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CULEGERE SEMESTRIALĂ DE STUDII ŞTIINȚIFICE ŞI DIDACTICE

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CONTROVERSIES REGARDING ȚICHINDEAL'S BIOGRAPHY

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Abstract: *In this article I would like to underline the importance of the school Preparandia from Arad for the pedagogical movement. From Tichideal the founder of the public teacher school up to nowaay. By establishment of Preparandia in Arad and by Tichindeal's activity in the pedagogical domain in the first Roumanian pedagogical school, the concept pedagogy", „became a systematic concern for teachers who teach in primary school.*

Keywords : pedagogy, school, school hystory, forerunner

"Dimitrie Țichindeal was born, according to all probabilities, in Becicherecu Mic around the year 1775"[1]: "having said this let us try and decode the information contained by the name Dimitrie Țichindeal and the name of his ancestor or ancestors because we do not know how far down in time it can be traced. It very well may be that his father, priest Zaharia, had this name until he got on the path to priesthood. According to data from June 11th 1767, Timişoara's diocese had three priests registered in Becicherecul Mic: Ilie Cărăneanț, Vasile Popovici and Zaharia Zaharievici, all of them born in this county (DIMB, 305). In Timişoara's entire district, which included Becichirecu Mic, we cannot find another priest named Zaharia. Therefore, Zaharia Zaharievici is Dimitrie's father. The name reappears in the 1776 statistics (DIMB, 369) alongside the names of priests Marcu Ioanovici and Maxim Marcovici, the latter undoubtedly the former's son. The 1767 statistic fails to mention the priests place of birth; however, it included the number of houses in Becicherecul Mic (254) and the year of the priests' ordination: Zaharia Zaharievici in 01.04. 1768 (fact which in corroboration with the attestation from 1776 leads to the conclusion that Zaharias's last name was indeed Zaharevici even from the time he prepared for becoming a priest), Marcu Ioanevici on October 10th 1764 and Maxim Marcovici on November 15th 1772. According to the onomastic practice of the time, used by the Serbian hierarchy of the Orthodox Church, it can be concluded that Zaharias's father was also named Zaharia, from where the name of priest Zaharia Zaharevici."[2]

There are many biographical facts known to be true and recognized as such, for example Țichindeal's presence in the group of petitioners from Banat who plead with king Franscisc I for the establishment of an independent school in Hungary, for the appointment of Uroş Nestorovici to research (" we have found that most of the people

[1] Almost all literary critics and those who have researched Țichindeal's life shared G. Calinescu's opinion on his birthplace and year . Also see Ioan D. Suciu's *Literatura bănățeană de la început până la Unire (1582 - 1918)*, Editura RB Astra, Timişoara, 1940, p. 57

[2] According to Simion Dănilă, *Dimitrie Țichindeal la Belinț*, in "***Coloana Infinitului***" (Timişoara), VIII (2005), vol II, nr. 53, p. 6-10

dwell in darkness and untruthfulness mostly because they lack good and proper education…") and then propose a reformed educational plan organized around 23 provisions, amongst which the establishing of an educational training facility for public schools teachers. For this purpose a *Schooling Funds Department*[3] is established based around illuminist ideals: forming educated citizens, loyal servants to the king, worthy inhabitants of the country, faithful Christians for the church and obedient sons to their parents (according to C.D. Loga's[4] phrasing)

For us, Țichindeal's birthplace and date became temptations and the bet taken was for the present generation, now after two centuries of Romanian pedagogical teaching, to have a clear proof of the spatial and temporal origin of he who was named by Eminescu "golden mouth". Regarding his birthplace there are several locations brought into discussion. Around Hârtibaciu valley near Sibiu there is a village named Țichindeal, name that either has a Transylvanian Saxon origin (*Zaxelnduel) or* comes from the German *Zickenthal,* both meaning "goats' valley". Relying on oral information, Professor Mircea Drăgan-Noiștețean[5] considers that D. Țichindeal was born in the clearing of Țichindeal village in Sibiu County.

Supposedly he would have descended from the Dragoman family, which during Maria Teresa's reign was colonized in the Banat area, taking over, according to the local practice, the name of the village, Țichindeal. The history of Becicherecul Mic starts with the colonizing, in 1748, of 24 Romanian families brought over from Transylvania. Hârtibaciului locals also invoke a poem written by Țichindeal, found in an old tattered book (with missing covers), in which the fabulist apparently confesses that:

"I was born in Ink
And I journeyed to Banat
I was set
To get to the king

To bring back freedom once more
For the oppressed Romanians
In church and country alike
To be strong, to be united"[6]

"Ink" is a place in the northern part of the village, the old heart, and the land would have been donated by the family for raising the church in Țichindeal. More to the point, in the same place, Petru Aaron is said to have married Țichindeal's sister.

[3] *Deputăția Fondurilor Şcolare* orig. The closest modern equivalent would be a regional board of education. (n. tr)
[4] D. Mârza, *Imaginea învățatului bănățean reflectată în Circularele şcolare*, http//www. History-ches.ro, p. 2. One can also follow, with more ground, V. Popeangă's tome *Studii despre Preparandia din Arad* (2012), a complex analysis of the Local Schooling Deputy.
[5] Mircea Drăgan-Noiștețeanu, *O personalitate controversată a văii Hârtibaciului – Dimitrie Țichindeal* (c. 1775 – 20 I 1818), in Gazeta Hârtibaciului, nr. 37, June 2009, p. 2.
[6] *Ibidem*.

Some facts can be interlinked in the general scheme of things. In 1748, amongst the 24 Romanian colonizing families that moved from Ţichindeal to Becicherecul Mic, there could have been a Dragoman family as well. If Dimitrie would have been born in Ţichindeal by the time they moved he would have reached the age for preschool, fact that "tips over" his entire literary biography. He was a proficient speaker of German and Serbian, a clue towards the fact that his schooling history (Elementary Serbian School and German Gymnasium) are credible. Under no circumstance would he have been able to learn Serbian in Ţichindeal, therefore his birth before his family's arrival in Becicherecul Mic in 1748 is impossible. Then he must have been born in Becicherecul Mic in a family that originated from Ţichindeal[7].

In an effort to claim D. Ţichindeal through his birthplace, inhabitants of Ţichindeal solicit a written document to attest his birth in Becicherecul Mic; however priest Petru Ilea (1976) says that "there (i.e. in Bechicherecul Mic) is no such document regarding the birthplace of the writer"[8]

Then why did the family change its name from Dragoman to Ţichindeal? This thing is not entirely uncommon, being customary for some of the colonists to take up a new name on account of nostalgia for their birthplace or to nicknamed –and later named- after the pattern: Ţichindeleanu, Arădeanu, Moroşanu, Bucureşteanu or Tăgădăuanu.

The first conclusion excludes the birth of the author in Ţichindeal before the family's arrival in Banat. But is there enough proof that Dragoman from Ţichindeal[9]

[7] "It is no surprise that Zaharia's father or a different ascendent of Dimitrie's was form Ardeal, from Ţichindeal more exactly, a village from Nochric parish, Sibiu county. When Zaharia, son of Zaharia, joined priesthood, they gave him his name, Zaharia Zaharievici, according to the fashion of the times. However his sons, Dimitrie and Gheorghe, taking advantage of the imperial decree from 1776, and because there still was a strong conscience of their origin alive in the family, opted when given the chance for a last name synonymous with their ancestor's place of origin, omitting the –eanu suffix (meaning a toponym in absolute antroponimic function) - Ţichindeal - and not Zaharievici as expected. As for the regional descendance of the Tichindeal family there is a precedent in Becicherecu Mic (mentioned in 1758): " Priest Constantin Popovici, born in Ardeal, 27 years old, studied in Arad with teacher Ion, married at 15, has a daughter, was ordained by Gheorghe Popovici on the 21st of November 1748, has five books" (DIMB, 239). It very well may be that Vasile Popovici, priest in Becicherecu Mic in 1767 and Gheorghe Popovici priest in Manastur at the same date, but also born in Bechicherecu Mic (DIMB, 305-306) were the sons of Constantin Popovici" aknowledges Simion Dănilă in *Dimitrie Ţichindeal la Belinţ*, "***Coloana Infinitului***" (Timişoara), VIII (2005), vol II, nr. 53, p. 6-10

[8] Ibidem.

[9] In 1350 there was an attested settlement named Chekendeal; toponym originating from the Transylvanian Saxon "lalle siculorum" (Transylvanian Saxon's valley) or the Germanic Zickental ("goats' valley). The etymology of the Ţichindeal anthroponym, as theorised by N. A. Constantinescu in his well known Romanian Onomastic Dictionary from 1963, p. 238, files the following under Cichinda: "2. Cichindel also spelled as Tichindel, poet, banat country", as being derived from Cichinda or Chicinda (i.e. Chichinda/ Kikinda from Serbia) must be refuted categorically as being in relation with Ciuchindel (Banat) because the spelling with *Ci*- or *Chi*-and the addition of *–del* is just a common stuttering for the transition period between the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin one of our language and the scholar's name is undoubtedly pronounced with Ţi - and -deal the way he himself spelled it in Cyrillic and the way his contemporaries spelled it in the Latin alphabet (see second facsimiled manuscript in Virgil Vintilescu's manuscript *Dimitrie Ţichindeal*, Timişoara, 1965: Czikingyal) . For the etymology of the topographic name Ţichindeal (as well as for Gherdeal and Merghindeal, all setellments in Sibiu county) and especially for the final component – *deal*, linguists aknowledge the transylvanian saxon –dal, i.e german Tal "valley"

was amongst the 24 colonized families? The family could have arrived later on, maybe around 1770, and the child Dimitrie Ţichindeal could still have been born in 1775, as George Călinescu writes so confidently in his ***History*** (both parents are identified, priest Zaharia the father, and also the mother, Elena[10]). What was the source of this information Călinescu had that all researchers used without a properly verifying it? An uncertainty became a reference document.

The assertion that after 1815 D. Ţichindeal would have returned to his native village and "posed" for a fresco in the church is the expression of local patriotism and the obsession of those from Valea Hârtibaciului to claim the writer-priest. There are firm dates, based on documents, according to which on April 15th 1815 priest Ţichindeal retires to Becicherecul Mic. The letter, written in German, sent by the Ţichindeal the priest to King Francisc I is dated October 1815 and it is signed by the vicar of Becicherecul Mic, Dimitrie Ţichindeal. He takes over his father in law's parish where he serves until August 19th 1817 when a sick Dimitrie Ţichindeal will be admitted to the Philanthropic Hospital of the Misericordian Order from Timişoara where he dies on a Tuesday, January 20th 1818 aged 43. He was buried on the 22nd of January in the city's cemetery and then –after a few years- his corpse moved to Becicherecul Mic, the location of his new grave remaining unknown. [11]

How was it that Ţichindeal ended up in a charity hospital ran by the Order of Misericordian monks is again a question that stirs opinions. In 1737 monks of the Misericordian order built their first hospital in Timişoara. The origins of this religious order, the role of which was from the very beginning taking to take care of the sick, poor travellers, wounded soldiers or of the mentally ill are to be found in late XVI century in Spain. The founder of the order was Juan Ciudad (8th March 1496-8th March 1550) a character whose very life and activity can be taken as an example for the typical late Middle Ages man.

The order's main role was to provide medical assistance to social cases: the poor and the sick, without religious, national or social status discrimination, for free, without asking for any kind of material remuneration[12].

In Romania the order was disbanded by official decree in 1949 the same way other Roman Catholic orders or congregations were. Also, what kind of motivation can an orthodox priest from Becicherecul Mic have to accept treatment at a Roman Catholic charity institution meant to deal with the poor and mentally ill?!

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although word formations with *–in* are characteristic to slavic languages (cf. Babindeal la Cornereva CS, apud V. Ioniţă, *Nume de locuri din Banat*, Timişoara, 1982, p. 60). However the origin of these toponyms has no relevance in the present case . Cf. Simion Dănilă *Dimitrie Ţichindeal la Belinţ*, published in "***Coloana Infinitului***" (Timişoara), VIII (2005), vol II, nr. 53, p. 6-10.

[10] Georga Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent*, Editura Minerva, Bucureşti, 1982, p.

[11] document taken from the official records of the deceased of the serbian church (in Serbian) Criterion number. 514. Year, month, day 20st january 1818, D. Ţichindeal, greco-oriental rite, vicar of Bechicherecu Mic, was buried by Iovan Vasci, vicar of Timişoara" *(Luminatorul*, VIII, 1887, nr. 68 (29/17 oct.), p. 2-3.

[12] Călin Claudiu, *Despre Ordinul călugărilor misericordieni*, in www.litere.uvt.ro/vechi/ *revista_arheologie/articole* (accesed 28 oct. 2011)

Let us continue. There is no dispute over the year (1802) when Ţichindeal was named "a national teacher" in Becicherecul Mic, same place where he married priest Nedeschi's daughter[13] and where he became a vicar. So says Emilian Micu in a letter to I. Ardelean (Kissoda – Chişoda – n.n. -, 25 ian. 1893): " he was made a deacon in Timişoara (1801) and next year (1802) after a year of trial according to the practice, at a minimum age of 25-26 he was made a priest and served as a chaplain to Nedeschi, his father in law , and after Nedeschi passed he came to be a vicar (1804) until the year (1812) when he was a teacher in Arad."[14] Professor Vasile Popeangă author of the *Preparandia din Arad* (1964) monograph provides an oral piece of information related to one of Ţichindeal's sons named Teofil who appears in the registry of the Karlovitz College, as he discovered in the archives of this old gymnasium. Teofil is expelled in his second year of studies without a record of the cause. It was the year 1815.

Let us return to the argument. Priest Emanoil Micu, a good connoisseur of Ţichindeal's biography considers that Ţichindeal becomes a priest at the minimum age of 25-26 fact that casts a new question on his birth year, which could be 1777, 1776, 1775 or maybe 1774 ("minimum").

In order to identify his birth place (and the exact date) there is need for a rigorous archive research activity. Professor V. Popeangă suggests that the problem might be solved through researching the Karlovăţ (Serbia) Metropolitan Archive, the parish's archive (the theological archive and that of the Schooling Department) as well as Uroş Nestorovici's Teacher training School archives. We have asked Lucian Marina the Serbian publicist of Romanian descendance, an exceptional man of culture and an enthusiastic supporter of preserving the Romanian identity in the Serbian Banat region, to research the enrolment registry and the gymnasium's archive in Karlovitz. Also we have called upon the historian Gheorghe Rancu to research the metropolitan archive from Timişoara. Therefore we have considered that there is a need for a research team. Unfortunately, so far, results are underwhelming.

Tradition had it that the school senior position would usually be occupied by the oldest teacher. Historians confer two different birth dates onto Constantin Diaconovici-Loga: 1770 and 1779. I opt for the year 1779, because in 1830, when he is named Head of the Greco-Iliric border schools, he would have been 60, and it seems highly unlikely that someone would take on such a responsibility and hold that same position until he was 80, when he also died. At the same time professor Doru Bogdan reading the present manuscript says that based on a letter sent by Ioan Mihuţ to Moise Nicoară, concluded that the eldest would still have been Ioan Mihuţ, born in 1755, or, in my opinion, 1756 (I would like to apologize to the reader for derailing from the chronological presentation of facts in favour of some considerations about Ţichindeal's biography).

By establishment of *Preparandia in Arad* and by Tichindeal's activity in the pedagogical domain in the first Roumanian pedagogical school, the concept pedagogy", „became a systematic concern for teachers who teach in primary school.

[13] A Pedagogic Institute graduate of the 15 mounth Course III from May 1815 named NADASCHI ATANASIU, being originally from Bechicherecu Mic. Is there maybe a relation between Ţichindeal and the graduate with a similar name to that of his future father in law?

[14] Mircea Popa, *Preotul bănăţean Emanoil Micu şi biblioteca sa*, www, nale. ro/reviste – recunoscute/ psihologica. Doc (accesat 27 oct. 2011)

The profesors who belonged to Preparandia and teached pedagogical disciplines were the most honorable, starting with Ioan Mihuț, Alexandru Gavra, Petru Pipoş, Sabin Evuțian etc. And some more like Victor Țârcovnicu and Vasile Popeangă. The Preparandia institution became a national pedagogical school, built 200 years ago by Dimitrie Țichindeal, a nationalist teacher and priest"[15].

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[15] Gabriela Kelemen, *Pedagogia învățământului primar şi preşcolar*, Editura Universității Aurel Vlaicu Arad, Arad, 2012, p. 12.

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E-LEARNING TOOLS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING, - II part –

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Abstract: In this second part of the paper is description of some *Asynchronous tools* of Virtual Learning Environment Tools used in education, knowing that in the previous part was presented some *Synchronous tools.*Since the tools provided by VLEs are very diverse, teachers must get to know them well in order to be able to use them efficiently in the process of teaching, learning and evaluation. When a teacher chooses to use e-learning tools, s/he should have in mind both the type of the course in which they can be applied and the students' needs and abilities.

Keywords – Virtual Learning Environment Tools (VLEs), Asynchronous

The term "VLE tools" includes all kinds of virtual/internet-tools that can serve for educational purposes.Virtual Learning Environment tools (VLEs) are claimed and used by the students, guided by teachers, to facilitate the solving of various learning situations.

As we said in the first part of this paper, theVLEs instruments can beclassified in:

A. *Synchronous tools – in a real time, instantaneous*

B. Asynchronous tools - transmission of data without the use of an external clock signal, where data can be transmitted intermittently rather than in a steady stream.

Now it's time to present some of***Asynchronous tools!***

1.Blog

A blog (a blend of the term web log) is a type of website or part of a website. Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. Blogging refers to maintaining or adding content to a blog.Most blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message each other. Interactivity distinguishes blogs from other websites.Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability of readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (art blog), photographs (photoblog), videos (video blogging or vblogging), music (MP3 blog), and audio (podcast). Microblogging is another type of blogging, featuring very short posts.

In education blogs can also be used for posting news and assignments to students. Teacher may also use a blog for sharing links to educational websites that will enhance students' knowledge and understanding of concepts and topics discussed in class. Students' comments or postings may be invited on issues in order to give them a writing voice. Students may even be asked to write a reflective learning diary/journal that they may share either with other students or only with their teacher.

Some application that can used for developing a blog are:

- Blogger (www.blogger.com, by Google),
- Wordpress (http://wordpress.com/),
- iWeb (http://www.apple.com/de/ilife/iweb/, by Apple),
- Posterous (https://posterous.com/)

2. Podcast

Academics at the Community, Journalism & Communication Research group at the University of Texas at Austin in the USA are proposing a four-part definition of a podcast: A podcast is a digital audio or video file that is episodic; downloadable; program-driven, mainly with a host and/or theme; and convenient, usually via an automated feed with computer software.

A podcast (or non-streamed webcast) is a series of digital media files (mainly audio) that are released episodically and often downloaded through web syndication. The word replaced webcast in common use with the success of the iPod and its role in the rising popularity and innovation of web feeds. The mode of delivery differentiates podcasting from other means of accessing media files over the Internet, such as direct download, or streamed webcasting.

Commonly used audio file formats are OggVorbis and MP3. In many respects, this is closer to traditional publishing models associated with books and magazines (as opposed to radio, which uses a live stream).

From the other perspectives we can subsume all kinds of online and downloadable audio-files under the term podcast.

Services to create save and share podcasts are:

- Voisse- allows you to upload and/or record audio-files and to share them online. A plus is the possibility to link these audio-files to pictures and presentations. (http://www.voisse.com/)
- Vocaroo- is a very simple and free online tool to record from your computers microphone. After recording the website offers to share the file via Link, E-Mail or embedding it into a website and/or to download it.(http://vocaroo.com/)

3. Resource-sharing

Resource-sharing covers a lot of activities, where you share resources (files or bookmarks) via internet, with a wide public or within a group (e.g. fellow-learners, participants of a study-program).

The main goal of resource-sharing is to create a common resource-pool for all or groups of learners, which can include text (scripts, presentations, articles, video-lectures etc.)

The characteristics of resource-sharing tool are:

- ***public*** (accessible to everyone) ***vs. private*** (shared only by a specific group or person, e.g. with password-protection)
- ***grouping and organizing:*** possibility to organize and structure the resources shared
- ***description and tagging***: possibility to add descriptions and tags (buzzwords) to the resources shared for easier searching and organizing

Resource-sharing can be differentiated into three types:

- ***File-sharing:*** sharing files via internet (programs, multi-media, documents, e-books, etc.)
- ***Social-bookmarking:*** organize, store and manage bookmarks (references, links to special homepages, files in internet)
- ***Presentation-sharing*** is a very simple way to get ready-made presentations.

File-sharing is the practice of distributing or providing access to digitally stored information, such as computer programs, multimedia (audio, images, and video), documents, or electronic books. Types of file sharing:

- ***Peer-to-peer*** file sharing: Users can use software that connects in to a peer-to-peer network to search for shared files on the computers of other users (i.e. peers) connected to the network. Files of interest can then be downloaded directly from other users on the network.
- ***File hosting*** services: These sites host files so that others can download them. Sometimes these services are used together with Internet collaboration tools such as forum, blog, or any other medium in which links to direct downloads from file hosting services can be embedded.

As for virtual Learning file-hosting services are the better solution as it is far easier to use. If the files shared are videos in our context we speak of video-sharing.

Features:

- ***possibility to add descriptions***, tags
- ***public*** (files are accessible to everyone) ***vs. private*** (e.g. password-protection)
- ***automatic synchronizing*** with local computer: Some file-sharing providers offer clients which enable you to create a virtual drive on your local computer, which is automatically synchronized with your virtual space. If the client is installed on various computers (e.g. of a learning group), the files are automatically updated on all computers, once they go online.
- ***mobile clients***: some services also offer programs for mobile-devices like smart-phones

File-sharing services are:

- dropbox(https://www.dropbox.com/)
- sugarsync(https://www.sugarsync.com/) - favourite at the moment
- zumodrive(http://www.zumodrive.com/)

Social-bookmarking is a method for Internet users to organize, store, manage and search for bookmarks of resources online. Unlike file-sharing, the resources themselves aren't shared, merely bookmarks that reference them. Descriptions may be added to

these bookmarks in the form of metadata, so users may understand the content of the resource without first needing to download it for themselves. Such descriptions may be free text comments, votes in favour of or against its quality, or tags that collectively or collaboratively become a folksonomy. Folksonomy is also called social tagging, "the process by which many users add metadata in the form of keywords to shared content". In a social bookmarking system, users ***save links to web pages that they want to remember and/or share***. These bookmarks are usually ***public,*** and can be ***saved privately, shared only with specified people or groups,*** shared only inside certain networks, or another combination of public and private domains. The allowed people can usually view these bookmarks chronologically, by category or tags, or via a search engine. Most social bookmark services encourage users to organize their bookmarks with informal tags instead of the traditional browser-based system of folders, although some services feature categories/folders or a combination of folders and tags. They also enable viewing bookmarks associated with a chosen tag, and include information about the number of users who have bookmarked them. Some social bookmarking services also draw inferences from the relationship of tags to create clusters of tags or bookmarks. Many social bookmarking services provide web feeds for their lists of bookmarks, including lists organized by tags. This allows subscribers to become aware of new bookmarks as they are saved, shared, and tagged by other users. As these services have matured and grown more popular, they have added ***extra features*** such as ***ratings*** and ***comments*** on bookmarks, the ability to ***import and export***bookmarks from browsers, emailing of bookmarks, web annotation, and groups or other social network features.

Typicalsocial-bookmarking services are:

- Diigo (http://www.diigo.com)
- Delicious (http://delicious.com)

Presentation-sharing is a very simple way to get ready-made presentations online. Presentations are uploaded to the hosting's companies server and can then be displayed online. The big advantage to using presentation-sharing tools is that the user can look at the presentation right online and doesn't have to download the slides first to his computer.

Usual features for the presentation-sharing tools are:

- ***private*** (only invited users, password etc.) ***and public*** (everyone) sharing
- ***possibility to download slides***
- ***commenting on slides***
- ***embedding to websites***, blog, etc.
- ***sharing***
- ***sync audio with slides***
- ***embed videos to slides*** (e.g. YouTube)

Examples for presentation-sharing applications are:

- SlideShare (http://www.slideshare.net/)
- SlideSix (http://slidesix.com/)
- Scribd (http://www.scribd.com/)
- Prezi (http://prezi.com/)

4. PowerPoint presentations

In the world of E-Learning, PowerPoint is a tool that you cannot afford to ignore. Sure, there are plenty of discussions about the good and evil of this program, but the reality is that it is the most commonly used E-Learning format across the board. So if you want to save time then you need to make a point to learn this program inside and out.Become the guru and learn all the little tips and tricks that will you save hours, if not days, in the future with New PowerPoint 2010 which: Create, manage, and collaborate with other people; Manage your files in the new Backstage view; Co-author a presentation with your colleagues; Automatically save versions of your presentations;

Organize your slides into sections; Merge and compare presentations; Work with separate PowerPoint presentation files in different windows; Work from anywhere: PowerPoint Web Apps; PowerPoint Mobile 2010 for Windows Phone 7: Edit and view from your phone; Enrich your presentations with video, picture, and animations; Embed, edit, and play a video in your presentation; Trim an audio or video clip; Use bookmarks in your audio and video clips; Link to a video from a web site; Apply artistic textures and effects to your pictures; Remove the background and other unwanted portions of a picture; Crop your pictures with more precision; New SmartArt graphic picture layouts… etc.

You have utilities that convert PowerPoint into Weblearning LMS (http://weblearning.atrixware.com/addons.php), as well as to slidepoint.net platform (http://www.slidepoint.net/), and there are numerous utilities that will you convert them to Flash as well - all mean you can easily get your PowerPoint online.

So know your tools. You'll be glad that you do!

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PERFORMER-AN AMBITIOUS PROJECT

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Abstract:*The Master`s programme called PERFORMER aims at developing competences for the profession of psycho-pedagogue for early education and young learners, so as the educators and teachers to be able to create various learning contexts, very stimulating, adapted to children`s/pupils` individual needs and offering them different options, allowing them to choose among alternative learning occasions and opportunities.*

Keywords: *master`s programme, psycho-pedagogue, professional competences, compatibility*

1. Argument in favour of a new Master`s programme

The contemporary society is confronted with a series of major problems that inevitably affect education. These aspects require the training of specialists able to deal with these issues of a ever-changing society (Antonesei, L., Popa, N.L., Labar, A.V.). The training of specialists in education becomes a must, starting with the pre-schooling period aiming at preventing school failure, school abandonment and assuring the children`s integration in the compulsory educational system. A proper training of future teachers, true professionals in education is required in order to be able to fulfil these tasks.They have to be trained to adapt traditional and modern educational strategiesto children`s educational needs and to make them optimal for training (L., Trif, 2010). Therefore, the coherent organization of higher education, according to the Declaration of Bologna, is fulfilled in two cycles that provide the graduates with necessary competences to practice their job. At the graduation of the first cycle of the Faculty of Education Sciences, Psychology and Social Work within AurelVlaicu University, Aradthe students acquire sufficient competences to practice their job, according to COR for teachers in pre-school and primary school education. Through the Master`s programme PERFORMER, cycle II we try to create a formal framework, based scientifically and with a high applied relevance. Its aim is to develop necessary competences for educational activities at early ages and young pupils, by using activities proper for the age of pupils. The students will develop competences necessary to practice their job as psycho-pedagogues for early education and young learners. So, the master`s degree is proper for the graduates of cycle I of the Faculty of Education Sciences, Psychology and Social Work that wish to develop new competences in the field of early education and young learners.

On a global level, the period of time for early education is from conception to the age of 8. This is the period when the most rapid development of brain takes place, and young learning prolongs to the age of 10. Education in this period of time is very important because if the process is neglected in this stage, it becomes more expensive

and difficult to balance the losses. A better world for children is a world where all children can enjoy childhood – a period dedicated to playing and learning, when children are guided and educated with affection, when their rights are promoted and protected without any discrimination, when their safety and wealth come first, so as to help them develop in harmony and dignity.

Education in these stages involves:

- Assuring a physically and affectively secure environment, stimulative from a cognitive and social point of view for all children, irrespective of their gender, ethical group, religious beliefs;
- Considering age and individual characteristics of children to ensure maximum of development potential in each child;
- Being aware of the importance this stage has for the overall development of a child, and providing quality based educational services.

The need for a master`s programme that handles thoroughly the issue of early education and offers new professional competences is determined by the results of scientifical research regarding education at the level of early education and young learners.

In childhood the source of learning is the diversity of experiences (cognitive, social, emotional, physical) that the child experiences. That`s why it is very important to encourage his natural exploring, experimenting curiosity needs and the desire to communicate and interact. Such a vision on a child modifies also the conception upon the essence of the educational process that has to be viewed as an interaction between subjects, between two active parts. We have to consider the trainee as a partner in his/her own development and to facilitate his learning track. This leads to the need of training teachers that fulfil didactic activities at this age.

2. The characteristics of the Master`s programme PERFORMER

The PERFORMER project – *Perspectives of formation through a master`s programme of specialists in the field of early education and young learners*on a superior quality level, is a project financed by the Social European Fund through Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007 – 2013, priority axis *Education and training in support for growth and development of knowledge based society*, major intervention area, *Quality in superior education.* This project aims at elaborating and implementing a master`s programme that is compatible with the requirements of ARACIS – Romania, ISPEF – Italy and to create a profile of competences for the profession of psycho – pedagogue for early education and young learners. By structuring the PERFORMER master`s programme we will elaborate a profile of competences that the master degree student will acquire throughout his two years of study. So, the master`s degree that we want to implement wants to build up a profile of competences in agreement with ARACIS standards, ISPEF model and PERFORMER structure.

3. Innovative aspects of the project

Fulfilling these standards, we can outline the specific objectives of this master`s programme:

- The extension of fundamental conceptual system specific to early education and young learners and its adjustment to the specifics of preschool and primary school

education in order to achieve a holistic and flexible vision upon the institutionalized educational act at that age;

- Understanding the necessity to approach learning through games, a fundamental activity in childhood, specific way of acquiring knowledge at an early age and passing on to specific learning activities;
- Diversifying competences necessary to carrying out educational activities in different fields of knowledge: language and communication, sciences, as well as to the formation and development of abilities, skills and attitudes towards learning.
- The graduates` ability to successfully implement child/pupil centred educational strategies and to develop the communication and relating abilities of children;
- The graduates` ability to use certain educational practices regarding psycho-pedagogic counselling and solving situations of educational crisis;
- Professionalizing pre-school/ primary school teachers in the field of developing educational projects, educational partnerships and educational marketing so as to involve as many educational factors as possible in children`s education.
- The development of an inter and trans-disciplinary vision of learning at young ages and early education in accordance with the directions of National Curriculum.

4.The fundamental objective of the master`s programme aims at *professionalizing in the field of early education and young learners through the development of a functional system of competences based on knowledge and specific abilities to the field of speciality, as well as the development of a system of attitudes that would allow proper and efficient adaptation to imminent changes in pre-university education, especially pre-school and primary school education.*

The university that develops the programme is "Transilvania" University from Brasov and partners are „1 Decembrie" University from Alba-Iulia, „AurelVlaicu" University from Aradand Instituto di ScienzePsicologichedellaEducazione e dellaFormazione Roma (ISPEF), Italy.

The transnational partnership was made in order to make use of the Italian partner`s experience in the field, by adjusting the experience to our conditions and by increasing the quality of curriculum construction. This will lead to the awarding of a certification from ECE (European Center of Education) along with the master`s degree diploma, which is a real gain for master`s students. This certification confers an international acknowledgement of the acquired competences for the graduates of this master`s programme.

The vision of this project involves a new approach to formation based on the four pillars of modern pedagogy: to know, to do, to be and to communicate. Starting from these desiderates, which are considered innovative by the entire academic world, we will try to put them into practice and not use them only theoretically. This way, their usage will bring about the development of creativity and didactic autonomy of trainees. As a consequence, the competences of the master`s programme *Psycho – pedagogy of early education and young learners*have been outlined. The curricular construction is balanced, with six modules a year and 60 credits, containing 24 disciplines and 120 credits. Each semester has type A, B, C and D activities (according to ISPEF):

- Area A of formation of the ISPEF model named *Area Lezioni in Aula e Seminari*;
- Area B of formation – *Apprendimento E-learning e ricerca in internet* (E-learning and internet research);
- Area C of formation – *Stage di sperimentazione et di interveto in ambitoprofessionale* (Experiential strategies and strategies of intervention in the professional environment);
- Area D of formation – *Documentazioneetrevisionedeipercorsiformativi. StesuradellaRelazione finale* (Documenting and monitoring of formative paths. Writing of Dissertation).

Regarding the collective learning activities - mainly courses (C) and seminars (S) - Romanian model operates mainly with standards of 2C+1S=3 hours/week (namely 42 hours per semester) and of 1C+1S=2 hours/week (namely 28 hours per semester), resulting in an average per semester of *35 hours/discipline*, which at 6 disciplines per semester leads to an average of 210 hours/ semester and 42- hours/year. *TheISPEF Model* operates with an *average per semester of 30 hours/discipline*, which at 6 disciplines per semester leads to an average of 180 hours/ semester and 360 hours/ year, namely less than the Romanian model with 30 hours/semester and 60 hours/year. Under these circumstances, the only option to maintain constant the value of credits (expressed in number of hours) is to diminish the number of hours allocated for independent/individual learning activities. The curriculum of the master`s programme abides the modular manner of organization of contents and teaching-learning activities applied by ISPEF. Therefore:

- the study disciplines and the learning activities are grouped in 12 modules (6 modules per year), each module containing two disciplines and being credited with a package of 10 credits; - within each module, the first discipline (scheduled in the first semester) has a highly theoretical character or/and of fundamental training in the field, and the second discipline (scheduled in the second semester) has a practical/applied character; this difference is marked also by the forms of didactic activity, for the first discipline being allocated 2 hours of lecture and one of seminar, and for the second one, only one hour of lecture and 2 hours of seminar.

Professional training was designed as a distinctive module (with distinctive disciplines, normed in the academic curricula), in order to adjust the ISPEF model to internal practices (national), that regulate two hours of training in the didactic norm. This was possible by redistributing certain hours from those comprised in *area C of formation– Stage di sperimentazioneet di interveto in ambitoprofessionale* (Experiential stages and stages of intervention in the professional environment).

To follow internal (national) standards that require a minimum number of optional disciplines, We have listed in the curriculum three optional courses (a share of 13,34%) without giving up on any discipline agreed with ISPEF, to follow internal (national) standards that require a minimum number of optional disciplines.

