an information-based networked world. In an ever-changing world order people need information to be able to adapt to life in their community, and can only do so if they are sufficiently literate. An uneducated non-disabled person today is incapacitated, and an uneducated disabled person is despondent. The uneducated person is a burden on society, and the disabled more so, because, rather than contribute to development, they deplete resources. Investment in the education of the disabled is therefore seen as an investment for the general good of the society, since the uneducated disabled persons will most likely remain poor and increase the incidence of poverty in society (Lawrence, 2004; Jonsson & Wiman, 2001).

The indication is that Nigeria is not yet positioned to mainstream disabled people into the larger society due to the absence of facilities and amenities that are disabled persons friendly. Similarly, although it is recommended that disabled children should learn in an inclusive environment because “children learn best when they learn together” (World Bank, 2003 [p. 2]), it may yet be impracticable for Nigeria to do so right away, since roads and buildings will need restructuring. For this same reason, inclusive education which has been found to be cost-effective in the long run (Peter, 2007) may not be practicable in Nigeria yet, if the highest number of disabled people are to access education. While inclusive education should be practised where practicable, the most important concern might be how to make education accessible to all disabled children *immediately*, even if through the establishment of special schools and units. Moreover, the importance of adequate experience and increased manpower (teachers and care-givers) cannot be ignored or downplayed in designing inclusive education.

Considering that there are many children on the street, a study was embarked upon to find out the education opportunities available to disabled children and how disabled students perceive their education. This paper reports on an exploratory and descriptive study that was carried out on three states in Nigeria on two aspects of the education of the disabled. The next section discusses findings on disabled children’s access to education using information derived from interview sessions with education managers and school

teachers in institutions for the disabled, while the section after presents students' perception of their education programme as elicited using a questionnaire administered with assistance of teachers.

1. Access to education

In the 1980-90 decade notable achievements in the field of special education were recorded. To meet the nation's special educational needs, the Nigerian government sponsored studies in diverse areas of special education within and outside the country (FME, 1986). In addition to special schools and special units in mainstream schools, it also established rehabilitation centres around the country for the education and vocational training of people with disabilities. Nonetheless, a lot still needs to be done to guarantee Nigerian children quality education that can empower them to cope with or transform the world around them. Generally, disabled children attend special (integrated) schools for handicapped children at primary level; and mainstreaming is practised to a large extent at secondary level, but with schools dedicated to a particular disability, for example visual or hearing impairment. Although inclusive education has become a major focus internationally, ensuring that disabled children have access to education at all is still a major concern in Nigeria, there being limited access to schools for the disabled.

2. Policy

The Nigerian government offers Universal Basic Education (UBE) to every Nigerian child – free primary and junior secondary nine-year education. UBE documents emphasise “access, equality, equity, inclusiveness, affordability and quality” (e.g. Osuji, 2004: 4) of education among all Nigerian children. By implication disabled children are entitled to free education that should guarantee sufficient level of literacy for future learning in vocational or academic pursuit. UBE has led to astronomical increase in school attendance, yet there are indications that many disabled children are not captured by the UBE programme. Prior to UBE, a Federal Government document (FME, 1986) on special education in Nigeria clearly outlined steps and procedures that are in line with current international recommendations and best practices (e.g. Lawrence, 2004), and which ought to have ensured early intervention and effective inclusive education by now if implemented. According to the World Bank (2003 [p.3]) “early intervention in small, multi-ability groups is important when children are still in the formative stage of development.” However the policy on special education was not carried through and the momentum of that decade was lost. Nonetheless, a landmark achievement is the establishment of Special Education as a field of study in tertiary institutions and colleges of education.

The task of educating Nigerian children is enormous, considering that the country's population is large and its growth untamed, and that the country is transiting from agrarian-based economy to a modern one. Hopefully, with the current active participation of educated disabled persons in pushing for recognition of people living with disabilities and their special needs in society, the education of disabled children will eventually extend beyond the privileged few to all. The disability groups in different states are no longer silent as this excerpt indicates:

About 5000 disabled people in Anambra State yesterday protested what they saw as government's neglect and political exploitation of their plight... One of the disabled, Mr.

Ambrose Okeke, said although they were not beggars, they wanted government to touch their lives and assist them in various areas, instead of treating them like animals. He said, “Our members were angry because they kept us waiting [on World Disabled Day] from 10am to 4.30pm without a word from either the Governor or any official” (Collins, 2010: 4).

Ekiti State in December 2009 passed a bill to protect and promote the rights of people living with disability – it offers automatic scholarship to disabled persons (Ikujuni, 2009). This came after the Nigerian Senate passed a bill on Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities in March 2009 (Ogala, 2009).

Availability and types of facilities for disabled children:

The number and spread of special education facilities differ from state to state – some areas/cities do not have any. For example, as at 2009, Oyo State had 18 facilities for primary education in 14 local government areas (LGAs) with four in one LGA, two in a second and one each in 14; implying that 15 (out of 33) other LGAs have none. Similarly, as at 2008 while Oyo State had 26 public primary and (junior) secondary schools for disabled children, Osun State had 18 (both states are in the South western zone of the country), Bayelsa State (South-south) had just one facility for both primary and secondary education. Further, the level of inclusion practised at secondary school level differs. In one school in Oyo State, the deaf learn in the same class with the non-disabled students through an interpreter, while in another, a special deaf unit has been upgraded to a school within a school. Few schools have residential facilities.

Effort is being made to supply the necessary equipment, materials and learning aids; but as in other areas, state governments differ somewhat in the assistance given to disabled students. In Bayelsa State, students are given bursary awards annually; Oyo and Osun States provide residential facilities and offer lunch. In all, the gap between minimum requirements and what is provided is still much. For example, there are little or no assistive technologies; and computers are uncommon.

In Nigeria today, the presence, rather than absence of special schools or units (in regular schools) are indications that attention is being paid to the education of the disabled; their absence implies that those children with special needs are excluded. Therefore, with only one special school for the education of the handicapped, and no other provision in regular schools, Bayelsa State guarantees the disabled little access to education, especially since it has no residential facilities. Further data on the three states are given below:

Table (i): Public facilities available for the education of disabled children in three states

		Bayelsa State	Osun State	Oyo State
<i>As at</i>		<i>2008</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2005</i>
Primary	Number of schools	1	10	16
	Population	<89	974	2,040
Secondary	Number of schools	1	9	10
	Population	<89	NA	500

Bayelsa State: the primary and secondary schools are in the same place, and the total population as at 2008 is 89.

From available data, 76% of children with disabilities attend schools that admit diverse cases of disabilities, which constitute 75% of schools. In Osun, all schools are integrated, with only one private school dedicated to just one disability. Classes are however differentiated for each type of disability. However, the data obtained for Oyo State indicate that the percentage that transit from primary to secondary is low. As Jonsson and Wiman's (2001) observe, disabled children enrolment and attainment rates are lower than those of the non-disabled, and more so in developing countries for which 1–3% enrolment is estimated.

Some factors limiting access to education

The number of special educators is small and limits how many special units can be established in schools, as well as the extent inclusive education can be practised. Similarly, facilities are too few and far apart, and many are not disabled people friendly. At such facilities equipment, aids and material provision is inadequate. Some blind people lacked basic learning tools such as typewriters, brailing machines, brailing sheets, stylus, textbooks, and talking calculators; and some hearing impaired needed hearing aids, etc. In fact, many were unaware of existing learning aids. This lack discourages continued schooling, as it also leads to only the highly determined and exceptionally intelligent choosing to pursue their education to a reasonable extent.

It is expensive for families to educate disabled children, especially in an environment (infrastructures) that is generally people unfriendly and definitely unsafe for free movement by the disabled. People lack the wherewithal for transporting the disabled to and from school. Some families are just too poor to be of help to a disabled child, so much so that some fail to pick up their children for holidays or return them to school at the end of holidays (when they are taken to them by care-givers). The cost of educating a disabled child in Nigeria is variously put at 4–10 times that of a non-disabled child (personal interviews). As Jonsson and Wiman (2001: 11) observe:

The incentives of households to enroll their disabled children is discouraged by lack of appropriate schooling options, poor accessibility of facilities, long distances and lack of transportation, school fees and cost of uniforms, and/or low expected returns to schooling for disabled children.

Besides, while some perfunctorily send their disabled ones to “somewhere” just because a place exists for the disabled many feel that investment in the disabled child is a waste. In addition, disability is still considered a taboo, a disgrace, a thing of shame, an embarrassment to a family, etc., such that many parents lack the courage to expose their disabled children to the public, preferring to hide them rather than seek means of educating or empowering them (early). Due to lack of timely intervention and remediation, it is no surprise that many disabled children enter school much later than their non-disabled counterparts, as the table below indicates.

Table (ii): Respondent average percentage, age at primary 1 and age at first year in junior secondary

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
Respondents' Age	18.69	13	36	4.360	89
Age in Pry 1	8.68	4	18	2.957	66
Age in JSS 1	15.77	11	22	2.499	61

Note: Only four students in the sample are mentally challenged.

Schools lack adequate teachers and other specialists, as well as equipment and resources. Expectedly, not many children spend enough time schooling. In many instances, getting through with education depends on the individual disabled person's determination to overcome challenges in the environment, and where people do not believe that disabled people can tap their potentials to become useful to themselves and society at large. However, asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that "the society has *not* provided what will help me become who I can become," 34.4% of students in this study disagreed, 36.7% agreed, while 28% could not say.

3. Students' perception of their education programme

A questionnaire was administered on secondary school students with various disabilities. Of the 90 students drawn from five schools in two states, 39 were in regular schools, 51 were in special schools. There were more males (55) than females (34). The table below shows the distribution of the respondents according to disabling conditions.

Table (iii): Distribution of respondents by type of disability

		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
1	Blind	11	12.2	12.2
2	Physical disability	21	23.3	35.6
3	Deaf	44	48.9	84.4
4	Mentally challenged	3	3.3	87.8
5	2+4	1	1.1	88.9
6	2+3	10	11.1	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	

Students' perception on various issues that have to do with their education was elicited using two sets of five-point Likert scales requesting them to indicate 1) how much they agreed with a statement and 2) the extent to which a statement was true. Their responses are discussed under three subsections below, focusing on what education means to the individual, individual's assessment of own academic potential and performance, and whether inclusive or segregated education is preferred.

What education means to the individual

According to Lawrence (2001:5) education is "a facilitator in everyone's human development and functionality." Further, the World Bank (2003 [p.2]) observes that it is

“lack of schooling and not their disability [that] limits their opportunities.” This study finds that students’ perception of the significance of education in their lives supports these assertions. Several of the students (86.5%) saw education as a means of achieving their dreams, 85.4% considered it important for inclusion in society, while 78.7% agreed that educated disabled people are in a position to manage disability better than the non-educated. In addition, 63% believed that disabled people can easily find jobs.

On whether, generally speaking, education is a right, privilege or favour, 62% of all respondents saw it as a right, 61.5% as a privilege, but 45.5% saw education as a favour. Furthermore, asked to characterise the education they were receiving, 37% saw it as a right, 34% as a privilege and 29% as a favour. Given the Nigerian environment where many disabled persons cannot access education, government-supported education may be perceived as a favour. In addition, it seems that an environment that supports interaction of a disabled person with others with similar disability gives a disabled person more confidence to cope with the challenges of disability. Thus, of 28 respondents that described their own education as a privilege, 21 belonged to the same (residential) school which is fully catered for by the government. Some of the respondents were glad to have special educators that could appreciate and attend to their special needs. Even though this is in line with the advocacy for universal education (e.g. Peters, 2007), such “privilege” is indeed a favour in an environment where regular education is neither funded or is partially supported by governments. In addition, it would have become obvious to the students that most parents are helpless without government support. The implication is that the education of the disabled in Nigeria today will suffer if placed on the same pedestal with regular education, which is yet to attract sufficient funding and provision of material resources.

No matter how it is viewed (a right, privilege or favour), education of the disabled is of utmost importance; and there is a growing realisation that it is key to securing their other rights in society (Peters, 2007).

Assessment of academic potentials and performance

The respondents in the study seem to be highly motivated by their aspirations. As many as 96.6% were positive about their future after their secondary education and as many indicated that they wished to further their studies in a tertiary institution. Although 43% indicated that disability limits what they want to do or become, as many as 85% were convinced that they can study whatever they wished to. Most (73.5%) believe that, with the right assistance, disabled people can do well academically. Similarly, 78.4% assessed themselves as capable of performing as well as non-disabled children, and 85.2% as possessing equal potentials with the non-disabled for becoming professionals.

In terms of actual performance, 77.7% believed that they were doing as well as other children academically. However, 24% were not sure that they understood what was being taught (69% were certain that they did), and while 34.5% were not sure that they were performing well in the class, 60.9% assessed themselves positively.

Students’ performance can be mediated by many factors, some of which have already been pointed out. Incidentally, some of the students were not aware of what devices are needed to aid learning. One other factor was teacher capacity and availability. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the students indicated that teachers were available for all subjects, but some also pointed out a need for more special educators. Similarly, 63.6% assessed

their teachers as capable of helping them to learn – but there is a wide variation in response among schools. More than half of those (30 of 55) that made the assertion that their teachers were capable belonged to the same school (the only special school involved in the study); and only one person from that school was not sure. All of 12 students from an inclusive school did not assess their teachers as capable. Nonetheless, 79.6% of the respondents think that teachers need more training so as to relate better with disabled students. This also suggests that for inclusive education to be beneficial and conducive to disabled and non-disabled students alike, all teachers will require some form of training in relating with and teaching those with special needs.

4. Inclusive or segregated education

In view of international advocacy for inclusive education, this study elicited students' responses on inclusive education and its inherent benefit. Equal numbers of students (46.6%) were for or against persons with disability living in a community of their own – the deaf favoured segregation. However, 65% felt that teasing was not a problem to them, just as 60% disagreed that name-calling and teasing (question of acceptance of person) constitute sufficient reason to put disabled children in separate schools. In terms of preference in individual relationships with the disabled and non-disabled mates, 19% did not enjoy either, while 44.6% enjoyed both. Overall, 54% wanted to associate with non-disabled mates, and 68.6% wanted to associate with disabled age-mates. The table below gives further information.

Table (iv): Percentage of deaf respondents that enjoy being with mates

	<i>With non-disabled</i>	<i>With disabled</i>
School 1 (high inclusiveness)	54%	83.3%
School 2 (low inclusiveness)	25%	37.6%

In School 1 the deaf learn in the same class with non-impaired students through an interpreter, while in School 2 the hearing impaired students occupy a block of classrooms exclusively but within the bigger school. School 2 students are taught exclusively. Expectedly, there would be more interactions between hearing-impaired and non-impaired students in School 1 than in School 2, since the non-impaired would also be able to pick up sign language with which to communicate with their hearing-impaired mates. The data in the table suggest that hearing impaired students in School 1 (high inclusive) had better interaction within the disability group and across group than those in School 2 (low inclusiveness) whose relationship within and across group might be poor. Therefore, the deaf in the high inclusive school might have a higher level of wellbeing. This finding supports Jonsson and Wiman (2001) and Peters (2007) assertion that inclusive education is far more beneficial to the disabled and society than non-inclusive education. Contrary to expectation, a blind student in the present study, who incidentally was in a higher class than his non-disabled twin brother, in expressing preference for inclusive education, asserted that the superior performance of the disabled could serve as motivation to the visually unimpaired, by encouraging them to put in more effort in their studies.

Bakker and Bosman (2003) found in their study that students' self-image is strongly related to performance level, and therefore suggest that students' social and emotional wellbeing be given more consideration since school experiences could affect emotional health well into adulthood. The above notwithstanding, the debate on inclusiveness or exclusiveness is not over – studies reviewed by Bakker and Bosman (2003) show mixed

outcomes on students' self-image in inclusive and non-inclusive environments. Besides, inclusive education does not guarantee integration or inclusiveness of disabled students pedagogically (Peters, 2007) or in everyday activities of regular school communities without some efforts (Copeland et al., 2005). According to Copeland et al. (2005), discussants in focus groups observed that during school interactional programmes disabled students did not participate in everyday social and academic events. The high school students in their study believed that the general education environments are typically unsupportive of students with severe disabilities.

Nevertheless, most respondents (80.7%) in the study reported here agreed with the statement that "Disabled children should attend the same schools with other children." It should however be borne in mind also that special schools/units in Nigeria may provide superior pedagogy, as students' assessment of their teacher competence and availability in this study suggests.

5. Outlook on education of children with disability in Nigeria

Government and the general public are becoming more aware of disabilities and people with disabilities. The media has been instrumental in propagating the message of hope and solution to those families with disability problems. Of particular note is a live TV programme sponsored and co-presented by a blind lawyer, Sunday Ayodele Adekanbi titled, "Beyond the Limits." The programme has created much awareness and interest about people living with disabilities in society, leading to the appreciation of disability (it is not a mysterious evil) and acceptance of disabled people. Consequently, local governments, social associations, organisations, churches and individuals are assisting people with disability through provision of needed equipment. The Oyo State government, for example, has built two additional primary schools since 2005 (making it 18 of such facilities in the state). Further, efforts are being made to equip all schools for the disabled and provide full boarding facilities.

"Beyond the Limits" paved the way for the creation of the office of Special Adviser on disability matters to the state governor in Oyo State. Adekanbi has succeeded in spreading the idea to other states, and a coalition of nine special advisers in 2008 had 16 members by the end of 2009. Their goal is to ensure that the interest of disabled people is represented, and that they participate in decision-making. Efforts by disability bodies has culminated in the passing of relevant bill by the House of Assembly, which in respect of education provides that all higher institutions should install elevators for free movement of people with disabilities, that visually impaired people should be provided all texts in Braille from primary school level to ensure early start in literacy in Braille, and that education should be free for the disabled.

6. Conclusion

The study suggests that students' wellbeing is better in inclusive than segregated education, but, however, that teachers in special schools are better skilled in handling learning disabilities (Jenkins and Leicester, 1992) than those in regular schools. The study further reveals that education is important for the formation of positive self-image and for functioning in society and that despite disabling conditions the disabled students rated their own academic potentials and performance positively. These indicate that if the 1986 policy on special education is revisited and implemented it will align the education of the disabled

in Nigeria with international best practices. It is important to note that inclusive education cannot succeed without inadequacies in general education properly and forcefully addressed; and that quality need not be compromised for quantity so that children are not disabled through schooling, rather than enabled through education. In addition, to encourage free movement of people with disability meaningful changes in public infrastructures is inevitable.

Nigeria may not attend optimal mainstreaming of the disabled in schools and society at large in the nearest future. It should however ensure access to quality education. Special schools may be expanded and special units established in as many schools as feasible, and select schools can have residential facilities for the disabled. Inclusiveness can increase as experience is gained about disabilities and education of those with special needs, disabilities are accepted by people as normal in society, and physical infrastructures are made friendly for all. Meanwhile, henceforth universal design should be employed in future construction of buildings, roads and other amenities.

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INTERVIEWERS AND THE SOURCES OF ERRORS IN THE APPLICATION OF OPINION QUESTIONNAIRES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the theoretical and practical aspects concerning research based on questionnaires, the errors which arise in the application of questionnaires, as well as the importance of training the interviewers. The first sections approach the particularities of empirical research and the procedural aspects of the activity of interviewers. A special place is held by the psychological and social interactions that are instituted between the interviewer and the questioned person, an interaction regarded from the perspective of the errors and the sources of errors in conducting the interview. Starting from the bibliography studied and the author's experience as a researcher at institute of public opinion polling, the last part of the article focuses upon the typical skills required in the training of students from the profile faculties for the participation at field research initiated by the economical organizations, institutions or entities.

Keywords: *interviewer, questionnaire, errors, sources of errors, skill standards.*

The questionnaire as a research tool and technique

Research based on questionnaires refers to the acquisition of data, information and opinion with the purpose of explaining social facts, phenomena or processes. Although social research have as their methodological principle the unit between theoretical and empirical, a distinction is often made between theoretical and field research. The latter involves the direct observation of the reality, the application of specific methods and techniques of data collection (investigation, questionnaire, interview), as well as establishing certain correlations between different types of phenomena, behaviors or social attitudes.

In the practical order of things, field research involves two methods: the sociological investigation and the survey. While the sociological investigation mainly uses the questionnaire and the interview to collect information referring to the information about subjective aspects (opinions, attitudes, interests, aspirations etc.) and objective aspects (the structure of the family, age, level of income, occupation etc.), the main task of the survey is to show the interests expressed by a significant number of people connected to a problem of general importance. The distinction between the two methods consists in the balance of interrogative means of collecting information in the case of sociological investigations and the limitation of the research area in the case of the survey.

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In both cases, the main technique of collecting data and information is the questionnaire. As Rotariu and Iluț (2008), Chelcea (2009), Babbie (2010), Jupp (2010) and others note, the questionnaire is a technique of collecting information through questions addressed to people selected after certain criteria of illustration connected to a problem upon which there are numerous points of views. Its main characteristic lies in the array of questions written or graphic images, ordered in a certain succession by which the people who take part in the research are asked to express their opinion about the problem or problems which constitute the object of the investigation.

An important aspect which the authors mentioned refers to the fact that the answers to the questions included in the questionnaire differ from one individual to another, their verbal behavior being influenced by the personality of the person questioned, by the place where the research is conducted, the theme of the investigation, the structure of the questionnaire, the period of time when the research takes place, the personality of the interviewer or the formulation of the questions.

Another aspect concerns the distinction between different types of questionnaires. From this point of view, the practice of psychosocial research has consecrated a classification of the questionnaires according to their content, the form of the questions and their application method. In short, the first interview makes a distinction between questionnaires of factual data (referring to objective facts which can also be directly observed by other people) and opinion questionnaires (which permit the study of the attitudes, motivation, interests and the psychological dispositions of the people questioned).

According to the second criteria – the form of the questions – one can distinguish between questionnaires with closed questions (which permit the choice between answers established beforehand), questionnaires with open questions (which leave the subjects the freedom of individualized expression of their answers) and questionnaires that include both closed and open questions.

Last but not least, according to the application, we can distinguish between self-administered questionnaires (which imply the registration of answers by the people included in the investigated sample), respectively questionnaires administered by investigators or interviewers (most commonly used in the collection of information for sociological investigations or surveys).

Starting from the idea highlighted by Chelcea (2004, p.119-120) according to which the use of interviewers ensures the representativeness of the sample, that they can clarify the meaning of different types of questions and that they can supply important information regarding the behavior of the respondent, I will now approach a few practical aspects of the activity of interviewers.