Below, we list the academic curriculum in its current form:

YEAR I

Modules	Disciplines	Discipline`s code	I Semester										II Semester										Total/year	No of credits
			Collective didactic activities					Independent/ individual activities				Total	Collective didactic activities					Independent/ individual activities				Total		
			C	S	L	P	Total	B	C	D	Total		C	S	L	P	Total	B	C	D	Total			
1. EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY	The advanced study of education in the community	MET1101	14	14	-	-	28	36	31	30	97	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	The educational design in the relationship of the educational institution with the community	MET1201	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	28	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	125	5
2. COMMUNICATION AND INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONS	Advanced theories in the psycho-pedagogy of communication	MET1102	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	The handling of the dynamics of interpersonal relations in childhood	MET1202	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	14	-	-	28	36	31	30	97	125	125	5

3. THE METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH IN EDUCATION	**The methodology of research and the management of research projects in education**	MET1103	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	Methods of quality research	MET1206	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	28	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	125	5
	Measurement and data analysis	MET1207																						
4. PSYCHOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT	**Thorough studies in the psychology of child and young pupil**	MET1104	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	The management of psycho-cognitive processes of learning in childhood	MET1203	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	14	-	-	28	36	31	30	97	125	125	5
5. PSYCHO-PEDAGOGIC DEVELOPMENT	**The methodology of psycho-pedagogic intervention**	MET1105	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5

	The handling of psycho-pedagogic intervention strategies	MET1204	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	28	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	125	5
6. EDUCATIONAL TRAINING (experiential stages)	**Training - Plan of actions with children and pupils**	MET1106	-	-	-	14	14	-	111	-	111	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	Training – evaluation and interevaluation of experiential training	MET1205	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	28	-	97	-	97	125	125	5
TOTAL I YEAR			**126**	**70**	**-**	**14**	**210**	**180**	**210**	**150**	**540**	**750**	**70**	**112**	**-**	**28**	**210**	**180**	**210**	**150**	**540**	**750**	**1500**	**60**

YEAR II

Modules	**Disciplines**	**Discipline`s code**	**Semester I**										**Semester II**										**Total/year**	**No of credits**
			Collective didactic activities					**Independent/ individual activities**				**Total**	**Collective didactic activities**					**Independent/ individual activities**				**Total**		
			C	**S**	**L**	**P**	**Total**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**Total**		**C**	**S**	**L**	**P**	**Total**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**Total**			
1. EDUCATIONAL AND DIDACTIC PLANNING	**Educational planning of activities with the group/classroom**	MET2101	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	The management of personalized	MET2201	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	14	-	-	28	36	31	30	97	125	125	5

	curriculum																						
2. DECIMOLOGY AND EVALUATION	**Decimology – comparative perspectives**	MET2102	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	Methods of complex evaluation of child and group/classroom	MET2202	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	28	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	125	5
3. PSYCHO-PEDAGOGY OF INTERVENTIONS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION	**Planning of interventions in special education**	MET2103	14	14	-	-	28	36	31	30	97	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	Coordination and evaluation of interventions in special education	MET2203	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	28	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	125	5
4. SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY	**Thorough studies in the sociology of education**	MET2104	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	Quality management of educational organizations	MET2204	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	28	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	125	5
5. COMPLEMENTARY MODULE OF OPTIONAL DISCIPLINES	**The competence profile of educators for children from 0 to 6 years**	MET2106	28	14	-	-	42	36	17	30	83	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5

	Formative-educational valences of national and international literature for children	MET2107																					
	The competence profile of the educator for young learners	MET2206																					
	Folklore and popular traditions revaluation in early education and young learners	MET2207	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	14	-	-	28	36	31	30	97	125	125	5
6. EDUCATIONAL TRAINING (experiential stages)	**Training - Plan of actions with children and pupils**	MET2206	-	-	-	14	14	-	111	-	111	125	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	125	5
	Training – evaluation and inter-evaluation of experiential training	MET2207	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	28	-	97	-	97	125	125	5
TOTAL YEAR II			**126**	**70**	**-**	**14**	**210**	**180**	**210**	**150**	**540**	**750**	**70**	**112**	**-**	**28**	**210**	**180**	**210**	**150**	**540**	**750**	**1500**	**60**
TOTAL STUDY PROGRAMME			**252**	**140**	**-**	**28**	**420**	**360**	**420**	**300**	**1080**	**1500**	**140**	**224**	**-**	**56**	**420**	**360**	**420**	**300**	**1080**	**1500**	**3000**	**120**

We observe that besides courses and seminars in lecture rooms, stress is laid also on individual research, e-learning activities and pedagogical training. The modular curriculum contains 24 syllabi, all elaborated according to ARACIS standards for Romanian accreditation and the same syllabi, elaborated according to ISPEF standards to make them, compatible with international standards. The syllabi were elaborated by teachers nominated by all three partner universities (8-10 teachers from each university) and afterwards reconsidered and improved in a 5 days workshop at "Transilvania"University fromBraşov. This meeting between the implementation teams and teachers that will hold lectures and seminars within the master`s programme was of real help. It was a true experience exchange, pointing out the strong points of this master`s programme and contributing to the overcome of difficulties of such an ambitious project. It is desired that all three universities would teach on the same syllabus.

The final product of this master`s programme will consist of 25 master`s graduates in each partner university that will acquire competences for the profession of *psycho – pedagogue for early education and young learners.* At the end of two years of study, the student will obtain his master`s degree if he acquired all credits with the minimal grade 5 (five). The ISPEF certification will be obtained only if all credits were acquired with minimum 7 (seven). Therefore all graduates can obtain the master`s degree with minimum five, but not all can obtain an ISPEF certification. On the other hand, the master`s student with grades 9 and 10 will have the right to publish his dissertation on the web site. The ISPEF certification will be obtained through a strict monitoring of each master`s student that will argument the acquired competences by means of tests, individual portfolios with all papers, projects, maps, etc.

This master`s programme is characterized by some distinctive facts that turn it into an innovative academic model:

- ❖ Courses and seminars in lecture rooms;
- ❖ Learning focused on e-learning system and on-line research;
- ❖ Personalized experimenting and intervention stages;
- ❖ Strict monitoring of activities and products.

5.Professional Competences Aimed By The Master`S Programme Performer

- The planning, fulfilment and evaluation of specific instructive – educational activities from the perspective of integrated learning;
- The planning, implementing, evaluation and coordination of educational projects, specific to early education;
- The planning, elaboration and fulfilment of strategies to facilitate the transition towards school specific learning activities;
- Initiation and revaluation of professional projects as well as of certain innovative projects in the field of early education;
- Psycho-pedagogical counselling of children and parents from the perspective of school and social adaptability.

6.Knowledge

- A thorough knowledge of the problematic of early education and young learners, of the theoretical, methodological and practical developments specific to the programme; the proper usage of psycho-pedagogical language associated to this problematic area.
- competences
- the competence to analyse and interpret the professional standards of *psycho-pedagogue for early education and young learners*
- the competence to analyse, interpret, compare different elements of educational policy with national and/or European character in the field of *psycho-pedagogue for early education and young learners*
- the competence to analyse and interpret different theories and methodological orientations regarding the specific of *early education and young learners*
- the competence to use field related knowledge to explain new situations occurred when fulfilling and affirming *early education and young learners;*
- the competence to use professionally the psycho – pedagogic language associated to planning and fulfilment of *early education and young learners;*
- the competence to convert theoretical knowledge and methodological orientation acquired to plan successful educational activities
- the competence to reflect upon different functions, roles and responsibilities of a *psycho-pedagogue for early education and young learners*

7.Abilities

7.1.The integrated usage of the conceptual and methodological apparatus, with incomplete information, in order to solve new theoretical and practical problems

- The competence to use a rich methodological apparatus to solve creatively different didactic tasks specific to early education and young learners
- The competence to generate in a group of pre-school children, psychological moods favourable to a natural, freely consented learning, without constraints and stress.
- The competence to use the conceptual and methodological apparatus with psycho-pedagogical character to fulfil a complex, multidimensional and integrated education
- The competence to use different pedagogical tools to sustain and promote early education and young learners in the context of a reform in the educational system.

7.2.The proper usage of criteria and methods of evaluation, in order to form valuable judgements and to fundament constructive decisions

- The competence to correlate psychological and pedagogical criteria in evaluation
- The competence to focus on identifying individual development, on product and on the process when evaluating

- The competence to use the results of the evaluation to improve educational processes
- The competence to fundament decisions based on valuable judgements also accepted by other educational factors involved in early education and young learners (family, school, community)

7.3.Elaboration of professional and/or research projects using in an innovative manner quantity and quality methods

- The competence to elaborate research projects with psycho-pedagogical character focused on the investigation and improvement of facts and processes specific to early education and young learners
- The competence to use in an innovative manner the acquired psycho-pedagogical knowledge
- The competence to convert the results of psycho-pedagogical research into successful educational practices.

Conclusions

The master`s programme that we propose has some essential features that turn it into an innovative construction. It fully takes into account the division into semesters, all disciplines and learning activities being structured in semesters. We offer a synthetic, but in the same time complete description of the programme of study, where the disciplines are grouped in the following categories: compulsory, optional, facultative. We have mentioned the number of credited hours for the two main categories of learning activities: collective didactic activities (that require the students 'attendance) and independent/individual learning activities. The profile of all developed competences will allow the graduates to diversify their didactic strategies. They will integrate the most proper didactic strategies in the planned, organized and carried on learning activities with pre-school and young pupils.

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OPTIMIZATION OF SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT BY STRENGTHENING THE SCHOOL-FAMILY EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

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Abstract: 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. Amid all these bio-physiological and mental transformations and changes, and the conditions related to the educational process, along with school, the family is the factor that should support students' efforts to adapt successfully to the new conditions. In an experimental investigation in which we sought to identify the difficulties pre-adolescents (5th grade students) face in adapting to the requirements of gymnasium. We have also aimed at elaborating and implementing some strategies to prevent/improve these difficulties. One of the study indicators focused on family involvement in school activities of the student, by improving communication and cooperation between parents and school. In this regard, we designed the socio-educational intervention program on *"Prevention of preadolescent school adaptation difficulties"* to develop educational practices and parenting skills, improve communication and cooperation between parents and teachers, by the child.

Keywords: school adjustment, educational partnership, school-family collaboration, pre-adolescents, optimization of educational parental practices

1. Pre-adolescents' school adjustment

The problem of students' school adjustment is a fundamental aspect of the educational activity, being present in school life, the everyday concerns of teachers, but also in many national and international investigations. Research undertaken for this purpose is looking to identify the causes that can generate school adaptation difficulties, factors that promote school adjustment, school inadaptability forms and methods of prevention and mitigation of the school inadaptability phenomenon.

One way of defining school adjustment is by referring to it as a transforming process, a process of student behavior 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 behavior 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. Coaşan, 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: promotion of new education systems, curriculum reform, a personalized approach of strategies, using alternative sources of information, interdisciplinarity, 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 center of the teaching process (L. Tăuşan, Journal Plus Education, nr.1, 2011).

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. (L.Tăuşan, Journal Plus Education, nr. 2, 2011)

School adjustment difficulties that may occur at the beginning of the 5^{th} grade, may be caused by multiple and sometimes sudden changes that occur within the two sides: the bio-psycho-social development and the educational activity. The way in which the interaction between the physical, intellectual, emotional and personality of preteen, on the one hand, and the requirements and requirements imposed by educational activities and quality of family influences on school activity, on the other hand depend on the student's ability to adapt. Pre-adolescents' adaptation to new requirements posed by the changes suffered by him/her in the bio-psycho-social plan and some changes in the educational activity are prerequisites for achieving and maintaining a morpho-functional psychological, moral and social balance.

Once the student faces this transition, he/she faces numerous changes at the level of the instructive-educative activity, which are expressed by new demands and strains, the contact with more diversified human models and more diversified types of lessons, which, because of the bio-psychological transformations may generate difficulties in school adjustment.

2.The role of the family in optimization pre-adolescents' school adjustment

Amid all these bio-physiological and mental transformations and changes, and the conditions related to the educational process, along with school, the family is the factor that should support students' efforts to adapt successfully to the new conditions. To achieve this support, it is recommended that the family (T. Cosma, 2001):

- do not dramatize the difficulties inherent in beginning the secondary school;
- work actively with the school to know and understand the requirements of the new school stage;
- develop a program with child labor and leisure in line with new requirements, taking into account the peculiarities of psycho-physiological and age-specific individual characteristics of the child;
- help the child when having difficulties without taking harsh measures against the first finding of unsatisfactory results and no more than necessary help in preparing lessons;
- not induce any inferiority feeling or belief that is superior to others, as this may hinder his/her integration into the team of students.

Active participation and direct life and school activities, providing models for action and behavior of children, ongoing cooperation with teachers in order to choose the best strategies for development and training of preadolescent children, working with other parents and sharing experiences are ways of action that can help reduce parents preteen difficulties specific to the onset of secondary education.

The family, the crucial educational environment, the most important context of life, which plays a very important role in child socialization, influences the attitudes and school performance by: family climate (cultural and emotional) that is within the family structure, degree of social integration and degree of collaboration with the school.

The family climate represents the functional expression of all the relations established between family members. The cultural climate of the family influences the student's academic performance, particularly by: the aspiration of parents, their attitude towards school and education, the cultural baggage itself (language use, cultural practices) and value system promoted by parents. Thus, the socio-cultural level of the family determines to a large extent: the child's attitude toward school, and taste for culture, wealth and accuracy of language, the aspirations of the child (which is usually directly proportional to the parents'), motivational level, the material conditions necessary for the assimilation of the culture (E. Paun, 1979).

Besides the cultural climate, the economic situation of the family has its impact on school achievement and mental development of the children. Available funds allow long-term education, providing the necessary study (comfort, books, supplies, taxes, etc.), while a precarious economic situation does not allow for paying tuition, employing in some cases

even stopping school. The family emotional climate is another variable, which can generate unfavorable inadaptability in school students. The cultural and emotional climates are usually closely connected. But there are situations where, despite favorable socio-cultural and intellectual capacities of the students, some mediocre

students achieve poor results or face school failure. In these cases, the causes must be sought in the emotional climate of the family, which is possibly not favorable.

Another family climate that can generate bad behavior is represented by the educational differences between the child's parents and other adult family members (grandparents). The differences in parental authority may break, causing tension and conflict. Parental inconsistency creates a climate of insecurity, incompatible with a good school adaptation, and the child will be permanently confused and inclined to adopt behavioral patterns outside the family. Excessive demands expressed by parents to their child, resulting in a demand for results beyond what they are taught in school, more overload (meditation), or overloading children with various other activities that will limit free time, can cause irritability , angriness or even manifestation of opposition in relation to the school.

The family type affects the development and the evolution of the child, especially the formation of the character and moral-volitional traits: the initiative and determination in action, epistemic curiosity, spirit of self-purpose, dynamicity, self-confidence, work motivation, etc. R. Vincent (cf. A. Cosmovici, L. Iacob, 1998) distinguishes the following typological couples: family repressed (which stifles the spirit of independence of the child) and liberal families (which encourage child initiatives) socially integrated families (who have a high responsiveness to social changes) and family integration limit (who resist to everything that is new and feel socially insecure), active families (who fight difficulties, and impose themselves in the social environment) and passive families (who are indifferent, distrustful, pessimistic and get discouraged when facing obstacles).

Collaboration between the school and the family is another variable that influences students' school performance and progress as a relaxed atmosphere between the two educational agents, the existence of common rules, enhance the school learning effectiveness. Collaboration between school and family requires cooperation through communication, unification of the value system and unity of action (E. Vrăşmaş, 2002). Establishment of direct relations between parents and teachers in order to know the requirements and demands of school is essential to support children to carry them out and to have permanent control over their school progress. Also collaborating of the school with the family is a prerequisite of an appropriate professional decision and this corresponds to the possibilities and interests of children.

3.Family involvement in the student's school activity – the results of some experimental investigations

In an experimental investigation in which we sought to identify the difficulties pre-adolescents (5^{th} grade students) face in adapting to the requirements of gymnasium. We have also aimed at elaborating and implementing some strategies to prevent/improve these difficulties. One of the study indicators focused on family involvement in school activities of the student, by improving communication and cooperation between parents and school.

To quantify the extent to which the family is involved in school activities and to identify how the student's cooperate with the school, we used a questionnaire as a tool for parents and a questionnaire for students.

The variables on which we developed the questions in the questionnaire for parents were: family involvement in school activities of children (knowledge of the new school requirements and demands and the difficulties the child faces, support in preparing lessons), parents' communication and cooperation with the school.

Regarding the variable on family involvement in school activities of children, we recorded the following results:

- 61.2% of parents say they only partially know the 5th grade specific requirements and only 16.3% of them claim that they fully know these. A fairly large percentage of parents are not aware of these requirements (22.4%) (Table 1)

- As the concern of parents to check the homework preparation, 46.9% say they do so only "sometimes", for 44.9% of them it is a daily concern, and only 8.2% say that "very rarely" control the child on how to prepare the homework;

- Communication of the parents with their children regarding their marks and other events, is achieved for 57.1% of the parents, "every day", for only 40.8% "sometimes", and 2% "rarely" ;

Table no. 1: Family involvement in the school activities of children – do you know the new requirements and demands your child has to face in the 5th grade

	frequent	%
yes	8	16,3
partially	30	**61,2**
no	11	22,4
Total	49	100,0

Analyzing the variable on parents' communication and cooperation with school, we recorded the following data:

- only 20.4% of parents consider it necessary to collaborate and communicate with the school "regularly", and 67.3% established this link, only occasionally, "when appropriate" (Table. no. 2).

- 42.9% of parents think that they need to communicate with the teachers only when the child has learning difficulties or behavioral manifestations and 44.9% of them said that only "sometimes" get in touch with the school in such situations. A percentage of 12.2% of parents say they do not go to school, do not get in touch with the head teacher or the class teachers, even if they meet such difficulties.

Table 2: parents' communication and cooperation with the school - How do you keep in touch with the school?

	frequent	%
periodically	10	20,4
When necessary	33	**67,3**
Very rarely	6	12,2
Total	49	100,0

With the help of the Questionnaire for students we have identified the students' perception regarding their family's involvement in their school activity and we have recorded the following data: 51% of students consider that the manifestation of concern of their parents to their school work is greater than in the fourth grade, while only 20.4% among students state that the degree of expression of interest of parents to their school development is lower than in the 4th grade. For 28.6% of students there are no significant changes in terms of attention by parents in this school year from the (Table no. 3).

Table 3: How do your parents treat you since you passed in the 5th grade?

	Frequent	%
They are less interested.....	10	20,4
They are as interested as in the 4th grade	14	28,6
They are more interested	25	**51,0**
Total	49	100,0

As a conclusion we consider it necessary to design educational activities aimed at supporting the family in performing its educational role and at contributing to the strengthening of the school-family partnership by improving communication and cooperation between parents and teachers.

4.Conclusions, educational solutions

Based on these findings, we found that family involvement in the school activities achieved through: knowledge requirements and specific requirements to the school grade, knowledge of student difficulties when beginning a new cycle, controlling the preparation of lessons in a systematic way, ongoing communication with the child, will help to optimize student's adaptation. On the other hand, we assumed that if parents adopt an appropriate educational style, based on age and individual peculiarities of the child, and developing effective communication practices and family interaction, problem solving situations, will contribute to a better normative and relational adaptation of the student.

In this regard, we designed the socio-educational intervention program on *"Prevention of preadolescent school adaptation difficulties"* to develop educational practices and parenting skills, improve communication and cooperation between parents and teachers, by the child.

In designing the program of prevention, we found out that school and family play an important role in preventing adaptation problems, but this can be achieved only by knowing them and coming to meet them, amid the ongoing cooperation with the school.

The program targets, as fields of socio-educational intervention, the educational processes in the family (parents' educational practices and attitudes), and relations between school and family as educational agents acting on children and is structured into seven meetings, each of two hours, one meeting/week.

The general objectives of the program are:

- Information and education of parents;
- Support parents in solving problems or difficulties related to child education by developing educational practices and parenting skills;
- Strengthening school-family partnership education, on the further communication and cooperation between parents and teachers to favour the child.

Among the particular objectives we may mention:

- Knowledge by parents of preadolescent age specific features and individual peculiarities of the child, to avoid the risk of ineffective educational benefits;
- Support parents in children's knowledge of activity, indicating the useful methods in this respect;
- Support parents in school life knowledge of the main difficulties of the child;
- Strengthening relationships between children and parents, through their involvement in the problems of school life;
- Knowing the best ways that parents can support the children in the preparation of homework;
- Identify recommended parental behavior in certain circumstances.

Among the topics discussed we may mention: the bio-psychological peculiarities of preadolescent period and desirable parental behaviors, how can we know the child?; Adaptation to the demands of secondary school, to the main changes that take place in schools, once the student gets into the 5th grade, how to help children in the preparation of homework, Special preadolescents (the naughty child, the only child, the angry child, the shy child).

In terms of methods and procedures used in conducting meetings we may include: discussing parental behavior in special situations in small groups, or face to face, finding solutions to education, analysis of the enlarged group settlement in small groups, exposure to information (exposure accompanied by video), lecture - discussion, critical incident technique (a situation is presented and group members express their opinions, attitudes to the situation presented), open discussions, debates on problem cases, brainstorming, questioning, conversation.

Evaluation will be carried out by assessing how the number of participants varies, observing the interest shown by participants, monitoring the school and social behavior of children, parent surveys among the program participants.

Educational partnerships, in our case the school-family partnership, is one of the principles of education and contemporary pedagogy, subsumed in the future education requirements. This is a form of communication and cooperation carried out with the child's support, involving a unity of requirements, options, decisions and actions between school and family education (E. Vrasmas, 2002).

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6. Annexes

Items we have used during our investigation, selected from the *Quiz for parents* and the *Quiz for students*:

1. Are you aware of your child's new school requirements this year of study?

Yes; Partially; No

2. How often do you check if your child has prepared the homework?

Daily; Sometimes; Very rarely

3. How frequent do you discuss with your child the marks he/she got and the most important events in the classroom/school?

Daily; Sometimes; Very rarely

4. How do you keep contact with the school?

Periodically; Only when necessary; Very rarely

5. Do you go to school when you notice any learning difficulties or behavioural problems?

Yes; Sometimes; No

6. How do your parents treat you since you entered the 5^{th} grade?

They show less interest to my school situation, to the way I prepare my homework, to the difficulties I have to face in school as compared to the 4th grade;

They are as interested as they were in the 4th grade;

They show even more interest to my school situation, to the way I prepare my homework, to the difficulties I have to face in school as compared to the 4th grade;

Any other answer;

Do not Know/Do not want to answer.

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PLURALIST APPROACH TO THE MONTESSORI METHOD IN THE ART OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract – *To let developing of personality is an important method for mental developing. Th e purpose of preschool education program which developed by Maria Montessori is gain self-suffi cient feature to kids in a free ambiance. Kids create itself in Montessori class and have an opportunity that discovery of dreams. Main important feature is that in this method. Th ere is not importantto become a product at the end of the Montessori method Art education is actions which have been done by kids for developing aesthetics and creativity in Montessori class. Being a subdivision of art activities, Painting is became colors, draws, light and shadow with the using of autonomy and perspective sciences. Doing painting is instinctive for a kid. Consequently, this research has been done.*

Keywords*: Montessori Method, Preschool, Creativity, Art, Paintings.*

The first thing to do at an education activity should be determining the objectives. Which program, principle and methods will be used to reach these objectives should be determined. Program Development discipline puts forth the program which will carry to objectives, and Schooling Principles and Methods puts forward how the program will be implemented.

Methods are roads going to certain objectives. This road should be thought well aforetime, analysed and planned, otherwise the education job carried out becomes a complex state. For the method to exist, the objectives should be clearly and correctly determined. Besides, a program in the direction of the objectives has to be formed.

As the Montessori method is a student-centered program, the teacher is just in a position guiding the student. In this method, the child learns by doing and experiencing. In child-centered classes, the children are active. Special learning material is used in the classrooms. Besides, information related with this material is not given and is ensured that the child discovers by himself/herself.

The objective of the pre-school program for the 3-7 year old group and developed by Maria Montessori, who is the first female medicine doctor of Italy and then taking the psychiatrist specialist title , is to bring the children in being self-suffi cient at a liberal environment. Montessori, by referring to the positive results she has received from the studies she performed on children with mental disabilities, and by thinking that the same methods can be used on the normal children, has directed her studies towards the area of education. To increase her knowledge on this subject, she has received Philosophy, Psychology and Anthropology education at Rome University.

Allowing the children to develop their personalities is also one of the most important methods for the development of the intelligence. In addition to the intelligence development of the children, education of the sensations, exploring the child, concentrating on the education construct the basis of Maria Montessori educational mentality.

As the Montessori Method is a student-centered program, the teacher is just in a position guiding the student. In this method, the child learns by doing and experiencing. It encourages the children to learn by the children teaching to their peers and the children cooperating with a social interaction. In childcentered classes, the children are active. Special learning materials are used in the classrooms.

Montessori approach encourages the children to motivate for participating in the activities and developing their skills via repetitive concrete experiences. Montessori education program has focused on self-confi dence, initiative, to know and apply what is wanted, independence, concentration, being tidy, cooperation, and being respectful. Montessori achieves these stated targets with two methods in her classes. Firstly, the child living the pleasure of learning by himself/ herself by setting the child free, and secondly, being a guide by helping the child to make the learning mechanism perfect.

The method has material which has been arranged according to its objectives and principles. The teacher does not teach the material by just introducing it to the classroom, analyses and observes the relationship of every child with the material and directs the child by showing a method. Montessori Method argues that the child can bring out the potential when he/she is set free.

The child is fully independent except for some technical restrictions which has to be present at the education. The child, working independently in the classroom of Montessori, has the liberty to explore his/her dreams by using creativity. Most important feature of the art activity at Montessori Method is this, and introduction of a new work is not important. Using the Montessori Method, sensation, education for intelligence development, and learning activities for creative expression is provided (Morrison, 1998). Emotional area teaches the child to use the emotions to learn the world. In this area, the child learns apprehending diff erent heights, lengths, weights, colors, sounds, smells and forms.

Child education approach developed by Montessori is one which positively influences the child from spiritual and physical viewpoints, attaching importance to child's sense, movement and language education, having signifi cant contributions and benefits in the social, emotional and bodily development of the child.

Education is a process which develops the individual's personality and skills, increases the success level at the studies performed, and brings into the open the secret talents. In this process, creativity being in the forefront is very important (Kelemen G., 2011). Because, the creative individual, at the creation process, using the past lives and experiences, perceptions, imaginations, assesses the environment with a critical approach and creates creative handiworks and present cases are handled with different viewpoints. Same things are valid also for art education.

Art education is an education process which liberates the individual, directs the individual to creative activities and develops the creativity, brings in esthetical skills,

and makes a difference in understanding the outside world. This process antagonizes the rationalization in the education system and focuses on emotional experiences. It is though that an individual whose perception of the outside world changes by receiving a multi-directional art education will be and individual who is creating, self confi dent, changing the surroundings in positive direction.

Art education in Montessori classes comes into prominence with the activities performed by the children for supporting the esthetics and creativity development. Painting, which is an important branch of art activity, with its classical meaning, is formed by using sciences such as anatomy and perspective with the help of color, line, form, light-shadow. Desire for painting at child is motivational. For this reason, art education contributes signifi cantly in the child's bodily, mental, emotional, linguistic, cognitive and social development.

In Montessori classes, the child himself/herself creates and with this way, has the freedom to explore his/her dreams. Most important point of the art act at Montessori approach is this, not the work come in open. Montessori Method follows the guidance of the child. At all the stages of the education, it is expected that the child directs his/her own education and his/her being the first arbiter of the education life. The adult undertaking the education of the child, starting from the first months of the education life of the child, has to see himself/herself as an artist who works for creating andhas to prepare the necessary environment by without unnecessary interferences and has to learn to show respect to him/her and to his/her choices.

Children's intelligence development should be contributed by allowing the children to develop their personalities. In addition to focusing on the intelligence, focusing on development of the children, education of the sensations, independence, developing the creativity and education construct the basis of the education understanding ot Maria Montessori.

In the Montessori classes, the child himself/herself creates and with this way, has the independence of exploring his/her dreams. Most important point of the art act at Montessori approach is this, not the work coming in open. In the Montessori Method, the art education is an educational process which liberates the individual, directs the individual to creative activities, which the individual in esthetical ability and creating a difference in perceiving the world. This process antagonizes the rationalization in the education system and focuses on emotional experiences. It is though that an individual whose perception of the outside world changes by receiving a multi-directional art education will be an individual who is creating, self confident, changing the surroundings in positive direction.

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PRACTICAL TRAINING IN MAJOR – EXERCISABLE THEORETICS
PRACTICAL TRAINING IN REMEDIAL GYMNASTICS MAJOR BASED ON THE STUDENTS' OPINIONS

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This study consists of the following parts:
- Introduction
- Legal background of the topic
- Key words
- Background
- Empirical analyses
  - aim of research
  - population, sample
  - methods
  - results
- Summary
- References

Introduction

The title of this study reflects to the eternal truth that the development of skills needed to the successful pedagogical activities is as important in the teaching of specialized methodology as in the teaching of up-to-date theoretical knowledge.

The parallel occurrence of these two things in the course of the training might have persuasive power on the future nursery and primary teachers, as they can directly experience the practical realization of special methodological knowledge.

There have been series of attempts nearly in all fields of teacher training to modernize and renew the practical preparation of students for their profession as well as to make it more efficient somehow.

These attempts appeared in the increase or decrease of number of lessons, or in the change of way of closing the semesters (practical course mark or terminal examinations).

1. The fundamental goal in all cases is the acquisition of such science-based knowledge which combined with practical skills will actually enhance the children's liking of motion.

2. Another topic which is worth mentioning is that the teacher candidates' responsible preparation for the career is not present in many students. Their preparation for the practical tasks needs further thinking.

3. The theoretics and practice of remedial gymnastics have changed significantly recently. The dance and exercise performed to music have been incorporated into the remedial gymnastics. In the practice the teachers have bigger pedagogical freedom both in the development of structure of PE lessons and in the selection of organizational forms.

In the methodological training of remedial gymnastics our students have to be supplied with such knowledge and experience which will make them competent to carry out tasks aimed at restoring the health.

In my experience only the teacher, who is well-educated and has satisfactory theoretical knowledge as well as a lot of practical experience, is able to utilize the possibilities ensured by the pedagogical freedom.

Legal background of the topic

There are several laws and decrees connected to the topic. The first appendix of MKM decree No. 11/1994. (VI.8.) about the lessons of simplified physical education and remedial gymnastics is of great importance [(1)].

1. The students have to participate in simplified physical education on the PE lessons or instead of PE lessons (hereinafter Category 1) if they are able to do the exercises only in part on the PE lesson or not at all, because of their health state – based on the medical opinion, or instead of compulsory PE lessons the students have to participate in remedial gymnastics (hereinafter Category 2), or do not have to take part in any kind of physical education at all (hereinafter Category 3).

2. The students participate in a simplified physical education (Category 1) if their physical condition is degraded because of a longer disease, or they have a slight disorder of locomotive organs or a slight medical disorder, and therefore can not do some exercises of the PE lessons. The simplified physical education can be arranged within the PE lessons or instead of them.

3. The students have to participate in remedial gymnastics (Category 2) if because of the disorder of locomotive organs or a medical illness, their physical condition does not allow them to take part in the PE lessons. Based on medical advice the students can take part in the PE lessons as well.

4. The students do not have to take part in the PE lessons (Category 3) if their disorder of locomotive organs or a medical illness impedes them even in participation in remedial gymnastics.

5. The health screening has to be carried out until 15 May except when the cause of screening occurs later than this day. The students examined by the doctor have to be recorded, and their health conditions at the time of first examination and results of later control examinations have to be recorded.

6. The number of lessons of simplified physical education or that of remedial gymnastics can not be lower than the number of compulsory PE lessons prescribed for the students of the same age group.

7. If the simplified physical education or the remedial gymnastics are carried out in the frame of pedagogical services, the number of lessons has to be determined in such a way that the students could take part at least on as many PE lessons as it has been detailed in paragraph 6.

8. If the necessary facilities are available, the students have to participate on one swimming lesson per week as a PE lesson.

The decree of the Health Minister No. 51/1997 (XII. 18) [(2)] about the screening examinations of children at given ages prescribes the following:

Age-related screening examination:

In one year age and till six years age annually:

a) Total physical examination,

b) Nervous system examination

c) Examination of cryptorchidism until two years age, examination of testicles every year

d) Evaluation of height, body mass (head circumference measurements as required), as well

as development and nutritional status based on Hungarian standards

e) Identification of psychological, motor, mental, social development and behaviour problems

f) Examination of sensory functions based on the professional guidelines as well as

examination of speech development

g) Examination of locomotive organs: with special respect to static foot problems and

disorders of backbone (postural faults, scoliosis),

h) Blood pressure measurements between the ages of 3-6

i) Early dental screening and care

Key words: remedial gymnastics, correction, competence

Background

First a few words about the historical background of education of remedial gymnastics at our Faculty:

In 1989 a special course of remedial physical education was started in our College. In 1993 this special course was developed into the special course of corrective gymnastics. My husband as a physician helped in the organization of screening examinations, and in the inviting of his colleagues to read lectures in the medical subjects.

The classroom observations and the instructing of lessons by the teacher candidates are practiced in specially organized groups of children in our training institutions. The starting of specialized training was the result of a many sided cooperation of the College and the municipality of the town.

Since 1998 our faculty has had specialized remedial gymnastics training within the nursery and primary teacher training courses.

Since 2001 the accredited training of remedial gymnastics as a special course for the nursery and primary teachers has been available in our Faculty.

In September 2006 the children's and remedial gymnastics special course was started in the nursery and primary teacher courses on BA level.

In the course of studies in the abovementioned educational structure the students are provided with such knowledge which prepares them for the use of the preventive and corrective gymnastics.

As a summary of this short overview it is worth pointing out that the training in remedial gymnastics has a 22 years long history at our Faculty, and during this time the knowledge of remedial gymnastics in the nursery and primary teacher training has developed significantly.

The number of students getting BA degree in remedial gymnastics (2000-2011) is shown in the following table.

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
2000	65
2001	66
2002	50
2003	72
2004	Modificaţion special course
2005	76
2006	23+ BA in children's and remedial gymnastics
2007	27
2008	25
2009	35
2010	36
2011	34
In total	**509**

Demonstration of practical training in the Major as a structural frame of training

The following table will help the understanding:

LESSON AND EXAMINATION PLAN OF THE CHOSEN SUBJECT

NO.	SUBJECTS	1. SEMESTER			2. SEMESTER		
		Chosen subjects					
		lessons	Form of exam.	credit	lessons	Form of exam.	credit
	General foundation subjects						
1.	Locomotor development	5	Etex+	3	-	-	-
2.	Anatomy	15	Etex	4	-	-	-
3.	Physiology	10	Etex	3	-	-	-
	Professional foundation subjects						
1.	Theoretics of physical education*	10	Test	3	15	Etex	3
2.	Internal medicine	10	Etex	3			
3.	Orthopaedics	10	Etex	3			
4	Movement therapy and methodology*	10	Test	3	15	Etex	3
5.	Remedial gymnastics				10	Qualified signature	3
6.	Athletics and theoretics of athletics	5	Pcm+	2			
7.	Gymnastics and theoretics	5	Pcm	2			
8.	Physical Education games	5	Pcm	2			
9.	Sport games	5	Test	2			
10.	Swimming and water gymnastics				10	Pcm	2
11.	Performance diagnostics				5	b	2
	Practical training and skills development						

NO.	SUBJECTS	1. SEMESTER			2. SEMESTER		
		Chosen subjects					
		lessons	Form of exam.	credit	lessons	Form of exam.	credit
1.	Functional gymnastics				5	Pcm	2
2.	Practice analysis				5	Pcm	2
3.	Children's Exercise instruction practices				15	Pcm	3
4.	Remedial Gymnastics instruction practices				10	Pcm	3
5.	Thesis consultation						2
	In total:	**90**		**30**	**90**		**25**

Thesis: 10 credits – Form of examination: qualified signature
+Etex: Endterm examination +Pcm: Practical course mark

Let us look at these data in more details. How to evaluate the practical training of the major and what should it include within the teaching of subject Movement therapy and methodology?

During the first semester the teaching material is processed by such a way that the practical training could be started as early as possible. In this period of training the suggested movement material can be tried and practiced by the students themselves.

In the second semester of Movement therapy and methodology subject the students prepare individually by practising the suggested movement material and instructing the exercises with each other.

In the second semester within the frame of Remedial gymnastics subject the students can attend demonstration lessons, and can take part actively in the demonstration lessons themselves.

In the instruction of practice of Remedial gymnastics the students apply their theoretical knowledge (individual preparation and instruction of the lesson in a special group of children).

Research goals

The main goal of research was to study the balance between the theoretics and practice in Remedial gymnastics Major in specialized post-graduate training as well as in the BA courses of nursery and lower primary teachers specialized in children's physical education and in remedial gymnastics.

Hypothesis

1.It is assumed that the theoretical and practical training in our remedial gymnastics courses is in balance.

2.It is assumed that in the active teachers are able to plan and instruct the locomotor development and correction if they have the special competences.

Methods

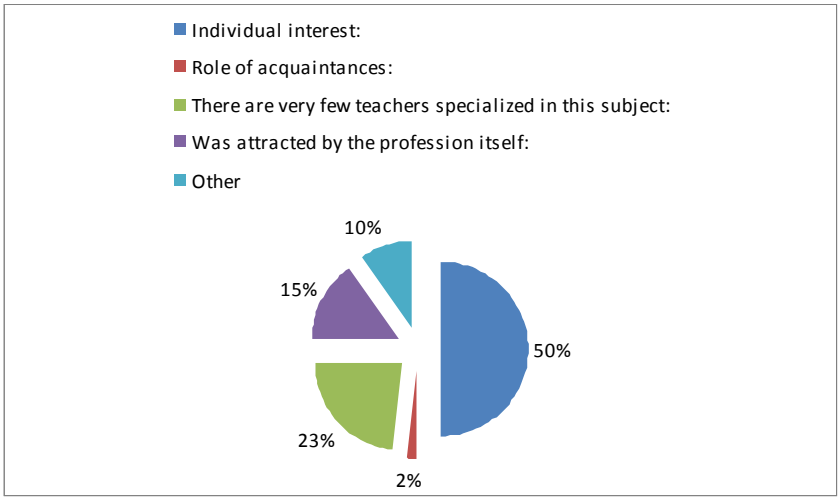
The studies involved the South Great Plain region of Hungary. From among teachers specialized in remedial gymnastics 150 teachers were chosen random (75 nursery teachers and 75 lower primary teachers). First a preliminary questionnaire was tested by a smaller group of teachers to get information about the correct formulation of the questions. Then the final questionnaire was prepared. The aim of the questionnaire survey was to get relevant information applying the most proper questions to elicit whether the theoretical or the practical side of remedial gymnastics prevails.

Results

Here are the results of the questionnaire research. We have to agree with the statement that the curricular modernization of a subject will reach its improving and developing intention only if both the teacher and the students of the given subject have a positive attitude to the changes. Now only the questions closely connected to the topic will be discussed in details.

Why did you choose the training in remedial gymnastics?

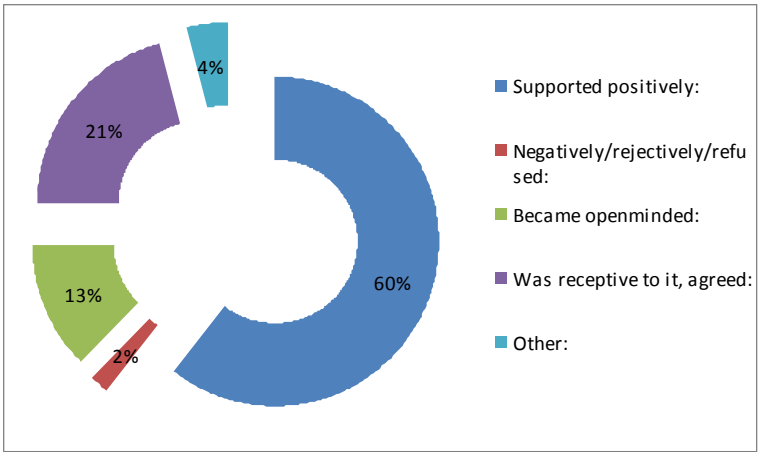
50% of respondents chose it based on his/her individual interest, 23% of respondents decided to study the subject because there have been very few teachers specialized in this topic, 15% was attracted by the profession itself and for 2% the training was advised by their friends.



The next question was how *the remedial gymnastics approach of teachers influenced their environment.*

60% was influenced positively, 21% agreed with the training, 13% became open-minded, 4% mentioned other factors e.g. the possibility of a better job, or the intention

of initiating the remedial gymnastics in the nursery school, while 2% mentioned that their environment refused the idea of remedial gymnastics.

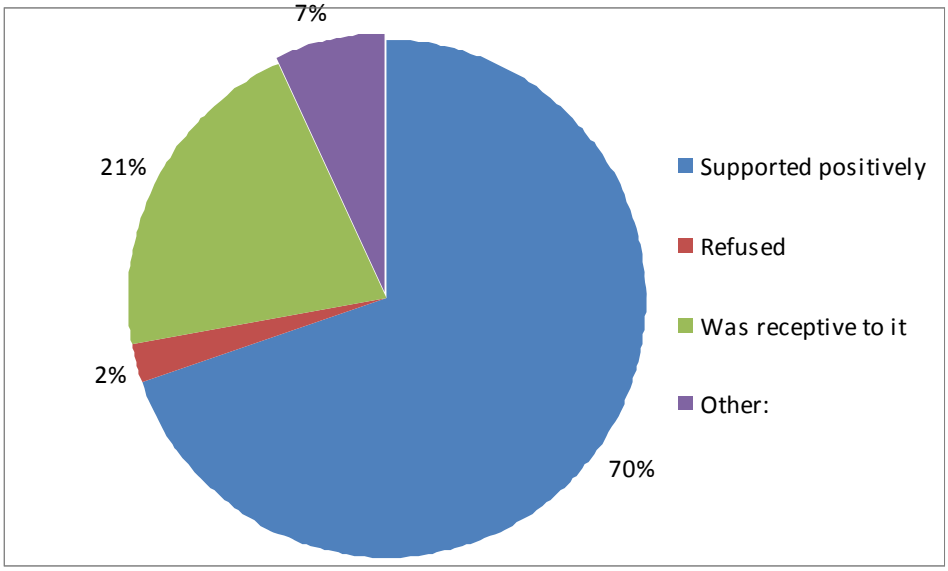


It would be worth studying why some members of the examined teachers' direct environment refused it.

The third question was *what results had been experienced in spreading of idea of remedial gymnastics.*

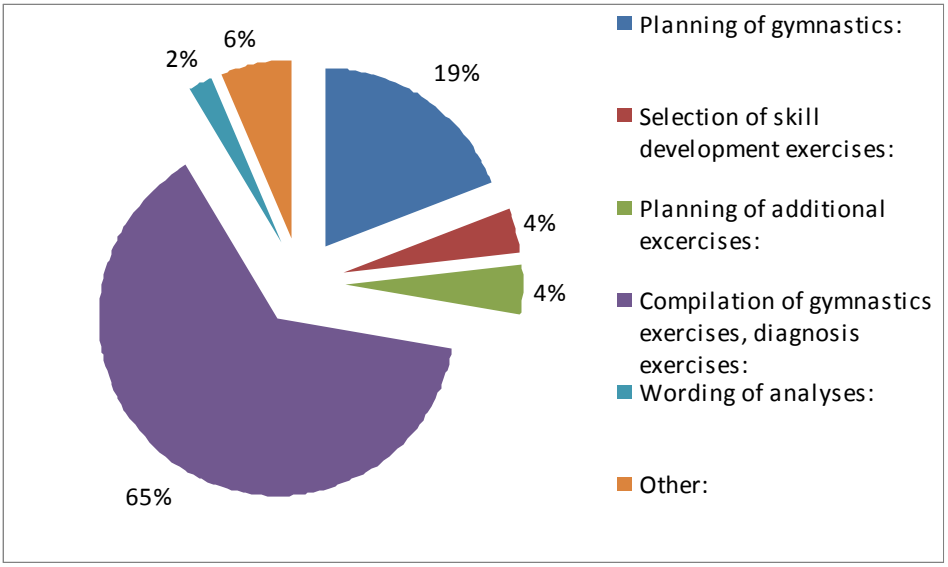
The idea of remedial gymnastics for us means that it is easier to correct the problems if they are recognized earlier and it is more difficult if the problems are recognized later.

70% supported it positively, 21% became receptive, 7% agreed with it while 2% refused the idea.



The following question asked *if the theoretical or the practical training is prevailing in the education of remedial gymnastics.*

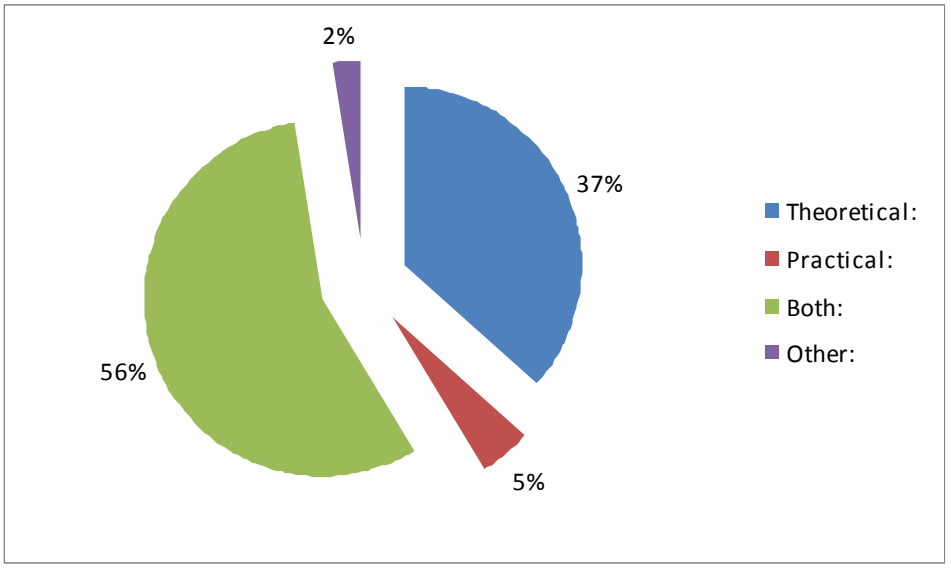
56% answered that the theoretical and practical training is in balance, 37% responded that the theoretical training is prevailing. Only 5% responded that the practical training is prevailing, and 2% marked 'other', and they expected more practical training.



It is clear from the responses that there are further tasks in the improvement of balance of theoretical and practical training of remedial gymnastics. It has also turned out that the practice of the Major subject actually serves as a connecting link between the theoretics and the practice. Hopefully this link is strong enough to serve as a stable base to the connection between the nursery and the lower primary teachers' practice, as it has to bear heavier and heavier loads.

The fifth question was the following: *Within the planning of remedial gymnastics which part of planning of the lessons was mostly supported?*

According to the teacher candidates' opinion 64% got help in compiling of corrective exercises, 19% got help in compilation of gymnastics exercises, 8% in the selection of skill development exercises, 7% in the planning of additional exercises, and finally 2% in the analyses.



Anyhow the results draw attention to the fact that the acquisition of theoretical knowledge provides a reasonable basis for the elaboration of corrective exercises.

It is worth comparing the answers given to the following question:

Which tasks were the most difficult for the students in the course of individual learning?

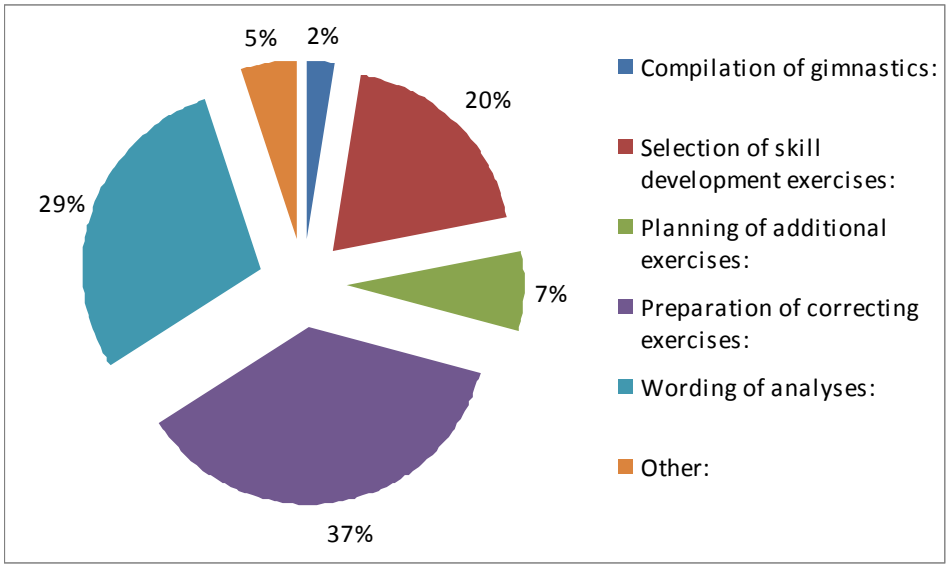
The most difficult task was the preparation of correcting exercises for 37% of students.

It means that the biggest help fore them was the assistance in the planning of corrective exercises.

In the course of individual preparation the second most difficult task was the formulation of analyses for 29%. It can be stated that the preparation of professionally adequate analyses of 'what and why' questions demand high level synthesis of theoretical knowledge and lots of practical experience. However the theoretical knowledge and practical experience are rarely combined in the students during the training time.

30% of students found the selection of skill development exercises difficult; however, it has been mentioned on the third place in the preparation.

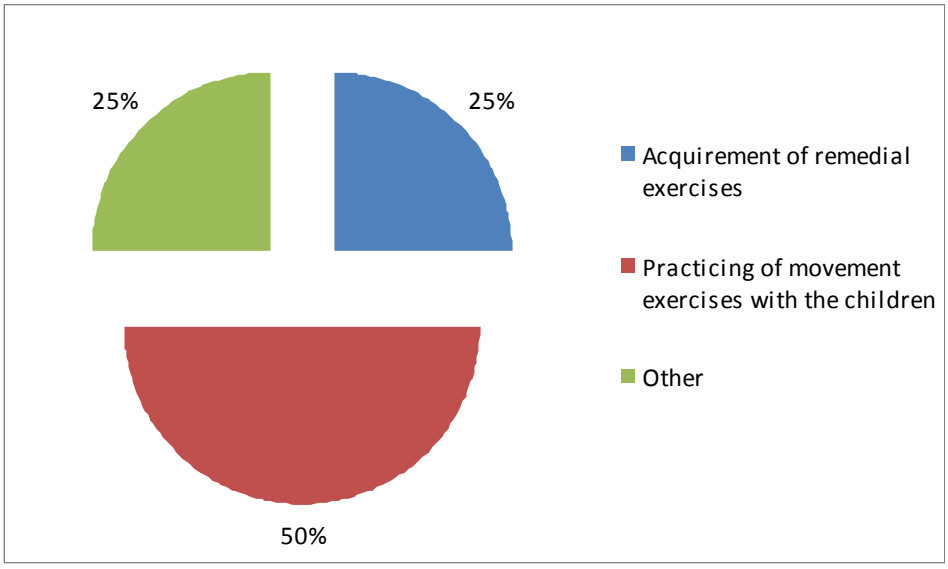
The planning of additional exercises was found easier by 7%. Compared to the previous questions this is the biggest difference. It can be explained by the fact that the students get such a help in the course of training, which supplement the previously mentioned deficiencies.



The abovementioned questions concerned mostly the realization of preparation tasks. The following ones will concern the instruction of PE lessons.

Which tasks proved to be the most difficult in the course of instruction of lessons?

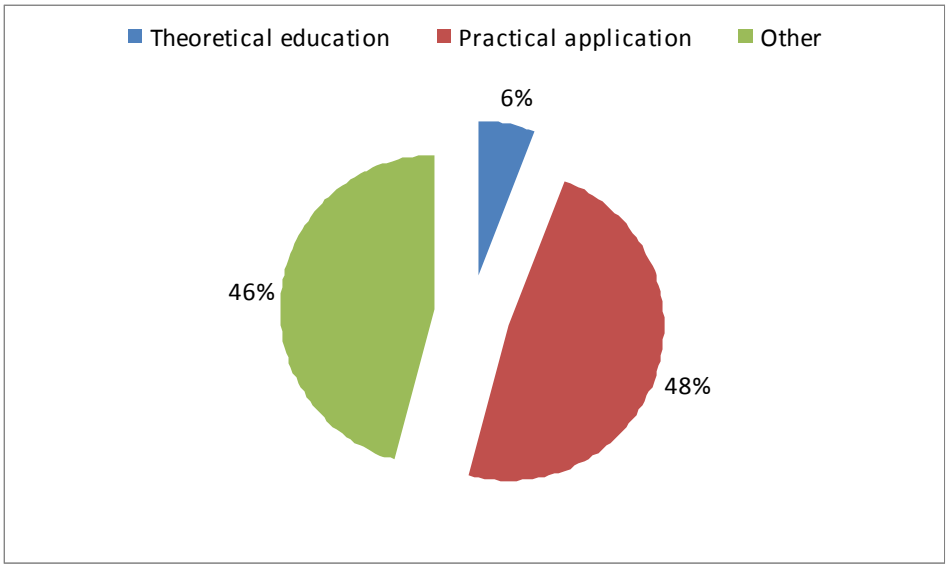
For 50% the practicing of movement exercises with the children was the most difficult. For 25% of students the instruction of none of the exercises involved difficulties. According to the answers the instruction of the lessons can be carried out without any difficulties with good management and adequate preparedness.



As it is demonstrated more practical experience is needed for the students to be able to realize the remedial gymnastics exercises adequately on the lessons. However, the students' responses, which reported on no difficulties in the course of instruction of the lessons, might be encouraging.

The aim of the following question was to identify the insufficiencies of training.

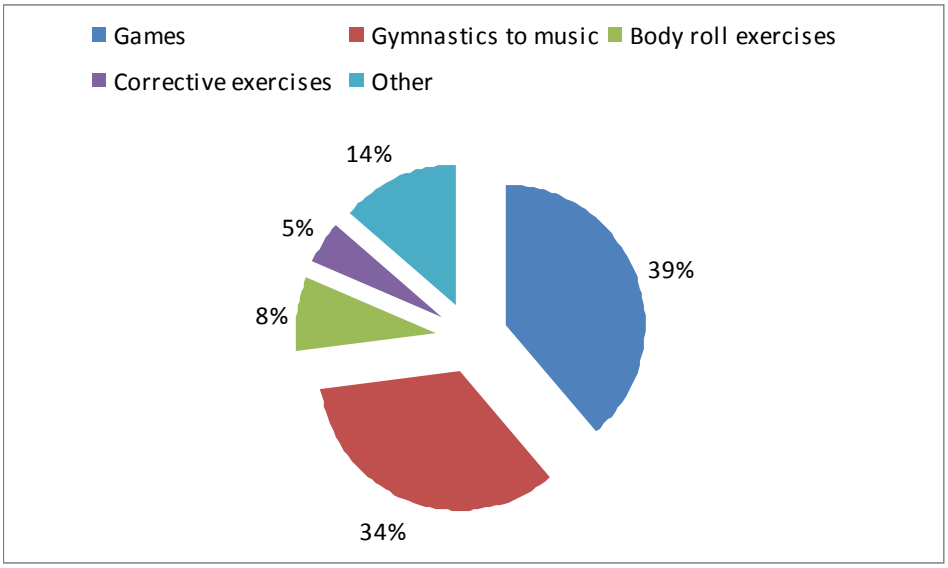
48% of respondents said that there had been insufficiencies in the practical training while, according to the opinion of 46% of respondents, the too short length of training time had been the biggest problem. They suggested higher number of demonstration lessons instructed by well-prepared experts.



Several respondents suggested the prolongation of the training time.

What exercises would you apply to provide pleasure for the children during the lessons of remedial gymnastic?

For this question 39% of respondents preferred games, 34% preferred gymnastics to music, 14% posture improving games, 8% body roll exercises and 5% corrective exercises.

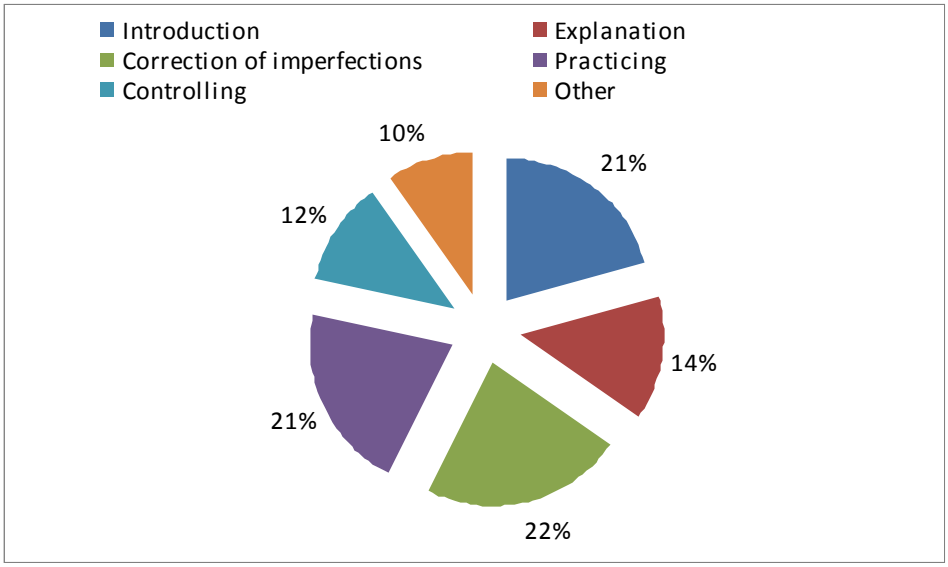


It is interesting to point out that only 39% preferred the games possibly because of their age.

The last question was the following: *What methods would you apply for practicing the corrective exercises?*

In the diagram it is visible that the different methods are applied to a similar extent (similar percentage) and are in close connection to each other.

The respondents were asked to comment the exercises of remedial gymnastics. They suggested to prepare hand-outs on the theoretical material as it would help them concentrate on the exercises.



Further on they suggested
– occasional meetings
– professional consultation
– lectures of experts
– practical demonstrations
– starting of several specialized post-graduate courses

The method of supervision was used only by a few respondents. However, there had been much more suggestions besides the ones discussed now.

Summary

The teachers participating in the survey were all nursery and lower primary teachers specialized in the subject. It has been proven that the nursery teachers having the necessary competences are able to realize the development of locomotive organs and to instruct the corrective exercises. Referring to the studies of balance between the theoretical and practical training of remedial gymnastics it can be concluded that in the education of remedial training both the theoretical and the practical training is essential and neither of them can be successful without each other.

It can also be concluded that the respondents would need more practical training.

Referring to the first hypothesis it can be mentioned that the strengthening of practical training of our faculty should be continued.

Hopefully this study helped the raising of awareness of the nursery and lower primary teachers. It was also revealed that the teachers apply several different methods in the correction of movement.

Valuable information was collected from the nursery and lower primary teachers for our education of remedial gymnastics. We are convinced that our graduated BA teachers got adequate knowledge to continue their work successfully.

This type of studies is extremely important, because wide range information is collected about the students as well as our education of remedial gymnastics.

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PROACTIVE DIMENSIONS OF CAREER COUNSELLING AND ORIENTATION SERVICES IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: The creation of career counseling and orientation centers has brought opportunities to students in regards to self knowledge (in the form of interests, needs, abilities, etc) and consequently in the proper awareness of one's appropriate professional route.

Providing quality career counseling and orientation services (the proactive type), consists firstly in establishing an optimum relationship between the counselor and the beneficiary.

For this to happen, a crucial role is held by the counseling competence, defined as a sum of scientifical, moral and social competences and as an intersection point of managerial, teaching and therapeutical abilities.

First we aim to analyze from a theoretical standpoint the two essential dimensions of the counseling competence, which are: scientific and moral competence of the career counselor.

On the other hand, the study follows the measure in which the career counseling activity undergone in the higher education system by career counselors is of a proactive type. For this we aim to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the specialists that provide career counseling services, under the followed specializations?
2. To what degree do career specialists know and respect the ethical norms that are specific to their own profession?
3. What are the challenges that they face at the level of the counselor-beneficiary(student) relationship and how do they respond to this challenge?

The study is realized on a lot of 50 career counselors in the career counseling and orientation centers of several universities across the country, the research methods used in gathering the data being the survey-based research and document analysis.

Upon processing the data, we can conclude that the services provided by career counselors are of a proactive type, a fact which indicates an efficient counselor-beneficiary relationship.

The conclusions of the study take into account a few recommendations regarding the conditions that must be respected and that should contribute to the optimization of the beneficiary-counselor relationship, implicitly in the optimizing of career counseling and orientation services within the universities in our country.

Keywords: scientific competence, moral competence, career counseling and orientation

1. Argument

The profession of career is the defining element of human-human relationship, which one falls into the category of helping professions.

Career counselor profile analysis generated two distinct approaches over time.

Some researchers (Jevene, 1981) have argued that career counselor personality is more important than his skills.

At the other extreme, the authors identify those who support the importance of qualifications and training of career counselors as critical elements for effective counseling process.

More recently studies show, however, that the counselor's personality and his professional skills are as important in relation to the client. An effective combination of these two aspects determine the appropriate reporting counsel to reality, the people themselves, as well as goals (apud. Murro, Kotmann, 1995).

2. The counseling competence

We are interested to look for the Council, especially since this was the subject of many investigations, the reason being given for the conclusion that, professional attitude and behavior counselor determines the client, therefore the act of counseling success.

Competence adviser "is measured and assessed by the number and quality / effectiveness of solving customer issues. If the work of counselors demonstrate his knowledge and skills necessary for solving different and more complex cases, the prestige and public respect grow "(Dumitriu, 2008). Professional competence is "a combination of knowledge, savoir - faire, experience and behavior that is manifested in a concrete and specific and is found at the time of its implementation in professional situations, which validates and fact" (Jigau , 2001).

In general, professional competence involves three types of competence:

a) scientific competence, assumes all knowledge and skills necessary for optimal deployment of a profession;

b) moral power, provided by those features that allow ethical and moral conduct;

c) social competence, determined by those interpersonal skills that allow optimal networking.

We analyze below two of the three powers above mentioned, namely: scientific competence and moral competence career counselor.

3. *Scientific competence*

A competent career counselor should be primarily a solid theoretical (scientific competence), which requires knowledge in several fields: psychology, psychotherapy, pedagogy, sociology, etc.

After Strong (1968), scientific adviser competence is demonstrated by: specialization, professional conduct and reputation expert. Specialization means the sum of diplomas, degrees and certificates in the field that enhance career counselor credibility.

Professional conduct or ability to apply knowledge in practice and specializations obtained, requires the proper career counselor solving customer problems, primarily through their exact definition and selection of appropriate means of settlement. Reputation as an expert is provided by experience in the field and places considered career counselor in a position of authority.

All this is possible, however, through two major components: initial training and continuing education.

Initial academic advisors providing training in basic social and human sciences (psychology - teaching - sociology - social assistance), which allows the formation of knowledge, skills and general abilities in areas such as (apud. Baban, 2001):

- Behavioral psychology;
- Psychology of development;
- Social psychology;
- Pedagogical counseling techniques.

Continuous training of counselors in career involves completing postgraduate, master or doctoral kind and is required as a condition of development of specific skills and abilities in the field.

4. Moral competence

Moral competence resulting from the manner in which professional career comply with specific conduct the counseling process.

Career counseling is subject to rules of conduct to be observed.

Some of these involves a degree of difficulty, which is why career counselor should consult other specialists experienced something career in the profession of ethics.

By knowing your own limits, career counselor should identify whether the problem lies with the client to, or be placed in another specialist.

Any professional code of ethics starts from a basic rule that any person should be respected and protected. In terms of professional ethics counselor should do so (as cited Dumitriu, 2008):

- Have the customer's consent before you provide support and guidance;
- To provide customer support and guidance, acting with competence and professionalism;
- To deal with customer issues seriously;
- To meet customer decisions, acting always in his interest;
- To ensure the confidentiality of the discussions;
- Not require client values and beliefs;
- Continuing to form and pursue obtaining a high professional prestige for its customers confidence;

- To know themselves and have a positive image of itself.

The scientific competence and moral condition of an act of good development advice.

In terms of scientific competence, it becomes essential to the way in which counsel refers to the act of counseling: theoretical ability to sound the practical knowledge and problem-solving specializations obtained counseling applicants.

And to prove the act of moral competence when counseling career professionals comply with ethical confidentiality, honesty, proper orientation and customer confidence in its ability to succeed.

The purpose of the study is to see to what extent career counseling activities carried out in higher education in career counseling is typically proactive

Sampling

Research was conducted in January-June 2011 and focused as a group - target career counseling (70 people) of counseling and career guidance in public and private universities attached.

5. Methods and tools used

5.1 Document Analysis: The website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, in 2011 operates a number of 56 state higher education institutions and 35 private accredited higher education institutions.

Of these, according to web pages, more than half are in subordinate counseling centers and career guidance for students. Counselors from 25 counseling centers (out of over 50 centers) answered the questionnaire.

5.2 Questionnaire-based survey

The questionnaire items applied counselors working in career counseling centers in higher education I received answers to the following questions:

1.Who are professionals engaged in career counseling services, in terms of specialization that followed?

Specialty career counselor concerns the amount of diplomas, certificates, diplomas in the field. Specialization respondents is most cases (55%), psychology, pedagogy followed by 30%. An 8% of the respondents is specialized in Sociology 4%. Other specialties (3%) are right (those who work in the center as a lawyer: provides advice about employment law, legislation to start a business on their own, etc..) and political science (the operating the center with responsibility for communicating and promoting the image of the counseling center).

Skills for career counselors are a result of initial training and continuous professional. Respondents assessed the effectiveness of initial training in the professional field current 70%, "due to theoretical training which provided a significant knowledge base." The remaining 30% considered ineffective initial training, motivating courses covering what they found ineffective in practice. Respondents said they had to use after graduation from courses, workshops and other training for the acquisition of specific skills.

Lifelong learning is therefore considered an essential condition for achieving and maintaining a successful professional conduct irreproachable. Depth studies (master) are the most common form of continuing education, followed by training in the workplace.

Table 1. Forms of continuous training that advisers were involved in university counseling centers

Types of training	Importance
Studies, master	95
PhD	29
Training in the workplace	50

2. What are the challenges they face in the counselor-customer relationship (student) and how these challenges?

Questionnaire items focused on identifying challenges facing career counseling for the counselor-customer relationship (student) and how we respond to these challenges, actually define professional conduct of counsel, as part of scientific competence.

Professional conduct of counsel refers to the ability to apply practical knowledge and problem-solving specializations obtained counseling applicants.

First is the need for precise definition of the problems beneficiaries, then the establishment of appropriate methods of intervention. The main issues requests of the beneficiaries are:

a) Educational and professional information holds the largest share among the services required of beneficiaries. This problem occurs most often in counseling:

- Assisting on study abroad opportunities;
- Assisting on opportunities for internships, jobs available
- Training courses, conferences, workshops with different themes: communication, negotiation techniques, first job etc..
- Develop and regularly update "Study Guide".
- Assisting with the appropriate legislation (how to develop a business on their own individual and collective labor contracts, etc.).
- Assisting on: knowledge, skills and competencies for each course and each specialization, the system of credit transfer arrangements for accommodation, scholarships, etc. mode.

b) Self-knowledge, any other service requested by students, is motivated by those with a need for better relations between students, between students and staff and integration, as appropriate behavior for students in life and the labor market. This occurs most often request advice by:

- The use of tests (personality, skills, intelligence, etc..) And questionnaires (the aspirations of graduates, professional interests, emotional intelligence)
- Forms of psychotherapy techniques specific academic misadapting (impairment of learning performance, reactive neuroses overload, stress tests, etc..).

c) Development of skills and abilities necessary for career planning is another problem students. Counselors often occur through the use of techniques for: establishing learning paths, setting a career plan, strategies to promote personal.

d) Optimizing learning is another matter to which recipients want an answer. Intervention methods most frequently used by counselors refer to: rigorous planning study time, establish a concrete plan of study (objectives, means, conditions), acquire the best techniques for taking notes, reading skills formation of effective acquisition of effective learning techniques.

e) Career debut, a problem to students who want to work from students or because they are close to completing undergraduate studies, requires intervention from technical advisers on: making maps employment interview simulation

Also professional conduct and other activities aimed at:

- Organized activities to increase access to as many people to offer services and information
- Achieving an annual (or several times a year) surveys on educational options or professional interests of students in their final years.

Proactive nature of advisory services and the types of activities shows organized by career professionals. Of these, the principal place of counseling has daily work with students, followed by the small difference fairs offer jobs (internships, part-time sites, jobs full - time) organized for interested students.

Other activities that are involved in career counseling centers: the university open days, fairs offers education and training, training on various topics of interest and student visits and internships in companies of interest to students.

Table 2.

Organized activities to increase access to as many people to offer services and information	Importance
Daily schedule for the beneficiary counseling and guidance	31%
Fairs job offers	28%
Open days at universities	23%
Fairs of education and training	23%
Training	21%
Visits and placements in enterprises, companies	13%
Other	8%

Other activities mentioned by advisers: collaboration with various companies willing to support / work with students to achieve the thesis research, recruitment of students / graduates for jobs or internships vacancies companies, presentation of companies and available positions, internships practice, some dedicated students in the last year of study and master the technical specializations.

Another activity that increases the proactive nature of professional advisory services offered counseling centers are annual surveys or more times per year on educational options or professional interests of students in their final years. This activity allows for proper adjustment counseling and guidance services to students, because it relies on some information directly from the beneficiaries. The data show that almost half of the centers that participated in the research carried out such surveys, information from being communicated to the university leadership and faculty in order to provide a more realistic about the usefulness of study programs in filling a job and provision of skills to match.