The questionnaires administered by the interviewers

Due to the large workload involved by the collection of information from different categories of people included in the research, the sociological investigation and the survey involves not only people qualified to design interviews, but also interviewers especially trained for the administration of questionnaires. The practice of research in this field insist upon the following responsibilities of the interviewers or of the investigators: finding the people included in the sample, obtaining their collaboration in conducting the interview, asking the questions and recording the answers.

Following this sequence, I will exemplify the mode of action of the operators for each situation separately, with the purpose of supplying conclusions for the practice of the students from the specializations from the fields of education sciences and social assistance, but also of those who specialize in the fields of social and humanistic sciences. I should also add that the examples I will use are based on both the specialized bibliography and the author's own experience as a researcher and territorial coordinator for research within The Romanian Institute for Public Opinion Polling (IRSOP) in Bucharest.

a) Usually, the sample allocated to each operator is considering the establishment of an itinerary which includes the streets whose names begin with certain letters and the choice of subjects for the interview is to be done based on an algorithm similar to the one described below:

- Choosing the house or the building:

- You are in the established starting point;
 - Walk on the left hand side of the street;
 - Stop in front of the third building. If you are in an area with apartment houses, stop at the third block entrance;
 - Enter this building and apply a single interview;
 - Exit the building. Continue in the same direction until the next third building and so forth;
 - Do not cross on the other side of the street. Continue only on the left hand side;
 - If you have walked the entire length of the selected street and if you still have people to question, then choose the next street indicated proceeding as mentioned above;
 - The procedure goes on until the application of all the interviews allocated.
- As for the person who administers the interview, we will proceed as follows:
- In the given family, ask who is the person with an age over 18 who celebrated their birthday most recently and apply the interview;
 - If the selected person refuses to collaborate or is unavailable momentarily, leave the building and keep on walking, selecting the next third building;
 - Please return twice to the addresses where it was impossible to proceed with the interview because there was nobody at home or because the eligible person was not at home. Try to set a meeting with the person who was not home, at the place and hour of his choice.

Of course, according to the specific of the research one can also use other criteria of selecting people for the interview, criteria which can refer to age, sex or the level of income, as well as to the use of a product or service, to develop their activity in a certain field or have a certain level of education and training.

b) Obtaining the collaboration of the person selected for the interview is one of the most disputed problems in the specialty literature, but beyond these controversies certain practical aspects are considered to be absolutely necessary. In the case of the interview based on a questionnaire, a few general rules of conducting the conversation between the operator and the interviewed person should be remembered, such as (cf. Ferreol, 1998; Miftode, 2003; Chelcea, 2009; Sandu, 2012):

- During the introduction part, the operator must say his name and legitimize himself, informing the person who is going to be questioned about the purpose of the research, the survey institute who conducts the given research, the fact that the choice of

the respective person was done randomly and that the information it will supply are confidential.

- People who are less willing to take part in the interview must receive an explanation connected to the importance of the research, the fact that their perspectives concerning the investigated problems have a great significance and that the lack of cooperation would make the selected sample less representative;

- Through his entire conduct, the operator must dispel any doubt concerning the aim of the investigation and the method of selection of the person for the interview, the time allocated for the interview, as well as upon the fact that what matters are only the opinions concerning the problems discussed in the questionnaire. If the selected person does not want to collaborate for different reasons (the theme of the interview, the lack of time, the place where the interview should be applied, lack of information concerning the subject of investigation etc.), the operator will select another person from the sample to apply the interview.

c) As for the way of asking the questions, the interviewer must follow the order established in the standard questionnaire, having the obligation to read each question “word by word”. Since the purpose is to obtain uniformity in the questions asked and in the answers registered, the operators are not authorized to make changes in the questions nor to formulate explanations which could influence in any way the answers given.

However, empirical research highlight the fact that the majority of the operators are tempted to add an explanatory word, to make alterations in the succession of the questions, or to “shorten” certain questions. One of the classical solutions given to these problems belongs to the British researcher C.A. Moser, who draws attention upon the following aspects: “If the questions are asked in daily language, the operators will be less inclined to reformulate them. If the operators are allowed to poll connecting certain questions, the danger of an unauthorized poll becomes smaller. If the order of the questions is made so that with the help of occasional linking phrases, the interview develops logically and similar to a conversation, there will be a smaller temptation to omit certain questions or to change their order (1967, p.271).

Another problem is the registration given by the interviewed person to the questions which involve the frequency of a certain behavior or the intensity of their opinion towards a certain theme. For instance, in a pre-election survey, if the respondents are asked to answer the question of how possible it for them to take part in the election, they may opt for one of the following answer options:

1. Almost certainly
2. Maybe
3. I haven’t decided
4. I will not vote
5. I don’t know

In order to obtain a valid answer, at the next question the person is asked to express his intention on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 means he is almost sure he will vote, and 1 that he certainly will not. If the person’s answer is still “I don’t know”, the operator must register it accordingly.

As for the last aspect, the analysts of psychosocial phenomena draw attention upon the fact that this answer may be interpreted as a form of denial or as a lack of information regarding the object of investigation, but also as a form of incapacity of the respondent to

take a decision or the “fear” that he would give a “wrong” answer. “In no case whatsoever, writes Moser, should the operator express his own opinions; on the contrary, the interlocutors with a contradiction spirit might be influenced to adopt a contrary position, while others might give answers which they think are to the liking of the operator. In both cases, concludes the British researcher, the answers would wrongly represent the true opinions of the questioned person” (1969, p.273).

Important statements are also brought by S. Chelcea (2004; 2009), when he shows that, although the relationship investigation operator – interviewed person is characterized by a certain asymmetry of laterality, the interview operator can reduce people’s shyness by explaining to them the principles of the sociological investigation or of the poll, insisting upon the fact that there aren’t any good or bad answers and that the interview situation has nothing to do with the examination situation.

d) As we have already shown, in investigations based on questionnaires the operators themselves must register the answers. Although at first glance the registration of answers might seem as a relatively simple task, the fact that the operators commit numerous errors of registration give rise to certain problems of principle. Firstly, if we take into consideration the route that the operator must follow to select the people for the interview, it is easy to understand that the tiredness that he accumulates and the somewhat “mechanical” method in which he must fill in the questionnaire.

Secondly, the operator must code the answers according to a rather complicated set of rules, and the discomfort created by the lack of cooperation of some of the people with whom they must do the interview.

Thirdly, the operator must focus simultaneously upon more tasks referring to the preparation of the question, to the registration of the answers to pre-coded questions, the filling in of incomplete or insufficiently precise answers, to the signals of misunderstanding the question or to the faithful registration of the answers given by the questioned person to open questions.

That is why, at the end of the interview, the operator is obliged to check if he asked all the questions, if he registered all the answers, if he circled the right codes and if there isn’t any contradiction between the answers obtained. Moreover, he must register his own impressions upon the development of the interview and upon the problems he encountered, as well as his appreciations connected to the degree of credibility of the answers obtained from the questioned person.

The errors owed to interview operators and to the people questioned

The methodology of social research systematized a typology of errors and sources of errors. They envisage on the one hand the errors connected to the samples and the ones regarding the construction of a questionnaire or of the interview guideline, and, on the other hand, the activity of interview operators and the people questioned within the research. Since the first category of errors is connected to the activity of specialized researchers, I will focus upon the errors owed to the interview operators and to the people questioned, with the specification that the aspects I will mention were theoretically based on the works of Moser (1969), Miftode (2003), Chelcea (2004; 2009), Rotariu and Iluț (2008), Babbie (2010) and others.

In connection to the interview operator, a first category of errors are those owed to personality features which actually have no connection to the theme of the study

developed. I am talking about features regarding the physical aspect, the temperament, the level of knowledge and the moral features. In this case, the negative affects can find themselves in a large number of denials from the subjects, in the more often frequency of the errors in registering answers and even in possible fraud.

Another category of errors refers to the correlation between the investigation and the attitude or opinions of the operator connected to the problems researched. A significant example is constituted by those situations where the political sympathies of the operator can influence the answers of the subjects. Even if we admit that he is honest, his system of values and attitudes will influence, to a certain extent, the responses of the subjects and their registration, functioning those spontaneous mechanisms of confirmation and auto reproduction of those systems, defined by the psychologists as defense systems of the self.

A third category of errors originates in the concrete context of the investigation and envisages what C.A. Moser calls the “*anticipations of the interview operator*”. We are talking about the fact that the operator evaluates the attitude structure of the subject after the answers given to the first questions in the interview. From that moment, the investigated subject is tagged by the operator, who also interprets his following answers in the virtue of that image. In other cases, the anticipations of the operator derive from the image he creates by noticing the social status of the investigated people, their social type, age, occupation, income and even their personality. In short, the operator creates an image about the given category of people and when he does not receive firm answers, he will try to attribute them the form he thinks is characteristic to the respective category of respondents.

C.A. Moser also mentions the so-called *anticipations of probability*, which consist in suppositions of the operators referring to the expected distribution of the answers to certain questions. More precisely, if the interviewer notices that along the filling in of the questionnaire his theory is not confirmed, he will consider that something is wrong and will have the tendency to fit the answers in those categories which he thinks are not sufficiently frequently chosen.

Such anticipations and projections which belong to the interviewer may determine alterations of the real data, not to mention the practical difficulties in tracing them. This is also the reason why the institutes of sociological research give such a significant attention to the selection of interviewers, their training and the systematic control of their activity.

As for the questioned people, numerous authors state that the sources of error are not only those connected to the uncertainty of the answers. Even if the operator makes the necessary specifications concerning the insurance of the anonymity and the advice to give honest answers, in the practice of empirical research a series of other sources of distortion intervene which alter the results of the investigation.

Starting from the questions we ask and how we ask them, a person can overestimate a behavior or an attitude with the purpose of appearing respectable in front of the operator or can supply a false image about his opinion connected to one problem or another. The investigated person can declare what he thinks might be the opinion of the interviewer or, to a larger extent, to give answers according to a set of norms and values promoted from the social point of view.

This last aspect represents what the analysts of socio-humane phenomena call “valorized answers”, “verbal conformism”, “social desirability”, “prestige effect” etc., by which the individual tends to appear in a favorable light in front of himself or the others.

A series of systematic errors are connected to the limits of human memory. The memory is solicited not only to the reconstruction of what the investigated people thought or stated connected to an event or another, but also to questions referring to social phenomena, activities or actions. Psychology has also unveiled the specific mechanisms by which individuals reconstruct segments of life from their past, as in the case of associating certain events, exploiting lived situations or the functioning of certain mental schemes typical to each person, by which information is interpreted, organized and activated.

By analyzing a series of perceptive mechanisms which generate errors, such as the effect of false consensus, the effect of framing and anchoring, mental simulation or the false difference of chance, T. Rotariu and P. Iluț signal the more general idea according to which “the subject has his own perspective on the problem discussed in the questionnaire, placing himself in so-called reference frames” (2008, p.119).

The explanation of the two authors refers to the different meaning which the subjects attribute to one and the same word, a situation where whole questions and sentences can get different meanings, while the processing of the data is achieved in the fashion in which there is an identical referential. Then, as the operator makes a series of assumptions and anticipations connected to the person and the answers of the interviewed person, there is a high chance that the latter will also attribute characteristics and intentions to the interviewer or to the person who elaborated the questionnaire.

The conclusion suggested by Rotariu and Iluț is that the aspects mentioned must be taken into consideration by the researcher when he proceeds with the processing of data and the interpretation of the information, as well as when he formulates proposals regarding the elaboration of a decision. Moreover, the signaling of these errors may help us in understanding better the constraints of sociological research, as well as the possibility of realistically examining the interaction of the sources which generate errors. With this remark, I will move on to discussing the problems connected to the selection of interviewers, their training and the control of their activity.

Demands regarding the selection and training of interviewers

As in the case of the fears discussed above, the literature in the field mentions a high variety of demands regarding the qualities that the interviewers should have, out of which the most numerous concern the following aspects (cf. Miftode, 2003; Albrecht, 2006; Rotariu and Iluț, 2008; Goleman, 2008; Chelcea, 2009; Beciu, 2011):

- Honesty in applying the selection instructions of the people for the interview, in formulating the questions and in using the boards and scales of opinion, as well as in registering the answers obtained. If the fraud connected to the “fabrication” of answers to a questionnaire is easily discovered, the lack of rigor in applying the instructions imposes a prolonged verification from the coordinators of the research. In both cases, the operators who are involved in such derivations should be replaced immediately.

- The interest for the researching work and the preoccupation for their own improvement are considered to be essential qualities which recommend a candidate for the operator activity. The practice of research has proved that repeated errors, superficiality or improper work are much more likely to happen when the interviewer considers that his activity is not important.

- The capacity to adapt to different types of research or to different categories of people they must question, as well as the capacity to use different questionnaires are

demands which the operator must know from his first collaborations. Not less important are the aspects connected to the field trips, compliance to the itineraries established, identifying the people for the interview or repeating the visit in the case where the people who are eligible for the interview are not at home or are unavailable.

- The personality of the operator and his temperament are demands which can influence decisively the relationships with the respondent, as well as the quality of the answers he will get from him. For this reason, the selection of the operators must be made based on psychological tests, or after a thorough discussion or a practical test connected to the interview. One will exclude from among the candidates people who are shy, who tend to be authoritative, or those who manifest psychological liability, disinterest for the work of an operator, lack of tact, communication difficulties and the lack of aptitudes referring to the establishment of inter-human relations.

- The relatively high level of general culture, a satisfying degree of intelligence and a high empathic capacity necessary both for surpassing blockages which may appear in the communication between the operator and the person questioned, as well as for the administration of the defense mechanisms of the respondent (the refusal, the rationalization of the answers, the invocation of pretexts, disagreement between declarations and behaviors, attributing their own attitudes, interests and motivations to other people.

- The capacity of analysis and self-control of verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as of the psychological relations which are instituted between the operator and the person questioned in order to obtain the necessary information and to avoid non-responses. I am referring to aspects such as: passing from one question to another, repeating certain questions, further explaining certain questions, the social status of the people questioned, interpreting the precise social context in which the interview or the investigation takes place, avoiding approaching undesirable aspects for the person in question or which would go over his capacity of understanding.

- An agreeable physical aspect and a neat attire are considered important conditions in establishing relations between the operator and the respondent in order to obtain the collaboration of the person questioned and of its availability to give honest answers to the questions asked.

Going on to another register of problems, the methodical instruction and the professional training of the interview operators are imposed as necessary for the good development of any sociological investigation or poll. Thus, Miftode (2003), Chelcea (2004; 2009), Babbie (2010), Şimandan (2010) and Sandu (2012) draw attention upon the following more important aspects:

- The careful training of the operators before every investigation, with a special focus upon: studying the questionnaire, understanding the different types of questions, respecting the succession of questions, the honest registration of answers, interviewing only the people indicated in the instructions and keeping the confidentiality.

- Establishing beforehand whether the interviewers don't have any prejudices connected to smoking, alcohol, ethnical origin, political affiliation, confessional adherence etc., avoiding involving those with significant prejudices in research which investigates phenomena such as those mentioned.

- Operators should fill in one of the questionnaires which are to be applied, so that one can meet the difficulties in formulating questions or the degree to which the

answers of the people questioned concord with the answers given by the operators. With this occasion, one can correlate the possible errors connected to the unfaithful transmission of the instructions, the operator's temptation to get the answer at every price, his tendency to use his own vocabulary in registering the answers to open questions, shortening or lengthening answers, the operators behavior in relation to the person questioned and so on.

No matter how rigorously they may have been selected and trained connected to the application of the questionnaire, the operators remain a potential source of errors in polls or in different sociological research.

For this reason, the control of their activity is imposed, both by checking the questionnaires filled in, as well as by telephone conversations with the people questioned, referring to the criteria of selection, the development of the interview and its length.

Conclusions

From the long list of problems involved by the organization and application of investigations and polls, the activity of the interview operators represents the most sensitive element in the management of any sociological research. This aspect acquires additional valences from at least perspectives: the first one refers to the skills that the interview operators must acquire within the specialty courses from the faculties of psychology, sociology, education sciences, social assistance, marketing or management, and to the practice imposed in the study programs; the second aspect refers to the regulations comprised in the occupational standard of the interview operators in the National Qualifications Framework.

Given the importance of the latter, I will summarize a few requirement which should be taken into consideration in the programs of theoretical and practical training of the students in order to exercise the occupation of interview operator (cf. Council for Occupational Standards and Certification, 1999). In the code of fundamental skills, for instance, the units of skill refer to interactive communication and developing activities within a team, and the specific skills are based on: administering the documents typical to the interview, identifying the sample, the primary processing of the answers, presenting the research theme, promoting the image of the institution who conducts the research, reporting on the activities carried out in the field and the actual conduct of the interview.

An aspect we should highlight is the evaluation guide of the knowledge and skills one must take into consideration for both the fields of competence (fundamental, all the work place, and specific), and the skill units afferent to these fields, all contributing to the increase of the importance of the operator's role and to the tendencies of professionalizing this activity which is meant to increase the quality of psycho-social, social assistance, marketing and management research, whose number increased significantly in recent years in our country.

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

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Abstract

The research was conducted on a sample of 23 football players of FC "Čukarički Stankom" 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 the criterion 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 circumference showed a statistically significant negative effect on the criterion variable.

Keywords: VO_2 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, toothier sport

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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-VO₂max) is represented in the largest percentage of the total motion actions, after which are walking and intense cyclic locomotor movement (11-18 km/h, about 80 % VO₂ max) and then sprint (11-27 km/h, <85% VO₂ 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 football vary and to a large extent depend on the league, team position, athlete model, 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: VO₂ 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 VO₂ 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, and the 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 "Čukarički Stankom" 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 the anthropometer by 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 under load was simultaneously 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 increase was 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 "Cukaricki Stankom" 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 variable for 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 variable for 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 descriptive statistics of the assessed variables*

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 VO₂ 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 confirms that taller 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 this correlation is most pronounced in the variable Mean thorax 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 partialization by other 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 ($r_{\text{part}} = 0.68$) 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 VO₂ 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 partialization by other predictor variables, this correlation (between the predictor and criterion) remains in positive statistically significant correlation, because the value of the partial correlation coefficient ($r_{\text{part}} = 0.50$) 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 analysis of the variable vo_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 thorax circ.	0.78	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.98	0.00

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

Legend: r - Pearson correlation coefficient; p - level of statistical significance for r; r_{part} - value of partial correlation coefficient; p_{part} - 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 mathematically positive, 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 higher recorded 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 in positive 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 subjects who 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 ($r_{\text{part}} = 0.44$) 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 in taller athletes.

In the second predictor variable, *Mean thorax circumference*, the value of the partial coefficient ($r_{\text{part}} = 0.46$) 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 variable heart rate under 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

$$R = 0.62 R^2 = 0.39 \quad P = 0.02$$

Legend: r - Pearson correlation coefficient; p - level of statistical significance for r; r_{part} - value of partial correlation coefficient; p_{part} - 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 $VO_2 \text{ max}$ 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 training of 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 included subjects. The higher vital capacity and better development of the thoracic part of the body (better blood flow to the muscles of the caudal body part) in taller 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 lower athletes, smaller by the constitution. Perhaps this is due to the completion of development of the respiratory and cardiovascular system in taller athletes with higher mean thorax circumference, which can be the next potential research.

For the second criterion, *Heart rate under load*, the variables *Body height* and *Mean thorax 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 values of oxygen consumption (and it is known that between the heart rate under load and maximal oxygen consumption there is a cause-effect relationship - higher O₂ consumption demands faster heart rate, because that O₂ 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 taller subjects 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 during 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 VO₂ 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 taller subjects 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 VO₂ 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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A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF REFORMED EUROPEAN EDUCATION⁴⁶

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Abstract

The authoress deals with the state of university education nowadays. Starting from theory of miseducation, she discusses the phenomena that have appeared within education as a consequence of European educational politics and developmental movements of contemporary civilization. In this context, special critical attention is paid to the notion of “learning society” and the related terms: IT society, knowledge management and knowledge economization. The antique idea of education, humanistic concept of education and the character of today’s education are compared in the paper. The course of movement of the idea of educatedness is analysed that headed towards obliterating of the paradigms that had been established by educational tradition and which have experienced its negation through the form of modern semi-educatedness and today’s miseducatedness.

Key words: *education, knowledge, spirit, information, humanism*

Introductory considerations

The paper deals with philosophy of education in its conceptualization implying critical discourse in regard to European higher education. To say the truth, it could be understood as a delayed reaction to what belongs to the very fundament of a human being, but which nevertheless managed to impose itself and enter university life, or as an intellectual compensation for the lacking broader discussion that should have preceded the adoption of the reform. However, if one is aware that the decision on the changes in higher education has been made at political (ministry) level, it is not surprising that we are faced with the lack of deeper spiritual purport of the idea of education reform. It is beyond dispute that it has been missing, thus equally effecting all those involved, regardless of whether we are referring to the settings where it was being prepared along with significant financial investments, or the fact that it was hastily approved by political powers, after the ostensible academic debate which had been over even before it actually began.

It has seemed that those settings in which dominant political dimension was permeated by the ideology of European way, would also confirm their loyalty to strivings

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for European values thus getting closer to European spirit, if they accept this segment of European reality, as well. For the absurd to be even greater, what was known about the given project was rather vague so that the interpretations of the law were mostly wrong and ambiguous, even though groups of expert exegetes, various commissions and councils have been formed to explicate it. Caught by the new rules of work and “business”, scientific and teaching workers have been pushed into the machine of accreditation, evaluation, categorization, standardization, which has become a part of their “everyday university life”.

“Knowledge Society” Phenomenon

More than any other anthropological phenomenon, education has so far shown amenability to reforms. Even though originally the notion of a reform denoted rehabilitation of original form, restoration, renewal of the lost values, in the meaning time it has acquired a completely different meaning. The latest reform has in the very announcement of its establishment developed a radically opponent attitude towards traditional educational paradigms, aiming at their complete suppression. Viewing them as outlived, stereotypical, fossilized spiritual forms, it has radically clashed them, in order to show its own futuristic commitment in being strictly distanced from them. Nothing has been emphasized by the reform so boastfully as its openness and harmonisation with the demands of the future (Liessmann, 2006: 139). All that has been recognized and announced as future perspective by the existing spirit of time has been accepted as a challenge of a novelty. Today’s reformers do not lack boldness to get to grips with changes taking turns rapidly, without fear or responsibility for what they might bring about. What lies beyond the euphoria of permanent reform is the belief that “reform can also be reformed” so that there should be no reservations about the issue of the character of reforms or whether it is justifiable to introduce them.