The surveys were to: a) identify career path of graduates of higher education to one year after graduation; b) The graduating options aimed at the professional route and expected educational process evaluation conducted in the University; c) issues related to project future career (line integration degree, further study - master, postgraduate, doctoral, postgraduate training and specialization), acceptance of different occupations to prepare the study.

3. To what extent career professionals know and respect specific ethical norms of the profession carried out?

Moral powers resulting from the way professional career comply with specific conduct the counseling process. Data in the table shows that career professionals are aware and comply with ethical rules of confidentiality, honesty, proper orientation and customer confidence in its ability to succeed.

Table 3.

Moral competence	**Importance**
Sincerity	60
Confidentiality	70
Confidence in the ability of successful client	54
Flexibility	48
Orientation towards obtaining concrete results	63

The results presented show that the hypothesis "We expect career counseling activities carried out in higher education (technical and beyond) for career counselors to be proactive type" is confirmed.

In terms of skills, proactive resulting from:

Scientific skills:

a) The forms of continuous training that advisers were involved in university counseling enters: further studies - master, doctoral training at work. Training is considered a prerequisite for achieving and maintaining a successful professional conduct irreproachable.

b) professional conduct of counsel, the ability to apply practical knowledge and problem-solving specializations obtained counseling applicants. First is the need for precise definition of the problems beneficiaries, then the establishment of appropriate methods of intervention. The results show that specialists use a variety of methods and techniques to address and solve the problems beneficiaries.

Recommendations:

Another activity that increases the proactive nature of professional advisory services offered counseling centers are annual surveys or more times per year on educational options or professional interests of students in their final years. The data show that only half of the centers that participated in the research carried out such surveys. Proactive nature of services would increase if all centers would conduct such a survey, especially since this type of activity allows a correct adaptation of guidance and counseling services to students, because it relies on some information directly from the beneficiaries. Other factors that increase the proactive nature of services performed by guidance counselors are to improve students' attitudes about counseling activity, increased interest in academics for such services and to attract extra-budgetary funds remain as problems to be solved for professionals of counseling and career guidance in universities.

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EDUCATION THROUGH ADVERTISING'S METAPHORS

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Abstract

The study of brand choices based on our metaphorical interpretations can lead us to consider, in a more realistic way, the construction of individuals and today's world, as well as trades and relations that undertake a range of interconnected social processes. Eventually, the extensive process of media consumption - choosing, buying, and using - of goods, could provide us with answers to important questions, like "who are the social actors?", "what kind of rules do they follow?", or "what are their values?".

In this sense, this paper will try to discuss the important educational role of the advertising discourse. By promoting a vision of reality, advertising assumes a social responsibility also. In a way, an advertisement educates people about the product or service being advertised, but also about the values communicated through a proposed brand identity. We will focus on the metaphorical constructions that are involved in advertising communication, the social and ideological campaigns, as well as the role of the new media tools in targeting the emotional potential of the target audience.

Fallowing I. Richards's and G. Lakoff's theory that people frequently use metaphors in their daily conversations, we advances the conclusion that metaphor is an omnipresent principle in language through which advertising is connected to us. We therefore believe that the recurrent use of metaphor in advertising communication doesn't serve the purpose of generating the surprise of the consumer public anymore, but responds to an existential need for understanding reality. Furthermore, as we will try to argue, it is mainly due to this double metaphorization of the advertising discourse that it can be understood by such diverse masses, managing to bridge socio-cultural gaps.

Furthermore, we will try to encourage a reconsideration of educational methods proposing the new applications of advertising's discourse as possible ways for better understanding of nowadays values and identities.

Key words: education, metaphor, advertising, culture, identity

Introduction

Did you ever wonder why children emphasis so quickly with the advertising or commercial discourse? How it is that an idea communicated through an ad is so easily accepted by an entire community? Professor Jef Richards, former chair of the Department of Advertising at the University of Texas-Austin, weighed in on advertising in these terms: "Advertising is the art and sole of capitalism. It captures a

moment of time through the lens of commerce; reflecting and affecting our lives, making us laugh and cry, while simultaneously giving traction to the engine that propels this free market economy forward into the future."[i] Taking onto account the negative image surrounding the advertising field, we still have to see it as a real achievement of our society in terms of discourse and rhetoric. We often forget the positive role advertising has had on everyday life even if it is more than obvious how advertising and communications impacted human behaviour, through education of new ideas and new ways of perceiving reality.

Advertising communication operates by exploiting our symbolic arsenals and their metamorphosis into products, relating with the audience through a simple dual discourse. On one hand we have the economic size of the advertising message as well as its congruence with the persuasiveness for sale, and on the other hand we have the social and educational dimension of the advertising discourse that proposes lifestyles and behavioral patterns to the contemporary public (Social campaigns, value based brand identities, slogans, etc.). Lately, more and more campaigns are interested in and try to draw attention on the problems faced by individuals at different stages of their existence, attempting to provide a personalized response to question of "how to run my life"? Whether we are talking about our social issues (and this includes both socio-professional issues as well as those of gender or religion), or our personal affairs (family problems, moral or social networking profile, etc.) advertising has a pedagogical function in its discourse, suggesting socio-cultural and moral models representative for this century.

Educating through metaphors

One of the most frequently encountered topics within the theoretical debate surrounding the advertising discourse is the use of metaphor, both at the textual and especially the visual level of advertising communication. Researchers agree on the fact that metaphor is the most commonly used figure of speech within the advertising discourse. Nevertheless, I. Richards[ii] contradicts the notion that metaphor is a purely stylistic device that requires from the individuals a special rhetorical skill set. He observes that people frequently use metaphors in their daily conversations and thus advances the conclusion that "metaphor is an omnipresent principle in language". Furthermore, he argues that a metaphor is the result of the simultaneous interaction between two thoughts and that this interaction can vary from *congruence* to *dissonance*.

Is it possible to educate the masses through advertising? Apparently this discursive tool has been a manipulative ideological tool for several decades, starting nowadays to behave as a social driving force that animates our society through metaphor. We therefore believe that the recurrent use of metaphor in advertising communication doesn't anymore serve the purpose of generating the surprise of the consumer public but responds to an existential need for the alternation of realities and identification with an identity. Rules, principles and norms of conduct proposed are acting like guidelines for our society. Furthermore, as we will try to argue, it is mainly

due to this double metaphorization of the advertising discourse that it can be understood by such diverse masses, managing to bridge socio-cultural gaps.

How does a metaphor work?

By integrating metaphor in his daily communication, the individual is aware of the violation of linguistic conventions. If the use of words generally serves the purpose of interaction, transmitting meaning and receiving feedback, this is achieved through transmitting one of the meanings attributed by the dictionary. But a metaphor bypasses this convention by suggesting a hyper-reality in which the meanings are inverted. Therefore, the individual is aware of the contravention with the linguistic conventions. Take for example this slogan for the *Johnson & Johnson* band aids, "Say hello to your child's new bodyguards", accompanied by a picture of band aids decorated with cartoon characters. The violation consists in this case in a neutral deviation of meaning, culminating with changing the meaning of the word 'bodyguard'.

Starting with the research of George Lakoff, contemporary cognitive linguistic theory considers metaphor as "omnipresent in day to day life", arguing that "our ordinary conceptual system [...] is fundamentally metaphorical in its nature" [iii]. Consequently, literary-stylistic metaphors are only a subset of the metaphors used in day to day speech, a stylistically special case of literary works rooted though in the omnipresent metaphors of everyday's life. Lakoff considers that these metaphors can be classified into categories such as *structural* metaphors, *orientational* metaphors and *ontological* metaphors. The examples used by the author highlight the way in which a metaphor like "ARGUMENT IS WAR" can trigger a real "bombardment" on the vocabulary of those who interact.

ARGUMENT IS WAR
Your claims are *indefensible*.
He *attacked every weak point* in my argument.
His criticisms were *right on target*.
I *demolished* his argument.
I've never *won* an argument with him.
You disagree? Okay, *shoot*! If you use that *strategy*, he'll *wipe you out.*
He *shot down* all of my arguments

Examples of structural metaphors like "argument is war", "love is a journey", and the famous "religion is opium for the masses", are instances of day to day speech illustrating the fact that we don't just talk about certain topics in a metaphorical way but we play the part defined by the metaphor, creating an entire discourse according to its stage direction; we don't just talk about argument comparing it to war, but we act as such, integrating into our conversations (arguments) a whole set of words related to war, immersing ourselves in the world described by the war metaphor as it was real. Thus, the concept is metaphorically structured, action is metaphorically structured and, consequently, language is metaphorically structured, leading to a metaphorically structured attitude on the part of the individuals. "The essence of metaphor is under-

standing and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another." Let us analyze the relationship between the terms.

(A) ARGUMENT is (B) WAR

In metaphorical structures as the one above, the first term (A) is the target domain and the second term (B) is the source domain. (A) will represent the more abstract concept, metaphorically linked to a more concrete one (B), mapping the important traits from B applicable to A, based on experience. We can therefore state that the recurrence of metaphor in advertising and the fact that it is still such a popular advertising technique is supported by two essential reasons; first of all, as we have shown and will try to illustrate further using popular slogans in advertising communication, a metaphorical familiarity with the everyday language. On the other hand, to reiterate the line of reasoning presented above, the use of metaphor in advertising communication responds to an existential need of the public for the alternation of realities in which it desires to loose and discover itself! Following this direction a corresponding advertising slogan can be attributed to each of Lakoff's examples of orientational and ontological metaphors.

Lakoff exemplifies orientational metaphors using the expression "happy is up, sad is down". With reference to the same attribute of assigning value, accenting progress and an upward movement, advertising's repertoire offers slogans as fascinating from a metaphorical perspective and accompanied by a brand attitude and vocabulary closely resembling inter-personal communication. The LG slogan for instance suggests a textual association between technological evolution (their area of activity being the production of household appliances) and an orientation towards the quality of life. With LG, *"life's good*".

On the other hand, Philips, another household brand, communicates the same improvement in the quality of life by exaggerating the message of progress, *"Let's make things better!"*, and let's not forget, *"Bigger is better"*.

For the ontological metaphors, from the examples that Lakoff offers we can note *Time is money* and *Life is a journey*. If we analyze briefly a metaphor like *time is money* we will invariably refer to time as a limit of resources, as a valuable good, operating in our explanation with metaphorical constructs. The metaphorical status of these constructs is given by our attempts to conceptualize time using our quotidian experience with money, goods and limited resources. In addition to this, for the human-being, such a perspective is not a necessary model of conceptualizing time, which means that metaphor is culturally linked with us and that it emerges in well established contexts, since there are cultures in which none of the above metaphors designates a reference to time. Due to the hyper-real dimension promised through its discourse, advertising is abundant in ontological metaphors. When a telecommunication company refers to the future through its own brand name that references the colour orange (the colour of well-being and tolerance) but also the solar fruit, the orange it becomes the expression for the aspiration to achieve more and the confidence in an assumed

promise: *"The future is orange"*. On the other hand, the image of a walnut, accompanied by the slogan *"Insurance is a walnut*" and the comment:

"Like a precious treasure, the walnut is hidden in its shell. It forms a solid armour which protects the fruit as you would protect yourself with a helmet. We offer our clients a symbolic helmet, which protects you from the impact of incidents and unforeseen circumstances, adapted to your personal situation and insurance needs", clearly induces the feeling of metaphorization of the message. With regard to the advertising discourse, the accompanying texts indicate the different aspects mapped from the source domain (the walnut) onto the target domain (insurance). The walnut is a metaphorical representation of the company's clients, in need of protection, and the nutshell suggests the protective attitude of the company.

From the perspective of Daniel Berlyne, like an aesthetic object, any rhetorical device, such as a metaphor, offers a means to make what is known, unknown and the natural, unnatural[iv]. The deviation is, in this case, a way to create what the researchers of the society of consumption call contextual dissonance. Thus, rhetoric dissonance could explain the way in which certain types of textual structures, metaphors for example, can produce displacements of meaning in advertising texts.

It has been concluded however that, although textual metaphors are very useful for advertising strategies, their results, difficult to quantify, may vary as far as to produce effects contrary to those predicted. To prevent this kind of outcomes, the whole context should be taken into account. It is important to recognize that a certain figurative expression may deviate to a varying extent and thus be more or less dissonant in relation to reality.

This applies corollary at two distinct levels: that of each individual in particular (especially the emergence of rhyme and metaphor, for example) and of the target audience (some dates, such as word groups or anagrams going as far as alliteration - the repetition of the same sound or group of sounds in words that succeed themselves). But, every time we compare rhetorical figures and their varying degrees of deviation we are operating with reference to the hypothetical medium associated to them.

Furthermore if the deviation is lower than a certain degree it could mean that we are no longer dealing with a rhetorical figure. This can occur, for example, in the case of metaphors which have became static or conventional (the sports car that "embraces the road" in the BMW commercials or the floor than shines from the Pronto ads) or lost their emotional impact thus falling into banality. So, because the deviation of meaning is often temporary what was once a rhetorical figure doesn't necessarily retain this status, fact proven by the many metaphors that have passed into everyday's language. The above examples, along with "the toy bodyguard" in the form of a patch, serve as a memento for the fact that the rhetorical structure resides and functions in a complex network of signs and socio-cultural meanings[v].

From a figurative-aesthetic perspective, rhetorical figures often lead to what Roland Barthes called "the pleasure of the text" - a reward that comes from an intelligent processing of an arrangement of signs. This arrangement, in turns, corresponds to Daniel Berlyne's argument which, based on his experimental research in the field of aesthetics, states that the dissonance (deviation) can generate the pleasant

feeling of inspiration and even profound understanding. The rewards of meaning deviation suggest thus that the figurative language of advertising, by comparison to literary language, should produce a more positive attitude; advertising texts are liked and remembered more easily.

Besides invoking metaphors, the advertising discourse seems free of any constraints, and because due to the absence of the true-false criteria, it can exaggerate with its use of subjectivity, lyricism, expressiveness, metaphors. Even if, at a discursive level we are dealing only with the text-image couple, the broad spectrum of organizational forms of the persuasive advertising discourse is based mainly on the great availability/flexibility of each component to express its contents in diverse forms. Even when the lexical level is concerned, the advertising discourse seems not to be bound by any rules. Its openness toward increasingly more varied categories of terms, its propensity towards polysemy, insinuation and reading between the lines make advertising a contemporary discourse of great originality and dynamism that can communicate its contents to a large public. Moreover, those which linguists call 'deviations from the rules of language' (meta-plastic or onomatopoeic changes of words) have come to be seen as distinctive traits of this kind of discourse. The adding of sounds (*Mirindaaaaa!, Bamuchaaa!*), using onomatopoeic formations (*Galina Blanca, bul-bul!, Hei Psst Cichi Cichi, Kltz Pmz Aahh*!), replacing sounds or mixing words (*Mégalumme = Mégane + lumme!* - catchphrase in the Romanian commercial for Renault Megane), are commonplace techniques for generating the advertising characteristic fervent discourse.

From a pragmatic perspective, advertising texts are more evocative than explicit; they don't communicate raw information but a meaning and rarely talk about a direct benefit. This is why children, who resonate more on meaning than on the significance of words, have a better understanding of advertising discourse and an immediate reaction to its messages. Most often the text is generated as a fusion between a benefit, an offered value and a sensory fact or promise highlighted. A slogan like *"Sans parfum, la peau est muette*" (Without perfume the skin is mute) creates an entire sinesteyic symbolism, especially if the text is accompanied by a visual dimension that opens the perspectives of interpretation. The accommodation with the product is facilitated once we familiarize ourselves with it on a sensory level.

Revisiting Lakoff's perspective, based on the fundamental idea that metaphors are conceptual rather than purely linguistic phenomena, it has been stated that they mustn't be and indeed are not limited to verbal expressions. Metaphors can be expressed visually through images, either static, as in the case of magazine adverts or billboards, or moving, as with commercials and movies. These expression modes can be combined with all of the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste etc.) in order to render possible the construction and interpretation of metaphors in a pictorial or even a multimodal manner.

Following Lakoff's explanation of the linguistic context created by the use of metaphor in everyday language, we might argue that advertising slogans function from a contemporary standpoint as trans-cultural metaphors. If, as we have shown, the rhetorical structure of metaphors resides and functions in a complex network of signs

and socio-cultural meanings, advertising slogans manage to convey concepts and ideas regardless of social and cultural barriers, liberalizing the meanings through the use of metaphor as a guide. We often use in our everyday language advertising slogans as metaphors to aid us in getting through an idea to our communication partners; familiar to a large audience, their integration in our interactions facilitates the understanding of the communicated contents, so much so that if we wish to express courage, we can easily achieve this by resorting to the Nike slogan - *Just do it!*.

Of image and rhetoric

Noteworthy for this discussion is the strong link between the text and the advertising image as a metaphor generator. The advertising discourse initially presents itself as an unstable, hybrid structure in which the balancing of text and images is made in an uncontrollable manner. Yet its message is understood as in a picture.

Second most influential for the consumers, though extremely visible in everyday language, the linguistic signifier emerges within the advertising discourse as several textual constructs: logo, slogan, body text, each serving the advertising discourse by simple way of the fact that any advertising argumentation begins with its visibility.

From the typography layout within the page, designed to grab the attention, to the aesthetic construction of the logo, intended to create/increase brand recall, the pragmatic characteristic of most of advertising texts is its sustainability, with the attention directed towards the visual-figurative whole. This indicates that even the construction of the advertising text abides by the outline of the visual and the visual metaphor which generates new meanings: specific typefaces for the logo and slogan, specific colors and textures for the letters, different orientation of text within the page, all of these draw attention on the importance of advertising visual rhetoric, as we will try to show.

"Whether we like it or not, each of us experiences at the present time a crack within the representation of the world and so, its reality. This is the split between action and interaction, presence and media-presence, existence and TV-existence."[vi]

The image of an ad thus becomes the opportunity to talk about multiple realities, not in terms of copying the reality, of mimesis, but especially from the perspective of the image's ability to infer the relationships which we establish with the give world. Furthermore, theorists regard the image today as renouncing its quality of being a representation *of something*, of referencing to something clear, in favour of a more important role; today it accompanies the human existence, the world, bordering on confusion. If Baudrillard's theory of a reality coefficient directly proportional to the supply of imaginary which provides it with its specific quality is true, then we can begin to understand why the visual and iconic are becoming means of adding transparency to the world through metaphor. The relationship between the world and its images is not based on mirroring but in *identification* as hyper-reality.

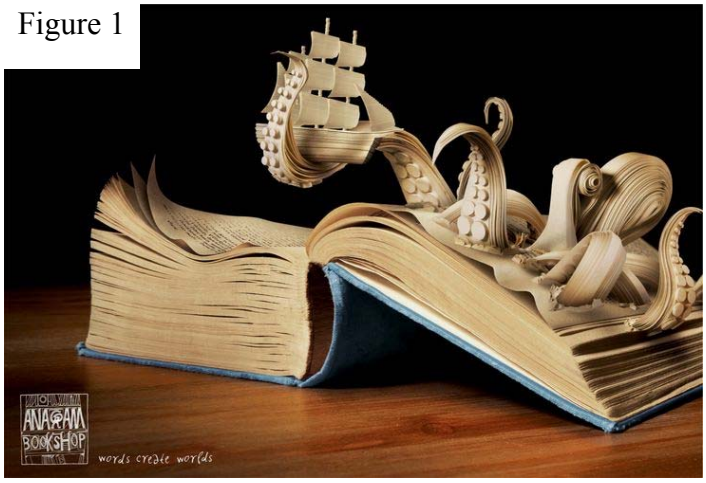
Visual metaphors in advertising's discourse

Continuing the discussion on the representational nature of visual communication, we can consider the contemporary world as one of maximum accessibility and of visual signs. This means that we can educate best our public if we start from a visual level. In the advertising discourse, the social qualities and values are transmitted through cultural symbols and these latter ones as metaphors, function not by altering the meaning but attributing certain additional traits. These features make communicated ideas easy to understand for everyone. On one hand we are dealing with the *universality* of the visual message and on the other with the free individual interpretation of it. All we can know is the way in which the interaction between representation, the represented object and the receiver-subject produces.

The same premise underlies Roland Barthes'[vii] in his "Rhetoric of the image", where two levels of image analysis, simultaneously perceived by the human eye, are presented: *the denotative level*, which is purely "theoretical" for image analysis, as it is hard to conceive an image without connotations. When referring to the "fashion system", Barthes identifies a specific language of combinations between colours and dimensions, which provides the subject with an additional meaning through the way in which it is presented. On the other hand Barthes describes *the symbolic level*, of connotation - at which the reading of the visual image varies according to the receiver and the codes which he associates with the message. The latter, emerges at the interpretation level, where the perceptive intelligence of the subject activates according to the socio-cultural meanings. The denotative layer plays a very important part as it represents the foundation for the connotative dimension.

As Charles Forceville [viii] has shown, we designate as visual metaphor a combination of two heterogeneous visual entities that involves a change in their meaning, one through the other. From the multiplicity of metaphor types discussed by the author, we will pause to analyze *the hybrid metaphor* and *the multimodal metaphor*, as two of the most recurrent in print advertising.

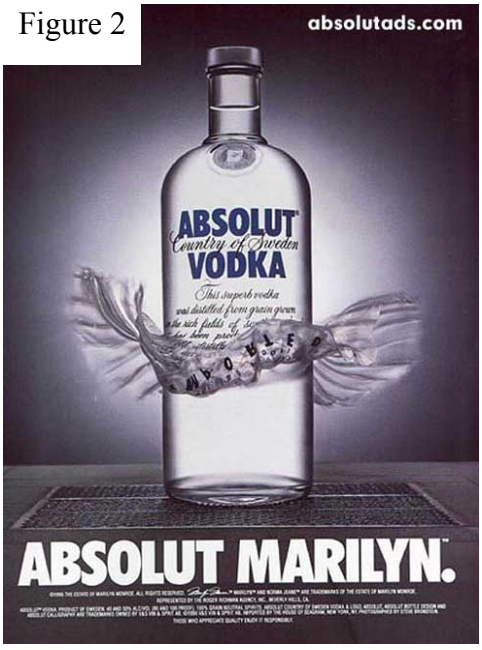
Figure 1



The hybrid metaphor (see **Figure 1**) is perceived as an object or *gestalt* formed by two entities seen as pertaining to different domains, incompatible and unable to form a whole. Regarded by the specialists as the quintessence of visual metaphor, this hybrid depends on understanding one of the parts in terms of the other and originates, as Forceville argues, from the surrealist painting movement.

Such visual metaphors are often present in advertising posters and prints, where the visual effect is instantaneous, their purpose being to suggest the product or a value without explicitly presenting it, to insinuate one of the product's traits or the alternative space proposed by the brand image (brand's imaginative ways of creating realities). Of importance is that the resulting metaphor creates the feeling of a coherent context, totally new, created through the simultaneous transformation of one term into the other, and so the meaning of the image becomes understandable. The example shown above in **Figure 1** (an ad to Melville's famous book *Moby Dick*) only comes to support the arguments presented.

Figure 2



On the other hand, in one of his later lectures (2002), Forceville discusses the *integrated metaphor* as being a construct which passes on to another by means of resemblance even without an integrating context. (**Figure 2**).

With this observation, we attach to the advertising metaphor a new dimension which we need to further explain. Theorists agree that the advertising mechanism functions on the foundation of the relationship between emotions and perceptions, appealing to primordial reactions through the visual stimulus, very much alike to the way we *read* a photographic work. Visual stimulation has the power to associate form and content in a convincing manner. The iconic status is implicit and the images communicate meaning through the use of connotations and the capacity to be intentional. In his work, *"Visual Persuasion. The Role of Images in Advertising"*, Paul Messaris [ix] sees the absence of syntax, the combining and associative capacity not limited to causality or analogy, as one of the main traits of visual syntax in the advertising image.

Naturally, one of the necessary conditions for constructing a metaphor is a certain resemblance or similarity between the two visual concepts that generate it (the target and source concept). On the other hand, the similarity between two phenomena, regardless of the way in which it was established mustn't be seen as a sufficient condition for generating a metaphor. The famous all purpose Swiss army knife isn't a metaphor but simply a multifunctional object. Therefore, a necessity for constructing a metaphor is the ability to distinguish between the traits of the two concepts, as well as the transferability of at least one trait from the source towards the target, without distorting the message that needs to be communicated. Or, in other words, only in this way can the image of a book with tentacles be linked to the work of Herman Melville.

Considering this premise, Forceville shows that in the case of representations in which the concepts that need to be communicated are presented as moving images as

opposed to static images, the opportunity to create visual metaphors grows exponentially. This is due to the fact that with moving images (TV commercials, for example) it is nearly impossible to extract a simultaneous scene in which both elements are presented.

If in the case of print the target and the source have to be represented or suggested simultaneously, within commercials, they succeed one another, the pictorial metaphor being the sum of frames that parade in front of the audience's eyes.

Figure 3

With the conceptualization of such a visual construct, the discussion opens towards the *multimodal metaphor* (**Figure 3**) which comprises in its construction text, image, movement and a time succession. Here too, the focus is on the visual, which is highlighted though by the textual, the non-verbal (given by the movement) and the passing of time.

If, at the beginning of this part we advanced the image as preceding the text in terms of the importance attributed in perceiving advertising metaphor, with the multiplication of mass-media (especially video), the text can become illuminating for the perception of advertising metaphor by the public. It offers a better understanding of the message and cleans the noise of visual ambiguity. To the same extent, a visual metaphor acts to reveal aspects concealed by the textual metaphor, accenting mainly the cultural-contextual particularity that can be deduced from the image.

Conclusion

Because of the versatility of trans-culturally comprehensible meanings, advertising metaphor becomes a genuine global handbook, interpreted with every instance of itself, within the sight of every individual engaged in perceiving its message.

"You need to have advertising in a capitalistic society. You don't need advertising in communism. But in a capitalistic society – where people are competing for the same dollar – you need to have information out there so the consumer can make a choice. That's what advertising does. It's all advertising does for our lives". (Nina DiSesa, McCann Erickson, New York). Here, for example, a mission statement of the "Make it count!" campaign part of the Element brand philosophy: *The Make it Count collection celebrates Element's deep roots, consistency and drive. It represents the importance of being graceful and approaching everything you do with depth and longevity. Leave an imprint deep enough, that it continues to make the world a better place. Make it Count.*

Motivational statements and rules of life are increasingly emerging as campaign slogans such as „You are Volcom, do your job, recycle!", „Green works - Panasonic", „Live. Learn. Grow – Element", „Connecting people – Nokia", „Sharp Minds– Sharp", „Come alive! You're in the Pepsi generation – Pepsi", „Think different! – Apple", „The Power to Be Your Best – Apple", „Together we can do more – Orange", „Impossible is nothing – Adidas", „Nothing is too small to know, and nothing too big to attempt – Element".

More and more advertising campaigns highlight values, in fact always present in our educational norms: respect for self and of others, tolerance, pursuit of the public good, charity or eco ethics. Advertising campaigns promote healthy eating, personal hygiene, gender integration, packaging recycling or even green tourism. Relevant to its educational implication is the example of global codes of conduct recommended by advertising international committees of ethics: responsibility towards the environment, eco projects developed at the organisational level, institutional communication based on an ethical vision for environmental protection. Thus, without yet drawing a conclusion, we see as imperative for the future educational undertakings a research of the premises that have led to the transformation of advertising from an industry associated with a certain type of economy (and targeted specific social contexts), into something closely linked with the structure, organization and functioning of our society.

In a world without a stable configuration, advertising enables communication of multiple cultural identities, of belonging to a social or value based group, transforming itself into a social educational institution of diversity and multiculturalism. And this change of advertising into a societal institution doesn't refer only to its ability to mirror and contribute to a social order. Furthermore, advertising is given the role of re-producing a social order educating its public, with reference to its certain mediating quality through which cultural insertion and value assumption is possible. Advertising becomes an important tool through which future generations can be educated about "consumption of reality".

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THE ETHICAL DIMENSION OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH WHICH INVOLVES INVESTIGATIONS ON PEOPLE WITH VISUAL DISABILITIES

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Abstract: The ethical dimension of academic research which involves investigations on people with visual disabilities can be ignored or made non-priority, hidden behind objectivity and validation of the research. Often, this ethical dimension can be in a shadow when the researcher takes some of the most important decisions for the success of the research.

However, the human existential condition involves naturally the ethical dimension as responsible rationality (Gadamer, ed.2001) in all the circumstances of the human interactions, and because the academic research is exactly a human interaction form, the respect for involved people' s life must be a priority.

The *existential fragility* legitimates the ethical intentions for any research which involves disabled persons and validates the relativity of the human universe, as proof and guarantor for existential infinity and authenticity. Ethics does not disturb an academic research work that starts from the probable hypotheses because a really truth intention cannot omit the duality of the human whole and cannot put in the brackets a subsidiary privacy of the feelings (in case of the researched and the researchers) by concentrating on what are often seen as measurable and accounted realities.

Keywords: ethical difficulties, responsibility, probability, existence

1. Introduction

The academic research is generally seen as intended and planed activity in a controlled and organized context, using specific indicators for actions and results. Although is exciting, academic research requires a very good control of all predictable or unpredictable inter-actions, especially when humans "subjects" are involved and they belong to vulnerable and delicate existential categories.

The acceptance of the *delicate existence* concept in academic research equation means that any research action must to be done with maximum responsibility because each human being signifies a unique and unrepeatable micro-cosmos, a sensitive replica of the "holographic" macro-cosmos.

The assumption of this *human fragility* is decisively for the decisions and elections of the design research project, of the methods and tools action. Fragility, as existential dimension, highlights the possibility of some dangerous action

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consequences and a huge responsibility for the physical and moral integrity of the human beings who are involved in research. In this sense, the academic research on human beings requires three different and simultaneous types of responsibility which must be generally reflected by the researcher's the attitudes and actions, but also by affiliated- institutional decisions:

* *Academic responsibility*-as academic rigor, a coherent logical approach, validity of dates, innovation and scientific impact;

* *Legislative responsibility*- as respect for civil law and human rights;

* *Ethical responsibility*- as non-affecting personal dignity, as valorisation of the soft aspects of the human interactions, as respect of all human beings involved in research, as maximizing the others Good.

If the legislative responsibility is indubitable because the civic lows are clearly and easy to identify (as common and mandatory rules for all the citizens), is not the same view in the case of the moral responsibility which is dubitable and involves optional prerogatives. In fact, the tendency is often to neglect or to make compromises when the scientific and moral imperatives are in contrariety, most time the balance being influenced by the force of the some pressure factors which can come from inside or outside the researcher realities. Certainly, the responsibility problem is not unilateral or simple because the involved parts must find *an equitable and common way* to respect simultaneously and to put in equilibrium *all* types of the required imperatives by different responsibility areas. For example, when the researchers enter in the privacy of the human feelings, the justification of academic knowledge can not be an indestructible and legitimate argument for any lack of moral in this area.

The academic investigator can not speak about *the moral norms* as *optional norms* and only about *the legal lows* as *compulsory norms* because the human being is a compulsory priority and an ethical behaviour is also compulsory…Actually, the norms take the optional or compulsory sense by the specific attitudes, decisions, options and actions of the person who chooses apparently just for himself as singularity, but in fact any of his/her chooses involves and affects a plurality of human beings. This is means that no research decision can be taken casually because the first and the last destination of knowledge and research is not just the truth, but also you, they, I…and finally all, as Human Beings.

Sometime, as in the Greek antiquity where human destiny was inexorably affected by a tragic dimension (due to the impossibility to comply strictly and simultaneously the three main laws of life- divine, social and familial), in the academic research which involves vulnerable people (as people with disabilities) can be observed a high level of tension at the researchers who are very pressed exactly by this requirement, for a simultaneous respect of the possible contrary imperatives.

The problem of responsibility can be schematic reflected, using the unbroken circularity of the circle as:

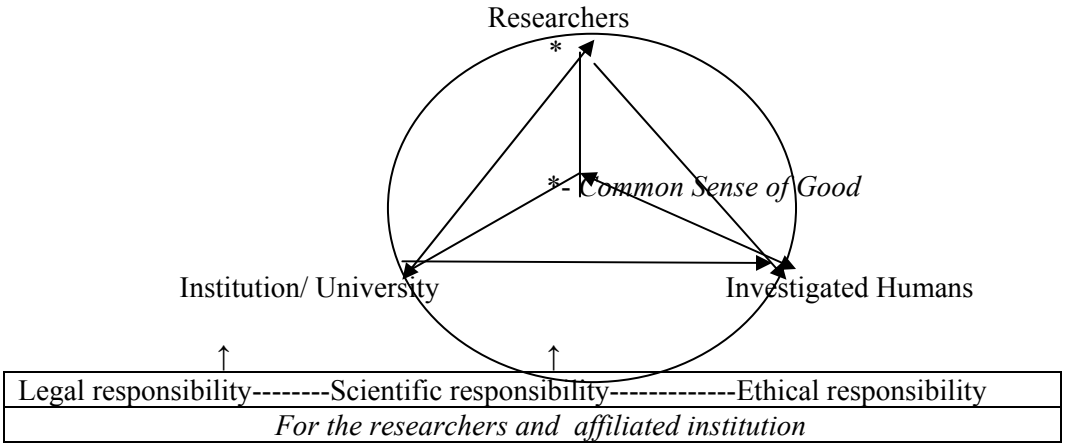

Fig.1-The responsibility model for academic research that includes investigations on disabled people

An academic research which investigates disabled people involves a *progressive* process for the identification of the common sense of Good, as a *changeable* value, because no one is morally legitimated to decide the Good like *an absolute* and *a-priori end* of the action (De Bouvoir, 1949). A justified research can not *use* human beings as research *objects;* it should identify a convergent way for different perspectives of the Good understanding, even the academic rigor and rationality seem to be incompatible with moral subjectivity.

From this point of view, any research thesis should begin with the assertion of an ethical principle that guides the research intentions and efforts. Any research activity must include in its context the importance and the influence of the imperceptible human emotions because without this subtle music of the human life, no any discovered formulas can be a *phenomenal* formula…

2. The ethics and the human existential context

Understanding of the ethical dimension in the case of the academic research which involves any human beings investigations can not be separated by a specific understanding of human nature. Its omission leads to a false science…

For example, if somebody is investigating the rabbit habits, these can not be broken by what rabbit is; the same problem is for the human investigations. But really we know what human being is? May be we already know some important facades of human life, but who really know the end of the human nature questions which are transforming in a new questions when the answers are coming?

Many old or contemporary thinkers have emphasized the importance of considering human individual as an intrinsic value, as spiritual and unfinished existence. Philosophers such Sartre, Heidegger or Gadamer, gave to human being the status of the central, unique and unrepeatable existence.

At Sartre for example the human being is an unfinished project, a unique *existence* form that does not have an end because this is choosing himself continuously,

absolutely free and totally responsible, while other life or without life forms are just *being* forms because are already ended and closed (Sartre, ed. 2005).

Heidegger also has spoke by the human being as an unique life form that is auto-interrogating about his own nature, as a Dasein who is *thrown into the world,* to live specifically among another word forms (Heidegger, ed.2003), while Gadamer has highlighted the unrivalled human capacity to communicate and to interpret messages by some cultural predetermined shapes (Gadamer, ed.2001). Even they had different ideas, all of them have thought the human being in a subtle relationship with the others human beings and have done from *the others* a key-term which includes the *ethic as existential dimension*.

When Heidegger has spoken about the human being as *thrown into the world*, he also said that human being *meets, lives* and *confronts* with the other word forms and this is not just a simply life location. The human complexity is more obvious when Dasein is interrogating himself/herself about the cryptic code of his/her profound nature because the answers for "Who am I?" involve a distance by himself/herself and many confrontations with the others. In the adventure of the self-search, the *questionable ego* meets and interacts with *other* objects and forms of *being* and also with *the other's* egos that *exist* and are unfinished life *partners* (Sartre, ed.2004). At Sartre this is a very important mark for human universe because *the others* represent a natural limitation for every existence that must stop the personal freedom there where starts the other freedom.

Exactly in this self-searching process, in time, the human thinking has divided the word and the knowledge in two relative opposite and incompatible parts: the natural science-as Being word and the spiritual science-as Existential word. While in the natural sciences the dominance of the objects is very important, in spiritual sciences is desired the welcoming of the others existence because every step in understanding and knowledge is a together step, as Gadamer said in his reflections.

By this perspective, the contemporary academic persistence for elimination the human subjectivity is as a failed effort because the academic concepts are inevitably a part of a subjective connected network, predetermined by a heritage that can escape to any scientific vigilance (Gadamer, ed.2001). In fact, the academic research should not necessarily give a science of truth, but *a study of the experience of truth* (Gadamer, ed.2001) and this does not eliminate decisively the dimension of the human emotions.

But why are necessary to put in attention here the philosophers ideas? The simply answer is that from a long time the ethical aspects of academic research are not considered very important and often go unnoticed. If ethics can be understand as a priority for any academic research, the research process, strategies and decisions will be compulsory orientated by and to a truth which doesn't renounce at intimate, profound human inside, but a truth which try to incorporate, to understand and to open this encrypted dimension of human being.

If Sartre, Heidegger and Gadamer's conceptions are linked and put in other form, can be seen clear where is the place of the ethics in existential context and why this dimension is so important and imperative for all the human actions. The figure 2 sows that ethical dimension, as responsible rationality (Gadamer idea), is a natural and necessary aspect for all the human inter-actions and a specific way for human being to be ontologically situated, as thrown into the word (Heidegger idea).

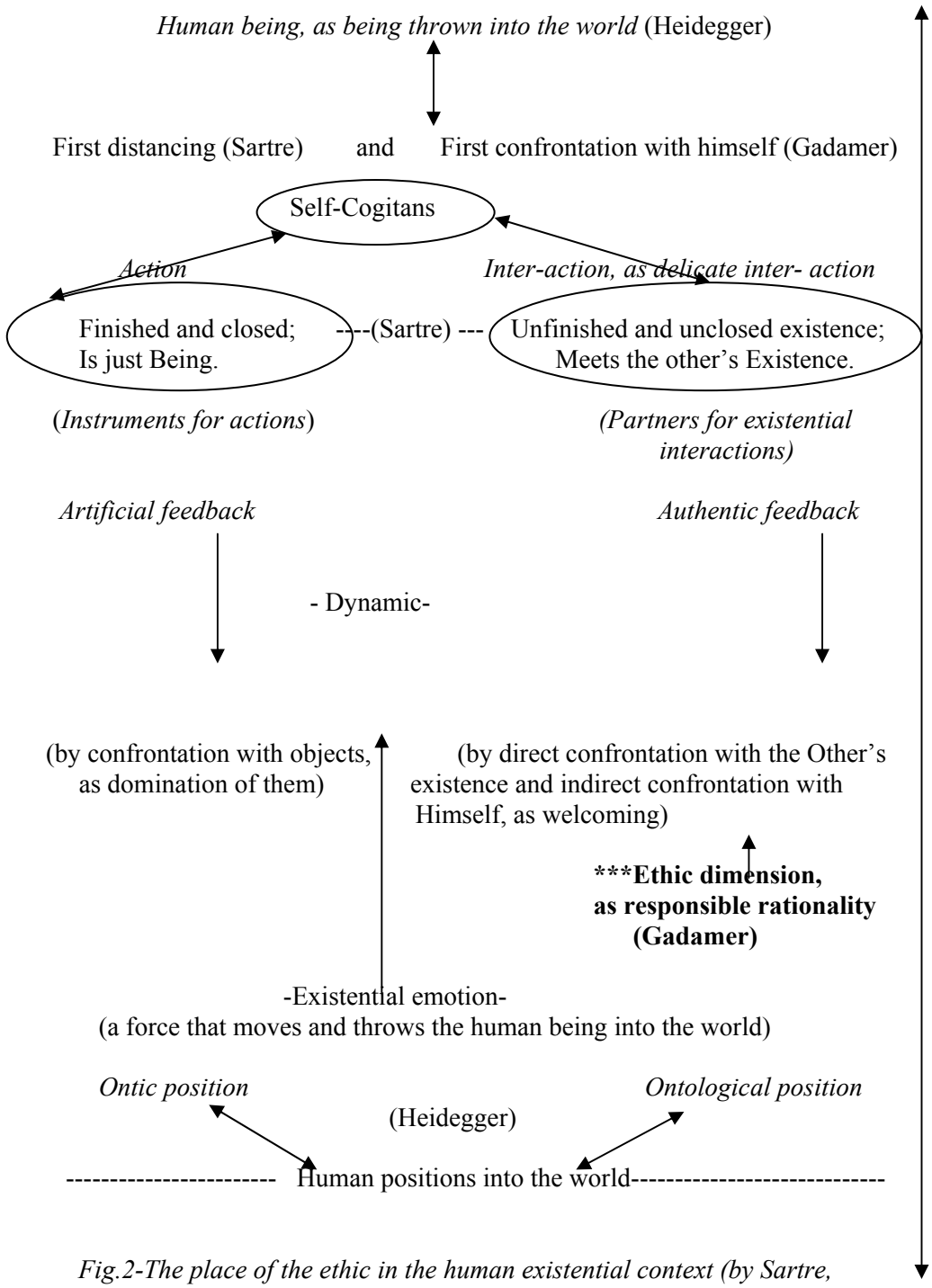

Fig.2-The place of the ethic in the human existential context (by Sartre, Gadamer and Heidegger reflections)

Even the world is out-of-self thinker, every existential intersection is an intimate interpretation and an emotional exchange that makes possible the exit and the returning to himself, because every meeting with the Others egos reveals the personal limits (Gadamer, ed.2001). The experience of Truth can not be broken by the human subject of this experience and by his subjective life.

From this specific perspective, the ethic animates the world of the human intersections with existential emotions thrill which can not be quantified in some formulas. The ethical behaviour is an intrinsic consequence of the authentic way to exist because authentic is means ontological and ontological is means ethical…

The effort for knowledge as academic research, especially when it involves human beings investigations must start and finish with the ethical dimension, as compulsory existential dimension.

3. Ethical difficulties, probability and interpretation in academic research which investigates people with visual disabilities

If someone puts on a flat surface two metal balls and move them one to other, the balls can pass one beside other, can easily collide or they can strongly collide. Because the balls are closed objects, the human can calculate the impact force and the force with that each ball has contributed to the impact. It is not the same for the people interactions whose interior force is unpredictable and is permanently changing; the human beings can only know that every incidental or intentional meeting with people from their proximity implies a mutual influence.

But who can afford the action to move the balls and who can afford the action to move the human beings? In the name of knowledge the human being can *afford* to do any think? With this type of questions may be starts every ethical disturbance of the researcher conscience, especially when the focus group implies vulnerable people. But I can speak just about me, about my ethical difficulties…as a researcher and a teacher-*partner* of the students with visual impairments.

The ethical dimension of academic research often goes unseen for those who do assessments and often people may ask where the ethical problems are if the participants say yes or sign for the investigation acceptance. The ethics is not a matter of the legal agreement; it is a problem of *how* can researchers find the correct way to maximize the Good, as *common sense*, and to avoid or to minimize the damage of the investigated people. Identification of this way becomes more difficult if the investigated people are not considered object (and indirectly tools) or simply subjects of investigations (and indirectly finished), but existential partners, as unfinished and changeable existences (Sartre, ed.2004).

The research decisions are also more conflicting when the investigated existences are people with visual impairments because interfere the force of the other two possible and adjacent existential hypostases: *physical imperfection* and *a relative, marginal social location*.

The experience of the physical imperfection in interaction with other persons often can cause isolation, self-isolation, self-doubts and desire to be unobservable.

Even the person with visual impairment is agree with the research participation, this does not really know how much will be forced the opening of his/her intimate interior and also the research can not perfectly predict the sensitive limits of the others investigated universe. For all of these reasons, the academic methods and instruments should be selected so as to not expose the participants to an artificial exteriorization or to harm the personal dignity.

Is also very important that researcher to manage good distances with participants who already have the experience of the marginal social existence because as investigator, the researcher can be perceived by participants as being in a central position and the investigation like an experience that exposes them at a new marginal situation. The ethical difficulties are also in this case *a problem of priorities*, because the researcher can not completely and definitively reconciles the objective imperative of science with the subjective imperative of morality.

Another identified ethical problem is related by the legitimacy of constructions for the others people or by the ability to collect relevant dates about the investigated people life. Even the participants are agree that the researcher to build a specific reality in their name and for them, it is not means that, compulsory, he/she will have at the end of work a compatible building with the other expectations and desires. From start to finish of these constructions, participants, as recipients are changing...they are changing their options, needs or desires and the researcher, too. How can be objectively measure all the imperceptible and unaccounted transformations?

Also, the researcher must have a common language, as instrument for communication with participants, but how can this identify, understand and reflect the privacy behind the language? In fact, with every data collection step, the researcher intentions are to scratch the cryptic and intimate dimension of the others existential partners, to put the others insides in the light of academic analysis, to make visible and understandable the diversity of the particular universes, using the common and standard benchmarks. No matter how carefully the researcher builds the relationships with investigated people, he/she can have access just at the peculiarities which the participant *wants* to bring at surface, to be visible for the others analysis.

In these circumstances the work results, as an indubitable truth, are not possible because are many cryptic and hermetic dimensions of the investigated existences that escape by any academic vigilance. Indeed, the science is based in the most cases on the inductive logic, but a clear and coherent logical thinking warns that the conclusions of the inductive research are in *terms of probability.* To put together the particulars dates as the *different* perceptions, visions, actions and reactions and to extract from their analysis a result as *possible interpretation*, this is the *experience* of the relentless search of the truth. The real task of academic researcher is not to discover an implacable and immediate truth, but to check *the probability value* of the initial assertions, as research hypothesis.

Directing of the research actions toward the universal truth revelation is a mistake because the researcher will see this as an expected final and will be tempted to sacrifice the existence of the others in the name of a wrong finality…he/she will be tempt to sacrifice the ethical principle and may be will make it.

Usually, the researcher starts the work from some personal opinion, as reflections about the similarity of the some situations, and must prove if these probabilities reflect a similarities coincidence or a causal relation; the results can confirm or infirm the probability of these personal assumptions and all that the researcher can really do is *to grow the probability chances* towards the truth. This is the real task of the researcher work.

Another important aspect for academic research that generally investigates human beings is the interpretation problem. Gadamer highlighted that science is not a really discovery, is rather a predetermined interpretation because in communication process people mutually use some signal systems to send the information and they also interpret these for understanding the messages sense (Gadamer, ed.2001). The language is a naturally system that *partially* reflects personal realities and has limitations; also the researcher, as human being thrown into the world, gives sense and interprets the signals of this world where he/she was thrown in different intersections. This can not skip, cancel or minimize the importance of another kind of signals (as emotional signals for example) because the investigated human beings are not only pure rationality.

The sciences can not consider the humans intersections just simple meetings of the rational individuals from a global society; these are much more… these involve the participation of the *identities* as *personalities* and here again is ethics. The researcher from the spiritual sciences must be release by method obsession and by the complex of the scientific insufficiency (Gadamer, ed.2001) because the desired objectivity inevitably meets the human subjectivity and its signals. This subjective human dimension can be essential for some aspects of knowledge and here can not be a competition for the relevance of validity; as different particularities of the human life, they have relevance and validity in their genus (Aslam, 2006).

In conclusion, the ethical difficulties, especially in the case of research that investigates people with disabilities and their delicate inter-existences, involve a tri-dimensional intersection (from researcher, institution and investigated people perspectives) of the different options, visions, interpretations and existential priorities*, in terms of probabilities*. No any researcher can search the eternity formulas absolutely free by the others or him-self/ her-self emotions because this will cancel any infinity of the human intentions. The ethics is an existential infinity guarantor and this human existential nature *legitimates the science to be compulsory based on ethics*…

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TEACHING PRACTICE: GOALS AND „CHALLENGES"

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Abstract: *In a more extensive research on the initial preparation of teachers, we tried to identify what students want to learn in their practice teaching, which are the objectives they set for this discipline. The open question is part of a questionnaire constructed by us, questionnaire seeking more dimensions: self-evaluation / self-appreciation on didactic abilities formed by following psycho-pedagogical mandatory training; self-evaluation / self-appreciation on personality characteristics involved in didactic behavior; perception on initial psycho-pedagogical training and assuming the role of teacher.*

Keywords: *mentor, teaching practice, focus group*

Introduction

Teaching practice for students is conducted in application schools, chosen by inspectorates along with higher education institutions, according to the needs of initial training for the teaching career. The role of teaching practice is to introduce practicing students in the atmosphere of school education by familiarizing with curricula, school order and discipline, and with the organization and operation of schools. Also, practitioners are faced with the actual situation when they will have to face the theoretical aspects of pedagogy, psychology, sociology and methodology, with real situations in class and in school. These situations materialize through effective participation in the educational activities that take place throughout the teaching practice. This "stage of initiation, apprenticeship, seeks placing students in the middle of the act of teaching-learning mechanism, the drafting technique of teaching lessons or activities in technology development and use of training facilities, etc." (6).

Pedagogical practice purpose is "harnessing theoretical knowledge and laying foundation for their practical training, by providing specific skills of the teaching profession for those who wish to practice a modern education" (1). Pedagogical practice goals are: training student's ability to work with information from specialized disciplines of science and education, targeting students in the use of framework plans, programs and textbooks; developing student's skills to use specialized materials; initiating students in the technique of laboratory or office activities; the acquisition of skills by students for the teaching profession.

In the stage of teaching practice, the didactician, the mentors and all those involved in teaching activity seek to ensure that students achieve the following abilities: (3)

- knowledge of the organization and functioning of pre-university schools;
- knowledge of education documents and how to use them;

- direct observation and analysis of the educational activities organized by school teachers involving students;
- exercise the role of teacher by students, under the guidance of the mentor, by designing, creation and self-evaluation of some the educational activities with students;
- practical skills training through teaching activities, conducted by students under the guidance and in the presence of mentors;
- ability to develop communication with students of different ages and intellectual potential through the practice of various scientific language in lessons;
- develop initiative, creativity and responsibility to work through the development of teacher tests, experiments, means of education;
- acquisition of confidence regarding the management of educational activities by: a proposal of learning tasks in accordance with the curriculum and accessible to students; determining appropriate teaching strategy for each type of lesson; establishing operational objectives; the correct and effective use of means of teaching; conducting appropriate evaluations and self-evaluations;
- develop flexibility and adaptability to the reality of class as a result of the merger of expertise to the psycho-pedagogical and methodological knowledge;
- acquiring specific skills for the teaching profession as occupational standard.

Experimental Part

The questionnaire prepared for students contains 18 items, both open and closed. In structure, it has three dimensions, including several variables as following: **dimension A-** Self-evaluation / self- assessment of the teaching capacity formed after attending mandatory psycho-pedagogical disciplines; **dimension B** - Self-evaluation / self- assessment of personality traits involved in teaching behavior; **dimension C** - Perception on initial psycho-pedagogical training and assuming the role of a teacher.

The subject sample consisted of 280 students in the third year of the University "Aurel Vlaicu" of Arad, students attending the classes in Department of Teaching Staff Training.

Results and Discussion

Following implementation of data collection instruments (questionnaires sent to students, assessment test) two types of data were obtained: quantitative and qualitative, depending on the type of question. Analysis of these data was made separately, and the results of these analyses will then be interpreted complementary.

In the following pages we try to make an analysis of subject's responses to the question *"What would you like to learn during the activity of teaching practice?"* connecting these results with those obtained from quantitative interpretation of questionnaire items.

We start with a negative result in our opinion, namely high frequency of situations in which subjects did not answer that question (about 20 percent). The explanation of this situation is probably that the students did not put on serious thought on the question of the personal goals which they pursue by following teaching practice before completing the questionnaire. It is the situation of the student who follows this

activity without interest, regards it as a simple binding activity in its initial training, from which he or she can not expect much. This finding fosters responsibility that during training intervention we try to change that perception and to inform students on the role and importance of teaching practice in the training of a teacher in accordance with training standards, needs and requirements imposed by the education reform and characteristics of contemporary society.

In the same vein, we find a large number of very general answers and that can just as well be interpreted as non-responses at all. It is the kind of answer*: "how to become a good teacher", „How can I train as a future teacher"* or *„ everything that can help me to become a better teacher"*. And these individuals show either a lack of clear objectives for teaching practice or just a lack of interest in completing the questionnaire.

Another important category of responses relates to the desire of students to enrich the knowledge acquired during the theoretical training through teaching practice and to implement them.

Frequent responses such as: *"to pursue a teaching activity", "ways of teaching", „how to teach students", „how to teach a lesson and how to draw up school papers", "to achieve educational projects"; "to assess pupils' skills"* are encountered. These responses show an interest in improving the psycho-pedagogical training, especially since it is noted that the students focuses on the preparation / design / organization / conduct of teaching approach and on some aspects of student assessment and implicit self-assessment of their own performance. We should also note here a significant number of subjects who said they want to learn about content and practice of new teaching methods: *„interactive teaching methods and assessment", "modern teaching methods", "lessons that they claim to be more attractive and interactive"* or *"learn to make lessons attractive and flexible to work with students"*.

Again we find that students declared their interest in the new teaching methods, but a sense of fear of their implementation still stands, students preferring to "experiment" these methods in the relative safety of teaching practice where they know they are receiving support from the mentor and the teaching practice coordinator. These findings correlate with the results of quantitative interpretation. We concluded then that the students appreciate that they have a high receptivity to the new (M = 4.41), but on the other hand they don't perceive themselves as resistant to the stress that the implementation of novelty items involves or to criticisms inherent to the application of innovative methods and concepts. We consider encouraging that students want to try new methods of teaching-learning-assessment and we will try during intervention training to encourage this trend and to increase acceptance, primarily by understanding and personal experimentation of new teaching methods.

Another category of responses is one that captures the concerns of students on learning how to interact with the class of students, this problem being clearly a major concern for the subjects. Thus we illustrate that students want to learn *"how to communicate with students", „how to interact with children"*. That concern is commendable and in a more in-depth analysis of some of the responses we can identify a number of problems that would have gone unnoticed and unrecognized by them

expressly. Thus we easily see the existence of emotional discomfort inherent in first contact with the class of students *"learn to master my emotions", "to master my emotions in front of the class", „learning to be relaxed"*. Not surprisingly, the stress factor has been identified also in the quantitative interpretation of responses from other items of the questionnaire.

Remaining at this category of responses, it is interesting to observe the immediate reaction of subjects to the discomfort caused by contact with the class of students. Two trends can be noted, one correct and the one that should be encouraged and one which we appreciate as inappropriate behavior. Thus we have a sub-category of responses which shows that student's reaction experiencing the class are reflected in that it seeks an appropriation of students and initiate closer collaboration to overcome the initial stage fright and track approach to teaching. Exemplified by the following responses (mainly appreciating the terms used) the student wishes to learn during teaching practice: *"how to attract students' interest", "to learn how to become an effective and enjoyable teacher for students yet respected" or "how to be a pleasant person and understand the position that you have"*. This approach to the students and the attempt to send the message clearer during a specific emotional state in early career seems fair to us and we try to encourage it.

But, we also observe another side to this situation, unfortunately a reaction noted in a larger number of subjects. Namely, when the student is faced with a tense situation for him, he is trying to impose in front of students by authoritarian means: *"I would like to learn how to better master the students"* or *"how to master students"*.

Not surprisingly these conclusions also resulted in the quantitative interpretation. We note as an interesting aspect that those questioned consider that they can take all the roles involving some position of authority of the teacher to student. But the situation is opposite when the student is placed in a position to lose this position of authority. Thus respondents are not so sure that they could take the role of negotiator of student's activities or receiver of educational messages. The most trenchant result in this regard is the lowest result obtained (m = 3.37), on self-evaluation capacity in terms of which the teacher's role is valued by students, exactly when the ratio of "power" is reversed in disfavor of the teacher. The conclusion that we learned it was that the respondents still can not easily accept an equal footing in relation to students and even less to be placed in a position to be evaluated by them.

Lastly it would be important to note on this item, a smaller number of responses demonstrating a concern for familiarizing with the school seen as an institution, the team of teachers and effective work in an educational establishment. It is reflected in responses like: *"contact with education, school, and teachers of different specialties"*. It is also in our view an appropriate concern arising from the interest of students to pursue a professional career.

We continue the data analysis with qualitative interpretation of the responses to the question "What do you consider the most "challenging" / difficult aspects of the teaching profession?" (Item 18). In a general analysis of the responses obtained in this item we can easily find a predictable result, one that we had in mind when drafting the questionnaire, namely that some issues that some students regard as a challenge are

appreciated by others as difficulties of the teaching profession. It is an expected result as we said, the difference between groups of subjects being only in attitude, perception. Of course, any difficulty can be seen as a challenge, and if there is the willingness, the difficulty can be transformed into a productive or "challenging" factor.

Also we noted that answers to these questions overlap somewhat with answers in the teaching practice objectives items, the subjects setting these goals by what it considers difficult in educational activities, the fears or expectancies they have regarding the practical work with students.

So, not surprisingly, the main challenge and difficulty of the teaching profession, is generally considered by subjects to be the actual work with students, communication and interaction with them. Answers like: *"class interaction", "communication with children", "working with students" or "relationship with students"* appear quite frequently. Indeed, for a future teacher, first contact with the class of students is always a moment so eagerly expected, but also with justifiable emotion and "stage fright". Subjects are concerned about relational aspects and the ability to teach knowledge effectively. A positive aspect revealed by the analysis of responses is that students generally appear to be optimistic in terms of overcoming these initial moments of "accommodation", trusting in their own abilities and psycho-educational skills formed during initial training.

We also note that the subjects realize the responsibility that a teacher has, both in the relationship with students and the other relationships they establish with colleagues, parents, community members: *„responsibility to start again with each generation", "more responsibility to students and parents", "responsibility for what is said and done"*. In direct relation to this responsibility, another difficulty that is recognized by the students is the mentally fatigue that teaching activity involves. We believe that by reducing or removing the cause i.e. stressors, it is possible to overcome this difficulty.

Also note that some of the subjects recognize the dynamic nature of the teaching profession and they regard it as a challenge: "*renewal and permanent addition to knowledge", "need to be always aware of everything and all", "unlimited access to new information", "the course is the same but always different"*.

Another feared and perceived difficulty by students is the ability to integrate in the school environment. We refer here to the interaction and relations with other colleagues in the school. We find that they view that contact with colleagues, particularly with the most experienced with some fear, the cause for this attitude being their lack of experience recognized and accepted, comparing with the rest of the school teachers: *"Working with experienced colleagues", "my lack of experience"*. This fear is normal in our opinion, but in this we should try to get a positive result, namely the determination of young teachers to call and make use the expertise of senior colleagues in the teaching career.

We conclude the analysis on this item showing a response category that regards as a major difficulty in the teaching profession on the one hand the insufficient material resources in most of the schools and on the other legislative instability in the organization of the educational system in general: *"lack of teaching materials", "frequent changes in education", "lack of resources in schools*". In this respect we can

highlight that the perception of students is justified, the problems raised by them are obstacles in the teaching career, but resolving them is beyond the reach of this study.

Conclusion

Students perceive entering the teaching profession as a new beginning, a very important "episode" in their life and careers. Like any new start is seen both with excitement and with fear. Anxiety most future teachers feels, and is constantly revealed in our analysis, is linked to the first contact with the class of students. It is undisputed that pedagogical practice has its place here in the initial training of students, its purpose being exactly overcoming this opening stage, by providing a first contact with students in a controlled environment under the supervision of a mentor, the student having the support and advice which they wish, the opportunity to have access to a person with experience and expertise.

In the future career in teaching, students will have to face two types of situations. A class of repetitive and ritualized situations for which the teacher have in its repertoire the necessary professional skills to address and resolve quickly and efficiently. And a second category, which includes new teaching situations, often unusual, creative, demanding new solutions for which the teacher lacks the skills necessary for addressing and resolving rapidly. The latter situation forces him to a time of reflection and exploration, to some hesitation, the fear related to their capacity and ability to overcome them.

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PHILOSOPHY AND THE EUROPEAN SPIRIT*

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Abstract: As a specific spiritual field, philosophy has its inner establishment and duration regulations. To attribute philosophical feature to a reflective activity, it is necessary for it to fulfil certain assumptions. At individual level, it is necessary for a spirit to make a shift through personal efforts from self-understanding to self-aware thinking; what is needed at general level is abundant historical, cultural and spiritual heritage. Various philosophies have been created in this context within the European space. The paper considers the possibility of their autochthonous and authentic grounding, as well as the issue of their permeation and intertwining from the traditional and contemporary aspect.

Key words: philosophy, science, technology, development

Introductory Considerations

The validity of theoretical research which in its discourse problematizes the relation between philosophy and European spirit implies abstraction of the question significantly determining the mentioned relation. The question facing philosophy both at the time of its construing and today is the issue of its essence, sense and role. As self-understanding awareness, it has always had more expressed responsibility for its own establishment and existence. Through history of its existence there were epochs when it doubted the validity of its own existence, when as self-reflecting spirit in critical self-observation, it revealed insufficient philosophical attitude. What has marked its creation was the ontological need of spirit to think[18] being the basic value and the symbol of philosophical awareness.

For a spiritual activity to be characterised as philosophical, it has to fulfil all the demands facing this form of universal consciousness. This means that it should be

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[18] 'A man who has once enjoyed the fruits of philosophy, who has known its system and who has been unreservedly thrilled by them as the highest culture goods, cannot abandon philosophy and philosophizing.' Husserl, E: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology, 25., Northwestern University 1970.*

raised to the level of clearly articulated abstract thinking, striving for revelation of the essence of a matter through the discourse of mental cognition. (Adorno: 124) Only the mental activity that has managed to go beyond the world of material things and to step into the space of general truths can attain the pretension to being philosophical. Such mental activity implies speculative power of the mind, abstract understanding, logical judgement, as well as ability of the spirit to critically overcome the self-understanding attitude towards reality. Furthermore, philosophy reaches its comprehensiveness only in the unity of theoretical and practical attitude, since the freedom of spirit is necessary in the search for the truth, it attains its true value only in existential relationship. In other words, philosophy has its inner "regularities" of establishment and duration.

A question is raised in the context of the given topic: What is the relation between philosophy and European spirit? If we talk about the European space as a place where philosophical thought has been born and existed, we should start from the term of beginning. In existential sense, it represents individual effort of a spirit to get to reflexive insight. It is a shift from the immediate to self-aware thinking, which is a necessary high level of self-developmental maturity. In historical sense, the beginning of philosophical thinking was preceded by versatile and rich forms of mythical – religious contents. Hellenic philosophy as an outset of European philosophy had for its grounds rich historical spiritual heritage created within an absolutely autochthonous culture. From such a specific and creative potential as Hellenic used to be, a reasonable reflection with all the features of indigenousness could be differentiated. As a consequence, in spite of the fact that the Greeks used to go to the East in order to get broader and better education, before all from the fields of mathematics, geometry, astronomy, ship building and trade, they could not adopt anything that is even close to the philosophy they had created, since they could not find such a model. What is it then that the significance and merit for such a great, comprehensive and all-encompassing architecture of Hellenic philosophical mind should be attributed to? It is beyond dispute that extrinsic factors, like favourable natural conditions (climate, geographic position, wealth), social-economical and political progress, among others, enabled the appearance of a unique way of philosophising which had never existed before. These factors refer, before all, to the expressed sense of right measure that came into play in all creative products ranging from architecture, sculpture and poetry to the highest speculations and the comprehensive experience of the world present in the uniqueness of sensible and passionate creative powers.

Philosophical Idea of Europe

Reflections on the idea of Europe as a specific, unique constitution of spirit has opened up the issue of the rising of such an idea. Although it has been created under the influence of ancient Hellenic philosophy, Hellenic philosophers did not immediately determine and differentiate the very notion of Europe. Nevertheless, the right of origin and primacy belongs to them since they were those who created the grounds of the new world according to their theoretical-abstract insight into the universal value of mental narration and action. Therefore it could be said that the

original ideal of European spirit was established and was growing through pan-Hellenic idea based on the awareness of the freedom of choice of the Hellenic people to think in an easy and comprehensive way about themselves and the world and to permeate their actions with their reason. Hellenic birth of European spirit was marked, before all, by the breakthrough of the aspiration for knowledge, not for special knowledge, but for the one referring to the interestedness in the structure of the world, its ultimate base and the sense of existence of everything.

Such knowledge was comprehensive and unique, having in mind that, apart from theoretical enquiries within the "true philosophy", it encompassed scientific knowledge in its broadest sense: mathematics, medicine, practical knowledge and skills. The broadness of knowledge did not mean the aspiration to "learned all-knowing", but to life wisdom confirmed by Hellenic people through the fulfilment of axiological principles. In spite of the fact that the readiness to learn, as an impulse of a curious mind to think, was not the basic drive of philosophy, in final result its function did not boil down to theoretical exercise of the mind, it rather addressed the deepest needs of man's soul.

As such, Hellenic philosophy was built into the spiritual core of Europe. Imposing the need for a self-aware subject and its inner search for its own, not only personal, but also human essence, Hellenic philosophy established a new concept of life giving a significant place to education of spirit and ennobling of ethos… Pointing to the Hellenic character of European spirit, Hegel says: "An educated European is fulfilled by the feeling of belonging to a homeland in any encounter with Hellenic philosophy" (Hegel: 285). Hellenic revelation of mental principle as universal mediator between cosmos and a man and among people has been emphasized by Nietzsche's standpoint: "Educated mind has made Europe what it is. In the Middle ages this mind was on the way to once again become a part and a pendant of Asia – i.e. to lose its scientific sense it owed to the Greeks" (Nietzsche: 244). The central place in being educated belonged to reflexive mind, out of which universal knowledge developed. Therefore neither original nor perspective sense of European values can be perceived beyond the context of Hellenic spirit.

Apart from speculative – mental dimension, European philosophical heritage has religious feature. At the outset, the breakthrough of the idea of Christianity was featured by not understanding or even rejecting philosophical knowledge as limited and ambiguous. Having undergone a dispute lasting for several centuries regarding the predominance between faith and knowledge, human wisdom and *God Revelation*, philosophy continued to live through a unique amalgam of religious and rational principles. In this temptation, philosophy managed to exist further due to the fact that through the long historical period of its existence it created a system of comprehensive knowledge, without which it was not possible to maintain longer survival of the ruling theological form of awareness. In other words, for religious dogmas to be accepted, faith was not sufficient. For their rationalization and apology, logical-philosophical knowledge was necessary already owned by philosophy. In interconnectedness and permeation of theology and philosophy a form of spirit was created having the characteristics of discursive thinking marked by Christian religiousness. What

connected philosophy with theology was its dealing with the issue of absolute grounds of everything existing in the world, according to which it entered the sphere of metaphysics; on the other hands, its narration was not sacral-dogmatic, but logical, within the limits of human thinking. Even though in its main historical course philosophy was deeply involved in "encompassing the whole according to the ultimate principle", it still established itself according to the critical act of thinking, to strictly notional knowledge, showing closeness to scientific spirit.

The whole period of the middle ages in Europe was marked by the idea of the God and the aspiration of a man to reach the assumptions of becoming a godly creature through religious feeling, ascetic or mystical experience. Having faith in God, a man had spiritual orienting points, moral directedness towards goods of universal and general character. At theoretical level, great disputes were led regarding the way to find ontological proofs and justify the idea on supreme entity. When these strivings went beyond the circle of creative efforts and gained scholastic character, they became a strict dogma, not leaving behind anything of its original essence. Nevertheless, the comprehensiveness religion offered in its authentic meaning contained all the necessary assumptions for faith in spiritual and moral metamorphosis of a man in the world.

Philosophy and European spirit experienced another temptation at the turn of the New century when the development of sciences awakened the sense of security in a man, as well as faith and opened possibility to build his own world. This is when philosophy starts to doubt its own heritage and searches for new insights whose truthfulness and usefulness it proved through the use of mathematical-logical methods and their technical-practical application. In such a way knowledge was loosing its educational sense and started to gain pragmatic sense. Through the demand for a "great renewal", philosophy transformed itself into "comprehensive natural science" (Mathesis universalis). This is how the Hellenic model of education was embodied in the striving for essential knowledge and discovery of general truths about the world and about man, aiming at creating a virtue as ultimate happiness and eschatological hopes, transformed into concern "about many things" and aspirations for greater power over the outer worlds.

Modern philosophy acted too self-confidently, ostentatiously celebrating "its beginning" like an absolute novelty. Detaching itself from scholastic philosophy, it distanced itself from Hellenic philosophy, as well, starting its transformation into "pure science". This further led to the narrowing of the notion of practice to pragmatic dimension, as well as boiling the notion of theory down to methodological framework, deprived of any value content. In the great renewal of philosophy, the accent was put neither on theoretical observation or contemplation, nor on educational course of good life, i.e. the life dedicated to improvement of spirit and character. The Hellenic concept of creation for one's own enjoyment was replaced by the care for survival. What used to be considered unworthy for a free man, what was proper only for a slaving soul has become the imperative of life.