The concept of new education has also inaugurated new aims of educational practice, for which care has been taken by its advocates in the roles of educational politicians, university reformers, EU trustees to find new words and coins wanting to emphasize new features of education. In his polemical attitude towards the existing European educational politics Liessman has put accent on one of these coins known as “knowledge society” and the related terms like: mobility, flexibility, informativeness, innovativeness. The first association appearing when the term knowledge society is used is a community where knowledge is raised to the position of highest value functioning at the principle of reasonable thinking, prudent action, wise conduct and humane relationships. If we do not allow to be dazzled by what in its manifested form is intended to be shown as a knowledge society, we will be able to look deeper and get a glimpse of knowledge which does not match the notion of the category which used to be nurtured in European spiritual heritage. For the paradox to be even greater what should be the main purpose and content of knowledge, i.e. finding truth, is considered redundant. An emphasis has been put on learning, but not learning developing the organ for scientific thinking, volition to search for and find the truth and to strive for self-change, but on learning according to which a given content is passively acquired, remaining beyond analytical-synthetic activity, beyond deeper influence on the inner being of the one who is learning. Learning promoted by knowledge society is not turned to practising the methods of thinking, examination and judgement, but to the demanding market of changing knowledge, which, in order to survive, has to encourage permanent readiness for learning so that it could project its

ultimately instrumentalized function through the so called program of lifelong learning (Günther Anders 1986, 120)

In its original form the idea could be found in Aristotle (Αριστοτέλης) and his statement: “The greatest good for a man is in the work of spirit leading to its virtue, and if there is more than one spiritual virtue, towards its best and most perfect one and throughout life” (Aristotle, 2001: 1099b). The attitude unambiguously and definitely refers to learning which essentially comes from within as a need and a duty of a man to work on himself, empowering the strength of the mind, developing ability of spiritual perception, practicing reasonable volition and forming spirit. The best indicator showing that through the process of learning the natural strive for knowledge is fulfilled is the life of such people who do not look for pleasure as some kind of a decorative pendant, but have pleasure in themselves. Do today’s actors and participants in lifelong learning think so? Is there any room for pleasure in the activity which is not a choice of the soul choosing its best affinity, but coming from the outer world as a threat for one’s job and a demand to survive in the market, making it appropriate for the parameter of flexibility and mobility so that it could last? Permanent professional development is an extorted adjustment to easily changeable market relations and technical innovations which in the current epoch have nothing to do with Aristotle’s understanding of the notion of wisdom as a unity of theoretical knowledge and practical experience, created in the course of lifelong refinement of spirit.

Three types of knowledge can be abstracted in knowledge society: informational, entertainment-sensational and expert knowledge. Information permeates all three types and it is so dominant that it is not a rare case that knowledge society is identified with informational society. The basic characteristic of informational knowledge is its unambiguous directedness towards purpose (Kastberger, 2008). In this context its value is also assessed according to the degree of its utility. Measured by this parameter, those types of knowledge are accepted which are evaluated as desirable, having in mind the possibility to address certain needs or meet certain targets imposed by a concrete situation. An essential feature of informational knowledge is its abundance and extensiveness which brings any man need for knowledge to despair, having in mind that in the general flood by information puts a man in the position to ask himself – what to choose out of the offered, which selection criteria to establish, i.e. “what has to be known”? As a consequence, there is a paradox that quantitative possibilities for knowledge acquisition are in almost opposite proportional relationship to what is really known. This is best shown through the formation of a modern “data bank”. They could be of technical use in offering certain administrative services, providing a fast insight into certain data, but these are not the places where knowledge is stored, but where data are accumulated. Knowledge cannot in ready form be displaced from the outer storage and through information memorization preserved in the memory of a data base. Such knowledge is not real, due to the fact that it cannot provide an answer to the question “what something is and why it is what it is”. “Knowledge cannot be consumed, places of education cannot be companies providing services and knowledge adjustment cannot madly follow since this is simply not possible without thinking. This is why knowledge cannot be managed in business manner... Particulars and notions become knowledge only when it is possible to interconnect them according to logical and consistent criteria so that they result in meaningful and verifiable interrelation (Liessmann, Ibidem, 27). The changes in understanding of knowledge are directly related to the transformation of “industrial society” into the “society of knowledge industry” when industrial worker was

replaced by knowledge worker, preoccupied by production and distribution of knowledge.⁴⁸ Due to superficial understanding of knowledge, the protagonists and planners of education are not able to come out with an idea of education; they rather remain imprisoned by the spirit of time “without courage to step out of self-distorted consciousness” and through the power of their own thinking overcome the limitations of the existing (Kant, 1974: 43). In general industrialization of knowledge a special type of fragmentary knowledge has been filtered whose carriers as multi-experts do not hesitate to show it in sensational-entertaining way and through media attention provide their promoters with great profit. The trend of knowledge socialization, its acquisition by a broad range of people, as well as bringing science closer to all people, under the motto *popular science, science through play*, has formed various models of attractive presentation of knowledge with an aim to show scientific knowledge in entertaining-trivial way, which is always at the border of comical. Such types of seemingly-educative knowledge launched through advertising-media and populist scene are a special way of knowledge metamorphosis and distortion of its true nature and role.

Self-educatedness – Semi-educatedness – Uneducatedness

Theoretical knowledge encompassed by *prima philosophia* and elevated by antique educatedness to the level of supreme life (*bios theoretikos*), as a privilege of rare minds liberated for the truth about ultimate things, has systematically been suppressed under the breakthrough of particular-pragmatic knowledge. Even though it caused contempt of extreme scientists at the time it was uttered, Hegel’s standpoint that *A nation without metaphysics is like a temple without a shrine* has nowadays brought us closer to understanding of existing epochal situation created as a consequence of meta-knowledge devaluation. The change permeating the deepest structure of scientific knowledge was pointed out by Heidegger in his lecture *Vulnerability of Science* (1937/8) suggesting: “The most severe vulnerability of today’s science is in that it is so well off at the moment as it has never been before, i.e. in that it confirms itself and drives itself by the progress it ensures on its own. This is a sign that it does not stand in truth and that it has denied essential knowledge – in spite of all worldly robes covering benefits of science (Heidegger 2006: 322). It is not knowledge if it is transformed into one-dimensional, instrumental experience. Such knowledge can easily become the means of economization viewed as goods that should be produced, sold or purchased as a resource of future. It is nowadays recognized in the form of “managerial knowledge” whose acceptability is measured according to the level of being appropriate for and adjusted to market laws. Deeper changes have started to affect education only when scientific knowledge with significantly changed notional determination has become superordinate to philosophy, when factual, particular insight has taken over the insight into the whole. Philosophy has tried to build necessary legitimacy in relation to sciences in self-defence of all of them until Hegel and Shelling. These were the efforts to reconcile the heritage of metaphysics with the spirit of modern science (Gadamer, 1981: 11). However, having entered the age of positivism starting from Comte, scientific feature of philosophy has assumed merely academic matter without full seriousness. This is when the culture of its vital spiritual fields has been deprived: religion,

⁴⁸ For more details, see: Drucker, Peter: *Was ist Management?* Munchen, 2002.

philosophy and creativity, having given place to various materialistic and hedonistic variants showing receptiveness for economic-technological spirit. Disastrous effects of such currents were felt by great minds of contemporary age, ranging from Spengler, who marked technical civilization as an artificial state appearing after existence, to Berdyaev (Бердяев), who through his mystical-apocalyptic view evoked the vision of a breakdown of civilization as an inevitable consequence of dissolution of the faith in God and, as a consequence, of a man, as well (2006:17). Thus the new age, sublime celebration of creations of science has turned into celebration of the power to enslave nature, world and man, while the idea of logos, ontologically-axiologically structured in antique philosophy, has been reduced to strict rationality separated from sensitivity and creative intuition. New existential situation can be well described according to an example of today's man who is burdened by the established aims and how fast he is moving towards their realization. The paradox is that he constantly thinks that the faster he goes, the further he is from his aim, ultimately resulting in pathological fear that others will reach the aim sooner. Fundamental fear of our epoch is encapsulated in the maxim – We must not lose the connection: either with globalization or with international development... Others have gone further, we have to follow them. Such a strive to catch up those who are faster, who are always ahead is distancing us from the life itself, from the presence and makes us unhappy (Liessmann, 2007).

The breakthrough of empirical knowledge has brought about the prevalence of *poietika episteme*, i.e. knowledge, which is, according to Aristotle's view, having in mind its lack of inner purpose and directedness to object creation, evaluated as instrumental. In the conditions having purely technical features, it has opened up possibilities for fast and massive production of consumer goods, having brought about the multiplication of artificial needs and thus to the distortion of its original purpose. As a consequence of going beyond the limits of existential moderation, today we are facing the syndrome of uncontrolled consumption, which is a symbol of modern "consumption slavery" which hurts less than classical slavery, but has the same consequences, i.e. a man deprived of his dignity and identity.

The expansion of object knowledge has produced the spread of the idea of the society of experts where we turn to an expert and ask him to unburden us from practical, political, economic decisions we should make. "In the technical ruling of social currents, an expert is a necessary figure – his position can now be described as what once used to be craftsmanship. The expert should replace practical and social experience. This is the expectation the society projects on him he, in his sober and methodical self-evaluation and sincere belief, is not able fulfil" (Gadamer, 1981: 38). An expert is not educated, he is trained, he acquires knowledge and skills that can be applied in performance of certain functions, most often consulting ones, implying the implementation of manipulative practice in exercising powerful influence on public opinion. This is a distorted picture of an educated person who, having in mind that he acquires his knowledge from the outer world, remains out of the real educational process, since his personality remains unchanged.

Who stands in the centre of antique and humanistic concept of education is a self-educated man who takes care of his gifts and the feeling of inner connectedness; he develops them to the extent of his full personal growth, acting responsibly towards his talents. The paradigm of such a project is education as a medium in which spirit is educated. In the basis of such education is the demand for truth articulated through art,

religion, science as objectified objection of spirit. If spirit is understood as an idea that can be educated and education as a phenomenon not strange to it or given from the outer world, any banishment of philosophy from science and culture can be explicated as denying education. Abolishment of spirit takes place when education is mediated through imposed necessity. What Nietzsche has to say about this type of education is the following: "I for my own part know of only two exact contraries: institutions for teaching culture and institutions for teaching how to succeed in life. All our present institutions belong to the second class; but I am speaking only of the first."⁴⁹

The issue imposing in the general race for as broad education as possible refers to the motive of education. Antique education practice testifies on education as a free act, learning as a thoughtful encounter of spirit, a virtue as a product of unconditioned work on oneself. In such a horizon of liberation from the externally imposed obligation of learning, of undisturbed personal choice of a teacher, an individual turned to education was able to truly advance. Nowadays the "schools of life misfortunes" have been multiplied according to the multiplication of socially-existential misfortunes. The institutions offering a shelter from life scarcity, where one looks for a refuge from existential fears, which are not places of leisure, focus, contemplation and thinking, cannot be real places of education (Nietzsche, 2005: 220). Theoretical conception of education is necessarily involved in critical comparison between antique education as a unity of being educated and honourable, the new age idea which was building an ideal of humanistic education and today's concept of education which has developed in the sharp opposition towards the traditional one. The course of development of European idea of education has moved from educatedness, through semi-educatedness to uneducatedness. Unlike antique education which had been established according permanent spiritual striving for reaching a paradigm set by mind, not deviating from ideals, humanistic concept of education has changed in its act of realizations. It is beyond dispute that, relying on classical antique culture, it has contributed to the creation of significant works of literature, philosophy, visual arts, and music in formation of civil middle class as elite part of civil-humanistic society. However, in time the lass has abandoned and distorted the original educational norm, so that it does not accept education itself as a value, but as a possibility to obtain position and acknowledgement in society. In such a way the original ideal of civil education has been transformed into notion of semi-education which was theoretically developed by Adorno. The essence of the notion is in the hybridism arising out of non-understanding of the real nature of education, creating a difference between rhetorical and factual, normative and real. According to the concept of semi-education, education means "semi-understood and semi-experienced education". As such it is not an introduction into education, it is not pre-educational level and it does not have propedeutic character; it is rather a hybrid idea of education living its objectified form at the expense of the truth contained by it. Semi-educatedness is not a stadium where spirit alienation ends. What comes after it is uneducatedness. While in the former spirit is objectified, in the latter it is abolished. However, uneducatedness does not mean the lack of knowledge, but the lack of truth; not the lack of information, but the lack of argumentation; not the lack of aggregated data, but

⁴⁹ A part of a lecture delivered by Nietzsche at the University in Basel in 1872 *On the future of our educational institutions*.

the lack of their synthetic connectedness into a whole. Knowledge in the form of information and unrelated data is even excessive, to such an extent that at the moment it has a status of knowing a lot with the tendency to get transferred into knowing all.

Reformed Education

If we ask ourselves when the contemporary European education started to adopt the character of uneducatedness, when it stated devaluating the idea of university education, it seems inevitable to remind ourselves of the idea of educational politicians to create a unique framework of European higher education aiming at facilitating diploma recognition, which was adopted in the form of Sorbonne Declaration in 1998. The suggestion turned out to be a good way of stimulating mobility of teachers and students, as well as mutual recognition of diplomas according to the criteria of comparability of the quality of a study program. Not later than the following year, without the necessary and along with the barely noticeable public discussion, it was accepted as a part of a concept of a new mandatory organization of European higher education space.

The main characteristic of programming and projecting the reform was the odium towards everything that carried a character of traditional educational values. The concept of educational changes should have proven its *novum* in being radically distanced and different from everything which used to be applied in higher education practice so far. The fact that the structure of knowledge society has been developed in the correlation with the structure of technological-informatics society has made the reasons of unification of national academic communities under the patronage of European community more clear, but not justified. Frequently used arguments in favour of reforms have involved newly formed terms like: mobility, quality insurance and quality control, achievement, efficacy, competition, standardization. Up to now, not one of the ideas of university education or education in general contained these terms as a measure of academic work quality. What is essential is that all these terms do not encode what evokes the meaning of these words, while hiding what they actually induce. Having this in mind, subjected to contemporary evaluation criteria, I. Kant could not have count on academic advancement. According to his example it is possible to see the meaninglessness of all the conditions imposed on modern university teachers, having in mind that in his work and life he embodied exactly what would not meet today's evaluation demands (Liessmann, 2006: 77). Before all, Kant would not have met the condition of mobility, nowadays implying various exchanges of professors with the status of emeritus, professional development abroad, professional scholarships, having in mind that he spent whole his life working in his born town, Königsberg.

The race and the competition in regard to who will spend more time abroad have become main indicators of international status of university workers. Apart from the total immobility which contributed to Kant's lack of international experience, he would not fulfilled another significant condition and it is publishing of scientific papers in certain time interval. Publication of two papers in the period of ten years would, according to today's evaluation, certainly have been below any threshold of the proclaimed scientific and research efficacy. However, after all this time of what had seemingly been "leisure" and passivity, *The Critique of Pure Reason* appeared, showing that all these years actually were the most prolific years of Kant's philosophical contemplation. It could not happen today to a scientist working at higher education institution not to publish papers for such a

long period of time; as a consequence, it is also not possible for him to conduct such serious and far-reaching research demanding long-lasting commitment and persistence in research. The one who would dare to do so would have to be aware of the evaluation consequences of such a choice. The phenomenon of meeting the need of quantity in order to satisfy the demand for “quality insurance” has led to such of amount of published papers that reaches the ranges of inflation. The pressure of evaluation has made such an attack on the freedom and ethos of work of scientific workers that it has resulted not only in self-understanding acceptance and adjustment to the established standards but also in the emphasized anticipation of new demands and expectations which would be useful to meet in advance. Therefore, even though the presence of the *science citation index* and the improvement of the *journal impact factor* are not sufficiently adequate criteria to measure real value of scientific achievements, they are nevertheless the factors significantly determining and directing the work of scientists which is, unfortunately, much less devoted to finding out the truth and much more turned to survival on scientific scene.

It is interesting that such type of a *paid scientist*, as it has been called by Schiller⁵⁰, existed even in the time of the mentioned author, recognized in scientific circles through being occupied with their status, rather than scientific insights. Such type of scientist has survived in the new form of “scientific manager” who, to say the truth, is modified according to new spirit of the time, but with the preserved main motive of scientific engagement. In spite of the fact that “scientists” of all profiles have the possibility to place their “scientific services”, we will deal with several most striking types. First of all, those among them could be the so called “strategists of social development”, engaged through managing functions in ministry organs and university bodies for implementation of measures and decisions of current politics. Then there are “expert knowers” familiar with social-political problem matter, acting in apologetically positivistic manner with the aim to preserve the current ideology at all the places where they have, not accidentally, found themselves, carrying out managerial-advisory role in a variety of bodies, commissions, councils, committees... However, the most successful among such “scientists” at the “knowledge market” are those oriented towards the field of natural and applied sciences, since the profitability of knowledge applied in the most recent nanotechnology, the military and bio-engineering, pharmaceutical industry and similar fields, is so high that it leads into temptation their scientific and human responsibility.

The criticism of theory of uneducatedness has focused on the field of “education ethics”. Trying to define the conditions under which we can manage knowledge in a responsible way, it has raised the following question – can knowledge be a candidate for ethical reflections, or they nevertheless have to remain limited to the actions of people, whose assumption is the existence of certain prior knowledge (Liessmann, 2006: 124). If we talk about object knowledge in the field of natural-technological sciences, we can say that they themselves contain no moral feature, but they gain such a dimension when their application gets into collision with moral principles. There have been an increased number of the examples of “short-term use of one technology producing long-lasting damage” for human health, the life of flora and fauna leading to the endangerment of survival of the

⁵⁰ Schiller talked about this type of scientist in his inaugural lecture delivered in Jena University in 1789 under the title *Was ist und zuwelchen Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte?* Friedrich Schiller: Sämtliche Werke, München 1980, IV, p. 750.

planet. Of course, what we have in mind at this point is not object knowledge and its (mis)use, but moral awareness being jeopardized as an inevitable consequence of the abolishment of ethical reflection from the process of education. Knowledge has become morally indifferent, so that what is implied by educated person is a person who has object knowledge, but not moral competencies. In regard to the moral status of the educated there is no reliable data, even though numerous extrinsic indicators may be in favour of the confirmation of their professionalism. As a consequence, who we are dealing with now are professionals and experts who have no sense of shame, whose knowledge is not subjected to verification of values before moral imperative. This is the very indicator which has nowadays imposed a necessity to ground an ethics of education, which would make the category of responsibility a relevant educational maxim. Such a status of responsibility ethos which is immanent to education was something that the former, humanistic-oriented standpoints used to have. Their significance was reflected in that they also involved practical knowledge into the system of theoretical knowledge, and its aim was to help a man resolve fundamental issues of his existence.

Conclusion

If humanity is a measure of civilisation growth, can we ask ourselves what is today's civilisation like? Is its undisputable technological progress proportional to growth of humanity? Is today's man ready to accept the existing world with the sense of belonging or he feels trapped in it with the emphasized original experience of *being thrown* and the subsequent feeling of *being thrown away*? His creation is so great that the creator can no longer control the direction and courses of its proliferation. In such of world, one are those who are rare and full of anxiety, worried about human destiny, while other are its powerful protagonists, the advocates of *new knowledge mastering* and gaining of unconceivable power. Between their divided positions and roles there is a man exposed to systematic indoctrination of those who are powerful, with unarticulated bunt against something which is only sensed as something bad coming, along with the low aspiration to remain a part of the order even at the expense of seeming certainty.

It seems that what has left of the sublime idea of an educated man who builds his educatedness on the renowned values of antique spirit new age began with, is almost nothing. Deconstruction of the education project of a humane man started with the weakening of faith in God and continued with the loss of faith in man has now entered its last phase with the faith in unlimited power of technique and economy. The idea of education as development of spirit heading to self-knowledge, autonomy and freedom has been replaced by the idea of education market. In economic knowledge competition it is most profitable to invest into knowledge providing certain profit. Aspiration arising out of creative inspiration and thoughtful curiosity has stepped back in front of the strive for economic and political power, the cult of money and profit. Healthy competition which used to rely on best ideas, implying various methods in search for the truth, respecting cultural diversity of academic communities has now been replaced by sick ambition of "winning the best place in a ranking list".

The extent to which academic level of education has gone below the line can be seen in comparison between higher education reality with what it should have become. First of all, university education should provide education and upbringing for independent being and thinking (Iljin, 2001: 77). This means that academic teaching should prepare for

thinking and cognitive self-activity, rather than passive, imposed and controlled acquisition of patterns and methods. Instead of mechanical filling of memory and technical exercise of thinking, the task of higher education teaching should consist of the development of independent approach to a subject matter, its independent perception and examination, with the aim to deepen the power of judgement. Academic exam should not assess memory, but the power of argumentation and judgement, as well as the skill of orienting oneself in unexamined and unknown, since a student who has reached the end of his studies and who has passed his exam should show that he is able to independently encounter the subject, i.e. to observe it, systematize, experience and examine it with the necessary level of spiritual curiosity and according to adequate methodology.

The spirit of higher education should be grounded on freedom relying on responsible, critical thinking fighting for the truth, freedom not liable to limitations of extrinsic political and social demands, liberated from the pressures on consciousness and the mind of a researcher. Apart from responsibility and independence, a man raised in academic spirit should be liberated from vanity and envy, having in mind that meekness resulting from his powerful experience and respect of the world as a great secret of all that can and cannot be seen is typical only for a true scientist, who tries to perceive and research it.

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WAYS OF IMPROVING SCHOOL ADAPTATION IN PRE-ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

The paradigm of school adjustment to the demands and teaching possibilities of the student, prompts for a diversification of learning situations and experiences, and setting them up according to the possibilities and needs of all student categories in order to meet the following principles: “inclusive school”, “school for all”, “integrated teaching”. One of the periods in which frequent difficulties of school adaptation are registered is pre-adolescence, especially the beginning of pre-adolescence, which coincides in students with the passage from elementary to secondary school and which on the foundation of a fragile emotional and psychic balance as well as personality in formation, numerous adaptation behaviours are assimilated and long lasting behavioural patterns are formed, which will be transferred in future activities. The steps to be taken in our investigations of identifying the pre-adolescents’ adaptation difficulties to the specific requirements of secondary education, as well as of developing and implementing strategies to prevent / improve these difficulties, are convergent with the action directions of the educational policy documents that refer to basic education.