Philosophy has not imposed itself as its highest aim the revelation of general truths for the sake of the truths, in order to enjoy the pure joy of cognition, it has rather been turned to study of mathematical structures in the world of nature in order to gain

applicable knowledge, useful for life. Just like philosophy went through radical changes adjusting to the demands of science, science, on the other hand, torn out from the wing of philosophy, suffered a radical change having become non-philosophical (Nehamas: 132) Strivings for technical knowledge, knowledge which increases man's power over things have outbalanced the aspirations for essential knowledge determining the right measure and value of things. In the process science has undergone significant structural changes. With the predominance of technical spirit over speculative, there has been increasingly less space for knowledge uniting ontological-ethical dimension. The highest subject of theoretical reasoning no longer is well-being of man, neither the reasoning itself is the highest form of good life. What is instead of these values in its prime is practical and functional task of science to increase technical knowledge and powers in order to realize the interest of "better life". It has turned out that the world of modern technology is not the world of versatile fields of possibilities, but a world of uniform sense of the all-encompassing that knows only for a single world and negates the inherited cultural differences (Patocka: 201)

The breakthrough of technological spirits in all the pores of human life implies that knowledge has failed its original aspirations when it ceased to act according to regulations of humanity. The pragmatic dimension of knowledge has to a great extent denied the ethical limitations and abolished the "binding norms" in which a man used to find his foothold. At the outset of 20th century European spirit underwent the inner destruction bringing about the radical break with the original self-understanding of a European man educated in the spirit of the highest heritage of old Greek and modern philosophy. Deep change has been announced by the loss of transcendent point of support a European man used to have, leading to the decrease of life strength and energy and more expressed feeling of anxiety and uncertainty. It is not a rare case that failures and sufferings occurred, but nevertheless "people still believed in a secret place of spirit where it is written where a man comes from and where is he heading to, they believed that there is a metaphysical world of unchanged shape due to which a man can arrange his life with hope and trust in this changing and decaying world" (Djuric: 329).

On its way of history European philosophy has gone through various challenges it managed to resist due to its universal spirit according to which it critically adopted and united religious, scientific and artistic values. Nowadays a question has been raised referring to reestablishment of a unique philosophical concept to unite discursive-intuitive mind, logos-experiential awareness, scientific exactness and creative inspiration. (Koslovski: 131), Dissipation of philosophy into its partial forms of awareness requires turning back to original self-understanding so that through the relation with its highest achievements it could theoretically determine and design solutions of basic anthropological issues.

The ground according to which European culture was built was clear notional differentiation between a being and pretence, between truth and fallacy. Getting back to this pattern would demand thoughtful reflection on the structure of the existing European spirit and identification and definition of new categories. Furthermore, what should be born in mind is the position a modern man is in, his distance from the God,

the lack of all-encompassing principle, his loss of faith in absolute values, making him deprived from the feeling of security and aspiration for model forms of life (Ulmer: 320). Eternity is not a challenge for a contemporary man; he does not strive for something which is above him; he does not address his primeval need to prevail the feeling of being mortal through the aspiration for religious union with the God; he rather compensates it by the increase of material wealth. A man of modern civilization in general, and thus a man of European civilization, occupied with the influence of technical creations has lost the sense of cosmic harmony beauty and stepped out of organic unity with the world as a whole; he has come to terms with the lack of righteousness in the world, he has suppressed human protest of conscious against evil, he has laughed at the inclination towards eternal life. In general subordination to worldly wishes and plans, it is the sprit of interest, revenge, destruction that has prevailed in the world.

Conclusion

The sense of anxiety and worry, since it started to overcome a European citizen, until now, has not ceased to multiply and deepen. Great minds who have anticipated the "disease" were clearly aware of its causes and that is why they could almost prophetically see its inevitable consequences. What philosophy is nowadays faced with as its main task, according to which its sense and justification has been judged, is its ability to identify these issues and the possibility of their resolution. Philosophy will be able to be an important part of European identity and it will become its spiritual expression if it manages to overcome its own crisis, i.e. to leave the sphere of sterile explications of outmoded categories and renew the cult of nurturing aspirations towards the truth and if it makes the language of its narrations not only notionally less ambiguous, but also more applicable in searching for new way of life.

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INTERACTIVE PROCESSING OF MEASURING AND MEASUREMENTS IN THE YOUNGER GRADES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract: *Measuring and measurements is the name of an exceptionally important topic, which has its place in the program curriculum of Mathematics, in each of the four younger grades of primary school. Basis for methodical transformation is the wide integration of the topic, especially with the teaching subjects of World around us and Primary science teaching. Methodical frames for processing the topic are made is such a way that they satisfy all the important characteristics of interactive teaching/learning. Having that in mind, authors of the paper first describe the concept and the characteristics of interactive math teaching. In the main part of the paper there are functionally described methodical frames for interactive processing of measuring and measurements in younger grades of primary school. For illustration of the suggested methodical frames, a model of interactive processing of measuring and measurements of surfaces has been created. In the conclusion, there are stated the elements of evaluation of the described methodical frames of processing the topic and the constructed interactive processing model of measuring and measurements of surfaces.*

Key words: *Methodical transformation and frames, processing model, measuring and measurements, interactive and integrated teaching.*

Introduction

The concept of measuring and measurements, and the way of calculating measures of some sizes represents a necessary condition for general education in many areas, therefore many subjects. Measurements are expressed with measuring numbers and measuring units, and measuring certain sizes comes down to determination or calculation of the right measuring numbers. The previously stated is the main reason why teaching contents about measures and measurements are included in teaching mathematics to all younger grades of primary school.

Measuring of values is one component of the activities of almost every working man in the modern world. If the work or research subject is made of immeasurable sizes, we are forced to determine and measure other relevant sizes. For example, quality of teaching and learning are both immeasurable sizes, and the main reason for that is the non-existent measuring unit. Quality of teaching is most frequently

determined by measuring the quantity of adopted knowledge and the know-how of a pupil. Determination of the domain of measuring numbers and measuring units represent a very complex activity. Therefore it is necessary for their "measurement", to have a lot of theoretical knowledge and experimental work. Before we engage in such a complicated activity, it is necessary to previously theoretically found and "assess" the quality of pre-prepared methodical frames and models of teaching.

Modern methods of teaching mathematics, except the educational and scientific foundation, are classified as priority condition for quality teaching and learning mathematics, interactivity and individualization. In assignment for research, authors of this paper had in mind that the theories of interactive learning recommend greater representation of integrated teaching of different subjects and areas, especially in younger grades of primary school. From the point of operative objectives and tasks of processing measuring and measurements in teaching mathematics have the highest degree of correlation in teaching subjects World around us or Primary science teaching. In books and in teaching there are many aberrations, both in domain of methodical transformation and in methodical frames of processing measuring and measurements.

Having in mind the previously stated, it can be concluded that the addressed topic is one of the prioritized researches of methodical transformation and modern teaching, especially interactive. Theoretically based and empirically evaluated models, that is, concrete methods of interactive processing of measuring and measurements in younger grades of primary school, cannot be found in any bibliographical data or on the internet. Main objective of the paper is to, in accordance with theoretical researches and scientifically based methodical transformations, compose original methodical frames for interactive processing of measuring and measurements in younger grades of primary school.

The idea and the characteristics of interactive teaching of mathematics

In wider meaning, the concept of interaction is defined as an activity which is interchangeable between at least two subjects. Interactive teaching/learning, as one of the most common strategies of modern education, is the short-term of interaction. It includes exchange of activities of the following subjects: teacher, pupils and the educational media. This implies all combinations of the stated subjects, which contain at least one pupil.

So far, didactic-methodical researches and knowledge about interactive teaching/learning of mathematics put in the foreground the activity of the pupil. The role of the teacher is to guide, encourage and to teach the pupil how to learn mathematics. At the same time, behind every student activity there is a necessary feedback from the teacher (tutor), because it is a proven psychological need of every individual. For analysis of every interaction in teaching Suzic N., (2005) suggests four aspects: "cognitive, emotional, target and active".

Instead of memorizing facts and formalisms in interactive teaching of mathematics, it is necessary to use such methods which would enrich the teaching with

pupil's reflective activities. The outcomes of interactive learning are characterized by more efficient influence of the development of cognitive and conative abilities of the pupil, they encourage criticism, creativity, etc. "With interactive learning, thanks to social interaction, we conduct changes in our thinking, in our emotions and the behaviour of people:" (Milijevic, S., 2003). That is why it is important that interaction, from the early childhood, is permanently and correctly conducted.

The statements refer to, firstly, mastering of the teaching contents in teaching mathematics because so far the contents were not respected enough. With the help of interactive learning, the learned is better used in new situations encountered during further learning of mathematics, the learning transfer is greater, and the learned is longer contained and remembered.

Interactive learning means pupil's independent work, with the usage of modern didactic means or the guidance of a teacher. Teaching mathematics has to be conducted as an interactive process in which the pupil and the teacher have a collaborative (cooperative) relationship, which gradually increases the pupil's activity.

In interactive processing of the right teaching units (classes) of mathematics in younger grades of primary school, the method we suggest approximately means the application of these phases:

1. Interactive repetition of previously adopted relevant knowledge of the pupil;
2. Setting and defining problem situations or examples, which provoke adoption of new knowledge;
3. Interactive processing of the provided teaching content;
4. Completing, uniting and generalizing of the processed content;
5. Verification summary.

The basis for preparation and realization of classes are teaching sets, which are suitable enough for interactive teaching and learning mathematics. **Connecting** the modern system, method, shape and means in interactive teaching is very significant and depends on the age group of pupils, objectives and teaching tasks, as well as program contents of every topic, that is, teaching units. In this paper we will concisely describe only those systems and methods which affect the most the level and quality of interactivity in teaching, that is, in learning mathematics.

In interactive teaching there is a need for integrating scientific and teaching areas, as well as within one teaching subject as within various subjects. The need for integration of teaching does not depend only on the degree of correlation of teaching subjects, from the point of operative objectives and tasks, but also on many other factors, above all psychological and physical characteristics of the children.

The fact that children in primary school age, and especially in younger grades, have strongly emphasized need for simultaneous continuation of different activities has long been known and proven. That on its own is sufficient reason to integrate different areas into modern teaching. The reason for wider implementation of a well organized and accomplished **integrated teaching** is also in its ability to fulfil complex objectives and tasks. That means that for nearly equal amount of time spent, better teaching results are achieved, in sense of their rationality and suitability.

Application of **exemplary teaching** dominantly affects the level and quality of interactivity in learning or forming concepts, as well as in learning mathematical rules. The adjective exemplary is derived from the noun example, which means instance or pattern. Consequently, with nominal definition, exemplary teaching can be determined as model.

Some authors consider that exemplary teaching should be used to point out characteristic teaching contents, which address the methodically whole and model way. At the same time, pupil should process as large part of the content as possible by themselves, in accordance with the model or with minimal help from the teacher. In that way, the activity of the teacher would be significantly rationalized, and the activity of the pupil increased. Despite the advantages stated, exemplary teaching, understood in that way, cannot be sufficiently successfully applied.

For interactive teaching of mathematics, especially in younger grades of primary school, wisely selected and processed examples are most frequently used in a frame of one teaching unit, and rarely in terms of teaching subject. The most suitable example is the one whose analysis can intrigue the pupils and be processed interactively. In that case the entire interactive processing of the provided teaching contents can be relieved of excess examples, and the inductive conclusion can enrich with brain activity. In the first place it activates analogical thinking of the pupil. It is known that analogy is based on observation and comparison, but it also demands separation of the important from the irrelevant. It means that with the previously stated application of exemplary teaching, students are being trained also for the application of more complex brain activities.

In differentiating teaching of mathematics, the starting point should be the fact that we must provide a mutual knowledge fund, necessary to every pupil. The objective is to maximize the usage and development of brain activities, inclinations, interests, and so on, with every student individually. "In terms of equal program demands, the problem of differentiation of teaching mathematics comes down to optimal usage of *obviousness and concretization, motivation, degree of difficulty of the tasks and the level of help to the pupils"* (Petrovic, N., Mrdja, M., 2005). If it is about interactive teaching, it imposes **differentiated minimum support** from the teacher in all cases**.**

The most complex task for the teacher, in preparation of this differentiated processing of teaching units, is formulating and structuring of differentiated support to pupils. Modern methods of teaching mathematics, approximately sets the hierarchy of different types of support (instructions): "motivational support, feedback support, strategic support directed to the content and contextual support" (Zech, F., 1999).

Motivational support more or less encourages the pupil and directs him to activity. Feedback support notifies the pupils whether they are on the right track to solve the problem. Every previously given support also demands a feedback. Based on the feedback, the pupil is introduced to the course and result of the stage of his work, for which he had received help. Strategic support implies general instructions for tackling the problem, based on Polya's scheme: "comprehension or understanding, creating a plan, implementation of the plan and accuracy check, discussion and interpretation of the solution" (Polya, G., 1980).

For every class of differentiated processing, teacher has to meticulously and carefully prepare strategic support guided towards the content and the contextual support. Strategic support guided towards the content directs the pupil to the methods of solving specific tasks and gives more specific directions, related to the beginning of solving the task. Contextual support implies those means, which give more specific directions for the concepts and rules given, for specific relations between them, for exactly specified support values and the result.

In teaching practice you ought to be prepared to give support which could not have been foreseen. It is important to have in mind that the differentiated help in interactive teaching can be conducted with all teaching methods, forms and means, even with verbal method in frontal form. For achieving good results it is necessary that the pupils get to know and adopt the principal of **minimum support.** It means that the pupils do not pay attention to all the support they have been given, but only to the one that is necessary for them. According to the rule support is given indirectly, often in the form of suggestive question, and it has to be followed by a suitable feedback.

The described definition in teaching mathematics is most suitable for elevating the level of its interactivity. Unlike the so called differentiation on a higher level of work, in this case it is about one and only level, **flexible differentiation.** The term flexibility is used having in mind that the pupil chooses the support which he finds necessary. Flexible differentiation finds its full implementation in interactive teaching of mathematics, only if it is permeated with the elements of **problem teaching.**

Cooperative teaching represents interactive work of a group of participants on the accomplishment of specific educational objectives and tasks. The fact that, in teaching, teacher's presence is obligatory does not mean that he interactively participates in every cooperative group. A contrary, his presence and activity should only be where there is a need for it and while it lasts. Work in small groups of pupils is the most suitable form for accomplishing cooperative teaching because it provides a high level of interactivity in a comfortable and pleasant atmosphere.

In acquiring knowledge and skills, which have been foreseen as mandatory for all pupils, forming of heterogeneous groups is desirable. At the same time, it needs to be kept in mind that the process of acquiring knowledge and skills also takes place outside the class. It means that the most suitably formed groups are the ones that pupils join voluntarily and implement cooperative activities without greater obstacles. "The main prerequisite for conducting pupil-directed teaching is the cooperative atmosphere among the pupils" (Roeders, P., 2003)

In accordance to the rule, reasonably heterogeneous groups in interactive teaching of mathematics have the greatest success in accomplishing objectives and tasks. "If in some area there can be an established hierarchy, then it is best to group together those pupils who differ according to the hierarchy of learning in one or two steps the most" (Bennett & Cass, 1988).

Groups of talented pupils can tackle the complicated and problem tasks with the help of cooperative interactive work more successfully and creatively, apposed to individual work or working in heterogeneous groups. Homogeneous cooperative groups of pupils, who adopt of mathematical knowledge and skills with more

difficulties, can interactively work only with differentiated support. However, successful work in a group of pupils is possible only with maximum activity of every individual.

Methodical frames for interactive processing of measuring and measurements in younger grades of primary school

Processing of measuring and measurements of some variable sizes is usually preceded by processing of comparison of their values. Due to that fact, we begin this part of the paper with concise mathematical basis for **comparison** of the size values. Values of variable sizes can be compared if in the set they belong to, that is, the domain, there is a strictly defines relations order. (R, AS, T).

The set is completely arranged, if for every two elements x and y from that set stands: Either is x in relation to y, or is y in relation with x, or is x equal to y (notice: "or' has the meaning of exclusive disjunction). In other words, all the values of those sizes are mutually **comparable.** For example, set N is completely arranged, and all natural numbers are mutually comparable. Values of certain sizes are only partially comparable. It means that in a certain domain there are at least two elements X and Y to which the previously stated does not apply.

Measurement of some size is expressed with measuring number and measuring unit. For the selected measuring unit, each value of **measurable** size is equal to exactly one measuring number. Determination of the measuring number is called measuring, and considering the previously stated it can be referred to as mapping. Therefore, values of measuring units are in the domain of mapping, and the co-domain is real numbers.

Measuring number of the size's value, is determined, by measuring, as a number which indicates how many measuring units are contained in the measuring value. It is also important to notice that the selection of value's measuring unit of variable mathematical sizes is not conditioned by anything. On the other hand, for measuring certain variable sizes, significant for everyday life and science, measuring units are, according to the rule, determined by general convention (deal) as constant values, therefore, sizes.

In younger grades of primary school examples of measuring sizes have to be elected so that the measuring numbers are in the set N. That means that the examples should be given inversely, that is, to first choose the measuring number from the N set and the measuring unit, and to ask the pupil to measure the so "given" value, that is, to determine its measure. For example, if the pupils are supposed to measure a straight line, therefore to determine its length so that it is 3cm long, "precisely that straight line" has to be given. All other measurable sizes are dealt with by analogy.

For accomplishing complex objectives and tasks of measuring and measurements in younger grades of primary school, we especially use integrated teaching of mathematics with the subjects World around us and Primary science teaching. At the same time, we keep in mind, first and foremost, the integrating of development of logical, mathematical and naturalistic abilities.

For this purpose we list two quotes. Gardner, H. (1984), lists four basic components of logical and mathematical abilities. "The ability to manage sequences of the thinking process, acknowledging the relations between elements, ability of abstraction, critical attitude". Roeders, P. (2003) as basic naturalistic abilities he lists: "identification and classification of patterns in nature, sensitivity to changes in time patterns and comprehension of different features in the natural surroundings."

Measuring value with the help of money does not fit in the definition of the term measurement. Claims like "every possession has its value" (referring to the value expressed through money), are incorrect. It is known that a lot of things, but not all, can be measured with money. It means that the general domain of sizes measurable with money cannot be precisely determined.

If we limit ourselves to domain of variable size, which is sold for money and is called merchandise, even then for a price of an item (domain element) we cannot say it is a measurement. For a price to become a measurement, it would have to be unique for every single item, and it is known that it varies, first and foremost depending on the place and the time of sale. So we can talk about the price as a measure of value of the goods only in certain store at a certain time. If you keep in mind the inflation, devaluation, floating rate, then currencies cannot be considered as measuring units either, because they are not constant.

In accordance with the previously stated, in processing of the topic we should make the term measurement and measuring relative. We should emphasize the concept of money, coins and paper bills, their role and meaning. In processing of teaching units, relying on limited experience of second grade pupils, interactive dialogue should be dominantly used. For example, the following could be used as help for students with feedback.

What do you have to give to the salesperson in order to buy something from him? How do you call the quantity of money for which you buy something? Salesperson sells, who buys? What is the word for everything that can be bought for a certain price in one store? Do we get money only by selling goods? How do we call the amount of money a worker receives for his work? Beside the pay check, can money be received for a special achievement, like in sports, for example? How do we call the first prize someone gets in games of chance? Can a premium be received in cash?

In this way, the role and significance of money would be interactively processed as well as proper use of the names of following terms. Introductory course of the term currency, that is, coins and paper bills, should be conducted in demonstrative method.

Time is considered to be continual variable size, whose domain has cardinal value in the continuum. According to current theories, the creation of the Universe was started with the Big Bang. It is only natural that that moment represents time values equal to measuring number zero. Under the condition that there is a measuring unit, time is a variable size, moreover it is permutation of time and not negative real numbers. Concept of time as continual variable size makes sense only in the world of changes. In unstable universe, that is, the world of chaotic changes, it is not possible to determine a measuring unit. Humans as intelligent beings, appear in relatively stable

universe, that is, in a world of legitimate changes. Then it is possible to determine measuring units, and also time measuring.

Time measuring based on the day and year has been gradually accepted as primary measuring units for measuring time. **Day** is time needed for Earth to rotate around its axis. **Year** is the time needed for Earth to orbit around the Sun following an elliptical orbit. Note that the given time units, as continual variable sizes are in fact time intervals.

From the previously stated we can conclude that by measuring time we determine "exact time" or the value of time and "duration" or a time interval. Time of the new era can be presented with the help of a numeric ray, so that the interval from zero to one represents the first year, one to two the second year and so on. By that we mean an astronomical year, given by the previous definition, not the so called calendar year. In that case the dots which mark the days could not be determined with natural numbers, which is not practical for general use.

Time interval for every year, is divided into months according to the calendar, and all of them except February have a constant number of days. Calendar also depends on the daylight saving time. Bigger units than the year are decade, century or millennium, and the smaller are hour, minute and second. Often the time intervals are expressed with months as measuring units. However, time interval is precisely determined only if it is expressed with months stated by name for an entire year.

Anyone who helps or directs children in the process of developing and forming of the concept of time and its measuring should have in mind the stated theoretical foundations for it. It especially goes for pre-school teachers and teachers, when they prepare and conduct certain educational activities. Development of the concept of time, as a variable size, in pre-school age dominantly takes place spontaneously and empirically. However, it is desirable that the children have previous guidance from the pre-school teacher. When they start school, majority of children know the days of the week. Concept of a day, as a time interval, is mostly related to some activities in certain parts of it, especially night sleep.

One of the biggest tasks for a teacher is to explain the concept of the day to children with the help of interactive dialog. That cannot be done with only the astronomical definition. With that, it is necessary to introduce ideas such as its two major parts: **daytime** and **night-time.** That way all the confusion that the use of the word day causes with children is avoided. Among the significant tasks of a teacher is introducing the children to the fact that the Earth is shaped like a ball and revolves around its axis once every day. After that, with interactive dialogue it is desirable to use the feedback support. Here we suggest specific contextual support which we find to be the most important.

Is the place of our residence turned towards the Sun the entire day so that the sunshine can reach us? What is the name of that time of the day when sunshine can reach us? What is the name of the daytime when the Sun is "right above us"? Is noon the middle of the day, or the middle of daytime? What is the name of that time of the day when the sunshine cannot reach us? What is the name of the middle of the night? Do night-time and daytime last the same every day of the year? In which season does

daytime last the longest and night-time the shortest? Do all days, daytime and nighttime, last the same?

Let us assume that, during the first two grades, the adopted stated concepts are described to all the students in the same way. Then at the end of the second grade, before introducing the concepts of the day, hour, minute, week and month, the level adoption of previously explained concepts should be briefly strengthened with an interactive dialog. On the contrary, there should be enough time provided for the adoption previously stated concepts with the help of integrated teaching of World around. In processing of the hour and minute illustrative-demonstrative method and teaching set is commonly used, besides the previously stated methods suitable for interactive teaching. The most suitable is that, during the six classes provided all program contents, without any strict division to teaching units, are being interactively processed.

In the third grade among the first teaching units there are two classes provided for adopting the concept of the year, decade and century. Under the previously stated presumptions, it is enough to repeat the already adopted knowledge of the student about the year. In interactive processing of the concepts of decade and century, after introducing the pupil with the suitable definitions, there should be an emphasis on their use. Integrative teaching of Primary sciences teaching should be used in those purposes. For example, with interactive dialog the next feedback support could be provided to the pupils.

What is the smallest number of years that a man in his seventh decade of life has lived? Can a dog enter the seventh decade of life? Can a man enter a second century of his life? Name some plants and animals, for which you know that they can live for over a century. In which century of the new era did Serbs raise rebellions and manage free themselves of slavery under the Turks? How many centuries did the slavery approximately last?

Mass is a variable size which expresses characteristics of solid bodies, fluids and gases, determined by the quantity of matter which they contain. Not to go deeper into the substance of mass, we can claim that it is measured by physical size, called force of gravity. The measurement of that force is called **weight,** and her basic measuring units, pound and kilopond are tentatively equal to the measuring units of the mass, gram and kilogram.

Mass of one kilogram at a sea level, that is, the ocean has the weight of one kilopond. It should be noticed that mass at a greater elevation weighs less. It also needs to be mentioned that in a larger part of the universe there are so called conditions of weightlessness. For example, astronauts have to be trained to manage in the conditions of weightlessness. People on the moon do not change their mass, but their weight becomes significantly smaller. If in the future people get to Mars, they will face the problem of significantly bigger body weight.

Processing of measuring mass is planned for third grade teaching with two classes. At the beginning of the first processing class, in interactive dialog, the pupils need to be explained the difference between mass and weight, in accordance to the theoretical basis and previously acquired knowledge. After that, using demonstrative

and experimental methods, the pupils should verify the independence of the body mass from size of the space fill that is, their volume.

For example, two matching balls or cubes (glass and metal marble or plastic and metal cube), would be put on pupils palms and they would assess which one feels heavier. Based on that they conclude which one has a bigger mass. In that way they understand, based on the introduction, the concept of mass as a body feature determined exclusively by the amount of matter. The teacher can use the demonstrative and experimental method by using a scale to compare mass of equal dishes filled with different matter, for example flour and water.

In the second part of the class pupils are getting to know the devices for measuring mass, names and tags of measuring units through an interactive application of dialog and illustrative and demonstrative method. For remembering relations of the units: gram, kilogram and tone it is enough to emphasize the fact that every next of them is **thousand times** bigger than the previous. In the second class, in solving the tasks the priority should be given to demands that the students identify the reasons for usage of every one of the stated measuring units.

Word **length** is a homonym, commonly used. It is nominally tied to the concept of measuring straight lines (segments) or the shortest distance between two points, in geometry as well as in real space. Length is also used to express measurement of all limited lines, which is a superior or wider concept than the previous one. However, measuring units in both spaces are segments therefore it is not possible to directly determine measuring number for curved lines.

In practice we are usually satisfied to get an approximate result when calculating length of curved lines. We usually do that in a way that on a curved line, between the end points, we take a big enough number of "closer" points which make an appropriate inscribed broken line with their tendons. If we use tangent lines in all points, their intersections and end point of the curved line, the right inscribed broken line has been determined. Constructed in such a way that lines can be measured and the arithmetic mean of their segments can be taken as approximate length of the curved line. Therefore, it is possible to conduct the described procedure so that it "satisfies" the previously required measuring accuracy. Approximate length of the path crossed, no matter the shape of the path, is measured with special instruments which all the modern vehicles have.

It is common that in real, three-dimensional space relatively determined names are used for dimensions: length, width and height. Height is always determined according to direction (cross-axis) normal to the plane of the ground, around the place where the man stands. A man determines the width in the direction of his wide open arms, parallel to the ground. Length of the body is considered to be the longest segment, whose end points belong to the surface of the body. Whether they are called length, width or height, all three sizes are determined by length.

At the end of the first grade, there are two lessons provided for preliminary formation of the concepts of segment and meter, as basic measuring units. Basis for the interactive realization of the teaching objective and task is the teaching set and the application of demonstrative and experimental methods. In interactive dialog with

pupils teacher emphasizes the necessity for measuring of all lengths there should be unified and constant measuring unit. That measuring unit is called meter and is the official measuring unit for length worldwide. It is desirable to point out to the pupils that there is a long kept special stick, exactly one meter long whose length hadn't changed over time. People who needed precise length measuring could, based on that stick, compare and coordinate their "meters".

For understanding, measuring and assessing the length in meters, two classes of mathematics are not enough. That is why integrated teaching with the subject World around us should be used and in that way additional interactive processing could be conducted. Having that in mind, special attention should be devoted to segments of curved lines. For example, the teacher can set differentiated support with feedback. Can the length of a string be measured if it is in a ball? Can the length of the entire ball of string be measured? What if the ball of string is rolled out and the string "stretched", can the length be measured in that case? At the end an experiment with 3m long ball of string is conducted.

In the second grade, there are two lessons planned for drawing and comparing segments as an introduction for widening the knowledge about the length. After that, the teacher should prepare and conduct four lessons for introducing measuring units (meter, decimetre and centimetre) and the lengths expressed in those units to the pupils. At the same time to point out the need for introduction of measuring units smaller than a meter. For that purpose, try measuring with a "carpentry meter" model of a segment, whose measuring number is in meters and does not belong to the set N, for example, the edges of a classroom floor. After introducing the concepts of decimetre and centimetre, we measure the given segment with "role meter", and express its length in centimetres. Foundation for further interactive processing is the teaching set and the application of demonstrative and experimental method.

In the third grade there is one lesson planned for revision and broadening the knowledge and skills of the pupils about length, adopted in the second grade. That lesson should be conducted interactively, by using similar methods, shapes and means which have been used in the previous processing. After that, there are two classes planned for introducing millimetre and kilometre and their use in the determination of lengths of certain sizes.

Models of sizes whose length is expressed in millimetres are in the teaching set or are given in the notebook. At the same time, pupils use triangle of ruler and tackle the tasks individually. Models of sizes, whose length is in kilometres, can be found only outside the classroom. Experiments, which would be used to immediately measure, are practically impossible. However, it is necessary that the teacher with his pupils walks the distance of one kilometre in the school surroundings (the starting and end point can be closely determined with the help of a vehicle) and determine the time for walking distance.

In that way, pupils can closely determine the length of their movements, whose length is shorter or longer than one kilometre. That kind of experiment is supposed to be recommended to them with the objective of acquiring the ability of assessing the length of certain sizes. Assessing the segment by observing makes sense, if the

observer is in the right place and the measured size is not too big. In order to realize the objectives and tasks described, it is necessary to integrate the teaching with the primary sciences teaching.

Part of the space which is consumed by the body is called **volume.** Under that concept we consider the surface that limits the body and the inner area of the body. Word volume is also used for expressing measurements of parts of a space limited in those ways. In the geometry of Euclid the body consists of points which are the primary concept. Straight line and plane are also primary concepts; however, the body cannot contain only their limited parts.

Bodies in real space can be made of different materials, and consist of the so called physical points and points of vacuum. For measuring unit of volume, the most practical solution is to use a body with the shape of a cube with edges of 1dm. Part of the space which that body occupies is called a cubic decimetre and is marked with 1dm3. If its interior happens to hold a liquid substance, then we say that its volume is one litre, a volume determined like that is considered to be a measuring unit for the volume of liquid and is marked with ***l.***

Processing of measuring volume of liquid is planned in the third grade with two lessons. Foundation for interactive processing besides the teaching set is also the implementation of illustrative and demonstrative methods. With introducing the concepts of measuring of units smaller and bigger than a litre it is desirable to remind the pupils of previously used units for length. For example, centilitre is relatable to centimetre, and hectolitre is relatable to hectometre. Even though the previously mentioned eases the performance of certain tasks, it is necessary to use integrated teaching with the subject Primary science teaching.

Model of interactive processing of measuring and measurements of surfaces

For processing and revising the material, teaching subjects of **Measuring and measurement of surfaces** is planned for eight lessons of mathematics in the fourth grade of primary school. Foundations for production of model of interactive processing of topics are theoretical determination of interactive teaching of mathematics and the teaching set Mathematic for the fourth grade of primary schools with practice tasks, part 1, whose publisher is Kreativni Centar, Belgrade, and the authors are Dr. Mirko Dejic, Dr. Jasmina Milinkovic and M.A. Olivera Djokic. Commitment to the stated teaching set is conditioned by the fact that it is very suitable for interactive teaching and learning.

First two lessons of interactive processing of the topic are meant for **comparing surfaces.** For the preparative stage of the first lesson (stage 1 described in this paper, in frames of five phases of interactive processing of teaching units), the foundation is page 53 of the teaching set. At the same time it is enough for pupils to tackle part 1 and 2 of the task, with differentiated support from the teacher.

In operative stage of the lesson (stage 2, 3 and 4) as an example we use tasks 1 and 2 on page 54 of the teaching set. Except this example, in this stage of the lesson, pupils notice and compare with the naked eye the surfaces of flat figures, which limit

the bodies to the inside of a classroom. At the same time, teacher notes that only surfaces of flat figures are being compared, and the pupils are comparing the noticed surfaces based on observation from at least two different places. After that, they put notebooks, books, ruler and triangle on the plain surface of their desks.

They put those items one on top of the other, in pairs, that is, they overlap the chosen co-respondent surfaces of the items. First they determine those matching items whose overlapped surfaces can be compared with certainty. For other matches, they use overlap as an addition to the assessment of comparison of the surfaces with the naked eye.

In verification stage of the lesson (stage 5) besides the summary, a pupil is required to bring a blank paper sheet from the block for art education and paper scissors for the next class.

For the second lesson, the foundation is task 3 from page 54 of the teaching set. During the interactive development of the task, considering that the pupils are using a big enough paper sheet, the previously mentioned dimensions are being doubled. Pupils first draw the figures and then they cut them out. Before comparing the figures, based on the task pupils are supposed to compare them with the naked eye on the drawing and also after the "cut-out".

In this way, the pupils are able to make sure of the advantages of comparing surfaces by overlapping them opposed to comparing them with the naked eye.

In verification summary, the pupil may be required to, with the differentiated support of the teacher, define the positions of the observer of the surface, from which he would be the most sure to compare them with the naked eye. In order for the lesson to have all the characteristics of interactive teaching, the role of the teacher is supposed to be only to direct and correct.

Lessons 3 and 4 of interactive processing of the topic are devoted to **surface of the figure.** For the third class we have prepared a more detailed scenario in accordance to the previously described characteristic of interactive teaching.

In the preparative stage of the lesson (approx. 10 min.) we revised the processed measurements and measuring from the previous grades, with the help of interactive dialog. At the same time, we use the first part of the foil which we state in the whole and which contains differentiated feedback support.

For which sizes have you measured values up till now?

Money, segment line, time, mass and volume of liquid

A pupil ran a hundred meters in twenty five seconds.

a)Which expression do we use to state the measurement of time of his run and is there a special name for it?

It is stated with the expression 100 m, and it is called length.

b) Which expression is used to determine measurement of the time of his run and is there a special name for it?

It is determined with the expression 25 s, and there is no special name for it.

c)How do we call numbers 100 and 25 in the stated expressions?

We call them measuring numbers.

d) How are meter and second universally called?

They are called measuring units.

e)Is the claim correct: measurement of size values are expressed with measuring number and measuring unit?

It is correct.

In one barrel there is 2 hl of wine and in the other 200 l.

a) In what relation are the measuring numbers of volume of liquid in those two barrels?

Measuring numbers are different.

b) In what relation are the volume measures of liquid in those two barrels?

Measures are equal because 2 hl=2 x 100 l =200 l

c) What makes it possible for measuring numbers to be different if the measurements are equal?

It is possible because the measuring units are different.

How do we call the measurement for the surface of a figure?

Measurement for the surface of a figure is called surface.

Since surface is a measurement, in which way do we express it?

Surface is expressed with measuring number and measuring unit.

Which are the measuring numbers of the surfaces of the rectangles A and B, if the measuring unit is square K?

Measuring numbers for surfaces of the rectangles A and B are the smallest numbers which determine how many squares K (measuring unit) are needed for the rectangles to be covered.

In operative stage of the lesson, (approx. 20 min) as an example and interactive processing we use a task on page 55 of the teaching set, with the part of the foil that relates to the surface.

In verification stage of the lesson (approx. 15 min), beside the summary, pupils commence their work on the practice task, on pages 56-58 of the teaching set. With differentiated support of the teacher those tasks are finished at home, as homework.

Foundations for realization of the fourth lesson are tasks on pages 56-58 of the teaching set. In the first part of the lesson the teacher gives feedback on the results of the given tasks and also the homework. In continuation of the class pupils are performing tasks individually, that is, individually with the differentiated support of a teacher.

Four teaching classes are devoted to the interactive processing of **surface units.**

For the realization of the fifth and sixth class, that is, interactive processing of the teaching unit foundations are pages 59 and 60 of the teaching set.

Having in mind that it is the last processing of the teaching unit from the section of measurements and measuring additional material is necessary to relate interactively the section with appropriate content from Primary science teaching. It is of extreme importance that the surface units are related to appropriate measuring units for length. In accordance with the stated, the processing should be interactively supplemented with the following additional explanations.

1. In preparative stage of the fifth lesson the following text should be used.

If people used different kind of measuring units for values of sizes, for their use in the practice they would have to get a measuring unit with the measuring number which has been used in that occasion. That is why in modern world, in accordance to a general agreement, unified measuring units are used: meter (m), second (s), gram (g) etc. In order to have as precise measuring of the size values as possible, nowadays devices for extremely precise determination of measuring units are used. However, for many years, special institutes were in charge of "keeping" exact measuring units of certain sizes, and the rest were used according to them.

With regard to those specified measuring units, other, bigger or smaller units are determined. It is done because of various needs for measuring "smaller" or "bigger" size values. In accordance with the previously stated, other measuring devices are used for measuring, for example ruler for a notebook, ruler for a blackboard, measuring device for a path crossed in a vehicle or aircraft, a clock, a scale, and so on.

2. With the help of interactive processing, in both classes, the relation of every unit for surface with a suitable unit for length should be established. As an example for the stated, the following ought to be used as graphic display for 1 square meter on page 59 of the teaching set.

3. The way converting 1 square meter into surface, expressed with smaller units of measurement dm2, cm2 and mm2 (1m2=(10 x 10)dm2=100dm2; 1m2=(100 x 100) cm2 = 10 000 cm2 and 1m2= (1000 x 1000)mm2= 1 000 000 mm2), with the help of analogy due to be transferred to reaching the formula which connects all other units for surface.

4. To get to the framed formulas, pupils should use the previously mentioned way, rather than just formally memorize them.

In the verification stage of the sixth lesson, beside the summary, pupils commence their work on the practice tasks on pages 61 and 62 of the teaching set. With differentiated support from the teacher, those tasks are to be finished for homework.

Foundations for realization of the seventh lesson are the tasks on pages 61 and 62 of the teaching set. In the first part of the lesson the teacher provides feedback on the solutions of the tasks, and then moves on to homework. In continuation of the lesson pupils tackle the tasks individually, unlike individualized but with the differentiated support of the teacher.

In the so called mixed inscriptions of surfaces, that is, with more measuring units it needs to be kept in mind that it is a unique surface which is expressed with several appropriate surfaces. That is why pupils need to express the inscription with verbally also, for example, inscription 2 *ha* 5 *a* 37 *m2,* would be: surface inscription like this consists of the surfaces of two hectares, five acres and thirty seven square meters.

Foundations for realization of the eighth lesson are tasks on pages 63 and 64 of the teaching set. In the first part of the class the teacher provides feedback on the solutions of the tasks, followed by the homework. In continuation of the class the pupils tackle the tasks individually, that is, individualized with differentiated support of the teacher.

The so called conversions of measuring numbers for units different from the square meter are to be performed in the way described in the example. The objective of that part of definition is also that different "conversion and calculations" of surfaces with different measuring units are practiced to the point of gaining **skill** and in that way also the formulas in the teaching set to become permanently adopted.

Conclusion

In this part of the paper we specifically want to point out the used structure of interactive processing of teaching units, which contains five stages. For the overall course of interactive processing of teaching units the second stage is of extreme importance, that is, the setting and defining the problem situation or example. Example, therefore exemplary teaching is used for learning concepts and simpler rules. Problem situation, that is, problem teaching is used for learning more complex rules and solving problems.

Other than flexible differentiation described in this paper, we also point to the connection of all factors which influence the quality of interactive teaching. Particularly significant role in elevating the quality of interactive processing of measuring and measurements is the one of the integrated teaching of mathematics with teaching subjects World around us or Primary science teaching.

It is our opinion that processing of measuring and measurements according to methodical frames and model of processing described in this paper is characterized by significant representation of interactivity, which can be experimentally verified and the assessment of the pupil's progress can be performed.

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EFFECTS OF PARENTS' CIRCULAR MIGRATION ON STUDENTS' SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT: EXPLANATORY VARIABLES

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Abstract: *The failure of educational systems to accommodate the needs of circular migrant students determined increases in numbers of school-aged Romanian children "left behind" by their migrant parents. The present study focuses on school achievement among children left behind, as well as attributional style and perceptions of parental behaviors, two dimensions previously associated with educational attainment. Two hundred and five high-school students participated in the study, out of which one hundred thirty-four have at least one migrant parent. The average grade for one semester was taken into account as an indicator of school achievement level, while attributional style and perceptions of parental behaviors were investigated with two adapted, self-administered instruments:* Attributional Style Questionnaire *(Peterson et al, 1982), respectively* Parent Perception Inventory *(Hazzard et al, 1983). Results are apparently mixed: parents' migration has limited effects on students' school achievement, while both perceptions of parenting behaviors and attributional style are affected. Based on these findings, we suggest deeper concerns for training students left behind towards adaptive explanatory styles and for maintaining good transantional family relations.*

Keywords: circular migration, students left behind, school achievement, explanatory style, parental behaviors

1. Introduction

Migration may be considered one of most acute reality of the contemporary world, and has complex implications for economical, social, cultural and educational developments. According to some of the latest European demographic reports, Romanians living across the national borders in EU constitute one of the largest migrant groups (Vasileva, 2009; Flander, 2011). Economic migration is certainly supported within EU community through regulations on free movement and employment (EC 2005a and 2005b), which determined high numbers of circular or temporary migrants, working and living abroad for a limited amount of time and changing destinations rapidly.

Recent pedagogical literature analyzing educational developments determined by increased migration mouvements, signals deeper concerns of specialists (Luchtenberg, 2004; Adams & Kirova, 2006; Brind, Harper & Moore, 2008), suggesting the need to assess potential effects and to provide responsive educational interventions. More and more international studies focus on explanatory research designs for low educational

attainments among migrant students (Stanat & Christensen, 2006; Michaelowa & Bourdon, 2006). Some of the factors frequently associated with educational underachievement among students affected by migration are social and economical inqualities in destionation societies, lack of interest for early interventions, early educational segregation in some of the European school systems, low self-image and self-esteem among migrant students resulted from ignoring ethnic minorities whenever new school curriculum is proposed, deficiencies in school management (lack of cooporation between teachers, poor educational resources, low parental involvement etc.), low preoccupation for bilingualism or pluringualism, and, ultimately, societal discrimination (Adams & Kirova, 2006; Brind, Harper & Moore, 2008).

Although the present study deals with implications of parental circular migration on school achievement among Romanian students left behind by migrant parents, some of the previously mentioned information is certainly valuable in understanding the education-related outcomes of these new forms of intra-European migration. On the other hand, we have to stress the lack of research efforts invested at European level for clarifying some of the unaccounted outcomes of work migration, namely the phenomenon of children left behind by their migrant parents.

Romanian research oriented towards educational effects of recent migration is rather limited and refers mainly to school results of Romanian children left behind by at least one circular or temporary migrant parent (Gherguț, 2007; Irimescu & Lupu, 2007; Toth et al., 2007; Luca, Gulei & Azoitei, 2007). Although no agreement was reached to this point, children separated by both parents and cared for by members of extended families are mostly exposed to educational failure, but school results are not significantly lower when compared with those obtained by their peers from non-migrant families, if socio-demographic variables are controlled (Sava, 2010). Adittionally, negative effects of parental abscence is compensated through higher access to communication technologies and equipement, as well as overall improved life conditions. The deepest negative effects of parental migration are depicted in relation with their social and emotional life (Robila, 2011).

The present study draws on empirical evidences collected in a larger research project aiming to uncover variables related to school achievement among Romanian children affected by parental and family migration, which includes students left behind by migrant parents, migrant students schooled in different educational systems, and returned migrant students, previously attending educational programs abroad. In this paper we report partial research data for Romanian students affected by parental migration, left behind in the home-country by at least one migrant parent. The central aim of the study is to highlight potential variations in students' perceptions about parental behaviors and explanatory styles, according to family migration history. Moreover, the two variables are also approached as determinants of school performances, in order to prepare a more comprehensive research frame, which needs to include additional explanatory dimensions (G.Kelemen, 2011). Obviously, complex structural models proposed for explaining school achievement are desirable, if compared with fragmented approaches which isolate one factor or another (Schreiber, 2002). Therefore, we need to stress from the beginning the limmits of our demarche,

taking into account only few of the explanatory variables related in the literature with school achievement. However, both parental behavior and attributional style have a high relevance in explaining school performance of children from families affected by circular migration, as noted in previous contributions.

Family support was mentioned in relation to educational attainment, regardless the age groups covered in the research samples (Singh et al, 1995; Schoon & Parsons, 2002). Studies suggest that children can have successful school records, even if they come from families with low socio-economic status, but most successful students benefit from high quality parental involvement (Schoon & Parsons, 2002). Based on a study on a representative sample of American adolescents, Feinstein & Symons (1999) concluded that parental involvement influences adolescents' attitudes toward school and school performance. Obviously, there are studies that state just the opposite, indicating a growing impact of discrete variables on adolescents' school achivement, in addition with a lower impact of parental practices (Sacker et al, 2002).

Explanatory or attributional style was also connected with school achievement, regardless the subjects' age (Park & Kim, 1998; Bridges, 2001; Khodayarifard, Brinthaupt & Anshel, 2010). Numerous studies have supported the connection between pessimistic attributional style (internal attributions in case of failure and external attributions in successful situations) and depressive symptoms (Abramson et al., 1999), but there are also studies indicating high correlations of explanatory styles to success in various educational and professional activities, and even health. Recent studies on the relationship between explanatory style and academic performance are contradictory: some show that students with pessimistic attributional style obtain significantly better results on tests than those with an optimistic explanatory style (Gibb et al, 2002), while others show that students who produce depressive attributions obtain lower average scores than their peers, in all main academic areas (Fosterling & Binser, 2002).

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The sample included two hundred and five high school students enrolled in urban school, aged between 15 and 18 years. One hundred thirty-four of them are affected by parental temporary migration (see also Table 1 bellow).

Table 1. Structure of the sample according to family migration history

Family migration history	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
No migrant parent	71	34.6	34.6
Temporary migrant mother	50	24.4	59.0
Temporary migrant father	52	25.4	84.4
Temporary migrant parents	32	15.6	100.0
Total	**205**	**100.0**	

2.2. Instruments

Adolescents' perceptions of parental behaviors were investigated with an adaptated version of *Parent Perception Inventory (PPI)* developed by A. Hazzard, A. Christensen and G. Margolin (1983). The instrument includes eigthteen items, structured in two parts illustrating positive and negative parental behaviors. Students are asked to rate the frequency of each described behavior on a Lickert scale (1= behavior is absent; 5= behavior is highly frequent). The original inventory is characterized by high internal homogeneity, and external validity (both convergent and discriminant) is satisfactory (Hazzard et al, 1983), and result are confirmed by later studies conducted in different cultural environments (*e.g.*, Durning & Fortin, 2000). The version applied within the present study has satisfactory levels of internal consistency: alpha Cronbach's reliability coefficient is .80 for the scale of positive parental behaviors and .70 for the scale of negative parental behaviors.

The effect of age on students' perceptions has been reported as non-significant, whereas gender has a significant impact: male students tend to report higher frequency for positive parental behaviors than female students. Also, if two versions of the inventory are administered for maternal and paternal bahviors, subjects tend to assess more severely negative maternal behaviors, and family socio-economic factors determine more negative perceptions of parental behaviors (Glaser, Horne & Myers, 1995; Durning & Fortin, 2000). Studies conducted in disruptive families, marqued by parental violence, sustain the hypothesis that marginal social status of the family modifies children's perceptions on frequent parental bahaviors (Baumann & Kolko, 2002).

Explanatory style was measured with an adapted version of *Attributional Style Questionnaire* (*ASQ,* Peterson et al., 1982), with a satisfactory reliability - alpha Cronbach's α= 0.77. The questionnaire requires participants to imagine hypothethical school-related events (positive and negative) and to rate on a seven-point scale whether the causes of the respective events are determined by one-self or others (internality *vs.* externality), whether the causes are stable or unstable (stability *vs.* instability), and whether they affect the subject isolately or generally (specific *vs.* global). Based on participants' responses, several scores for different characteristics of explanatory style can be computed: locus of control (internal or external), differential locus of control (the tendency to attribute internal causes to positive effects rather than to external events and vice-versa), stability (stable or unstable causes), differential stability (attributing stable causes for postivie events and unstable causes for negative events and vice-versa), and gloality (specific or global causes for positive and negative events). Positive scores of differential locus of control indicate self-enhancing explanatory pattern, while negative scores illustrate self-effacing attributional patterns. Similarly, positive scores of differential stability indicate optimism in explaining life events, while negative scores indicate pessimism. The adaptive explanatory style is presented throughout the literature as a combination of optimism and self-enhancement.

Participants' school achievement was estimated based on average school grades for one semester of the school year 2010-2011, as indicated by classroom teachers. The Romanian grading scale comprises ten levels: 1 is the lowest, 10 the highest and 5 is the passing grade.

2.3. Procedure

The instruments have been self-administered in collective sessions under the supervision of classroom teachers, and detailed instructions were provided by the researcher. Instructions included information about confidentiality and anonymity of research data, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. The data were collected in four high-schools from two North-Eastern counties in Romania; the schools were indicated by school inspectorates as enrolling high numbers of students affected by temporary parental migration.

3. Results

Migration history of the family (circular or temporary migration of parents, with all variations considered) significantly influences dependent variables considered in our study – students' school achievement, their perceptions about positive and negative parental behaviors, and explanatory styles. Academic performances are modified under the effect of temporary parental migration, although the effect is significant at the upper confidence limit, $F(3, 201)= 2.55$; p= .05. Students with both parents temporary working abroad obtained significantly lower average school grades ($M= 7.75$; $SD= .86$) than students benefiting from the presence and direct care of their parents ($M= 8.15$; $SD= .70$), $t(101)= 2.47$; $p< .05$, while the absence of one migrant parent does not generate statistically significant effects on school performances.

Likewise, students' perceptions about positive parental behaviors modify according to family migration history, $F(3, 199)= 4.17$; $p= .01$, while perceptions about negative parental behaviors do not vary significantly, $F(3, 199)= .16$; p= .91 (See also Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 2. Perceptions of positive parental behaviors – Mean (*M*) and Standard deviation (*SD*)

Family migration history	**Perceptions of positive parental behaviors**	
	M	***SD***
No migrant parent	3.33	.77
Temporary migrant mother	3.67	.87
Temporary migrant father	3.77	.63
Temporary migrant parents	3.65	.65

Thus, students with migrant fathers report in average the highest frequency of positive parental behaviors, followed by students with temporary migrant mothers and

both parents working abroad, while students benefitting from the direct support of both parents report in average the lowest frequency. Variations in this respect are explained through significant differences between students with no migrant parents and students with mothers working temporary abroad, $t(119)= -2.28$; $p< .05$; students with no migrant parents and students with temporary migrant fathers, $t(121)= -3.42$; $p< .01$; students with no migrant parents and students with both parents temporary working abroad, $t(99)= -1.98$; $p= .05$. Differences between the three groups of students affected by parental migration in terms of perceptions about positive parental perceptions are non-significant.

Table 3. Perceptions of negative parental behaviors – Mean (*M*) and Standard deviation (*SD*)

Family migration history	**Perceptions of negative parental behaviors**	
	M	***SD***
No migrant parent	2.30	.54
Temporary migrant mother	2.30	.80
Temporary migrant father	2.34	.50
Temporary migrant parents	2.24	.72

Result also indicate significant variations in terms of explanatory styles: parental migration significantly influences locus of control, $F(3, 186)= 4.46$; $p= .00$; stability, $F(3, 186)= 7.22$, $p= .00$ and differential stability, $F(3, 183)= 5.68$; $p= .00$]. Thus, students with temporary migrant parents tend to explain events through external causes, whereas participants with no migrant parents make rather internal attributions, $t(92)= 2.47$; $p= .01$. Father's absence determines an external attributional style ($M= 5.14$; $SD= 1.00$), while mother's absence affects more subtle this dimension of explanatory style ($M= 4.72$; $SD= .72$), $t(94)= -2.15$; $p< 0.05$.

Participants from families with no migration history make more stable attributions, generalizing causes of successes and failures ($M= 4.84$; $SD= .63$) than students with both parents temporary working abroad ($M= 4.23$; $SD= .62$), $t(92)= 4.25$; $p=.00$. Students with temporary migrant fathers report the most stable attributions ($M= 4.99$; $SD= .72$), and thus are exposed to extrapolations of events' causes in successful or failing situations than students affected by mothers' absence ($M= 4.68$; $SD= .80$), $t(94)= 2.01$; $p< .05$.

Differential stability, in other words the level of optimism, vary between students from families with no migration background and students with temporary migrant parents: although scores of all students included in the sample are positive, students with temporary migrant fathers are closest to pessimism than other groups ($M= .47$; $SD= 1.27$), followed by students with both parents temporary living abroad ($M= .49$; $SD= 1.21$) and those affected by mothers' absence ($M= .75$; $SD= 1.13$). The three subgroups of participants affected by parental migration report significantly lower optimism than students from families with no migration history - $t(115.79)= 2.64$, $p< 0.05$; $t(109)= 3.33$; $p< 0.01$, respectively $t(92)= 2.76$; $p< 0.05$.

Further connections between variables have been suplimentary investigated through a correlational analysis, in order to prepare a deeper predictive approach, with parental behaviors and explanatory style as determinants of school achievement among children left behind by migrant parents. Differential stability (optimism *vs.* pessimism) correlates significantly and moderately with students' school performances, except academic achievement of students with both parents temporary working abroad – r= .42, p< .05 (for children from non-migrant families); r= .45, p< .05 (for children with migrant fathers), respectively r= .44, p< 0.05 (for children with migrant mothers). All other dimensions of explanatory style, as well as perceptions about parental behaviors accidentally correlate significantly with students' school performances.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The central problem of the present study highlights some effects of current migration patterns on Romanian high-school students' school achievement and associated characteristics, as perceptions of parental behaviors and explanatory styles. Beyond circumscribing a certain area of interest – circular or temporary migration and its impact on students' academic performances – our approach focused on perceptions of parental behaviors and explanatory styles among a sample of Romanian students left behind by their migrant parents.

Although there are no previous studies dealing with the same dimensions of analysis, the literature offers some clues about the relation between school achievement, parental support and attributional style. Based on these prior foundations, we analyzed the specificity of these links in the case of students left behind by migrant parents.

Our initial assumptions are partly supported by the findings, as some significant influences of family migration history have been found in relation with school achievement. The data of Romanian reseaches focusing on similar issues do not entirely sustain these results, although they stress the high incidence of school absenteeism and dropout among children left behind by migrant parents (Irimescu & Lupu, 2007; Toth et al., 2007; Luca, Gulei & Azoitei, 2007). Our findings may be also easily criticized in this respect, if the weaknesses in assembling the sample and in designing the general research framework are considered. In order to provide more reliable outcomes about the influence of parental circular or temporary migration on students' school achievement, future studies should embrace more accurate research designs, considering all relevant demographic variables.

The sample included adolelescents and according to the literature we would expect non-significant variations in parental support and behavior among this age group (Sacker et al, 2002); however, results indicate significant differences between students from families with no migration history and students left behind by migrant parents. The latest group develops an idealized image of parental behaviors, reporting less frequent negative interventions. Additionally, explanatory style is also affected by migration history in the families: students left behind develop less optimistic attributional explanations, which place them closer to depressive explanatory patterns.

In line with previous studies on similar issues (Bridges, 2001; Khodayarifard, Brinthaupt & Anshel, 2010), explanatory style of of students left behind by migrant parents corrrelates significantly with their school performances.

Beyond a certain concern for deeper analysis and undersanding of current findings, we can suggest at least two dimesions of psychological and educational interventions founded on results already available: attributional training for all students in developing more optimistic, specific, and therefore adaptive and balanced explanations for success and failure, and encouraging migrant parents to preserve and consolidate close communication relationships with their children left behind, even though mediated by technology.

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QUALITATIVE ASPECTS OF THE INSTRUCTIVE-EDUCATIONAL PROCESS SPECIFIC FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS

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Abstract: The study represents a pre-testing of a social and emotional learning program taken over from the British experience and developed in Romania aiming at the research of major aspects regarding the quality of the instructive-educational process. The research is a qualitative one, developed on the semi-structural observation over 47 children from Iasi. There is a wide variety of obtained results and conclusions, confirming the advanced hypothesis regarding the best practices in the teaching-learning process, the attractiveness of programs for children and the improvement of the learning environment. The study ends with a series of useful recommendations for the practice of integrating social and emotional learning programs in the Romanian educational system.

Keywords: social and emotional learning, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making.

1. Introduction

1.1. The background

Social and emotional learning represents a new problem emerged in the sciences of education field, that is increasingly becoming a complementary component of academic learning and a revolution of teaching process, through the complexity and the benefits it generates. Of course this type of education has been not created in a void of educational thinking and practice, from a pure coincidence or from the spontaneity of the exploratory educational experiments, but from the challenges of macro-social changes, from the inadequate coping skills of children and from families and communities ebulliences. Although it's been a while since it was proclaimed the need for counterbalancing the knowledge acquisition in favour of the logical and axiological structures such as skills and attitudes, yet this approach is fragmentary, rather identifiable within the aims of education and less directly related to the explicit educational contents. This is due to the complexity and generalization being operated in the sphere of values which allows a much less analytical intercession, subordinated in measurable and observable behaviours. On the other hand, attaching an exhaustive importance to academic education, the learning of efficient ways of life management shall be considered as a natural aspect that the students will learn anyway, under the

premise that all adults handle difficult situations without having received special education in this respect.

Social and emotional learning, particularly as it is known in the U.S., is found in educational theory and practice in the international context with the same name or using other terms or variations such as: personal and social development, social and emotional aspects of learning, emotional intelligence, emotional learning, social and emotional competence, social and emotional education, emotional literacy, mental health and well- being, social, emotional and behavioral skills, life skills. After International Academy of Education and International Bureau of Education (UNESCO) social and emotional learning "is a way of teaching and organizing classrooms and schools that help children learn a set of skills needed to manage life tasks successfully, such as learning, forming relationships, communicating effectively, being sensitive to others' needs and getting along with others." (Elias, 2003: 7). In the chapter one from *Children Needs III* about social and emotional learning Joseph Zins and Maurice Elias define the concept as follows: "In simple terms, social and emotional learning (SEL) is the capacity to recognize and manage emotions, solve problems effectively, and establish positive relationships with others, competencies that clearly are essential for all students. Thus, SEL targets a combination of behaviours, cognitions, and emotions." (Zins, Elias, 2006:1)

In American perspective social and emotional education involves the development of five groups of skills summarized by CASEL as follows:

- *"Self-awareness*—accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence
- *Self-management*—regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately
- *Social awareness*—being able to take the perspective of and empathize with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources
- *Relationship skills*—establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed
- *Responsible decision-making*—making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; contributing to the well-being of one's school and community" (CASEL, Skills and Competencies, Web)

From the British perspective there are five social and emotional aspects of learning correlative with those from U.S., which represent the ultimate aims of educational programs: self-awareness, managing emotions, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

Training of social and emotional skills through formal and non-formal educational programs includes a number of obvious benefits summarized by Professor

Katherine Weare and Gay Gray of the University of Southampton in the study published in 2003 "*What works in developing children's emotional and social competence and wellbeing?":* greater educational and work success, improvements in behaviour, increased inclusion, improved learning, greater social cohesion, improvements to mental health. (Weare, Gray, 2003: 34-36). In December 2008, the Organization CASEL ends a stage of its complex multi-year study led by John Payton, Roger P. Weissberg and Joseph A. Durlak, with the report ***"The Positive Impact of SEL for Kindergarten to Eighth-Grade Students: Findings from Three Scientific Reviews" .*** This report summarizes the results of three large-scale synthesis of research on the impact of social and emotional learning programs on students in primary and secondary education. Thus, students who followed the social and emotional education programs have shown improvements in social-emotional skills, attitudes towards self, school and others, social behaviour, academic performance, and reducing conduct problems and emotional stress. Moreover, SEL interventions were effective, both in school and after-school structures, for students with and without problems, from different environments and at all stages of schooling. The results were preserved in the follow-up and were effective when carried out by school staff so they can be incorporated into routine educational practice. (Payton, Weissberg, Durlak, 2008: 5-6)

1.2. Nature and purpose of the study

The here study has as main purpose the deep identification of the specific of the social and emotional learning as it is defined and applied in the international context, and also the creation of some premises for a possible opening of the Romanian educative field towards these new challenges streamed from the spiritual and social life of the community itself.

The problematic which represents the fundamental of the scientific challenge can be summarised like this:

- The attractiveness of the formal school curriculum is decreasing and it is sustained by the worrying tendency of early school leaving of pupils;
- The predominance of informational aspects in a high quantity which is not in the favour of forming life competences and abilities;
- The increasing incidence of both behavioural and psychological disorder and educational deficits at children and teenagers, and the high request of adults for therapeutical programs.
- The decreased flexibility in the mutations on the labour market facilitated by the insufficient formation of key competences which stay at the base of every job.
- The rise of the number of aggressiveness cases and conflicts between pupils or between pupils and adults at school.

Although the research had as a starting point some issues, deeds, situations existent in the Romanian educational or social system, its purpose is also to look for facts, meaning to study the possible relations and influences that social and emotional learning could have on the problematic issues mentioned above. This study is part of a more ample and qualitative research which structured its general purposes as follows:

- The identification of the level of social and emotional learning knowledge and evolution in the international context;
- The synthesizing of the innovative benefits/perspective, and also of the limits of this type of learning for the educative theory and practice;
- The presentation of the fundamental element of the social and emotional learning curriculum and their specific hypostasis;
- Leading a program of social and emotional learning used in the formal educational system from another country in order to observe the main aspects regarding the implementation, and the reactions of/effects on beneficiaries;
- The development of an action-plan to integrate the social and emotional learning in the Romanian educative practices;
- The investigation of the level of influence on the social and emotional competences of children by developing this type of programs.

To profoundly experiment and perceive the basic references of the specific social and emotional learning, we selected, from the range of available present programs, the British experience as it is one of the few which uses this type of learning on a large scale, in a formal didactical context. Thus the "Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning" Program benefits of complex support-resources, developed for every age stage and it is an initiative which is available in the English school with offers of formation for educators, too.

All the implementation procedures are developed, the harmonizing with the other school subjects and curricular initiative is provided, correlative aspects regarding the learning environment are dealt with, there is a great set of resources addressed to both children and educators and school principals. From the whole program the Blue Set was chosen, which represents the first and second school year and fits better with the children involved in the program. We have to mention that in the English system before this set, the social and emotional competences are developed through a program of formation for early education (The Red Set).

The specific objectives of this study aimed two major aspects mainly on which the whole scientific engagement was based as follows:

- The conditioning of the instructive-educational process developed in the social and emotional learning program;
- The identification of response/reaction behaviours and of products of children's activities during the program.

2. Body

2.1. Work hypothesis

❖ **Hypothesis 1**: The program of social and emotional learning will be developed in high quality conditions from a didactical point of view;

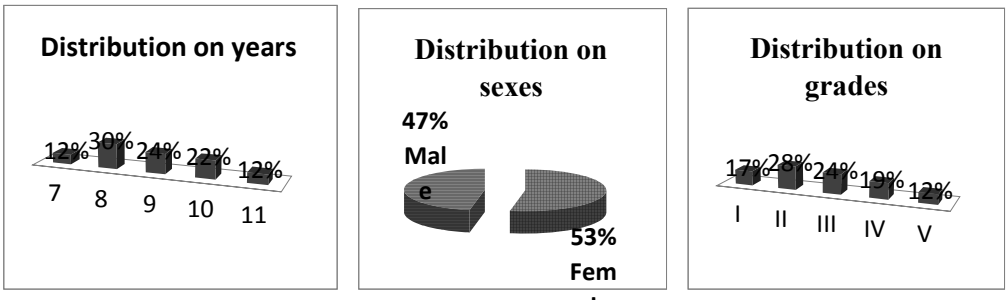
❖ **Hypothesis 2**: The chosen program of social and emotional learning can be attractive and productive from the perspective of the experiences, both for children and educators;

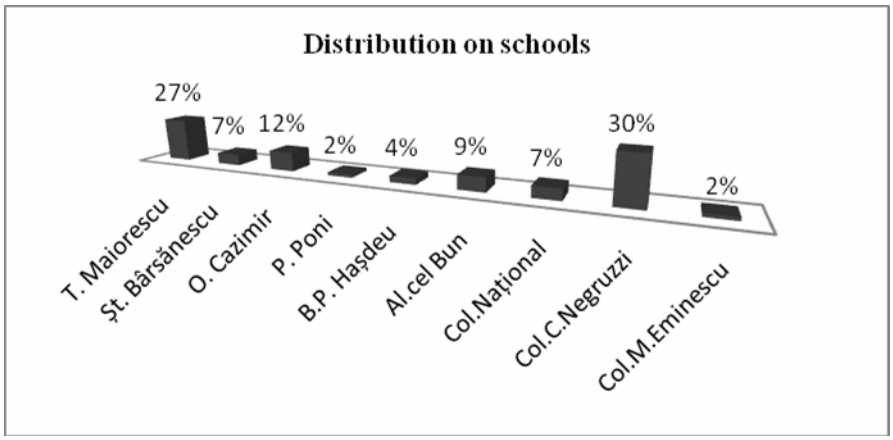
❖ **Hypothesis 3**: The activity of the organization will be improved from the perspective of getting to know the children, optimizing the relationships between people and the positive activity atmosphere.

2.2. The research group

The observational research was done on a group of 47 children with ages between 7-11 years old from 9 city schools (Iasi) in an environment of non formal learning at The Doxamus Resources Centre for Education and Family Association. The children attended the program partially or totally, 53% were girls and 47% were boys, they came from families with a medium towards superior education and life standard, they were primary school or 5th grade pupils from the following schools in Iasi: The National College, "Costache Negruzzi" College, "Titu Maiorescu" School, "Stefan Barsanescu" School, "Otilia Cazimir" School, "Petru Poni" School, "Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu" School, "Alexandru cel Bun" School, "Mihai Eminescu" College. The group was divided in 3 smaller groups of 17, 16 and 14 children; the first two groups attended the program at the same time while the third attended it afterwards after the finalisation of the first series of activity.

Figure 1. Distribution of research group after different criteria





2.3. The methodology of research

The research was done using the observation method in the Personal Development Program which took place at Doxamus Center and at the Sportive-Recreational Base for Outdoor Activities in Barnova. The duration of this program was of about a year and a half, including both the periods of school year structure and the holidays. Currently it was a weekly program (on Monday, Wednesday or Friday) between 4-5 pm, but sometimes it was followed by some games or exercises in other type of activities. During school holidays the themes were done between 2 and 3 pm of the same days.

The program was developed by following an identical translated and adapted structure of the SEAL Initiative – The Blue Set, with a doctoral candidate as instructor/observer and with two other observers (one of them is a Science of Education doctoral candidate and the other a teacher who constantly works with the group of children). The instructor/observer led the program and took observation notes during children's independent activities or immediately after their ending, and the other 2 observers did this during activities. Regularly after each activity there was a debriefing session with the observers where the most important aspects of methodology, of children's and educators' behavioural reactions were underlined. It also highlighted the utility of the future program and realistic action variants for implementation in the Romanian educational system.

If from different reasons the session could not take place immediately after activities, it was rescheduled for the same week, when time allowed so that the notes and conclusions be fresh in their minds. From this point of view the research method could be considered cvasi-mixed as it combines the semi-structured exploring observation of longitudinal type with a kind of informal focus-group of observers who shared their common conclusions and opinions. The high demands of the focus-group were overpassed by semi-structuring their discussions on themes oriented by the research objectives, but allowing though the freedom of speech for the eventual discoveries. We can assert that the post-session debriefing had been done, up to a moment, in a focus-group concentrated on collecting information and useful conclusions, and then secondarily, in a qualitative circle of problem solving or decision taking. We notice that the observation was direct, qualitative, structured on a deductive line of exploration research, developed on a longer period of time in order to lead the program both from the educators' and pupils' perspective. And here we must take into account the familiarization of the program leader with the curriculum, but also with the group dynamics, considering the fact that the approached theme focuses mostly on competences formation and less on acquiring information. Moreover, the educator who directs, transposes didactically and teaches children confronts himself with the challenge of his own values, believes, behavioural reactions and attitudes putting and effort of co-formation and restructuring together with the children.

At the beginning of the explorative research it was established an observation protocol with some pre-established reference points and with a large space of free open writing, and during the program development the initial grid was adjusted to make the writing easier as even the categories themselves became saturated. Thus we let a free

way for the manifestation of the serendipity phenomenon which allowed us note and structure unknown aspects or which skipped the initial phase of categorization or which became explicit while the social and emotional learning program was developing. An important aspect observed during the activities was the identification of the values and beliefs spread during the program and which are subordinated to the didactical contents. We must assert from the very beginning that the grid was not exhaustive, although it had been conceived in a multidimensional form. The observers were allowed a high degree of reflection by being offered the possibility to appreciate, understand, clarify, initiate and innovate in connection with their observations. A type of participant observation was chosen using the so-called technique of visible observer, but ignored as the group of children had already established security relations with the educator-observer and with the other two observers, and the notes were taken down in a discreet way, being substituted by audio-visual recording too.

We are going to present an improved form of the observation protocol as it was continuously used, mentioning that the main information regarding the method and organization of program was mainly approached in the final notes and in the debriefing sessions of the observers. This format of the observation grid is a reconstruction adapted to the needs of this research based on the transformation and reflection of various resources, among which we mention here:

- The class evaluation QAIT (acronym for Quality of Instruction, Appropriate Level of Instruction, Incentives for Learning, Use of Time) – an instrument adapted after Nesseldroft and Schaffer, 2000, which appears in an American guide revised by AEL in 2004 called ”Special Strategies Observation System-Revised: A Useful Tool for Educational Research and Evaluation” (Meehan & al, 2004);
- The checklist of the class environment and resources – an instrument from the same guide mentioned above;
- Checklists and observation grids of the lesson conceived by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills) of the British government;

The observation protocol was organized on 3 sections in order to cover, on one hand, the formulated objectives and hypothesis, and on the other hand, to combine structured and less structured techniques of observation. Section 1 – **The general grid of the program assesment** was used as a reference for observation notes taken during each activity, but it was completed wholly at the end of each theme during the program.