Keywords: *school adjustment, student-centered paradigm, difficulties of school adaptation, pre-adolescents, educational policies*

1. School’s adaptation to student’s requirements – size of the current educational paradigms and policies

One way of defining school adjustment is by referring to it as a transforming process, a process of student behaviour adjustment in line with the demands and exigencies of the educational-instructive process, so as to meet these adequately. On the other hand, school adjustment also presupposes altering, regulating, and adapting the educational-instructive process according to the potential, and psychological and individual student capabilities. The final goal of all these changes and adjustments applied to both parts (at student level, as well as at the educational-instructive process level) is to reach a balance between the demands of the school and the response behaviour of the students towards these, but also between the needs, the student’s capabilities, and the way the educational-instructive process is suitable to all these (A. Coașan, A. Vasilescu, 1988).

A second definition of school adjustment, which refers to the adjustment of the school, of the educational strategies and the entire educational-instructive process to the individual needs of the students, to their learning capabilities and particularities is one dimension of the post modern paradigm within the education system, characterized by:

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promotion of new education systems, curriculum reform, a personalized approach of strategies, using alternative sources of information, interdisciplinary, ceasing to use traditional practices of transmitting knowledge, using a personal content instead of a pre-established content that reflects a subjective knowledge, using multiple means of instruction and teaching, placing the student, with its needs and capabilities at the centre of the teaching process. Post modern tendencies mostly correspond to the constructivist approach in education, especially through the role given to the student concerning knowledge acquisition, and altering the role of the teacher and learning strategies with a strong formative aspect.

The requirement of placing the student in the centre of the educational process, of adapting all activities to his capabilities and interests, is an approach to education proper to the constructivist paradigm, which, by comparison with the traditional paradigm presents a number of significant changes in design, strategy and action.

The paradigm of school adjustment to the demands and teaching possibilities of the student, a characteristic of education in the future, but also of education systems organized according to the network model (V. Chiş, 2005), prompts for a diversification of learning situations and experiences, and setting them up according to the possibilities and needs of all student categories in order to meet the following principles: “inclusive school”, “school for all”, “integrated teaching”.

A series of documents of international educational policies promote and support dimensions of the student-centered paradigm and of a real school adjustment to the possibilities and needs of the student: the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Dakar Framework for Action at the World Education Forum, the Millennium Development Goals, UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy, 2008-2013. Among the demands for democratizing the contemporary education systems, there is also the issue of transforming the students into subjects of education (though involvement, used methodology, enhanced responsibility) and the adoption of adequate support measures for the socially, intellectually, and physically challenged (alternative schools: Freinet, Montessori, Waldorf, Decroly that allow an individualized training, suited for the capabilities and the rhythm of each student), action directions aimed at adapting the school to the various capabilities and interests of students.

The need of school adjustment to the various educational needs, to the learning and development characteristics of each child is also reflected by the concept “education for all” launched by Jomtiem at the World Conference on Education for All (1990). Providing a quality basic education, acknowledging the diversity of the educational individual needs, engaging in a pedagogy that is student-centered, the right of every child to a complete cycle of elementary school, are a few of Jomtiem’s recommendations in order for everyone to get a basic education. (T. Vărăşmaş, 2001, p. 22).

Flexing and individualizing curricula by adapting the educational offer to the individual needs is one of the priorities of the Romanian pre-university education reforms, representing an essential aspect of the curricular system reformation. The principle of decentralizing and flexing the curriculum, which offers the possibility of designing differentiated, personalized curricula, through the segment of *curriculum at the school’s decision*, one of the principles of educational policy that lied at the basis of the new Romanian pre-university curricula.

Generating a new type of curriculum is characterized by: transitioning from a teacher-centered school to a student-centered school by promoting interactive learning methods, flexing the curriculum, adopting an inter- and transdisciplinary approach to the curriculum, is in accordance with the paradigm of adapting the school to the demands and possibilities of the students, giving all of them an opportunity to identify their interests and to fully use their aptitudes and capabilities.

2. Pre-adolescents' adaptation difficulties to the specific requirements of secondary education

One of the periods in which frequent difficulties of school adaptation are registered is pre-adolescence, especially the beginning of pre-adolescence, which coincides in students with the passage from elementary to secondary school and which on the foundation of a fragile emotional and psychic balance as well as personality in formation, numerous adaptation behaviors are assimilated and long lasting behavioral patterns are formed, which will be transferred in future activities.

Secondary education is an integral part of basic education, whose importance is emphasized in international and national educational policy documents. It is an essential step in preparing for life, the child learns "how to learn" and is able to decide on the path that he/she will follow in the future, in which he/she forms and develops skills in the areas of oral and written language, mathematics, problem solving, science, communication, optimal integration in the sphere of work and in society as a whole.

One of the fundamental principles formulated by UNESCO and reaffirmed by the International Commission for Education in the 21st century targets the vital need for basic education, which is a major problem in all countries, and must include the millions of illiterate adults, and children out of school, children leaving school after the first year of study. In this regard,

the Commission recommends (J. Delors, 2000):

- Designing the curriculum for basic education so as to stimulate the love for knowledge and education, to include skills, abilities and knowledge essential to human development;
- Improve basic education through enhancing the traditional elements of the primary programs: reading, writing, arithmetic skills, capability of expression, conversation and understanding skills;
- Reconsideration of the teacher-student relationships, whose importance should not be minimized in relation to modern technological means of transmitting information.

The Framework of Action adopted at the World Conference on Education for All Jomtiem (1990) and adopted as the conclusion of the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, provide directions and strategies aimed at making available good quality basic education to all individuals of a (especially for those disadvantaged workgroups) improving the quality of primary education and teacher training, school achieve measurable results, especially in reading and writing, computer skills and essential life skills, recognition of diverse individual educational needs.

Therefore, the steps to be taken in our investigations of identifying the pre-adolescents' adaptation difficulties to the specific requirements of secondary education, as well as of developing and implementing strategies to prevent / improve these difficulties,

are convergent with the action directions of the educational policy documents that refer to basic education and which aim at:

- improving the quality of basic education by redistributing a higher share of human, material, didactic and financial resources towards this level of education system and by a widespread use of student-centred teaching strategies;
- developing special education programs for the disadvantaged social groups (children with special needs) regarding their access to basic education.

Within a broader experimental investigation, conducted on a sample of fifth-grade students, we proposed contributing to enriching teachers', fifth-grade students' and their parents' practical way of action, in order to improve the instructional-educational activity's results, to prevent / improve the school adaptation difficulties. Thus, in order to identify the changes of the fifth grade educational activity that raised the greatest difficulties to students, we used a questionnaire survey, and we obtained the data summarized in Table no.1.

Table no. 1: When you were in the fifth grade, did you experience any changes in your school activities? Which of these changes did you find the most difficult?

	Frequent	%
Each subject is taught by another teacher	22	44,9
The subject matters are more numerous and more difficult as compared with the 4th grade	11	22,4
Free time is significantly reduced	10	20,4
The relation with the teachers is different as compared with the relation with the primary school teacher	5	10,2
Assessment is carried out through grades	1	2,0
Total	49	100,0

The data presented show that the main difficulty faced by students in secondary education is that every subject is taught by another teacher, each with a different teaching style, formulating different requirements, using different teaching methods and evaluation and the student is forced to adapt to all these requirements. Also, increasing the number of school subjects studied and the degree of difficulty of their content, and reduce leisure time, are perceived as difficult. The preadolescents in the fifth grade are forced to adapt to all these requirements.

Correlating this with the results of the students at the end of the first semester of fifth grade, we found that students with the lowest average considered the main difficulty the different teaching style of each teacher (Table no. 2). The collected data point out the need to conduct activities that contribute to an appropriate learning style and new school requirements assimilation techniques and strategies for increasing learning efficiency.

Table no. 2: overall average grade - the 1st semester * When you went in the 5th grade you faced some changes in school activities. Which of the following seemed the most difficult?

When you went in the 5th grade you faced some changes in school activities. Which of the following seemed the most difficult?	average	number
Each subject is taught by another teacher	8,8555	22
The subject matters are more numerous and more difficult as compared with the 4th grade	9,3245	11
Free time is significantly reduced	9,3640	10
The relation with the teachers is different as compared with the relation with the primary school teacher	9,0640	5
Assessment is carried out through grades	9,2000	1
Total	9,0929	49

3. Strategies for optimizing the pre-students' school adaptation

Pursuant to the investigative steps taken, we have proposed to implement some *intervention programs* for helping the students' school adaptation optimization.

The practical ways of action were:

- Implementing *appropriate activities within the "Counselling and Guidance" curricular area*, which to meet the fifth-grade preteen's real needs, discovered during our investigations;

- Conducting the *"Preventing the pre-adolescents' school adaptation difficulties" socio-educational intervention program on parents*, in order to develop the educational practices and the parenting skills, to improve communication and cooperation between parents and teachers, for the child's benefit;

- Designing and conducting some *activities within the Form Masters Committee*, based on specific suitable topics, which to contribute to improving the course of education, by communication effectiveness, by the proper application of active and interactive teaching and learning methods, of some alternative assessment methods, by knowing the methods of investigating the students' and the school groups' personality, by the formation of some counselling and guidance skills depending on age and students' individual peculiarities, and by adopting managerial effective attitudes in specific teaching activity situations.

The theme of the activities conducted with students aim at optimizing their school adaptation, at achieving the goals set in the research referring to the teaching adaptation and also to the students' normative and relational adaptation: concern's, interest's and positive motivation's development towards school activity; using techniques and strategies adequate to their own learning style, in order to increase learning efficiency; developing inter-relation, inter-knowledge, cooperation behaviours, collaboration, assuming roles and responsibilities in group; effectively resolving conflicts; developing an effective interpersonal communication; the compliance of the conduct norms and rules which operate within the academic and extracurricular environment; developing the self-knowledge capacity.

As a means of conducting the activities we have chosen one based on the interaction with students, for they had the opportunity to express their knowledge and to learn through discovery what they were interested in. We also assumed that the

“Counselling and guidance” classes’ success is provided by both the form teacher’s (counsellor), and the students’ active and responsible implication, and by achieving a student-student and teacher-student interaction based on respect and mutual trust. For this purpose, we have used *interactive methods*, especially methods based on debate and group work, such as: brainstorming, “Phillips 6/6”, debate, questioning, group work, role play, exercise, “Gallery Tour”, “One stays, the others are moving”, SWOT analysis, cluster method, dyad work, “I know - I want to know - I learned”, SINELG method, etc.

In designing the socio-educational intervention program on parents, we thought that, in addition to school, family also plays an important role in preventing the preteen student’s school adaptation problems, but this can be achieved only by knowing them and by meeting them, based on a continuous cooperation with the school. *Family’s alliance with the school* is a factor affecting students’ school performances and progresses, as a relaxed atmosphere between the two educational agents, the existence of common rules, together seen and set, increase the efficiency of school learning. Educational partnership, in this instance school-family, is one of the principles proper to contemporary education and pedagogy, subsumed to the education requirements in the future. It is the form of communication, cooperation and collaboration made for the child’s support, involving a unit of requirements, options, decisions and educational actions between school and family (E. Vărășmaș, 2002).

Among *the topics* discussed, we cite: Bio-psychological peculiarities of the preadolescent period and parental desirable behaviours; How can we know our child?; Child’s adaptation to secondary school demands, to the main changes taking place in school when entering the fifth grade; How to help the child in homework preparation; Special pre-adolescents (naughty child, only child, angry child, shy child) (G.Kelemen, 2012).

Our concerns for designing and carrying out an activities program with teachers, fall on line of steps of improving the quality of their professional performance, by initiating and improving on theoretical and practical issues aimed at modernizing the instructional-educational process, proper to contemporary pedagogy’s characteristics and trends and to education in the future: focus on learning, on learning competences and skills; learning by problem solving; critical thinking; promoting interdisciplinary perspective in teaching and learning (developing synthetic lessons in interdisciplinary teams, conducting interdisciplinary connections, promoting interdisciplinarity within non-formal activities); students-centred education; school’s adjustment to student’s characteristics, to the different learning rhythms and styles; personalized, individualized instructional-educational activities; formal, non formal and informal education contents’ harmonization and articulation; promoting and applying the principle of continuous learning in organizing the instructional-educational activity; effectively integrating the interactive methods and the computer technologies in the educational process.

4. Conclusions

School adaptation difficulties that may occur at the beginning of the fifth grade may be caused by multiple and sometimes sudden changes that occur within two plans: *the bio-psycho-social development plan* and *the instructional-educational activity plan*. Pre-adolescent student’s school adaptation abilities depend on the way in which the interaction between the pre-adolescent’s physical, intellectual, emotional and personality

particularities is achieved, on the one hand, and on the exigencies and requirements imposed by the instructional-educational activity, and also on the quality of family influences on school activity, on the other hand. Preteen's adaptation to the new requirements implied both by the changes suffered by him in the bio-psycho-social plan, and also some changes in the instructional-educational activity plan, is a condition for achieving and maintaining the student's morpho-functional, psychological, moral and social equilibrium.

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ARAD: TERRITOIRE DE CORESPONSABILITÉ

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Abstract

Un group Local d'Action a été mis en place dans le municiple Arad pour appliquer la méthodologie SPIRAL proposée par le Conseil de L'Europe. Le group Local d'Action est formé par 26 membres desquels 7 institutions publics, 2 personnes physiques et 17 organisations non-gouvernementales. Les partenariats stratégiques conclues en Arad, ont offert une dynamique intéressante au group local d'action, fait qui en plusieurs occasions a facilité le travail de tout le group et la mobilisation de celui-ci. Les principales étapes d'implémentation sont: Organiser des réunions dans groups homogènes de citoyens, Analyse primaire des critères de bien-être exprimés par les citoyens , Développement du Plan Local d'Action du Municiple Arad, Propositions d'idées pour le Plan Local d'Action Arad.

Mots-clés: *group Local d'Action, implémentation, groups homogènes de citoyens, critères de bien-être exprimés, Plan Local d'Action Arad*

I. Méthodologie

Selon le Conseil de l'Europe, en s'agissant d'élaboration concertée d'indicateurs de progrès pour développer la coresponsabilité des acteurs d'un territoire ou d'une entité collective pour le bien-être de tous, la méthodologie SPIRAL consiste tout d'abord à assurer la participation effective des acteurs concernés ou du moins de leurs représentants reconnus. Ceci se fait par l'organisation d'un groupe de coordination représentatif des parties prenantes qui devient l'entité porteuse de l'ensemble du processus. Une ou plusieurs réunions préliminaires permettent de l'organiser, de s'assurer de sa complétude et de l'appropriation par le groupe ainsi constitué de son rôle de porteur et coordinateur du processus. Quand une structure partenariale existe déjà, il est de tout intérêt de s'appuyer sur elle.

II. La composition du Group Local d'Action :

Le Group Local d'Action du municiple Arad est formé par **26 membres desquels 7 institutions publics, 2 personnes physiques et 17 organisations non-gouvernementales**. Les partenariats stratégiques conclues en Arad, ont offert une dynamique intéressante au group local d'action, fait qui en plusieurs occasions a facilité le travail de tout le group et la mobilisation de celui-ci. Parmi les autorités publiques impliquées dans le Group Local d'Action d' Arad nous mentionnons : Direction de Développement et Assistance

Communaire, Direction Générale d'Assistance Sociale et Protection de l'Enfant, Police Locale du Municipie Arad, Pénitenciar Arad, l'Université de l'Ouest Vasile Goldiș, l'Université Aurel Vlaicu et la Collège National Elena Ghiba Birta.

III. Les principales étapes d'implémentation:

Organiser des réunions dans groups homogènes de citoyens.

Dans la ville d'Arad ont été organisés, pendant la période juillet- septembre 2011, des réunions avec 209 citoyens provenant de 20 groups homogènes, de différents catégories socioprofessionnelles.

Nombre total de critères de bien-être exprimés par les citoyens a été de **1760 critères**, desquels 1626 enregistrements uniques des critères (critères exprimés une seule fois), avec une moyenne de **88 réponses par group**. Après l'attribution des critères, ont été organisés des réunions de validation de l'attribution des critères de bien-être, auxquels ont été présents un nombre de 117 citoyens des groups homogènes. Les réunions de validation ont été organisées pendant la période décembre 2011-janviers 2012.

Analyse primaire des critères de bien-être exprimés par les citoyens :

En ce qui concerne une analyse primaire des critères de bien-être, conformément aux 3 questions adressées, le classement se présente ainsi:

<i>Qu'est ce que ça signifie pour vous une vie meilleure?</i>	<i>Qu'est ce que vous empêche d'avoir une vie meilleure?</i>	<i>Que seriez vous disposé de faire pour vous et pour les autres pour avoir une vie meilleure?</i>
A08 – Pouvoir d'achat /Accès aux finances 18,25 %	A08 - Pouvoir d'achat /Accès aux finances 17,11 %	H02 – Activités et initiatives privés 30,8 %
F01 – Équilibre physique et santé 7,18 %	C05 - Organisation, gestion, financement 17,28 %	H06 – S'engager dans la société.....18,63 %
A06 – Emploi 4,6 %	F01 - Équilibre physique et santé 6,53 %	H04 – Se rencontrer/ Écouter/ Être solidaire 11,98 %

Parmi les indicateurs les plus faibles ou pas du tout représentés, nous mentionnons:

- I. Vêtements 0 %
- II. Météo, phénomènes naturels 0 %
- III. Conditions de production 0 %
- IV. Équilibre démographique 0 %

Développement du Plan Local d'Action du Municipie Arad

Pour le développement du Plan Local d'Action, ont été choisies **4 directions générales d'action**. Le choix des directions a été réalisé basé sur l'analyse primaire des indicateurs de bien-être, choisissant tant indicateurs avec le plus grand nombre de critères exprimés, ainsi que les indicateurs pour lesquels a été exprimé un nombre réduit de critères de bien-être, ainsi:

- 1. Environnement
- 2. Entrepreneuriat
- 3. Inclusion Sociale / Réseaux d'Inclusion Sociale
- 4. Démocratie, institutions, morale sociale

Pour chaque direction de développement, a été choisit un nombre de projets / actions / politiques locales/locaux qui soient co-évalués, basé sur la grille aux indicateurs de bien-être. Dans le municipale Arad, ont été co-évalués basé sur les indicateurs de bien-être un nombre de **15 projets.**

Dénomination du projet	Description générale du projet
L'entrepreneuriat et l'égalité de chances. Antres	Objectif: la promotion de l'égalité de chances dans le domaine de l'entrepreneuriat, par la stimulation de l'implication des femmes généralement et des femmes de l'environnement rurale, spécialement, dans l'initiation et le développement du propre affaire dans le contexte du développement durable des communautés des départements situés le longue de la frontière de l'ouest de la Roumanie.
"L'implication du clergé et des membres des communautés paroissiales orthodoxes dans le développement de projets sociaux au niveau de l'église métropolitaine orthodoxe de Banat et de l'archevêché de l'Alba Iulia"	Activités principaux: (1) Établir, développer et soutenir l'activité de 6 Centres d'Inclusion Sociale dans les 6 départements; (2) Formation professionnelle de 460 prêtres / membres des communautés paroissiales comme managers de projet ; (3) Rédiger et déposer pour financement minimum 60 projets; (4) Réaliser 120 diagnostics communautaires; (5) Signer un minimum de 100 partenariats; (6) 2400 personnes seront conseillés, leur sera offert support et orientation pour occuper un emploi.
„Élaboration des stratégies de conservation, des plan de supervision et développement durable pour le défilée du Mureş inférieur"	Dans le projet ont été faites des études concernant les espèces et les habitats d'intérêt communautaire et national, études qui constituent la base de départ pour la réalisation des plans de management et des stratégies de développement durable.
Projet de recherche commun concernant le testage de la tolérante à sécheresse de certains génotypes de maïs cultivés dans la région de l'ouest de la Roumanie et de sud-est de l'Hongrie	Objectif : optimiser les techniques d'évaluation pour l'identification de certains génotypes de maïs à tolérance élevée dans des conditions de sécheresse, par des expériences et déterminations „in vivo" et „in vitro"; le transfère d'information et technologie entre le domaine recherche et celui de production.
"Les plantes libériennes – ressources régénérables stratégiques pour l'économie Européenne "	L'objectif du projet est la valorisation complète des plantes techniques (le lin, le chanvre et le colza) pour obtenir des produits novatoires, des matières premiers auxiliaires et des produits énergétiques par le développement et l'application de nouvelles technologies compétitives d'extraction et de traitement tant des produits principaux que des produits secondaires, dans le contexte du développement économique durable.
Étude national de supervision de l'insertion sur le marché du travail des émouls de l'enseignement supérieur. Les émouls et le marché du travail.	L'élaboration d'un questionnaire de supervision pour „Les émouls et le marche du travail pour les émouls des promotions 2005 et 2009, établir une base de donnés au niveau national".
La campagne „Habitants d'Arad pour habitants d'Arad "	Les activités principales: Collection d'aliments, vêtements, accessoires et petit mobiliers des citoyens d'Arad; Réalisation d'enquêtes sociales pour les familles défavorisées; Offrir des biens basés sur l'enquête sociale.
Integradev – ecos ouverture –	Objectif: développement régionale durable et échanges

développement régionale durable	d'expérience avec 5 pays européens, savoir-faire
Débat – „ Le meilleur gouvernement en ce qui concerne la sécurité interne et externe	Objectif: la dissémination de l'idée de mobilité en ce qui concerne la possibilité de l'intégration de la Roumanie dans l'Espace Schengen
Workshop „Réseaux entre réseaux”	Objectif : information concernant la possibilité de trouver des endroits de travail; dissémination d'informations concernant le réseau Eures et Europe direct
Foire des ONG-s XIV ^{ème} Edition	Organiser des pavillons (22) de présentation des ONG-s d'Arad dans l'espace public
Des services intégrés pour la promotion de l'occupation durable dans 5 régions de Roumanie	Développement de services complexes pour faciliter l'occupation professionnelle: information, conseil professionnel, orientation professionnel, formation professionnelle, tuteur et médiation sur le marché du travail.
„ Dites non à la mendicité !”	Discussions avec 20 élèves de gymnase de chaque école sur la perception du phénomène de la mendicité, possibilités de l'éradiquer; distribution de grand tasses personnalisés Résultats:240 élèves + leurs collègues + les familles de ceux-ci informés concernant le phénomène de la mendicité
La protection de l'enfant – de théorie à pratique” PractiPass	Objectif : Promotion et consolidation du partenariat interrégional entre les universitaires, d'une côté et des partenariats locaux entre les universités et les institutions publics et privés de profile, potentiel employeurs des émoulus, pour faciliter la transition de l'éducation à la vie active des futurs praticiens dans le domaine de la protection de l'enfant. Création de cette liaison durable va offrir aux étudiants la possibilité de faire le premier pas vers la vie active par un contacte directe avec le milieu de travail réel.
„Soyez ECOlogique”	Présentation de matériaux éducatifs, format pps. et par support imprimé (dépliants, brochures, affiches, bannières, etc., tout le papier utilisée résultant de recyclage), pendant les mois octobre et novembre; collection de papier et des doses en aluminium, ainsi qu'éditer la premier apparition de la revue du projet, dans le mois novembre; concours par équipes.

<u>Propositions d'idées pour le Plan Local d'Action Arad: Direction</u>	<u>Actions</u>	<u>Qui?</u>	<u>Comment?</u>	<u>Quand?</u>
<u>D.I.M</u>	<u>Concours d'élaboration de dépliants pour la Police Locale Arad</u>	<u>Police Locale Arad</u> <u>Élèves des lycées d'Arad,</u> <u>L'Inspectorat Scolaire Départemental d'Arad</u>	<u>Consultation de la page internet de la Police Locale d'Arad par les élèves;</u> <u>Lancer le concours d'élaboration de dépliants;</u> <u>Poster les dépliants sur la page d'internet;</u> <u>Le vote de ceux-ci</u> <u>Imprimer le dépliant gagnant</u> <u>Accorder des prix aux gagnants</u>	<u>Automne 2012</u>
<u>D.I.M.</u>	<u>La campagne „Stop aux Ethnobotaniques”</u>	<u>DDAC,</u> <u>L'Association Antidrogue</u> <u>La Police Locale</u> <u>Le Pénitencier d'Arad?</u> <u>L'Association Educatio?</u> <u>Des Volontaires</u> <u>L'Archevêché Orthodoxe d'Arad</u>	<u>Distribution de verres liège et tapis de souris avec le message</u> <u>„Stop aux Ethnobotaniques”</u> <u>Tee-shirts</u> <u>Présentation de la campagne dans des églises, apport de volontaires</u> <u>Accorder des prix aux volontaires actifs</u>	<u>Jusqu'à la fin de l'année 2012</u>
	<u>Ateliers de développement personnel pour les élèves de lycée</u>	<u>Les étudiants de psychologie</u> <u>Uav+UVVG</u> <u>L'Archevêché Orthodoxe d'Arad</u> <u>Élèves de lycée</u> <u>Volontaires</u> <u>Enfants des centres de placement</u> <u>ISJ</u>	<u>Les étudiants vont diriger des activités dans la salle de cours et dans des espaces non-conventionnelles avec les élèves de lycée et avec les enfants des centres de placement. Les activités vont viser la stimulation de la connaissance de soi et la connaissance des collègues, le développement de la capacité de communication, assertivité, créativité, etc.</u> <u>Un prêtre sera aussi présent</u> <u>Les bénéficiaires pourront devenir multiplicateurs</u>	<u>2012-2013</u>
<u>Environnement</u>	<u>„Couleurs et sourires”</u>	<u>Des personnes défavorisées, jeunes auxquels manquent les moyens d'expression et élèves du Lycée d' Art?</u> <u>La Police locale</u> <u>Volontaires</u>	<u>Teindre, peindre les murs, faire des mosaïques en déchets pour embellir les endroits de collection des ordures (des murs gris)</u>	<u>2013</u>
<u>RIS</u>	<u>Foire ONG+EUR AR+ Institutions Publics</u>	<u>DDAC</u> <u>ONGs d'Arad + Institutions Publics</u> <u>L'Archevêché</u>	<u>Présentation interactive de l'activité de l'institution respectueuse (par exemple les Finances apportent des formulaires fiscaux qui soient remplis et expliqués au public)</u>	<u>Septembre 2012</u>

		<u>Orthodoxe d'Arad</u>		
<u>RIS</u>	<u>Le Catalogue des ONG-s d'Arad</u>	<u>DDAC</u>	<u>Réactualisation du catalogue des ONG-s et la distribution de plusieurs exemplaires</u>	
<u>A</u>	<u>„ Le Petit Entrepreneur ”</u>	<u>ISJ-maternelles UAV CNIPMMR</u>	<u>Instruction des éducateurs des maternelles concernant le spécifique de l'éducation entrepreneuriale pour les préscolaires; Organiser pendant l'année scolaire des activités, des jeux concernant l'utilisation, la planification du budget, prix, idée de produire des revenus, etc. Exposition avec vente de produits réaliser par les préscolaires dans la halle d'entrée d'UAV</u>	<u>2012-2013</u>
<u>RIS</u>	<u>„ J'ai réussi. Toi?..”</u>	<u>Membres du GLA</u>	<u>Dresser une brochure avec des exemples de succès des personnes de catégories désavantagés: minorités, délinquants, femmes, chômeurs, etc.</u>	<u>2013</u>
<u>RIS</u>	<u>Aider les mendiants d'auprès les églises</u>	<u>L'Archevêché Orthodoxe d'Arad par paroisse, ONGs ?</u>	<u>Stimuler les paroissiens d'aider d'une manière organisée les mendiants d'auprès les églises</u>	<u>2012-2013</u>
<u>RIS</u>	<u>La bibliothèque vivante</u>	<u>Des étudiants volontaires de philologie L'Archevêché Orthodoxe d'Arad</u>	<u>Identification des volontaires, identification des personnages stéréotypés qui vont constituer les „livres VIVANTES” Identifier la location Préparer les matériaux Imprimer les invitations et la publicité des événements</u>	<u>2013</u>
<u>DIM</u>	<u>Théâtre forum</u>	<u>Élèves du lycée d'art Volontaires adolescents GLA</u>	<u>Inviter des parents, des professeurs, spécialistes pour visionner et intervenir dans une pièce de théâtre forum avec le sujet „L'adolescente enceinte” ou un autre sujet d'intérêt</u>	<u>2013</u>
<u>RIS</u>	<u>Photovoice</u>	<u>GLA- personnes défavorisés</u>	<u>Les personnes des groupes défavorisés vont recevoir un appareil photo et elles vont capturer des instantanés de leur vie. Les photos seront exposés dans un espace public</u>	<u>2012</u>
<u>M</u>	<u>Le Café du Monde</u>	<u>UAV, GLA, Acteurs locaux importants qui déroulent des activités liés à l'environnement L'Archevêché Orthodoxe d'Arad</u>	<u>Dans l'espace UAV seront invités des acteurs locaux importants qui déroulent des activités liés à l'environnement qui devront répondre aux questions concernant la problématique de l'environnement. L'organisation de l'activité sera sous la forme d'un café</u>	<u>2013</u>

V. Les principales difficultés rencontrées dans l'implémentation du projet:

La difficulté principal a été de motiver les membres de GLA de s'impliquer dans toutes les activités du projet dans les conditions d'un agenda organisationnelle propre très chargée. Nous mentionnons aussi, des suspicions des citoyens à l'égard de la communication des données personnelles dans les formulaires demandés par l'Autorité de Management POS- DRU.

V. Les principaux bénéfices obtenus au niveau local comme suite de l'implémentation de cette démarche et opportunités d'avenir.

- créer le cadre pour connaître d'autres locaux actifs dans le domaine de l'inclusion sociale
- développer des projets communs, augmenter le degré de confiance entre divers acteurs communautaires
- mettre en commun des ressources
- impliquer les citoyens de diverses catégories dans l'augmentation du bien-être local
- concevoir des actions d'intervention au niveau local se basant sur une identification réelle des besoins des habitants
- évaluer de la perspective des 59 indicateurs des projets existants ayant comme effet de découvrir des nouvelles perspectives sur les points forts et maigres de ceux-ci et identifier des directions futures d'action.
- intégrer les membres du GLA dans un réseau national par l'accès à la Plateforme
- accès aux informations sur des exemples de bonne pratique dans le domaine de l'inclusion sociale

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TEACHERS OF PEDAGOGY AND PEDAGOGUES OF ARAD PREPARANDIA

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Abstract

We are highlighting, by enforcing Vasile Popeanga`s opinion, the pedagogic character of the institution, a core for building up an atmosphere specific for education in the spirit of time. From the beginning, Țichindeal promoted a new concept of education based on the idea of national identity. He had as reference point the translated volume of Peter Villaume, „Pedagogy and methodology for town and village school teachers”; the author was a pedagogue of European openness, taking the role of „unifying new pedagogic ideas into a national system of education”⁵². The first pedagogy professor, Ioan Mihuț, elaborated a manual of pedagogic sciences (deposited in copies at the Archives of Karlovitz, Sibiu and Cluj) structured in four parts: „the needs of folk schools (1); the folk educational system (2); the core of educational act (3) and the explanation of methodological problems (4)”⁵³. For Ioan Mihuț, pedagogy is „the science that teaches you to bring up teenagers”. The primary ideas have later on developed into coherent structures for future teachers and their teaching performance.

Keywords: *Arad preparandia, pedagogues, teachers of pedagogy*

While writing about the *History of Arad Preparandia* (2012) I have stated at a certain point that “Pedagogy, as a fundamental school subject for such an institution was taught by Ioan Mihuț (1812 - 1816), Dimitrie Constantini (until 1837), Atanasie Șandor (until 1857), Alexandru Gavra (until 1878), Lazăr Petrovici (until 1880), Ioan Ghibu (until 1881), Petre Pipoș (until 1913), Sabin Evuțian (until 1918)”. I would revise the list of pedagogy teachers and teachers of psychological disciplines with the following: Teodor Mariș (1921 - 1935), Victor Țârcovnicu (1937, 1959 - 1962), Gogu Atanasiu (1939 - 1950), Ilie Orzescu (1940s), Gruia Stroia (1945 - 1951), Ioan Vârtaci (1950s), Grigorie Șarlău (1948 - 1973), Vasile Popeangă (1950 - 1985), Ioan Drăgan (1951 - 1961), Marin Nedelcu (1968 - 1982), Iuliana Scherer (1972s), Aurelia Marșieu (1973 - 2001), Doina Calomfirescu (1986 - 2001), Alina Roman (1996 - 2005), Valeria Peștean (2002 - present), Corina Uzum (2008 - present). Among the pedagogy and psychology teachers we also mention: Elena Bârseti (1962s), Corneliu Peter (1963 - 1980), Maria Tomov (1970s), Georgeta Ciul (1970s), Gheorghe Comicescu (1921s), Ilie Deac (1964 - 1972), Maria

⁵² V. Popeangă, Op. cit., p. 26. **PETER VILLAUME** (1746, born in Berlin - 1825) was a German pedagogue of the Enlightenment of French origin, a preacher, principle and Ethic teacher at a Girl Highschool in Ioachimstahl (Bohemia). In 1793, he emigrated to Denmark, carrying out his didactic activity until the end of his days. He has written: *The History of Man* (1783), *About Education in the Spirit of Love for the Mankind* (1784), *About Body Culture* (1793).

⁵³ Ibidem.

Lăcrimioara Dincă (1992 - present), Gabriela Iancic (2004 - present), Corina Uzum (2004 - present). From this list, some were pedagogy teachers, performing a professional exercise, and others were, moreover, teachers, or personalities that have issued theories about the educational phenomenon, have produced volumes of pedagogical concern, being thus generators of science.

I mention here, in addition, those teachers who have earned a PhD in educational sciences, and those who have published studies and articles in various journals. However, there were periods in the evolution of Arad Preparandia (by which I synthesize any educational institution names within the two centuries) when the *pedagogy teachers* have had a national, scientific and referential performance in the history of Romanian pedagogy that entitles us to call them *pedagogues*. I am referring to Peter Pipos, Vasile Popeangă, and Victor Țârcovnicu. Therefore, from the title, I understand that there were four pedagogy teachers who have honored this fundamental discipline of education, presented in the *Curricula* in a considerable proportion, and that can be called authentic teachers, that is theorists of the educational phenomenon, developing scientific papers and who have completed the didactic exercise with a representative scientific work. Developing pedagogy volumes and treaties, and textbooks for the use of pedagogy students, Peter Pipos, Vasile Popeangă, Victor Țârcovnicu have their rightful place in the history of national pedagogy, as I have also done, in fact, by including them in our volume *Pedagogic Doctrines from the Origins to the Present* (2010).

What were the reasons that led to the selection of the four leaders of the pedagogy in Arad?

1. **PETER PIPOȘ** (born 29 aug. 1859, Alba-Iulia – 29 sept. 1913, Arad) was a pedagogy teacher at Școala pedagoghicească greco-ortodoxă „Dimitrie Țichindeal” in Arad, for 32 years from 1881 until 1913. Drawing on the ideas of psychologists E. Meumann and W. A. Lay, he calls for "a teaching experiment" to handle the application of the experimental method, the accurate observation and interpretation of statistical data on teaching problem solving. P. Pipos explains the organization of an experimental research, saying that "*we stand before an epochal reform*" in the sense that "*experimental teaching will become the didactics of the twentieth century.*" P. Pipos developed textbooks, being a declared follower of the pedagogy of Pestalozzi, with a critical attitude towards JJ Rousseau's pedagogical thinking. He wrote "Teaching" (1887), "Education" (1900), "Psychology" (1896) and a "History of Pedagogy" (1892, completed in 1912).

In "**History of Pedagogy**" Pipos presents the leading thinkers' conceptions on pedagogy, from the antiquity to nowadays. We owe P. Pipos the presentation in a true view of the teaching culture of the time, the doctrines and the educational trends. Moreover, P. Pipos has an important contribution "*to the assertion of Arad as a teaching center*" and "*to the modernization of the education in Arad*" (V. Popeangă).

The teacher from the Preparandia of Arad starting with 1880, printed the manual "**Pedagogy for Preparandia (normal schools)**" (1900) in which he states that "*education is an action (composed of several partial actions), through which a human adult (grown-up) influences another minor (undeveloped) man intently after a certain plan to perfect him to the extent that it is possible*". He had the ability to systematize pedagogical ideas, the openness to modernize the educational system and to adapt the European pedagogical concepts to the specific of the national education.

2. **VICTOR ȚÎRCOVNICU** (born 1913, Slobozia, Popești, Argeș – died 1987, Timișoara) was "*a teacher built on a great man*" with "*a high civic conscience and professionalism.*" He received a thorough education in seminars and educational and philosophical studies at the University of Bucharest. To developed his teaching and pedagogical activity at the Caransebes Normal School, the High School of Oravița, then the Pedagogical School in Arad and ended it at the University of Timisoara (1962 - 1986), giving the pedagogical literature two important volumes: "*General Pedagogy*" (1975) and "*Whole-class Learning, Individual Learning, Group Learning*" (1981). He had his PhD exam with the thesis entitled *Progressive Trends in the Romanian Education of Banat*, in 1968, at the University of Bucharest, a kernel for two other works on the history of the education in Banat: "*Contributions to the history of education in the Romanian Banat (1780-1918)*" and "*History of education in Banat until 1800.*" In his activity, he "*was a man in whose life debt conscience, the sense of justice, human solidarity, the humanity sent by generations of ancestors who have planted it in our hearts, the love of children, the work diligently to affirm Romania in the realms of culture and science were leading values to his own behaviour.*"

The author starts from the belief that "if they would give teachers clear theoretical guidance and practical models of organizing work group and individual work activities, they would detach from the traditional education model." In this respect the proposal of various forms of learning is based on experiments which Țîrcovnicu V. has made on groups of students from primary and secondary schools. Joining frontal education (classes and lessons) with individual and group teaching are, in the opinion of the teacher from Banat, a way to increase the efficiency of learning. He explains the benefits of providing whole-class teaching procedures, the negative aspects of this type of organization, giving a number of suggestions to improve this style, as resulted from the experiments performed. Analyzing the individual education forms, the author proposes a methodology to stimulate individual learning, suggesting the use of worksheets common and differentiated. It is believes that "individual learning prepares the student for lifelong learning to a greater extent " and "the knowledge acquired is more solid and suitable for various uses." Furthermore, the work group has both advantages and disadvantages, but it is important that there is a form of learning that can alternate with the other two types (frontal and individual). V. Țîrcovnicu clarifies the concept of school group, the principles of composition of the group, how to work, and providing a more effective learning. The text elaborated by V. Țîrcovnicu is clearly expressed in short sentences, carefully conceptualized with an impeccable logic of argument.

3. **VASILE POPEANGĂ** (born 22. Dec. 1920 Lelești, Gorj - died January 18. 2012 Arad) graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, Romanian language-pedagogy from the University of Bucharest (1948). He worked as a professor of pedagogy and logical at "Dimitrie Țichindeal" High School of Arad, led the school for over 20 years created a school of thought and action in undergraduate teaching. He wrote: "*Romanian School in Transylvania in the period 1967/1918 Romanians' struggle for union*" (1974), "*Pedagogical Press of Transylvania*" (1966), "*A century of Romanian activity in different parts of Arad (1721-1821)*" (1974), "*Romanian School of Arad between 1967-1918*" (1976), "*Romanian School of Arad in the middle of the nineteenth century, 1921-1867*" (1979), "*School and social collectivity*" (1970) "*The class of pupils, subject and object of the educational act*" (1973), "*General Pedagogy*" (manual / et al) (1967), "*The Preparandia*

of Arad "(colab.) (1964)," Pedagogy "(1994)," Studies in educational sciences"(2007). In addition, he performed a rich and prolific scientific research and publishing.

Although his activity has developed mainly in pre-teaching activity around the "Dimitrie Țichindeal" High School in Arad, the PhD in Pedagogy V. Popeangă had, the scientific and intellectual performance prove he had valued the virtues of a university professor. He has published books, journals or collections, initiated pedagogical studies and histories of teaching or institutions, printed manuals which are very concerned about the teaching logic and its pedagogical effectiveness. After reading "General Pedagogy" (1967), there are some design elements that support its timeliness. First of all, his speech is very clear, consistent and based on logic of ideas and the development of structured thinking. The short sentences, the linking of ideas in a coherent system, the order of the chapters, and the timeliness issues approached give the pedagogical text conceptual clarity and openness. "Man needs education throughout life", is the claim that, today, supports the concept of "lifelong learning". Education is considered a social phenomenon, and pedagogy - a science education. The school has an educational character. The analysis of the teaching principles, the methods and procedures, the use of public education, the general conceptualization of didactics, the forms of organization of the educational process, etc. are resources and teachings that remain valid today. In addition, the school has identified ways of collaboration with family, as well as classroom management issues and those connected to the educational institutions. A reference that is worth mentioning includes considerations about the personality of the teacher. Asked if his Lordship's pedagogical work could configure a doctrine, Popeangă V. testified that teachers around the country's main teaching high school had doctrinal vocation because such institutions have tools similar to higher education teaching.

V. Popeangă was a follower of the pedagogy of cultural values. Establishing pedagogical concepts, in his case, was based on knowledge of the national and European development of pedagogical ideas and their effect on educational institutions, consequences of the practical manifestation of the pedagogical ideas. The school institution was not the most faithful representative of the doctrine of the time. He assigns an essential role to the teacher's personality, who must be a genuine intellectual, virtuous model of conduct and a quality reader of books. The value of the people in education gives value to the processuality that it organizes. Educational institutions are not just devices that express the amount of human quality, but also clues to the intellectual health of the society. The pedagogy of Basil Popeangă is doctrinal, regarding the processability of cultural and human values in teaching.

It was based on the knowledge of the evolution of ideas and pedagogical conceptions about Popeangă V., M. Ionescu calling it "the most important and valuable history of pedagogy in life." A recent volume of Vasile I. Popeangă contains fifteen "Studies in educational sciences" (2007), which expresses a new vision on education issues from the perspective of the establishment of the common European education space. Guided by the idea of training a generation of European stature, V. Popeangă views that only "by ourselves" can we argue the hopes of the Romanian society, and we will diminish the suffering caused by its political repercussions. He presented three models of pedagogy in the Romanian educational corpus: Onisifor Ghibu, Petru Pipos and Victor Târcovnicu. The study entitled "The initial training of educators. Preschool and primary education from a European perspective" conceptualize an experience capable of generating "an educational

project group" which applies to "the whole European generation included in the educational institutions of the Union." In the ontology of learning, proposes some guidelines: respect European identity, national identity and building respect for multiple functions, and they are the result of three cultural codes "the spirit of reflection generated by the Greek philosophers, the Christian faith based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Roman law with principles that put them at the base of society and human coexistence." Such a project must cultivate real pride supported by the idea that the European culture is one of the pillars of the world: "Europe's cultural identity is a driver of feelings, attitudes and value judgments. Europe's cultural reality is a powerful civilization, is the abode of the creative community." This is the spiritual space in which the teaching profession needs individuals with a bunch of skills who have their individual "pedagogical vocation" in the communication with others, the ability to influence others, the power of argument, dynamism in action, the ability to penetrate "other souls" to observe the child's mental life: "it is the vocation that recruits teachers who focus on the pedagogy of the heart, that is on the promotion of an educational doctrine based on love, kindness and forgiveness of offenses." In this study, V. Popeangă outlines principles and suggests actions which could help in the making of an educational paradigm focused on the virtues of curriculum implementation, taking into account: the psychological life of the child (psychology), the dynamics of the educational action (teachers) and the social context of life (sociology). V. Popeangă's doctrinal activity is the consequence of a remarkable practical activity in Romanian school, fact that ensures proper justifications for his theoretical opinions. He is an important personality of our national pedagogy, whose pedagogical work is a source of suggestions for improving the vision of contemporary education.

In conclusion, we have words of special gratitude to all pedagogy teachers who provided theoretical culture and practical models to all educators in order to develop an effective professional exercise which would help pupils from preschool and primary school education. Beyond being teachers in their classrooms, they assured didactic assistance for teaching practice activities, to form psychological and sociological culture and to make pedagogic students more sensitive.

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Annexes:

Short biographical listings:

- ATANASIU GHEORGHE GOGU “*had a PhD in pedagogy in Zurich, Switzerland, owned three houses in Bucharest, which were bombed, former minister in Averescu Government and modest pedagogy teacher*”, as he used to introduce himself to the pupils, principal of the Application School (1939 - 1950); „was a distinguished teacher, discrete and internalized”, as V. Popeangă described him.

- BÎRSETI ELENA – born 1932, in Bujoru (near București), taught pedagogy (1962).

- CALOMFIRESCU DOINA - born. Oct 28th 1939, Leș, Bihor County; graduate of the Faculty of History-Philosophy, field: Pedagogy, with Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj (1962); taught pedagogy from 1986 until her retirement (2001); has published studies and articles in reviews (**Journal of Pedagogy, Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, Education tribune, Primary Education**, etc.)

- CIUL GEORGETA – teaches pedagogy (1970), has carried out pedagogical counselling activity and logopaedia activity.

- COMICESCU GHEORGHE – taught pedagogy at the School for Primary School Teachers (1921).

- CONSTANTINI DIMITRIE - born 1792, Oravița – died October 17th 1865, Oradea; comes from a wealthy Macedonian-Romanian family; graduated Philosophy in Szeged (1815), field Philosophy, pedagogic sciences; preparandial and senior teacher (1817 - 1843); school principal of Oradea district (1846 - 1864). He wrote: *Romanian West and East History* (Timișoara, 1857).

- DEAC ILIE – pedagogy teacher (1964 - 1972); died in Timișoara. He held control positions at School Inspectorate of Timisoara.

- DINCĂ MARIA LĂCRIMIOARA - born March 30th 1968, Arad; graduate of the Faculty of Pedagogy, within Cluj University; has been teaching Pedagogy and Psychology since 1992. She has published studies in *Plus Review*.

- DRĂGAN IOAN - born January 21st 1923, Bretea Mureșană, Hunedoara County – died November 22nd 1993, Timișoara; graduate of Normal School of Deva (1945); Graduate of the faculty of Pedagogy – Psychology of Cluj (1951); taught Pedagogy and Psychology (1951 -1961), was deputy principle of Pedagogic School of Arad and school inspector at the Educational Department in Arad; had a PhD in Psychology, academic career – university reader at the University of Timisoara between 1961 and 1989 (retirement). He published over 300 studies, 21 volumes, among which we mention *Cognitive interest and school orientation, Tutoring in educational work system, Psychology for all, Pedagogical research, General Psychology, etc.* as well as numerous studies and articles in field related reviews.

- EVUȚIAN SABIN – born July 11th 1889, Pecica, Arad County - died Sept 25th 1977, Timișoara; aBachelor of the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Budapest, taught Pedagogy and organised teaching practice classes (1913 - 1919). He participated as an official at Alba-Iulia in 1918, deputy general inspector of Banat-Timisoara District (1927 - 1941). President of *Astra* Cultural Association Timisoara region.

- GAVRA ALEXANDRU - born December 18th 1797, Oradea – died October 23rd 1884, Arad; was teacher at the Preparandia from 1821 to 1876 and from 1864 until his

retirement in 1876 he was school principal; he taught Aritmetics, Pedagogy, Methodology, Geography, Economy, History, Romanian, Hungarian etc.; he wrote *Lexis and conversation* (1847), he edited *Cronical of Romanians by Gh. Şincai* (1844), *The Sincai-klein Monument* (1844), *Additions to Romanian Theatre* (ms); plans an organized publishment of Romanian books according to a *Plan on publishing some Romanian books*, which seeks approval at the Court of Vienna in the spring of 1833; *I have served under 3 kings in times when Arad Diocese was governed by 7 bishops*; a big personality of the Preparandia and of Arad culture.

- IANCIC GABRIELA – born November 22nd 1971, Arad; graduated the Pedagogic Highschool of Arad (1990); bachelor of the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology, field Pedagogy of the University of the West Timisoara (2004), as well as of the Master Programme “Educational Management” of the Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad (2010); teacher for primary school education at the School of application (since 2008); published articles in *Şcoala vremii, Educația Plus*, being co-author of different volumes for primary school teachers; pedagogy teacher and teaching practice coordinator as well as methodologist of the School Inspectorate of Arad County (since 2004).

- MARIŞ TEODOR – born August 14th 1885, Cherechiu, Arad County– died December 18th 1935, Arad; held a Teacher Diploma (confessional primary school teacher at the Romanian School, Giula) and the course of professional accomplishment in Budapest, then the course for teachers in Cluj (1921); pedagogy teacher (1921-1935); principal of the School of Application; editor of *Şcoala Vremii*; wrote *Didactics Lessons* (1922); decorated with Romanian Crown with cavalry rank (1933); *Şcoala Vremii* from December 1935 publishes his portrait and the number is commemorative.

- MARŞIEU AURELIA - born July 20th 1945, Avrig. Bachelor of the Faculty of Psychopedagogy within "Babeş Bolyai" University of Cluj (1968). She taught pedagogy since 1973. She published the volumes “*Counselling. Applications* (2004), *Counselling. Theory and practice* (2005), *Psychopedagogic Fundaments* (2006, colab), as well as studies in *Şcoala Vremii, Plus* and *Tribuna învăţământului*. She retired as Junior Lecturer, PhD at the Teaching Department of “Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad.

- MIHUŢ IOAN - born 1756, Şiclău, Arad County – died February 3rd 1835, Lugoj; senior-principal of the Preparandia between 1814 and 1816. He translated *Pedagogy* (after P. Villaume⁵⁴) and *Methodology*; he wrote „*Manuductor pentru învăţătorii sholasticeşti*” (Handbook for scholastic teachers), an introduction into pedagogy and a methodological initiation (1818, Buda); he taught pedagogy from 1812 to 1816; was principal of the School District Caransebeş with the seat in Lugoj (from 1816 until 1835).

- NEDELICU MARIN – born March 17th 1921 in Cioroiaşi, Dolj County; graduated the Faculty of History and Philosophy, Pedagogy – Romanian of Cluj (1962): he taught

⁵⁴ **PETER VILLAUME** (1746, born in Berlin - 1825) was a German pedagogue of the Enlightenment of French origin, a preacher, principle and Ethic teacher at a Girl Highschool in Ioachimstahl (Bohemia). In 1793, he emigrated to Denmark, carrying out his didactic activity until the end of his days. He has written: *The History of Man* (1783), *About Education in the Spirit of Love for the Mankind* (1784), *About Body Culture* (1793).

pedagogy between 1968 and 1982. He wrote articles and studies in reviews like *Catedra, Ziridava, Anuarele liceului*.

- ORZESCU ILIE – pedagogy teacher in 1940, former principal of Normal School of Caransebeș.

- PEȘTEAN VALERIA – born October 5th 1972, Sântana, Arad county; graduate of the Pedagogical Highschool of Arad, Bachelor of the Faculty of Educational Sciences within Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca; PhD in Educational Sciences since 2010; she wrote *Introduction into contemporary teaching practice* (2011), *Analysis and synthesis –logical-didactic procedures* (2012); participates in didactical projects.

- PETER CORNELIU - born January 28th 1922, Lemniu, Sălaj County – died ?; bachelor of the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy of Cluj, (1947); he taught pedagogy (1963 - 1982).

- PETROVICI LAZĂR – born November 16th 1856, Bocșa Română, Caraș County – died June 21st 1881, Sibiu, suburb Iosefin; Bachelor of the Faculty of Philosophy of Budapest, PhD in Philosophy (1878); pedagogy teacher (1878 - 1881); he wrote *Compendium of Pedagogy* (1880) and translated handbooks from Hungarian and wrote Romanian literature handbooks. He collaborated with articles to the following publications ***Familia, Albina, Biserica și școala*** etc. publishing his PhD thesis *Love for a Child*” (1878); tuberculosis ends his life at the age of only 25.

- PIPOȘ PETRU - born September 29th 1859, Alba Iulia – died September 29th 1913, Arad (buried at „Eternitatea”cemetery); philosophy studies and PhD at the University of Cluj (1882); he taught Mathematics, Physics, Philosophy and Pedagogy between 1881 and 1913; his former students cast his bust in bronze (1936) and placed it in front of the Cultural Palace; he wrote *Psychology, Pedagogy, Didactics, The History of Pedagogy, Memoirs of Iena Lectures: Dr. W.Rein and his pedagogical system* (1911), collaborator of ***Biserică și școală, Educatorul*** (București).

- POPEANGĂ VASILE – born December 22nd 1920 Lelești, Gorj County – died January 18th 2012, Arad; Bachelor of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, field: Pedagogy – Romanian Language, in Bucharest (1948); he taught pedagogical sciences (1950-1985); was one of the most long-lasting principals of the school (1954 – 1960, deputy-principal, 1960 – 1978, principal); „he was principal for 24 years out of the 200 years long school existence; a well prepared teacher, owner of an impressive pedagogical and methodological culture. He impressed on the school a management style based on the „ordo et ratio” principle, exigency and professionalism. Untiring researcher of the Archives and libraries from inland and abroad, V. Popeangă was the creator of a scientific work that imposed him as a reference point in the historiography of Romanian education; he carried on the spirit of Tichindeal, Petru Pipoș and of all worthy teachers of our school in all his being and writing” (notes on a manuscript – Doru Bogdan); he wrote *Școala românească din Transilvania în perioada 1867/1918 și lupta sa pentru unire* (Romanian Schhol of Transylvania in 1867/1918 and its struggle for unification) (1974), *Presa pedagogică din Transilvania* (Pedagogical Press of Transylvania) (1966), *Aradul, centru politic al luptei naționale din perioada dualismului*(Arad, political centre of national fight in the Dualism period) (1867/1918) (1978), *Un secol de activitate românească în părțile Aradului* (A century of Romanian activity in Arad) (1721/1821) (1974), *Școala românească din părțile Aradului în perioada 1867/1918* (Romanian school from Arad in

1867/1918) (1976), *Școala românească din părțile Aradului la mijlocul secolului al XIX-lea 1821/1867* (Romanian school of Arad in the middle of the 19th century 1821/1867) (1979), *Școala și colectivitatea socială* (School and Social collectivity) (1970), *Clasa de elevi, subiect și obiect al actului educativ* (The class of pupils, subject and object of the educational act) (1973), *Studii din domeniul disciplinelor pedagogice* (Studies in the field of pedagogical subjects) (1983), *Pedagogia* (Pedagogy) (manual, colab.) (1967), *Preparandia din Arad* (The Preparandia of Arad) (colab.) (1964); *Pedagogia* (Pedagogy) (1994), *Dictatura se amuză* (The Dictatorship has fun) (1997); *Studii despre Preparandia din Arad* (Studies on the Preparandia of Arad) (2011); rich scientific and writing activity.

- ROMAN ALINA – born December 2nd 1971, Arad; graduate of the Pedagogical Highschool of Arad (1990); Bachelor of the Faculty of Pedagogy of Cluj-Napoca; she taught pedagogical subjects between 1996 and 2005 when she enters the superior education system; PhD in Educational Sciences; currently university reader at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Work of Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad; dean of the Faculty; she wrote: *Labirintul evaluării didactice* (The Maze of Didactic Assessment) (2006), *Elemente de psihologia educației* (Elements of Educational Psychology) (2008), *Evaluare și autoevaluare. Competențe, atitudini, practici* (Assessment and Self-Assessment. Competences, attitudes and policies) (2008), *Strategii de instruire și evaluare* (Strategies of training and assessment) (2010), *Dimensiuni psihologice ale învățării* (Psychological dimensions of learning) (2010), as well as studies and articles in academic publications; she is involved in research grants in the field of educational sciences.

- ȘANDOR ATANASIE – born May 14th 1809, Nădlac – died January 27th 1892, Arad; classes of Philosophy in Szeged and Medicine at the University of Pesta (1830), PhD in Medicine (1836); he taught Romanian, History, Geography, geometry, Pedagogy at the Preparandia from 1843 to 1879 (36 years); he published in *Gazeta de Transilvania* (Transylvanian Gazette) and *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* (Paper for Mind, Heart and Literature).

- ȘARLĂU GRIGORE – born August 26th 1912, Turbulea – Gorj – died 1998, Arad; Bachelor of The Faculty of Pedagogy in Bucharest, in 1941: teacher at the School of Application of Arad until 1948, later Pedagogy teacher until his retirement in 1973; he published studies in Revista *de pedagogie* (Journal of Pedagogy) and the volume *De la învățarea citirii la munca intelectuală* (From learning reading to intellectual work) (București, 1984).

- SCHERER IULIANA – born May 18th 1950; defectologist; she taught Pedagogy; lives in Hungary.

- STOIA GRUIA – Psychology and Pedagogy teacher at the Normal School (1945 - 1951).

- TÎRCOVNICU VICTOR – born 1910, Slobozia, Popești, Argeș – died 1986, Timișoara; benefited from thorough seminar and pedagogical studies, then he studies Philosophy at the University of Bucharest. In 1968, he took the PhD at the University of Bucharest with the thesis “*Progressive tendencies in Romanian education of Banat*”. He taught at the Normal School of Arad (1937), at the Normal School of Caransebeș (1938 - 1954), was principal of The Highschool in Oravita, then at The Pedagogic Institute of 2 Years in Arad (1959 - 1962), ending his career at the University of Timișoara (1962 -

1986). He released important volumes: *Pedagogie generala (General Pedagogy)* (1966) and *Învățământ frontal, învățământ individual, învățământ pe grupe* (Frontal education, individual education and group education) (1981). His PhD was a core for two publications on the history of education in Banat: *Preparandia din Arad* (The Preparandia of Arad) (collab. 1964) „*Contribuții la istoria învățământului românesc din Banat (1780 - 1918)*” (Contributions to the History of Romanian Education in Banat (1780-1918) and „*Istoria învățământului din Banat până la anul 1800*” (The History of Banat Education until 1800). „*He was a man of duty towards school and the profession he has chosen, a teacher who centred his activity on the pupil and above all the care to enrich his character through learning and deeds*” (V. Popeangă).

- TOMOV MARIA – born August 13th 1936, Covăsânț, Arad county -died 1994, Arad; Bachelor of the Faculty of pedagogy within the University of Cluj; she taught Pedagogy (1970); she published studies and articles in *Revista de pedagogie* (Journal of Pedagogy), *Anuarul Liceului Pedagogic* (The Yearbook of Pedagogic Highschool), *Învățământul Primar* (Primary Education).

- UZUM CORINA – born March 29th 1971, Arad; graduate of the Pedagogic Highschool „Dimitrie Țichindeal” of Arad (1990); Bachelor of the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology, field: Pedagogy within the University of the West Timisoara (2004); pedagogy teacher from 2004; school inspector (2001 - 2010); he published field related studies in study collections for primary school teachers (*Educația-Plus*, the review of The General Association for Primary Education, methodological guides etc.), as well as books: *O pedagogie pentru învățământul primar* (A Pedagogy for Primary School Education) (coord. collab, 2005), *Alternative educaționale – expresia pluralismului în educație* (Educational alternatives – the expression of pluralism in education) (coord. collab, 2008), *Managementul demersului didactic* (The Management of didactic undertaking) (2009), *Strategii pentru eficientizarea învățării – repere teoretice și practice* (Strategies for an effective learning – theoretical and practical guidelines) (2009).

- VÂRTACI IOAN – was teacher and principal of the School of Application; he taught Pedagogy in the 1950s “*a thorough and serious man*” (V. Popeangă).

A CASE STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LITERATURE CLASSES IN STUDENTS' VIEWS

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Abstract

In accordance with the changes brought about by the new educational framework, students' evaluation of the teaching process has become an important measurement instrument of the quality of the instructional performance. This idea lies at the basis of the present pilot study, which aims at discovering the impact of students' evaluation of their literature classes on the classroom environment as, in our opinion, such assessment may lead to the improvement of the teaching strategies used during literature courses and seminars.

Keywords: *literature class, evaluation, teaching strategies, improvement*

1. Introduction

The present paper is part of a broader study which aims at evaluating the state of the educational system in our institution from various perspectives: students' perceptions of the teaching process in general, and the assessment of language and literature classes in particular. Our approach is in line with the measures imposed by The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in compliance with the European higher education standards. The starting point of our research was the Quality Barometers published in 2009, 2010 and 2011 by the Agency, as well as the educational policies adopted in our country up to the present.

As reflected by the 2010 Quality Barometer, the respondents' “dominant opinions are that “the information provided in courses is of interest” but that too much emphasis is placed on memorizing, while the practical side is neglected.” (2010, p. 15). This opinion led us to carry out the present study to check its validity within our university.

In addition to this purpose, we intended to discover other particular aspects related to the teaching of literature in our institution, focusing on the quality of classroom instruction and its evaluation from students' perspective. In relation to the former concept, we had in view Scrivener's “experiential learning cycle” which involves the following steps:

- “1. doing something.
2. recalling what happened.
3. reflecting on that.
4. drawing conclusions from the reflection.
5. using these conclusions to inform and prepare for future practical experience.”

(Scrivener, 2005, p. 20)

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From this model, we deduce that high quality teaching has to adapt its strategies to this cycle, which, in case of literature teaching, can be translated into more practical activities based on students' needs.

Needless to say that high standard teaching should be guided by a well conceived syllabus that can be defined as representing "the teacher's personal plan for the course, based on the requirements of the curriculum, the content of the textbook and the concrete conditions imposed by the school/classroom and the group of students." (Vizental, 2007, p.128). In other words, the syllabus should express the best correlation of the inherent factors constituting the educational process. If the correlation above is accomplished, then a literature class "can promote teacher quality and student achievement" (Hightower, M. A. et al., 2011, p.7). Furthermore, high quality literature classes cannot be separated from the development of pedagogical skills that teachers need as real change starts "with an examination of pedagogy and domain content" (Moore, H. A. et al., 2008, p.6), and not only with the introduction of new technologies which cannot replace the role of classroom strategies in developing students' skills.

Another characteristic of good quality classes is the enhancement of intrinsic motivation, which means that students might be stimulated "by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by a desire to make themselves feel better" (Harmer, 2007, p. 98) As researchers have state, "intrinsic motivation produces better results than its extrinsic counterpart" (Harmer, 2007, p. 98). We should mention that students "come to love the learning process" only if teachers shift the focus from teacher-centred classes to student-centred classes, by using active learning strategies.

In our opinion, if teaching reaches high standards, students' evaluation of the classes they attend will successfully complete the educational process by providing instructors with relevant suggestions that could help them adapt, improve and change literature classes. Meaningful change does not require great effort (McGowan & Graham, 2009), but creates opportunities for interaction in the classroom, leading to better student-teacher relationships. Moreover, teachers prepare for their classes starting from students' assessment of their performance, which obviously paves the way for more effective learning.

2. Methodology

2.1. Objectives

The objectives of the present research are to find out if students' evaluation of their literature courses and seminars, performed at the end of each semester, influences the teaching process in a bad or positive way.

In order to achieve these objectives, our purpose is to answer the following research questions:

1. What is students' perception of the literature courses and seminars in our faculty?
2. What kind of teaching methods are used during literature classes?
3. To what extent and how can students' evaluation contribute to the change of the literature classes that they attend?

2.2. Participants

The people involved in the research are 60 students specialising in Philology, within the Petroleum – Gas University of Ploiesti. They are in their second year and they attend courses and seminars of English, French, Romanian and Comparative Literature as

part of the curriculum. In selecting the participants, the main criterion was their literature knowledge, half of them having grades between 5 and 7, and the other half between 8 and 10.

2.3. Procedure

Our study is based on a quantitative method that used as a main instrument a questionnaire consisting of 10 items, intended to bring to light certain aspects that could help us find answers to the questions above. The data were interpreted quantitatively, being expressed in percentages that reflect the respondents' evaluation of literature courses and seminars, except for one item, which was an open one, offering the students the opportunity to freely convey their opinions on the investigated phenomenon.

3. Data Analysis

The collected data indicate students' opinions on the way in which literature classes included in different specialties (English, French, Romanian and Comparative Literature) are taught, thus suggesting to us an interesting perspective on the status of teaching literature in our institution.

From the very beginning, it should be noted that a great many students (55.00%) perceive the literature courses they attend as being dull and monotonous, which may reflect their dissatisfaction both with the teaching style and the content of the subject.

At the same time, the high percentage of the questioned students (43.00%), who have a favourable opinion on the courses, is diagnostic of a certain quality of the instructional process.

Q 1. I consider my literature courses (English, French, Romanian and Comparative Literature) to be		
A	Very interesting	21.00%
B	Quite interesting	22.00%
C	Somewhat boring	35.00%
D	Very boring	20.00%
E	Undecided	2.00%

Regarding the literature seminars, it is worth mentioning that they reveal the same perceptions, the percentages being close to the ones above: almost half of the students (46.00%) find seminars engaging and stimulating, while 52.00% consider them to be boring and very boring, leading us to the conclusion that their perceptions are not inconsistent or superficial.

Q 2. I consider my literature seminars (English, French, Romanian and Comparative Literature) to be		
A	Very interesting	19.00%
B	Quite interesting	27.00%
C	Somewhat boring	38.00%
D	Very boring	14.00%
E	Undecided	2.00%

Furthermore, question 3 shows that their dissatisfaction with literature classes may be a result of the fact that more than half of the students (59.00%) do not attach any importance to the materials needed for the study of literature. However, the percentage of students who admit the usefulness of reading (41.00%) what teachers require for literature classes proves that the instructional process tends to reach a good teaching standard. The almost equal percentages of students who read the materials and those who find literature classes interesting show an objective reality that cannot be ignored, in spite of the negative opinion rendered by the other category.

Q 3. Do you consider it useful to read the materials provided (written courses, bibliography, realia) by your literature teachers?		
A	Yes	41.00%
B	No	59.00%
C	I don't know	0.00%

As to question 4, we may state that a possible explanation of students' favourable opinion as shown by more than 40.00% of them lies in the fact that half of the literature teachers employ active learning strategies during their classes. As known, classes that are more dynamic have a greater impact on students than the traditional ones. As a result, the percentage of discontent students (around 50.00%) is similar to the one indicating that teachers rarely use active strategies.

Q 4. To what extent do your literature teachers make use of active learning strategies during courses and seminars?		
A	permanently	8.00%
B	very often	16.00%
C	quite often	21.00%
D	rarely	51.00%
E	never	4.00%

With respect to the students' involvement in the learning process during the literature classes, we have noticed three tendencies according to which about a third (36.00%) of the learners admit that they are not active participants in these lessons, another third (33.00%) is somewhat involved and another third (31.00%) shows great interest in the learning activities.

Q 5. Taking into consideration your literature classes, express your attitude concerning your participation in the learning process. Use the following scale, where 1 means "I am not involved at all" and 5 means "I am highly involved".				
1	2	3	4	5
7.00%	29.00%	33.00%	17.00%	14.00%

In order to identify the reasons why students are not enthusiastic about the literature classes, we asked them to enumerate some of the weaknesses that, in their opinion,

characterise the courses and seminars dealing with literature topics. Their answers point out several aspects that can be divided into three categories: the first one refers to the teaching process itself, which is seen as ineffective due to the following practices: the teachers do most of the talk, there is no interaction in the classroom, students are discouraged to express their own ideas by authoritarian teachers who do not take into account their needs. The second category includes the syllabus itself which, in students' views, overloads them with too much information, as they have to study a great number of writers in a short period of time and do too many homework assignments during a semester. The last category brings to the fore problems connected to the facilities provided by the university, such as the lack of the works and materials they are supposed to read, limited number of written courses in the library and, most of all, the impossibility to borrow books to read at home. An interesting finding concerns their capacity to evaluate the teachers' performance, as they consider that some of the shortcomings of the literature classes result from the teachers' lack of experience in interacting with the students and managing the teaching process in general.

Other causes explaining the state of the instructional process are shown in the table below, which expresses students' evaluation of literature classes as follows:

Q 7. Read the following statements and write "yes" or "no" according to your opinion.			
		Yes	No
1.	The taught materials are interesting and stimulating from an intellectual point of view.	43.00%	57.00%
2.	We always receive feedback for our written assignments.	42.00%	58.00%
3.	Grading criteria are clear and communicated in due time.	37.00%	63.00%
4.	Grading is objective, reflecting our literary knowledge.	39.00%	61.00%
5.	Literature classes encourage us to continue studying on our own.	34.00%	66.00%

The first two statements reveal the two tendencies we have already analysed, the percentages being almost similar, that is, 42.00-43.00 % of the students appreciate the teaching materials and the feedback offered by their teachers, while the rest are not satisfied with their quality. A finding that should be taken into consideration shows that more than half of the learners (61.00-63.00%) signal inconsistencies of the assessment system, which seems to lack objectivity and well-defined criteria. This remark may explain why 66.00% of the students do not perceive literature classes as encouraging them to continue studying individually.

Q 8. Read the following statements and state if the following types of activities are encouraged by your literature teachers, using yes/no answers:			
		Yes	No
1.	Memorizing and reproduction	68.00%	32.00%
2.	Synthesising and organising information	36.00%	64.00%

3.	Critical evaluation of information, arguments and methods of working with the texts	31.00%	69.00%
4.	Stimulating intertextual and interdisciplinary approaches	28.00%	72.00%
5.	Interactive and creative activities	38.00%	62.00%

Question 8 restates the opposition between the two major trends of literature teaching in our institution: on the one hand, we have noticed a trend reflecting the traditionalist supporters, who base their teaching methods on memorising and reproduction and ignore the role of synthesising and organising information, interactive activities, as well as students' independence and critical thinking in approaching literary texts; on the other hand, the supporters of the modern methods are appreciated – by approximately one third of the respondents, who value active learning.

With regard to questions 9 and 10, learners' answers reveal a significant finding, namely the very positive impact of their evaluation on the improvement of the teaching process. High percentages of respondents (90.00%, 80.00%) consider that, as a result of their evaluation, the student-teacher relationship has definitely improved leading to trust, closeness and more attention paid to their needs and use of stimulating learning procedures. Students' opinions are indicated in the tables below:

Q 9. In your opinion, what are the effects of your evaluation of your literature classes on yourselves and the student-teacher relationship?		
1.	Trust	51.00%
2.	Closeness	39.00%
3.	Fear	2.00%
4.	Tension	5.00%
5.	Conflict	3.00%

Q 10. In your opinion, what are the effects of your evaluation of your literature classes on the teachers?		
1.	Stimulating	48.00%
2.	More attention to students' needs.	32.00%
3.	The teachers become more authoritarian.	12.00%
4.	The teachers pay little attention to it.	6.00%
5.	No effect	2.00%

The low percentages of respondents who have a negative opinion on the effects of their evaluation of the literature courses and seminars are not significant, emphasising the above mentioned trend.

4. Conclusions

According to the analysed data, the percentages of students' who have both positive and negative views of literature classes they attend are almost equal, this demonstrating that traditional and modern teaching methods coexist during lectures and seminars.

The main conclusion of our research is that students' evaluation of the literature instructional process constitutes a reliable tool for improving the educational programme in our institution. As the data we have examined show, this system has been subjected to a radical change, evolving into more effective class activities.

In spite of the fact that there are still supporters of the traditional teaching style, which is reflected by almost half of the students' answers, the passage from the old methods to the modern ones is a reality that cannot be denied.

Using students' evaluation of literature courses and seminars represents an efficient barometer which, if taken into consideration, could help literature teachers to adapt the content of the syllabus and their classroom techniques to students' needs.

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THE ROLE OF ASSESSING AND THE SELF-ASSESSING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' EVALUATIVE AND SELF-EVALUATIVE SKILLS

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Abstract: *Knowledge of the factors on which the student's attitude towards the assessment made by the teacher depends, is of great importance to his work. Knowing these factors, the teacher can choose the most effective means to form correct student attitudes toward these assessments. Considering that the development of responsibility for the evaluative act requires evaluative and self-evaluative skills we conducted a constative survey, by means of a questionnaire for both students and teachers. The goal of the study was to emphasize the determinant aspects in developing evaluative and self-evaluative skills for students.*

Keywords: *assessing, self-assessing, evaluation, self-evaluation, skills*

Introduction

The role of educational assessment can be fairly well revealed reminding an EB Hurlock experiment: a group of children only received positive feedback, another group only negative and, finally, the third group received no feedback. The most progress was seen in students who belonged to the group that received only positive appreciations. Intellectual and moral development of students in school is realized not only through educational fields and methods of teaching, but also through educational assessment. It has a dual role: on the one hand, it influences intellectual development, contributing to the awareness of the student's level, and on the other it influences the volitional-affective sphere, through directly experiencing both success and failure. In this way the pedagogical assessment contributes to the cultivation of student's aspirations, interests and attitudes. Under the influence of school assessment, the acceleration or deceleration of the tempo of intellectual activity takes place, the changing in work procedures, the training and transformation of intellectual mechanisms. The assessment is a tool for modelling the student's personality. It guides students step, it helps them to integrate better into activity, it reinforces their confidence in themselves and in others, giving them moral satisfaction for their efforts.

The evaluation made by the teacher is also reflected in the sphere of interpersonal relations, and also in the school group opinions. For example, thanks to positive assessments made by the teachers, the children change their attitude towards the "difficult" and isolated from the group children. Under the influence of school assessment a certain

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student's attitude towards their work, towards themselves, an important and complex capacity of personality is developed – the self-assessment. The appreciation expresses valour. It can take the form of verbal appreciation or can be expressed by a mark.

Experimental Part

The conducted research is a constatative one, based on an investigation conducted by questionnaire. In this research we used a questionnaire for students and one for teachers. Both instruments have followed the general principles for developing such a tool, so we used introductory questions, closed questions, open questions, in order to allow the interviewees to freely express their choices and personal opinions.

The sample group consists of students and teachers from pedagogical high-schools in Arad and Hunedoara County. In this study, we started with the assumption that the development of evaluative and self-evaluative skills in students is determined by elements of interaction, communication and learning strengthening.

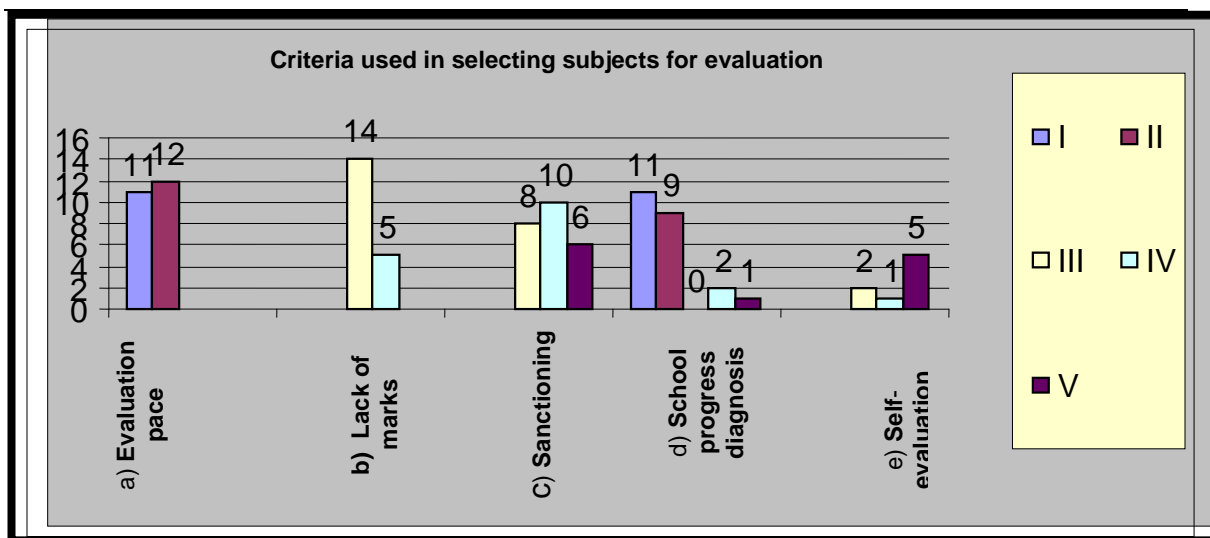
Results and Discussion

The first item of the questionnaire for students shows the assessment methods that they perceive to be the most objective. The assessment methods considered by students to have the highest degree of objectivity are: the test, the oral questioning, the written work and experiments/practical tests, unlike modern methods in theory very much appreciated by the students, but which did not make it in this list.

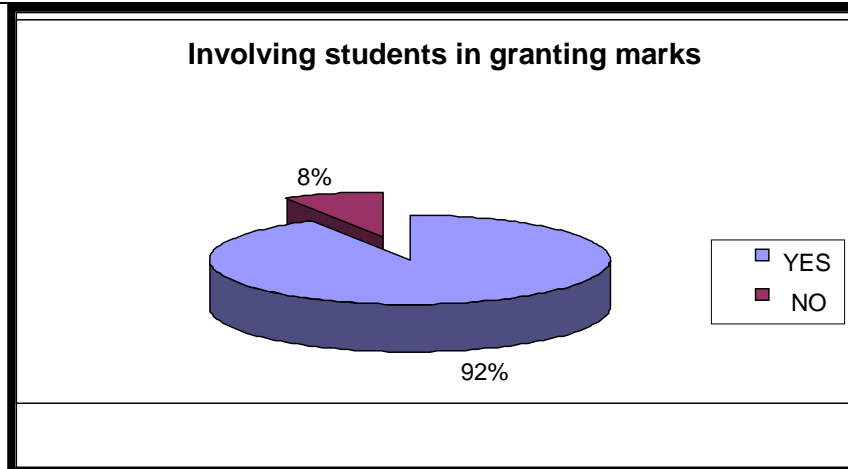
In order to ensure the objectivity characteristic of the evaluative act and to develop the student responsibility regarding the assessment process, about 84% of teachers consider that this process should heavily focus on educating and only then to control. About 72% think it is extremely important that the assessment be designed along with teaching and learning and to track student progress. A small importance is provided by 20% of teachers to offering students opportunities to assess the quality of instructional activity, the existence still of a mentality of "magister dixit" type as opposed to the modern perspective on evaluative act.

The necessary and useful markers mentioned above for helping to streamline this process must be correlated with the criteria that the students consider important in evaluation. How teachers plan and perform the evaluative act has consequences for the way in which it is understood by students. Continuing in the scope of these criteria, considered extremely useful and important from the teacher perspective, we tried to highlight the criteria used in selecting students for assessment in another item of the questionnaire for teachers (starting also and from the frequent statements about students' emotional state during such activities). As can be seen from the figure below, we found that the pace of assessing and progress diagnosing are the main criteria used for this purpose.

Since the formative aspect of assessment is appreciated both by students and by teachers, we found that approximately 60% of teachers use more than 80% of the allocated time to assess the ability to apply knowledge.

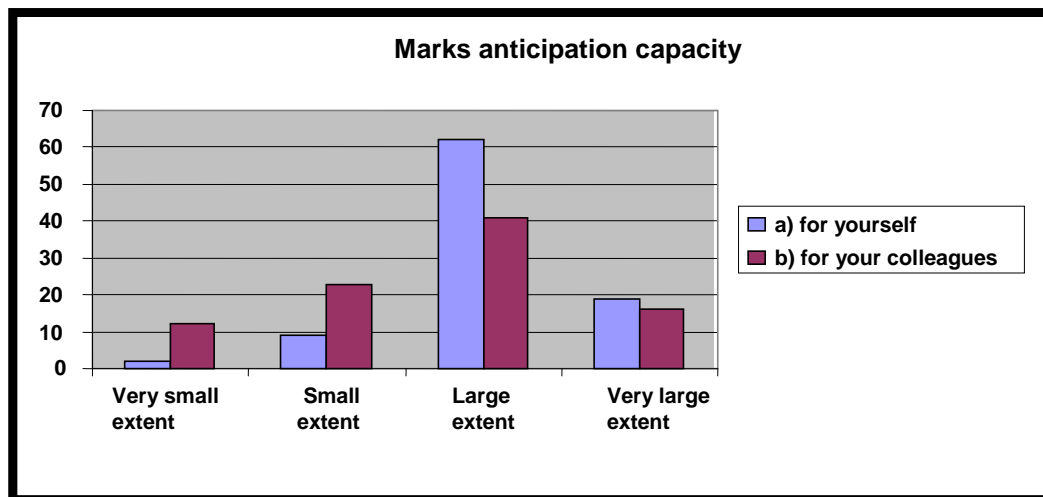


This allows students to form a clear perception of usefulness and value of assessment, while being a motivator for learning. The capitalization of skills that students needs developing, the cultivation of positive character traits are the points that teachers regard as having the utmost importance. These aspects capitalized by teachers in the evaluative process come to support the planned reform in education and contribute significantly to empowering students for the evaluative act, for learning, training and personal development and for future employment. Another question in the survey designed for students wants to identify the aspects, the rules that a teacher need to capitalize during the evaluation process, becoming milestones in the development of self-evaluative skills of the students. The most important rule is justifying the marks granted to students, for which some 70% of all those investigated opted. In order to develop evaluative and self-evaluative skills, the teachers think that students should be asked to express their reasoned opinion on marks granted. Thus, over 90% of surveyed teachers consider this important because it develops the self-assessment skills, the self-control and self-critical spirit, it develops skills of proper self-evaluation under the guidance of the teacher, it points out more clearly the successful or less successful elements, received marks and knowledge. Approximately 8% of teachers investigated considered that the student should not to be involved in this process because it is too subjective and has a too little experience for being able to self-evaluate (see figure below).



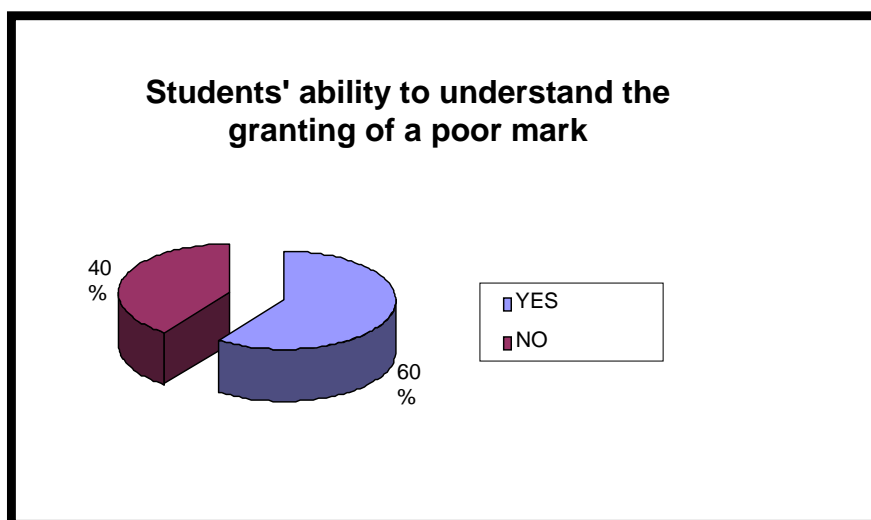
Approximately 56% of teachers whom involved students in the process of self-assessment found out that marks granted are in accordance to the real performance, and 44% considered them to be overestimated in relation to performance. In this situation, it is necessary to improve and review the self-evaluation techniques used in the classroom in order to develop these skills.

Regarding students' ability to predict their own or colleagues marks in a sample evaluation, it was shown that about 70% of students surveyed said that their could anticipate their mark fairly accurate, and with the same accuracy they could anticipate the marks of colleagues, said a rate of about 45% of students surveyed (see figure below).



For the marks anticipation, the interviewed students relayed in particular "on their own knowledge, on the quality of answers, on their previous experience in assessment, on the methods to address the questions and by relating on the scoring scale provided by the teacher." For the anticipation of marks granted for colleagues, the interviewed students relayed in particular "on their previous oral and written answers, on the knowledge that they know that they posses, on the teacher feedback, on the clarity, accuracy and consistency of responses, on the activity during classes". About 10% of students are not interested in anticipating the marks of classmates. Also in this respect, teachers think that

most students (about 84%) were able to predict their marks, because inquiring students about the evaluation process is a common practice. The students wishing to succeed know the scoring scale, the objectives and evaluation criteria they are objective and fair, and the teacher is also objective in all situations. If students receive a poor mark, about 60% of them understand the reasons for granting it by the teacher, because the mark is explained, justified and it is always in accordance with evaluation criteria. The disputes relating to receiving a poor mark are due to the fact that some students are not aware of the correct answer, they overestimate their skills, they don't know the scoring criteria, the families unfavorably influence them, are not observant and interested, have a high dose of subjectivity and poor self-evaluative and evaluative skills.



For this purpose, because the percentage of students with such problems is quite high (as can be seen in the figure above), we recommend a greater attention to the development of self-evaluative skills necessary both in school and in personal life, by the effective use of various techniques. An approximately 44% of teachers believe that exacting in scoring is necessary for developing the evaluative and self-evaluative skills among students and also for improving the students responsibility regarding the evaluative act, while a very close percentage of surveyed teachers (40%), considers that this criteria should not be considered in scoring. Opinions are divided because they are related to each one personal experience during his career and to prior accomplishments with students.

Interaction between teacher and student is the support that teachers can provide for students during assessment to overcome difficult moments. Thus about 72% of surveyed students considered of great support to receive explanations, guidance as clear as possible on unfamiliar concepts, examples, additional questions without affecting the mark, about 10% of students consider relevant information on assessment methodology, about 7% do not need support because they can handle things alone, about 10% need stimulation, encouragement, creation of a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere in order to eliminate blockage and emotions, and 1% need to know what goals that must be achieved by students.

Conclusion

After analyzing the data, we noticed a two-way relationship between evaluative and self-evaluative skills and elements of interaction, communication and strengthening of learning. The formative aspects of assessment are appreciated by both students and teachers as well, based on the interaction and immediate strengthening actions. We believe that objectivity in evaluation, will determine the development of the students' evaluative skills. For this, a full transparency regarding the used scoring criteria is needed, a continuous interaction, a mutual knowledge and a permanent encouraging regardless of the size of success. Teacher's ability to strengthen and encourage success and use the mistake as an opportunity to learn, will allow stimulation and a greater involvement of students in the evaluative process and therefore an increase in the quality of learning. Conducting frequent inter-evaluation, developing the argumentative skills in students in terms of clear and objective criteria, will eliminate errors in evaluation. An improvement and a review of classroom assessment techniques is also needed, for developing the self-evaluation skills needed both in school and in everyday life.

The evaluation process has a great formative value for students. Periodic evaluation will determine the student to learn regularly, helps in training and skills development, develops habits related to independent, makes him is more responsible for the activities undertaken. If the students know the criteria on which they are evaluated, the students will be aware of the demands being put on them and on this basis, they will outline their interests, they will aim for goals consistent with the possibilities they have. Student assessment becomes a landmark in the self-assessment, in developing an image of self. Not paying more attention to the way of distributing the forms of strengthening, punishment and reward balance, both positive and negative appreciation, can lead to a depreciation of the student's personality, when overusing rebuke, especially when rebuke is not kept limited ("today you have learned your lesson"), but takes the form of a global depreciation ("what will come out of you"). It is no coincidence that the teachers that drive students through praise, obtain better results in education. They positively appreciate the "difficult students" even for some minor progress thus trying to develop, as a permanent basis, the students' confidence in their own abilities.

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**VITICULTURE OF MINIS – MÄDERAT VINEYARD,
HISTORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES –**

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Abstract

The author presents the history of vine culture and wine production in Arad County Vineyards, Miniş - Măderat area, focusing on the diseases of vine plantations along the way. In the end, the author shows some methodological aspects which increase the efficiency of content teaching by seminar activities with the students of „Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad, Food Engineering, Tourism and Environment Protection Faculty.

Key words: *viticulture, methodological issues, Miniş Vineyard, Vine pests, history*

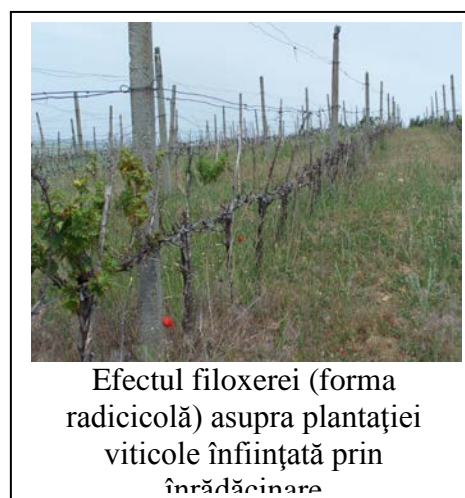
Beginnings: It's very important to show that starting from XIX-th century (1855) in Arad county there were 5216 ha of vine plantations, and by 1880 the Phylloxera year, 6540 ha divided 72 % hills and 28 % plane. On 26 of July 1880 there was seen from the first time the Phylloxera (*Phylloxera vastatrix* Planch sin. *Daktulosphaira vitifoliae*) in citizen Kover Gabor's vineyard from Arad. A few days after (12 August) they start treatment by spraying the ground with Carbon disulphide solution but the treatment was ineffective.

In Miniş – Măderat Vineyard area, the Phylloxera appeared for the first time at Şiria during 1883 on a surface about 115 acres. Until 1884 it spreads to Cuvin, Covăsânţ and Pâncota, by 7 October 1885 to Miniş and by 1886 to Ghioroc, Păuliş, Mâsca, Măderat.

We noticed that geographically speaking, the Phylloxera started in the middle of the area (Şiria) went fast towards South (Şiria – Radna) and then North (Şiria – Mâsca – Măderat). Phylloxera has it's origins in North America, arrived in Europe in 1863 for the first time in England and France.

The pest has two biological cycles, one complete with all the 4 forms: eriophyes vitis, riparia, sexuparia și sexual specific for American vine (*Vitis rupestris* și *Vitis riparia*) or hybrids and incomplete cycle for European vines.

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Root form attacks the vine roots by biting and sucking, in the injection site the tissues get deformed and weakened and nodules appear. This form develops only in heavy soil, loamy and clay soil. It doesn't develop on sandy soils with over 60 % silica and temperatures over 30 – 50 °C. Root form attacks the American vines too but the damages are low because of the thick root structure.

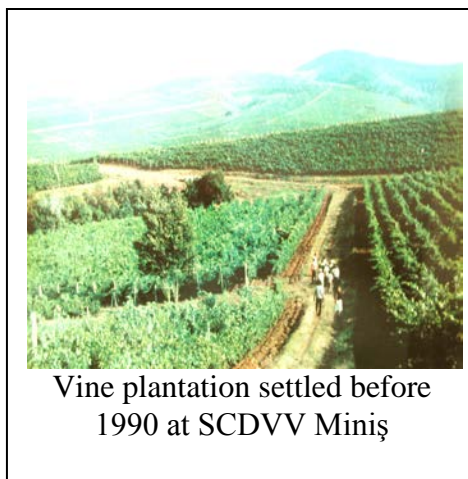
Fighting the Phylloxera. We found the highest interest on fighting the Phylloxera at Ghioroc residents, where on 1885 was founded the „Cooperativa pentru cultivarea portaltolului” – „The rootstock cultivation cooperative”. The insecticide treatments employed in those years were unsuccessful.

Bela Reichter's work „Înștiințarea despre reușita combaterii filoxerei în Podgoria Aradului” – „Notice about Phylloxera fighting success in Arad County Vineyards” from 1888, mention the method of vine logs flooding producing good results. This means that in the roots area is kept the water provided by rain and snow for about 6 months (November – April). The Phylloxera disaster was so highly spread that by November 1887 there were 1600 acres affected and 860 acres completely ruined. In 1888, when Richter from France visited the Vineyard, 25 % of its entire surface was destroyed.

Miniș Viticulture School, founded on 1881, had an important role in formation and training specialists and viticulture recovery after the Phylloxera disaster, employing new grafting techniques and cultures. Here on 1885 was employed for the first time the grafting on *Riparia* rootstocks but from 600 vines only 2 or 3 pieces succeeded in dry grafting and none in green grafting.

Green grafting was demonstrated afterwards at Ghioroc Viticulture Cooperative by Arad's Chamber of Agriculture on May 1885. The method applied in the next year at Miniș Viticulture School was 50 – 60 % successful.

In the same year 1885 was founded the State Vine Nursery at Barațca – Păuliș. In 1890 the entire surface of 69 ha was repotting, in 1892, from 800 thousands of grafted seedlings resulted 42 % vines good for planting. On 1893 the State entrusts the private sector (bankers, barons, land owners) with seedlings production.



Barons Bohus Ladislau and Vasarhely Adalbert agreed by contract to replant 144 ha at Barațca – Păuliș and 400 ha at Ceala Arad.

The European varieties used for reconstruction were those pre-Phylloxera: white wine: Mustoasa de Măderat, Bacator roz, Alle Mărunt (Aprofehér), Ardeleanca, Alb micios (Mezesfehér), Galbenă de Ardeal și Riesling; and red wine: Cadarcă, Oporto, Burgund și Cabernet Sauvignon.

There are local literature speaking about the vines and wines of our Vineyard, in Hungarian Perestsinyi at the beginning of XIX-th century, and Romanian Petru Vancu - „Vieritul sau cultura viței de vie (1898)”, I. Tuducescu (for primary schools) „Traducere în economie (1893)”.

Viticultural Economy. Between 1870 – 1880, the medium annual production of grape juice in the county was 250500 hl, 10 %only from Șiria. The effects of Phylloxera disaster showed in 1890 when production falls down under 9 hl/ha.

Export of wines between 1846 – 1862: Brazil, 1885 India and Australia. Towards West and North European countries the wine export was made by water Mureș – Tisa – Danube. After 1900 Austria left the only country to import wine from Miniș-Măderat Vineyards.

By the end of XIX-th century, the number of cooper and barrels manufacture centers was highly increasing, between 1881-1888 the barrels authorised by the 10th metrological offices of the county was around 286 thousand pcs. The biggest barrel from Romania, 70124 liters capacity was produced at Diosig, Bihor county in the second half of XIX-th century, was bought by a cooper from Arad and exposed at the exhibition of 1935 (Arad).

The first concrete tanks to keep the wine in Arad were made by Domány enterprise on 1878 when wine production was very good, then employed in the cellars of the Viticulture School of Minis between 1912-1914 (26 pcs. – 3600 hl). Arad industries in the second half of the XIX-th century produced smashing machines and grape press, machinery and tools for viticulture. The medium cost for working day was 5,2-5,4 l wine or 8-10 kg of wheat. The establishment of one hectare of (grafted) vine was as 7500 liters of red wine.

In 1883 was founded „Cercul gospodarilor Arad - Podgoria” – The cooperative of managers; in 1905 „Asociația viticultorilor” – The association of viticultors, „Cooperativa producătorilor de vin din Miniș și Măderat” The wine producers cooperative of Minis and Maderat.

Between 1872-1913, at Ghioroc and Arad were organized 12 exhibitions and fairs of grapes, fruits, and wine and agriculture tools. Internationally, they participate to contests and exhibitions, for example on 1862 at London the Miniș red wine got the highest distinction and was nominated „the king of all wines”.

In Miniș-Măderat Vineyard was founded the Arad-Podgoria narrow railway, with branch from Ghioroc to North (Pâncota) and south (Radna), first on 1906 with mechanical traction and from 1913 with electrical traction.

Viticultors Congress. After the great union of Transylvania and România, the most important changes appeared with the agrarian reform of 1921, which brought a significant improvement of economic and social life of peasantry.

In Arad, Bihor and Satu Mare counties, the Hungarian and German landlords represented 0,9 % of all holders and owned 51 % of the entire agricultural area, while the peasants were 65 % and had properties under 5 acres.

September 1, 1924 the number of expropriated landlords was 344, for an amount of 145,387 ha, while the vine surface was only 72 ha. This shows that the Arad viticulture was employed in small surfaces and had peasant feature.

The Congress of Viticulture from Arad and Focșani on 1922 asked the Government the wine export tax repeal and offered some advantages for railway transport.

In 1923 appeared the first number of „Viticultura”, magazine of agriculture, viticulture and economy, organ of viticultural unions of Arad and Timiș – Torontal, bi-monthly publication. During the economic crisis between 1929 – 1930, the situation of viticulture aggravated much, the Minister of Agriculture I.C. Teodorescu, took specific measures: delimitation of viticultural areas, keeping famous vineyards, limitation of cultivated varieties, prohibition to plant hybrids directly produced (HPD).

The law for establishing the provenience and denomination of wine origin was elaborated and it was organized the fraude control service and wine record. The viticulture defense law of 1936 provides for viticultural areas the creation and function of warning stations, to fight the vine diseases and pests. It also provides the foundation of wine producing cooperatives, cellars, distillery plants for wine and brandy, vinegar and grape juice. In every main viticultural area were supposed to be established experimental Viticultural and Oenological Stations, guided by „Institutul de cercetări Agronomice a României” (ICAR).

The Arad Plantations Census. In 1936 there was the census of Arad county vine plantations, the 6160 ha were in the property of more than 22000 viticulturists – owners, from which 94 % had less than 1 acre of vine (1 acre = 0,5755 ha). The viticultural area defined by the Agriculture Ministry by order no. 4077 from 8 March 1944 comprised 24 villages of vineyard hills. For this area I. C. Teodorescu on 1942, recommends the following varieties and percentage:

- Cadarcă – 35 %;
- Cabernet s. – 30 %;
- Pinot noir – 80%;
- Oporto – 5 %.

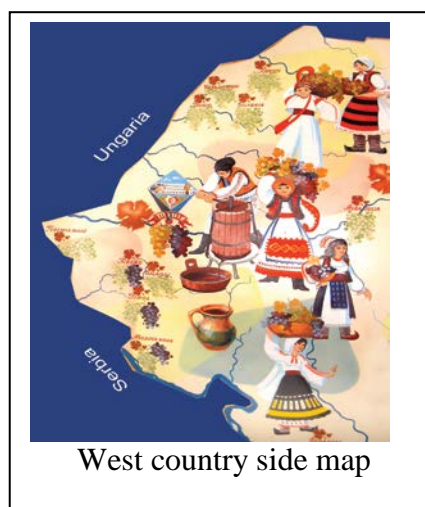
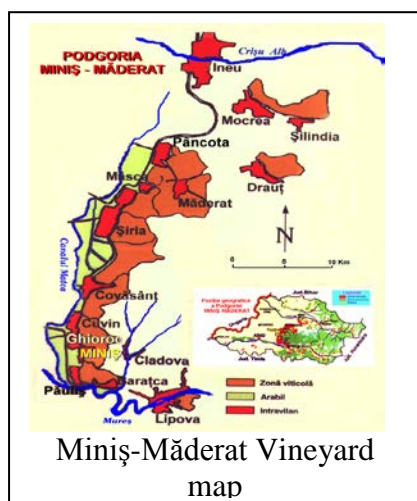
This prescription is one of the famous types of „ROȘU DE MINIȘ” – Minis red wine. For superior white wines he recommends the following varieties:

- Riesling italian – 25 %;
- Furmint – 25 %;
- Rujța (Bacator) – 20 %;
- Sauvignon – 15 %.

In 1939, Arad chamber of Agriculture became an external service of Agriculture Ministry and took over the schools, farms, nurseries of seedlings, all except laboratories, stations and research institutes.

Together with the Chamber of Agriculture, at Ghioroc was activating Adalbert Kaufmann (1888-1985), the first breeder and creator of new vine varieties, on 1911 he graduated the „Școala Superioară de viticultură de gradul I” – Superior 1st degree School of Viticulture, from Geisenheim – Germany. After the Great Union of Transylvania and Romania, the Viticulture School of Minis was reopened on 1921. In 1930, became „Școală de viticultură de gradul I” – First degree viticulture school. Professor. I. C. Teodorescu started here a meteorological station of 2nd degree on 1936, an experimental vine plantation, which were 10 of all in the entire country. School principal Vasile Juncu, and his colleagues had an important contribution to viticulture development between 1928-1938. By 1945, from the entire vineyard surface, 2/3 were old plantation with more than 30 % blanks. During 1957 – 1965, in Arad county have been planted 750 ha of vines, from those 685 in state area. In 1957 was founded „Stațiunea de Cercetare Viticolă Miniș” - the Minis Viticultural Research Center, located on Minis Viticulture School. The new center was ready by 1982.

Production potential. Between 1970 – 1975, started the modernization of vine plantations in order to get a higher production by a complex action plan based on fertilizing, planting the empty spaces, modern support system.



Plant nursey sector. Between 1967 – 1976 every year in the county were grafted 18 – 20 millions of seedlings, obtaining 6 – 7 millions vines, which could start 1100 – 1400 ha of plantations. The major share of grafted vine production was in Cooperative sector (65 %) – Târnova.

On wine sector, the grape production until 1989 was taken in two major statal centers Miniş and Baraţca.

The Research department of Minis had as major goals the modernization of vine varieties and grafts in the West Romania area, the use of sloping lands to plant, raise of biological value of seedlings, improvement of technologies in order to reduce the workforce, energy and production costs, improve the quality and composition of wine

New wines were obtained, the clones of Cadarcă 123 și 2000 and Mustoasă de Măderat 79, then Roz de Miniş and Sylvania.

The vine varieties from the vineyards have been mapped, cartograms of soils reaction, agrochemical mapping for soil fertilizing. There was defined the types of red and white wines and their features of their composition along the vineyard. The blue clay treatment for red wines was the first time applied in the country. The red special wine named „Mara” was homologated here.

The special quality of Minis red wines from the year 1950 to 1985 is documented by more than 100 awards, of which 58 gold medals and 38 silver medals gained in national and international contests. The scientific results obtained by Minis Research Center were implemented in all western Romania counties: Arad, Timiș, Caraș – Severin, Bihor, Satu Mare. By the end of 1987, the productive sector had 20 ha grafted vines and 457 ha fertile vines.

Situation of Arad County’s viticulture after 1989. The transition from centralized to private economy was very difficult for Arad county viticulture. The plantations were divided in small pieces, had inadequate technical equipments, lack of professionalism, and distrust for working in common. The vine plantations area was dramatically decreasing, here is the situation for the past years evolution:

1986 – 1990 : 3550 ha
1991 – 1996: 2868 ha
1996 – 2000: 2790 ha
2003: 2775 ha

By the end of 2008, vine plantation areas should be:

Specific	Surface - ha
Vine – fertile - wine grapes	1470
Vine – fertile - table grapes	138
Grafted seedlings	27
Nursery	19
Plantations newly founded 2008	72
*HPD	78
TOTAL vineyards area	1804

In 2000, at the Research Centre we had 10 themes and 12 experiments inside the „Orizont” – Horizon Program and 6 projects financed by Relansin Program.

In Miniş – Măderat Vineyard, after 2008 there were founded with A.P.I.A financial programme 1200 ha of young vines, until the end of 2011.

Methodological issues. There are some specific techniques that I propose on seminars for the students to study all the informations reported above, using the constructivist model⁵⁷:

Role-play: can be used in any moment of the activities. The teacher presents the scenario, distribute the roles dividing the group into actors and audience, or role observers. Then follow the play, the audience opinions, and the conclusions of the teacher. This method aims to encourage the communication, stimulate dialogue.

Delphi. Students are divided in groups, every group analyzing a different problem or situation. The conclusions are written and argued than the paper passes from one group to another in scale and are read, analyzed and commented

Puzzle. Denomination for a synthetic approach to a field, starting from its components. The teacher will employ this technique for complex situations.

Rotative. This technique aims to discuss a complex theme eliminating the controversy. The groups debate the basic theme and the ideas derived sending a written message. The conclusions comes out in message set passing clockwise from one group to another.

Philips 6x6 involves all the participants in analyzing and debating the above theme. Every group has 6 members and activates 6 minutes, after that the secretary makes a summary of the problems and in the end the conclusions are reported to everyone.

Active interruption is a method based on a theme presented by the teacher, free discussions between the students and then a break to put down the main ideas. The debate reports the impressions and a new active interruption is possible if necessary.

Brainstorming means an active participation of all members in debating a theme. The students are asked to express quickly their ideas, then written, recorded and analyzed by the group

I know – want to know – I studied technique aiming to make the awareness of learning. Individually or in groups the students progressively complete a table of a theme, with what they know about it, what they would like to find out and finally the results

Grapes reveal the method where students find the connections and associations between ideas, elements of concept or notions. In the middle of a board is written a word or a sentence and they must mark other words or ideas derived from it, in more levels, resulting a grape shape.

Cube stimulates thinking, developing the students' capacity to involve and understand the information. On the edges of a paper cube we write the instructions: describe, compare, associate, analyze, apply, argument, then the cube is rolled as a dice and the students debate and make conclusions and suggestions.

This kind of methodological models is very efficient for seminary activities and helps the students to become an active part in their own formation, democratic teaching gives the student a conscious role in building its multiple intellectual structure and necessary capacities to fit the changes, adapt and positively react in social-professional life⁵⁸.

Conclusions. This highly scientific content theme regards the history of a vineyard which produces ones of the most important red wines of the country. In the course of history we improved the wine production techniques, by the activity of the Research Center

⁵⁷ Anton, Ilica, *O pedagogie modernă*, Editura Universității Aurel Vlaicu, Arad, 2012, p. 218.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, p. 219.

and accurate soil management. In this article I show that the efforts of specialized institutions and scientists made famous the wines of Arad county vineyards, where the sun shines for almost 180 days annually, and the rocky soil increase the marvelous quality of our red wines, literally called red wine without blemish.

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THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH OF COMMUNICATION*

-Book review-

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In recent years, the theoretical and practical aspects of communication have been analyzed in numerous works of psychology, sociology, psycho-sociology, linguistics, education sciences, cybernetics or information sciences. These issues reflect, on the one hand, the importance of communication in the formation of the individual's social personality and, on the other hand, the necessity of knowing the psychological mechanisms of communication in order to increase its efficiency in interpersonal, group or organizational relationships.

The study entitled “The Sociology of Communication” can also be included in this context. In the study, the author, Professor Matei Șimandan, approaches issues or real interest regarding the fathoming of clear themes in this field, as well as regarding the opportunities he offers to researchers and students who are interested in understanding the complexity of the communication process.

The paper I am referring to is structured around the following more significant themes: the concept of communication and the explicative theories which thus emerged; the characteristics of verbal and nonverbal communication; the particularities of interpersonal communication; communication in groups and organizations; mass communication and the media culture; public communication and advertising communication.

From the preliminary pages, the author is preoccupied with the organization of the diversity of the perspectives which approach the concepts connected to communication, stressing the forms of verbal communication, the functions of communication, the characteristics of nonverbal communication, the meanings attributed to paralanguage and to the identification of certain barriers in the process of communication.

I should also like to highlight the fact that the issues discussed do not stop at their mere presentation, but are treated in close connection to the daily life situations involved by interpersonal communication, to the factors which favour or limit the types of communication, to the role of self-image, the relationships instituted between attitude and behaviour in the process of communication, as well as to the cognitive, affective and behavioural effects of interpersonal communication.

This type of argumentation may also be noticed in the section consecrated to the communication in groups or organizations. Thus, after presenting the main types of social groups, the author focuses upon the evolution stages of the social groups (their formation, structure, standardization, performance and deconstruction), the different types of communication which take place in work groups, the ways in which social networks are constituted and function, as well as the role of the group leader within these networks (p.82).

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What holds a particular interest in this context is the relationship between the organizational culture, which refers to the array of ideas, knowledge, rules, values and means of interaction between people”, and the communicational culture, which includes “the array of data and information which circulate on formal and informal channels of communication, inside the organization and between the organization and the outside, as well as the means of transmitting them.”⁶⁰(p.82).

The last three chapters of the study are consecrated to mass communication, the approach perspectives and its functions, public communication and the role of propaganda, persuasion and manipulation, and to advertising communication, its elements, the types of advertisements and the ethical aspects involved by this type of communication.

A good connoisseur of the educational discourse, the author of the study entitled “The Sociology of Communication” does not disregard the classification of the meanings attributed to the main concepts which intervene in the different forms of communication. For instance, I would mention terms such as: empathy, attitude, motivation, social conformation, consensus, discrimination, social identity, interaction, the management of impression, mentality, interpretation, prejudice, conflict, social representation, stereotypes, social stigmata or social status.

Starting from the importance of these terms, I consider that the author of the book could have used them more explicitly in the discussion of the practical situations of communication, to reveal their significance within different contexts of communication, thus developing their characterization from the end of the study.

At the same time, I consider that the paper would have been in benefit if the author had proposed a few communication scenarios meant to stimulate the knowing of the psycho-sociology of communication, the factors which limit interpersonal communication, as well as the means of surmounting the blockages which emerge in the process of communication.

I would conclude my reflections by highlighting the rich documentation of the study, the clarity and precision of the discourse, the use of synthetic graphs and tables, as well as the rigor of Matei Șimandan’s enterprise. All these aspects turn the reading of the book into an exercise that brings thorough information, which helps the reader understand the psychosocial perspective on communication, as well as the need of perfecting our individual ability to communicate.

⁶⁰ Matei Șimandan, , *Sociologia comunicării*, Arad, Editura Universității “Aurel Vlaicu” din Arad, ISBN: 978 – 973 – 752 – 595 – 6, 2011, p.82

A BOOK ABOUT EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURES

-Book review-

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Gabriela Kelemen, associated professor within the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Work (Head of the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology) releases a new publication *The Didactics of Preschool and Primary School Education*, at the Aurel Vlaicu Publishing House, 2013 (with the support of COPYRO). It is an enlarged edition of the volume *The Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education* (2012) and the replacement of the first word of the title (**pedagogy** with **didactics**) reveals a change of perspective as well. The first volume would be a theoretical one, structured in pedagogy specific concepts and the second one is intended to be an applied one. This is basically what didactics deals with. Practical suggestions, applied arguments and convincing examples are required even for theoretical assertions. The volume responds to a request determined by the changes in preschool and primary school education, determined by the strategic and regulation enactment of new curricula in both segments of Romanian preuniversity education. The students of the study programme *Pedagogy of preschool and primary school education* need such course supports that would update their options derived from educational policies, from implementation strategies of curriculum documents, and from assuming new responsibilities and didactic attitudes. The answer to such demands of initial training is found in the volume that we kindly recommend for students` and colleagues` reading. I stated in the foreword that Gabriela Kelemen “*is an ambitious person that hides under her attitude crinkles, a vanity similar to a beautiful viciousness*”. Ambition is measured in the virtues that a man releases in order to overcome himself in a generous aspiration towards ego fulfilment. This volumes follows others with specific thematic, starting with *The Universe of Childhood* (2003) and continuing with the passion for *The Methodology of instruction-educational activities in kindergarten* (2009), for *The Methodology of cultural, civic and recreational activities* (2010), for *Children with learning difficulties* (2012), for *Pedagogy of the Gifted* (2008), for *Preschool Pedagogy* (2008), for *School Counselling* (2011), for *Psychopedagogy of the Game* (2012), for *Child`s Pedagogy* (2012), for *The Methodology of Speech Training* (2012), and concluding with a summarizing volume, a coherent structure on the issues of primary as well as preschool education, from a didactic perspective.

The volume is structured in 12 chapters, as follows: *The Importance of the study object, The Pedagogy of preschool and primary school education, Child knowledge, Knowledge on the structure and dynamics of preschool child`s and pupil`s personality, Institutions: Kindergarten and School (primary school), Curriculum implementation at preschool/primary school level, Didactic projects, Assessment in preschool/primary school education, Methods applied in preschool/primary school education, Normativity*

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in preschool and primary school didactic process, The Game, Kindergarten-school-family partnership, Teacher`s personality.

The chapters are arranged according to the author`s options and they bring an element of originality because they differ from the current orientation of organization and progress of the didactic process. For the same reason, learning strategies occur after assessment strategies and the game is considered a distinct activity, being discussed in a separate chapter (theories on games, classification, didactic games and games for pupils). Original is also the cross discussion of didactic (and pedagogic) speech in preschool and primary school education, assuring a coherence between the two components of the preuniversity educational system.

An interesting chapter is the one on *Normativity in preschool and primary school didactic process*, placed between *Methodology and The Game*, proving the link between theoretical and didactic aspects of learning. The same original options are visible in the content relationship between *Child knowledge* (Chapter II) and *Knowledge on the structure and dynamics of preschool child`s and pupil`s personality* (Chapter III). The theories and findings are sustained by over one hundred bibliographical listings and over ten webography listings.

Such content reorganizations depend on the author`s options and they overcome the well-known structures of a coherent endeavour and structured according to current methodological requirements. The volume is a contribution to the enrichment of didactic publications in the field of educational sciences. It reveals the author`s options on the problems of pedagogy and didactics of this important segment of national education. Therewith, ***The didactics of primary and preschool education*** marks the point of professional maturity and assimilation of certain procedures used to describe the pedagogic phenomenon specific to preschool children and pupils from primary school education.

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