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

THE OBSERVER'S CODE:
THE OBSERVATION NUMBER:
DATE:
OBSERVATION TIMETABLE:
PLACE:
NUMBER OF PRESENT PUPILS:
THE NAME OF THE ACTIVITY (LEARNING OPPORTUNITY)

THE STRUCTURED GRID OF GENERAL ASSESMENT OF THE PROGRAM

Table 1. Aspects regarding the quality of the instructive-educational process

No.	EVALUATED ASPECTS	ABSENT	PRESENT
1.	The organization of information in a proper way		
2.	The pointing of transition towards new topics		
3.	The use of real and explicit materials		
4.	The constant assertion of main concepts and principles		
5.	Asking open questions, allowing the necessary time to answer them and encouraging to ask them		
6.	Children's capacity of exposure using the reflection technique of the acquired subjects		
7.	Connecting the acquired theme with the former abilities and contents		
8.	Making connections between children's comprehension and their own real life experiences		
9.	Setting the objectives clearly		
10.	Setting the learning objectives and the criteria of success together with the children		
11.	Adapting instructive-educative strategies to the level of pupils' abilities		
12.	The presence of teaching styles and active, experiential, multisensory and adequate approaches to the performed learning		
13.	The use of different ways of grouping in the approaching of learning opportunities: individually, pair, small group, whole class		
14.	The grouping and mixing according to abilities were thought to maximise the learning based on reciprocal		

	strengths		
15.	The stimulation of pupils' curiosity through examples and surprising demonstrations, experimental techniques of discovery		
16.	Offering the opportunity to reflect on what they learnt and how they will put it into practice in the real life		
17.	The use of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards		
18.	The constant identification of the strong points and the next steps for improvement		
19.	The efficient use of the time allocated to teaching		
20.	The constant corrective and encouraging feedback		
21.	The teacher's regular perception of the lack of interest and understanding of the subjects by the pupils		
22.	The manifestation of enthusiasm and humour		
23.	The modelling of own social and emotional competences of the teacher		

Table 2. Aspects related to the attitude/reaction of children regarding the program

No.	**EVALUATED ASPECTS**	**ABSENT**	**PRESENT**
1.	The pleasure to take part in activities		
2.	Active participation, enthusiastic involvement in exercises, games and reflections		
3.	The spontaneity of reactions in the developed activities		
4.	The engagement in activities both on a cognitive level and on an affective one		
5.	The presence of clues of behavioural changes, not only their verbal expression		
6.	Responsibility and the presence of the duty feeling		
	Assumed roles in the group dynamics		
7.	Wheel in the system		
8.	Leader and initiator		
9.	Isolated and selfish initiative		
10.	Stagnant factor of activity		
11.	The collaboration and the feeling of belonging to a group		
12.	Encouraging and appreciating the others		
13.	The independence and personal trust degree in accomplishing the tasks		
14.	The manifestation of the initiative and originality in		

	approaching activities		
15.	Visible effort, expressing productivity		
16.	Focus and persistence in the task		
17.	The pride expressed in connection with the personal accomplishments		
18.	The rapidity with which they involve in the task		

Table 3. Aspects regarding the learning environment

No.	EVALUATED ASPECTS	ABSENT	PRESENT
1.	Relaxed teacher-pupil relations		
2.	Creative cooperation atmosphere		
3.	The presence in pupils of the safety feeling when in a group		
4.	Self-awareness of the just and correctness atmosphere		
5.	Flexibility perception and the possibility of self-determination of the course of activities		
6.	The manifestation of humour at all the actors involved in the educational act		
7.	Reciprocal respect as human beings		
8.	The supportive environment from the perspective of self development and internal enrichment		
	Physical aspects of the environment		
9.	Posting of class rules		
10.	Exhibit of the tasks/products of pupils' activities		
11.	Happy welcoming class		
12.	Distinct activity centres		

2.4. Findings and results

2.4.1. Considerations on results regarding the quality of the instructive-educative process

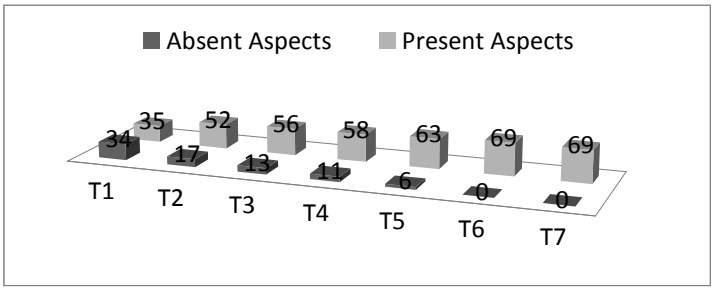
The assessments of the 3 observers were done wholly with the help of this grid, ticking ABSENT or PRESENT the aspect described for each item, cumulatively at the end of each theme of the 7 in the program.

As a general tendency we can affirm that the quality of the educative process developed in the social and emotional learning program is optimal, taking into account that the majority of the aspects mentioned in the grid were present (see the cumulative score by counting 81 Absences and 402 Presences). The weigh in percentages in what the assessment is concerned is 16.7% for Present Aspects and 83.3% for Absent Aspects. Consequently, we could state that **Hypothesis number 1** "The program of

social and emotional learning can be developed in good conditions from a didactical point of view" is confirmed by the assessments and conclusions of the observers involved in the research.

We can also observe a tendency of progress, meaning that while the program was taking place, there was a decreasing improvement of some aspects initially appreciated as being absent. This happened due to some post-activity debriefing sessions in which the observers talked about the observed aspects giving suggestions of improving the program. At the same time elements which were not under the educator's attention during the teaching process were underlined. Being aware of them, the educator could easily direct its self-control effort and self-management of the taught lesson. The little innovative "experiments" allowed during the instructive-educative process and given by the possibility of working in groups of 3 observers was quite useful for the improvement of the educative demarches. We also state that assessing as Present/Absent was done as follows: if the aspect was not present in a variety of situations, but it appeared only isolated, at the end of the theme when the information from the grid was put together, it was noted as absent. Thus from the evaluation of Theme 1 to Themes 6, 7 we could notice an obvious improvement of the quality of the instructive-educative process.

Figure 2. Absent-Present Evolution on Topics of section 2.4.1.



This has a realistic applicability to the implementation process, demonstrating that these types of programs need piloting for a longer period of time, on different levels, working in groups of educators. This fact is useful for familiarizing educators with the contents they have to teach, for releasing of their mental and affective reconstruction in order to adjust to the psychological and axiological state needed to approach the programs of social and emotional learning. This can be a useful recommendation for the development of the mentoring period for teachers at the beginning of their career when working in teams of educators with inter-attendance at classes, inter-practice at distance or with alternative teaching represents an efficient way from an experiential point of view.

Another general conclusion is related to the specific design which the programs of social and emotional learning have, although they can go on a classical structure, their contents being adapted on the formal demands of the instructive-educative process: sequence, spiral approach, levels of practice, consolidation and continuous

improving assessments. Over this classical structure there are the inclusive, stimulating and experiential strategies, involving the pupil as partner in the didactical process, the specific values and beliefs in conditions of proper formation of the educator from a social and emotional point of view.

We also tried to classify the items from the grid following different criteria of appreciation of the instructive-educative process quality. We did this to make our effort of considering the results and conclusions easier, without thinking about this ever since the grid construction, as we wanted to offer the observers more freedom. Thus, we propose the following group of items following the aspects taken into consideration in the assessment of the quality of the instructive-educative process.

- Aspects regarding objectives: items 9, 10

In what the aspects related to the aimed objectives are concerned we have noticed that firstly we need a clear specification of them expressed through behaviours, attitudes and observable and measurable actions, which are announced to children at the beginning of the theme or lesson and eventually negotiated with them. It was difficult to accomplish this at first because of both the difficulty of materialization up to a level of behaviour/reaction of the affective and regulator processes, and the prejudice related to the children's age which allows a limited involvement of them in decision connected to learning directing and behavioural change. On the other hand, this initial clarification and understanding of the objectives by the children facilitates the reference to the results obtained at the end of the program and to the implied benefits, things which orients the children and educators and give consistency to the program.

- Aspects regarding the content organization: items 1, 2, 4, 7

Regarding the content organization, every educator, no matter if he is a beginner or he has didactical experience, admits the necessity of this for teaching economy. There are certain details like pointing the transition to new topics and the constant re-assertion of the essential concepts and principles, which structures pupils' learning much more coherently. This is even more necessary when we talk about abstract concepts, subjective categories, attitudes and solutions to social and emotional problems. Regarding item 7, at the beginning of the program it was difficult to quantify the level of abilities, mostly the former contents, as although a certain level could have been estimated, assigning it to the children's ages, different life experiences, the learning done inside the family could have made this evaluation more difficult.

- Aspects regarding didactical strategies: items 3, 5, 6, 11, 12

It seems that the most important challenge in applying the program was the use of inclusive strategies, appropriate to the level of pupils' abilities and the use of those active techniques, with a low structuring level, with bi-direction done by the educator and children, and at the same time experiential and sensorial. For an educator who is quite compliant at the formal references given by the curricular design it is very difficult to constantly involve children in the process of personal development, to consider them partners in the study even if they are very young and allow them sometimes to orientate the activity development depending on their own requests and necessities. Respecting their own rhythm in asking question, in waiting for the best

time to answer, and also encouraging of their formulation represent exercises necessary to approach the social and emotional learning. The ability to work with inclusive strategies which imply a deep knowledge of the competences level, but also of poor dimensions, represents a step to individualised children stimulation in realising a whole, coherent and systematic educational model for each of them. As the cumulative scores related to inclusive strategies show (the report of 10 Absences to 11 Presences) it is necessary from the educator's part some deep knowledge about the group of children who he works with, but also a long process of familiarization and acquisitions in the piloting phase. This fact is demonstrated by the counting theme scores, because after Theme 5 the educator showed enough self-confidence in using these strategies. We mention that these acquisitions develop on a generous time as the end of Theme 5 took place after 22-23 weeks, meetings respectively. We should also take into consideration not only the hours worked by the children during sessions, but also the important time passed from a session to another given to planning, organizing and reflecting on personal experiences and restructuration.

- Aspects regarding class group/ organization: items 13, 14

The use of different grouping ways in approaching the learning modalities didn't represent a problem for the educator as he worked for each of the themes alternating with individual work, pair work, small group and whole class. This organizing element was possible due to the space structure where activities took place. As there were more rooms or work areas, we consider that in a regular school it would be very useful to have a special place allocated and organized for holding classes of social and emotional learning. It could have an endowment and specific design for the stimulation of acquiring social and emotional competences, organized on various workshops where children could retire when they work in pairs or in small groups. We also consider that the optimal group for developing social and emotional learning activities would be of about 15 children; consequently each class should be divided in two groups who would have to do these sessions alternatively. This would be possible in the form of the alternative development performed by each group twice a month or, more efficiently, its alternation with another object which needs a deeper/ more individualized approach, too. For example, in the primary cycle the 2 groups formed from the structure of a classroom could be alternated, participating in the same week, to 2 hours of a Foreign language and of Citizenship Education (adapted in the social and emotional leaning sense). It was even more interesting for the educator to take into account the grouping and mixing according to abilities, thus maximising learning through reciprocal support on strong points. Consequently after about 3 themes (12-13 weeks) this thing could be done in optimal conditions.

- Aspects regarding evaluation, motivation, reward: items 15, 17, 18, 20, 21

The assessment dimension of activities from the social and emotional learning program represented a turning point for the educator/observers as it implied a coherent management of rewards, the constant use of positive attitude of celebrating the results, systematic underlining of the strengths, but also registering the weaknesses which were going to be improved slowly. The scores regarding the Absent Aspects from item 15 referred to the worthy, exemplifying and relevant constructs, but with a metaphorical

cover and transposed experientially to stimulate children's curiosity. These needed a deeper practice and that is why they registered a progress in the sense of Presence at the middle of the program. Another important thing which needed an effort from the educator/ observers was observing the weak aspects individually for each child, putting it in significant learning situation in relation to his problem and highlighting when each progress occurred. And this approach has requested a time line, being also visible in the second part of the program. These dimensions were directly related to item 20 concerning the constant offering of corrective feedback and encouragement, although it had a smaller number of judgments the Absent type (4) since it was much more specific and formal compared to the other issues that became evident in a longer time. At the beginning of the program the teacher was not so used to redirect the students' attention according to the interest or level of topic understanding. So, in the debriefing sessions the observers drew out those moments, bringing them into the educator's awareness to produce self-regulation behavior and proper training.

- Aspect regarding the applicability in daily life: items 8, 16

Regarding the constant appeals to past life experiences, to everyday events during the weekly session, to the possibilities of application in future life situations, the observers felt that it was done properly during the program and especially after the initial stage of adjustment. Applicability in real everyday life was even easier as the whole social and emotional learning program exposes similar situations through stories, metaphors, examples and reflections of life. At the same time, the program requires the development of social and emotional skills in distinct steps, and which show their true measure only if expressed effectively at behavioral level in relation to other people.

- Aspects regarding time management: item 19

Time management was a factor formally considered by observers as insufficiently allocated conformable to the rigors of SEAL original program. However in the debriefing session it was highlighted that at least the first part of the program has become an "expansion" of time spent training to allow the pace of acquisitions adequacy of child and educator, as well as familiarity with the typical structure and teaching strategies. Since there were no resourceful constraints of time the three observers considered this approach appropriate, although it scored properly in comparison with the original program.

- Aspects regarding educator's personal equation: items 22, 23

As anticipated from the beginning of the program, an important aspect in teaching economy is the personal equation of the educator. This is the major feature that can make a program to be truly useful, beneficial for personal development of children or to remain a rigid curriculum, beautifully wrapped in what the rigors design of the instructive educational process means. Without the educator himself and, more importantly, policy makers and managers having been the subject of a previous training in social and emotional learning, the program will be only a suite of information, ways of solving problems, solutions which educational actors will talk about, but will have no contact with the emotional level or social context of effective integration of children. Regarding the expression on the excitement and sense of

humour (item 22), it had a positive assessment because the teacher as a structure of personality had also mobilizing and targeting energy type and often used humour as a mean of alleviating the emotionally charged situations or as a way of relieving the teaching atmosphere. Finally, it is found, even with a previous training of teachers, a personal restructuring it's happening when developing activities with children. In this respect it was quite obvious the idea of formation or rather co-training in the socio-emotional field, of both educators and educated.

We can, therefore, affirm about the quality of the educational process conducted under this program, that it is an optimal one, adequate to pedagogical principles and standards, and to the level of skills of children. Moreover, where there were sensitive issues that needed further correction or harmonization we managed to improve those issues during the program. Another summative finding concerns the need for proper time period for the rate of children development and the educators training to become converging in achieving homeostasis specific to the teaching process.

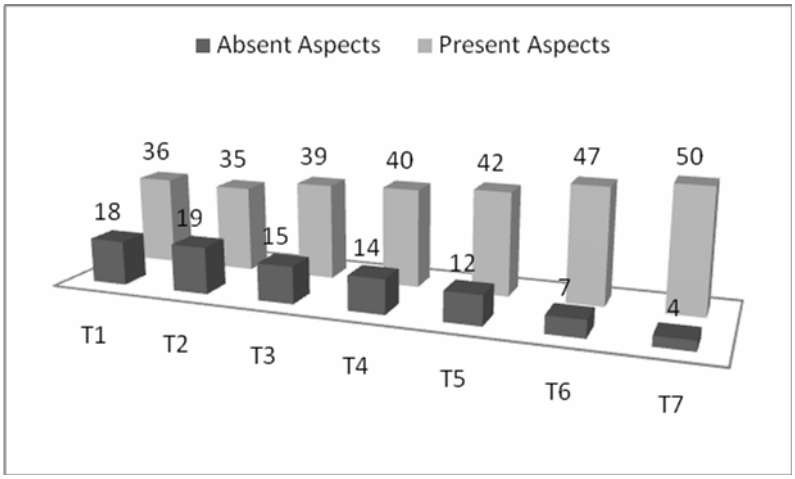
2.4.2. Considerations on the results regarding the pupils' attitude/reactions in connection with the program

Students' reactions in relation to the program are one of the most obvious beneficial aspects as the general impression created to observers was of attractiveness and innovation. Largely observers found that students were very attracted to the program, they wanted to attend it happily, and when, for various reasons they could not do it, they became frustrated. In most of the activities they actively involved, generating ideas, seeking solutions, spontaneously giving examples from life. We believe that it was quite intensified including that mixing in terms of skills, which gave them the opportunity at each of the activities to work either individually or in pairs, small group or whole class. As an overall assessment, observers agreed that social and emotional learning programs are attractive for children and may represent alternative structuring curricula that provide academic learning opportunities beyond the manifestation of the joy of learning and self-development at the same time. Thus, **Hypothesis number two** "The chosen social and emotional learning program can be particularly attractive in terms of successful experiences for children and for educators" is confirmed by the cumulative results of this research section.

This high level of attractiveness is given in our opinion by the active strategies of games, the prospect of immanent learning that finds its application in real life, in the very near future. Another explanation for the attractiveness of social and emotional learning programs could be relaxed relations of partnership type, based on mutual respect, which are very significantly in addressing issues from academic subjects in which the "relevant authority" is still the teacher. Life problems, solutions to difficult situations, the proper atmosphere of self-developing makes out of this programs modalities of inter-learning in which the educational actors exchange roles, can be as "experts" in an issue, since it is part of their own personal and social lives. This fact is illustrated by appreciating item 1 "The pleasure to participate in activities" with assessing as Present at each topic from the beginning to the end of the program.

At the other items, except for those from 7 to 10, we found the same trend of progression recorded on the base of children evolution through self-training showing beyond the visible, superficial aspects connected with attractiveness, a continuous effort of self-development.

Figure 3. Absent-Present Evolution on Topics of section 2.4.2.



Thus, the engagement in tasks passed from the manifestation at a cognitive level at the beginning of the program and emotional reactions, to the whole mobilization in the activities. Within this general trend, the slowest changes can be seen in the visible changes at behavior level and of those that require more acquisitions to prove the independence and personal confidence. Thus, item 5 on the presence of cues behavioral change, has a score of 11 Absent to 10 Present, most assessments of the Present type now being accumulated in the second half of the program. Also, the item regarding the level of independence and personal confidence in tasks more strongly manifested after running a good part of the program, receiving a score of 10 Absent and 11 Present. Item 6 (responsibility and sense of duty) and item 16 (concentration and persistence in the task) were appreciated and have to be analyzed taking into account children's very early age (7-10 years old), and these are acquisitions that require a high enough socio-emotional maturity. Item 12 which targeted the dimensions expressed in behavior, of encouragement and appreciation of the others requires more exercise ran throughout the program to overcome some manifestations specific for Romanian society, rather oriented towards competition and the appreciation of elites than the empathic conducts and respect for the other person's value.

A particular situation was set up by items 7-10 on roles in group dynamics, which was identified from the findings of the three observers who had typical character rather than the expression level or degree of intensity. Consequently, they have been unanimously acclaimed as being Present in the group in all 7 themes. We affirm once

again that observers assessing summative, have found the issues, related to items that were most representative for the group and not only isolated, as being present.

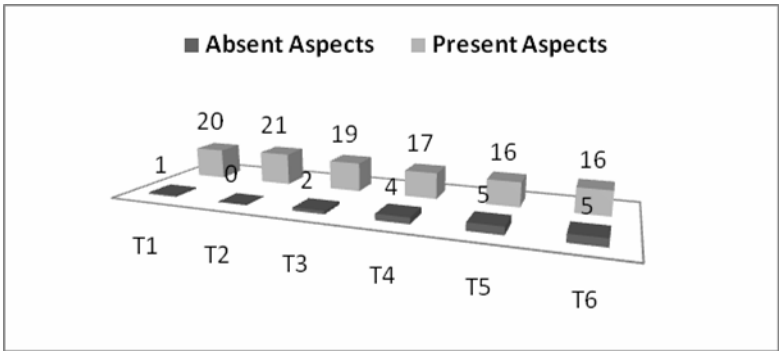
As a general consideration on the attitude of students toward social and emotional learning program, we highlight the attractiveness showed through the pleasure and commitment in activities, the spontaneity and speed of potential mobilization and medium-term manifestation of the profound changes in affective and behavioral level. Similarly, educators and educated acquired a sense of personal satisfaction and safety of self-development on a route whose construction stood at their discretion.

2.4.3. Considerations on the results regarding the learning environment

From the perspective of this analysis of the social and emotional learning program developed, it seems that the learning environment was the highest-rated, which is influenced by the expectations of the educational actors who knew from the very beginning the character of the program and the releasing from academic learning rigidity. We can say that the **Hypothesis number 3** of the research "The activity of the organization will be improved in terms of children's knowledge, of optimizing inter-human relationships and positive work atmosphere" is confirmed by the assessments of observers.

Of course, at the beginning of the program there were still processes of mutual accommodation between the teacher and children, by altering the boundaries of permissiveness and positioning one educative entity towards the other. From the educator observer's point of view, this effort of loosing relationships, of creating a sense of belonging and partnership, was a pretty long one because with the vast majority of participants had entered in previous relationships, specific for academic learning. It was therefore necessary to develop a process of setting limits, of clarifying the vision and program management arrangements for the program to be marked by profound changes in the personality of students and educators. Of course, all these findings focus on the same tendency of progressive acquisitions together with a long term development of the program.

Figure 4. Absent-Present Evolution on Topics of section 2.4.3.



From the beginning the creative atmosphere of cooperation and relaxed teacher-student relations were obvious and appreciated with a maximum score of Presence of 21 and 20 points. Clarifications and stages of awareness of supportive environment based on principles of fairness, required an optimal time to be present in the majority of group members (compared to 2-19 for the Absent, Present). The development of children's sense of safety in group is something which takes time as it involves elements of personal trust, practicing successful learning situations that do not affect their self-image negatively, that is why has become more evident from Theme 5. The belief that the program is quite flexible and the children can be at the same time influencing factors in terms of self-determination occurred in the first part of the program and was absent in the first theme, so children could perceive their contribution as being an important one.

A greater number of Absent assessments (although they represent a low score in all assessments of all sections) was awarded to items 6 and 7. In our opinion, showing humour cannot be fully present as it is a feature related to the personality of each individual, the optimistic view on life and the social context in which each person is formed. Of course that while assessing the program all observers have appreciated the humour as a representative factor of a climate conducive to inner enrichment. Regarding item 7, "Reciprocal respect as human beings", we believe that it represents an acquisition feasible in different stages and on a long-term, meaning that although children tend to conform to rules and social convenience in relationship with others, at the base of any learning there is the fundamental respect "stripped" of qualities and personal characteristics. It is obvious the tendency of criticizing the actions and reactions of their fellow, mostly of those with certain vulnerabilities, the strongly present competition in the education system (see the explosion of school competitions on various themes, the variety of tests and classifications), but also in the Romanian society as a whole.

A clear place in the appreciation of learning environment was given to the physical aspects, as they are quite well appreciated (items 9, 10 and 11 with maximum score) and as the endowment of space of the program had been done before the beginning of the program. On the other hand, posting group rules and students' product activities has been done constantly ever since the first activities. After the first theme, we noticed the need of separate centers of activity, either for group or paired exercises, or for conducting a certain type of activity (the relaxation and meditation corner, the friends' corner, the corner for solving problems).

In conclusion, we must say that the creative relaxing atmosphere based on mutual trust and cooperation is one of the biggest benefits of social and emotional learning programs and maybe a necessary change of perspective of the Romanian school in which all the participants in the educational act (adults and children) to feel satisfaction and personal fulfilment in everyday life. This would improve the school management more widely, transferring to both the entire teaching staff and support staff, and to the decisions made on behalf of the organization optimal performing.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

After piloting the "Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning" Program - The Blue set on a group of children in Romania, a number of conclusions and pragmatic findings, used in educational policy, on the integration of such initiatives in schools in our country, have emerged. We will present all these considerations concisely in the hope that they could be inspirational elements for interested practitioners or researchers who would like to capture the specific design of social and emotional learning programs from different angles.

- Social and emotional learning programs require a high quality level of the instructional process as it involves children in the act of learning directly, making them become more active by the chosen strategies, allowing the creation and structuring contents, valuing them as complex personalities with all their character traits. It is quite relevant the efficiency of programs in the sense of supervising the informational transfer to behavioral acts involving emotional life, so that these will be more evident in a short time in real life.
- The teaching process carried out in such programs is very attractive and enjoyable for children; they participated with their entire being to practice social and emotional acquisitions because they can act roles and assume different responsibilities, not just the one of a good student from an academic point of view.
- The teachers who lead these programs are „blessed" with the revelation of the discovery of pupils' personality in a natural way, showing their strong and weak points to require in one way or another the celebration of some of them and the development of other.
- The development of the modules has positive effects on the climate specific for the teaching environment, lowering the tension in the critical moments, releasing anxieties, allowing the presence of an atmosphere based on trust, reciprocal respect and sometimes having humorous moments.
- In our opinion, the success of a social and emotional learning program is conditioned by the training started from an early age and constant continuing during school life, with a long term effort to obtain efficient and consistent results.
- Teachers are the key in the educational demarche specific to the educational and emotional learning (confirming the proverb "Man holy place") and it is vital for them to be mature from a personal point of view, to be supporting factors for child development. Moreover, all the actors of education should also undergo this kind of personal development modules: school managers and policy makers together with all staff, including those administrative ones).
- The process of program implementation has to be conceived as a long-term one, having certain levels before its piloting, focusing on efficient promoting, identifying needs that will be met and "impregnation" of all decision factors with the benefits of social and emotional learning to represent key levers to support approaches.
- To have a greater probability of being integrated in the Romanian educational system, social and emotional learning should overlap Counselling Curricular Area for several reasons: it can use existing human resources with adequate

training in this area, there are already hours allocated in the curriculum, has several items of reference content (even if they focus on aspects of information), so it requires less financial means. At the same time school counsellors will also acquire effective teaching status, proving to be helpful and involved in all aspects of organizational life in a school.

- To be addressed in a professional manner, programs should provide all pre-designed sets of teaching materials, prepared and designed to be used in activities with children.
- Social and emotional learning programs should be very present in school, meaning that all human resource should be aware of the benefits, make use of the knowledge clues in their own activity as this is a way of challenging innovation in organization.
- The preventive perspective that the social and emotional learning has, allows further action on a broad set of deficient issues, from the lower level of pre-morbid state to a much lower reference of psychological and psychiatric services, to easier social integration, by acquiring various instruments used in a variety of situations.
- It can also be provided the alternation of difficult academic materials and sometimes unattractive with more enjoyable activities, loaded with acquisitions easily identifiable in everyday life and versatile in terms of used strategies.
- Another interesting thing to note is the holistic, systemic perspective on the child, and the school institution as a whole too, produced by the collaboration between staff, levels of decision, constitutive elements of the instructive-educative process, while integrating all preventive interventions from school.
- Alternative teaching by separating the two working groups of class is recommended and also facilitating the work in groups of teachers by inter-assistance procedures, inter-teaching and mutual assistance for the teaching process to gain consistency and depth.
- Assessment will not be done through grades or ratings, but through personal development portfolios, through the products of activities and accomplishments and through registering the bahavioural changes in other social contexts to which the teacher has access.
- Social and emotional learning programs aim at ethical issues regarding privacy, security relations in the group and avoiding situations of discrimination, so the involved teachers should approach these issues by defining the limits and available references in the training programs.
- Last but not least, social and emotional skills training at students represents a benefit which meets the employers requirements present in the labour market in terms of skills required qualifications beyond school, such as teamwork, the ability of innovation and initiative, the responsibility and flexibility in accomplishing tasks.

4. Acknowledgements

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DESIGNING AND USING INTELLIGENCE AND MEMORY ACTIVATING BOXES (IMABs) AS INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CLASSROOMS AND LABORATORIES

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Abstrct: The paper explains what Intelligence and Memory Activating Box is (IMAB) and opines that several of such boxes can be employed as Academic Learning Materials (ALMs) buy teachers during their teaching to deliver effective lessons to learners at the primary and secondary levels (Grades 1- 12 levels) who should in turn utilize them to study/learn. These boxes can be designed and utilized by teachers and learners alike to provoke interests and motivated to perform well and achieve better in their academic endeavours. The paper also outlined steps for the preparation of lessons that can be used to feed concept envelops and cards into several of such boxes and went on to outlined steps on how the different IMABs can be designed. It also pointed out how such ALMs should be used by teachers and learners alike.

Keywords: Intelligence, Memory, activating, individualized/cooperative learning, etc.

Introduction

Encyclopaedia Britannica (2011) defines intelligence as "mental quality that consists of the abilities to learn from experience, adapt to new situations, understand and handle abstract concepts, and use knowledge to manipulate one's environment"; and memory as "the encoding, storage, and retrieval in the human mind of past experiences." According to Okebukola 2002.39, "our intelligence therefore is our singular, collective ability to act and react in an ever-changing world". The time to utilize this ability is now, considering the fact that societies of the world are conglomerating to form a global village as a result of the advent of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and other gadgets. For teachers and learners alike to interact effectively to promote good performances and achievements in school science subjects during teaching and learning in this technological age; the activation of their intelligences and memories using effective and viable instructional materials is necessary. Based on the foregoing, teachers can prepare their lessons to accommodate sessions of interactions that should help to develop in learners the abilities to learn science subjects on individual or cooperative bases whether they are in the classrooms

or not. These sessions can be in form of teacher and learners' interactions in practical or demonstrations in the classrooms and laboratories or playing in small groups outside the classrooms and laboratories among learners.

On the other hand, for learning to continue among learners within the school hours or at their homes, Intelligence and Memory Activating Materials (IMAMs) can be designed by teachers and released to them to use either during their study periods or playing sessions. One of such materials is what this paper titles "Intelligence and Memory Activating Boxes" -IMABs (Pollyn and Teetito 2011. This box can be designed by both teachers and learners and be utilized vice versa during teaching, individualized or cooperative learning/interaction or be kept at the corner of the classroom or laboratory as reference boxes where learners can visit and make references to. Several of such boxes in form of square or rectangle can be designed and used to create science and technology corners in the classrooms or laboratories for learners to visit at their convenience to activate their intelligences and memories so as to perform well in their assignments, tests and examinations.

The contents of IMAB can be prepared based on the main concepts that can pasted on the surfaces of the boxes. It is expected that IMABs when designed properly by teachers and after using them for effective delivery of lessons, learners can utilize these boxes by opening and studying the sub-concepts contained in them; which are systematically arranged to give the formal knowledge they need to perform well in their classroom activities to achieve better in the different subjects they offer in schools. This paper is advocating the designing and use of IMABs by teachers and learners to help them increase their capacities to learn individually or cooperatively within or outside their classrooms and laboratories whether the teacher is there or not..

Learning with IMAB

Since learning does not have limitation in life but begins from cradle to grave, academic learning has systematized it such that learners can qualitatively, meaningfully and fruitfully acquire scientific knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to proffer solutions to their personal and societal problems of life which are emerging as a result of scientific and technological advancement of societies. Consequently, academic lessons normally are designed systematically according to subjects from the curriculum, syllabi or schemes of work. It is with this notion that this paper is proposing the designing of IMABs by teachers. Learners can utilize these to (empower their capacities) activate their intelligences and memories for the sake of lifelong learning, self improvement and self- reliance. The power to think as well and act intelligently is in every individual where an enabling environment is put in place; in this case provision of Academic Learning Materials ALMs or Intelligence and Memory Activating Materials (IMAMs) and games that are needed to encourage teaching and learning. According to Professor Howard Gardner cited by Okebukola 2002, and Pollyn and Teetito 20011, "all humans have multiple intelligences. These multiple intelligences can be nurtured and strengthened, or ignored and weakened". Gardner believes that each individual has nine intelligences which include:

- Verbal-linguistic intelligence.

- Mthematical- logical intelligence.
- Musical intelligence.
- Visual-spatial intelligence.
- Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence.
- Interpersonal intelligence.
- Intrapersonal intelligence.
- Naturalist intelligence and
- Existential intelligence.

Through painstaking efforts which are described in one word as "picolizing" or picology by Pollyn 2004, teachers can adopt strategies that would enable them to prepare and present effective lessons in their classrooms and laboratories. They can design appropriate learning materials for learners to utilize at their convenience to empower their capacities to achieve in their specific subject areas. IMAB is an academic learning material that depicts a slogan and a plea: "Do it yourself in the proper way". This plea goes to both teachers and learners alike. In preparing their lessons therefore, teachers are enjoined to think and reason systematically about the topics to be taught, work hard to design and produce lessons and materials that should be able to invoke learners' interests and motivate them to utilize their intellects through active participations within and outside their classrooms or laboratories.

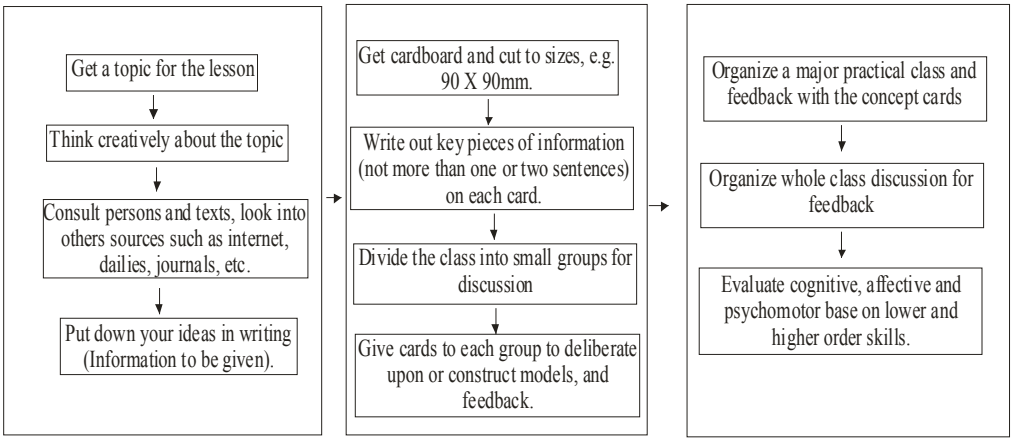
Nature of IMAB

Intelligence and Memory Activating Box (IMAB) is a box that can be designed by teachers and used to teach different concepts in art, sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics in ideally organized manners. In the lessons to be learnt with IMABs, there should be opportunities for learners to display their verbal-linguistic intelligence such as talking and making contributions in the class or playing games in small groups; display their mathematical- logical intelligence by solving problems where necessary; display their musical intelligence where necessary by singing and composing songs with the sub concepts in the lessons; display their visual-spatial intelligence by constructing and drawing objects and so on. Through these ways, the operational word for designing and using IMABs is proposed as "picolize" (Pollyn 2004). When people picolize, they are performing activities in the right direction based on the topic at hand which will lead to Right Teaching, Right Learning and Right Living; also referred to as 3RTLL (Pollyn and Wokocha 2008). The designing and uses of IMABs are ways of picolizing to bring about proper conceptualization in teachers and learners, innovations into teaching, efficiency and productivity into teaching and learning in the education industries.

Picolizing the lesson to produce an IMAB

The following steps put forward by Pollyn 2000 can be used to bring about activity-based lessons in the classrooms or laboratories. The lessons can be made into concept cards that can be introduced in constructed boxes to be used by learners.

1. Producing a lesson



2. Steps in designing an IMAB based on the particular lesson produced

1. Take measurements of 90mm by 90mm (less or more lengths) and cut out six or two pieces of equal sizes of cardboard.
2. Join the pieces using glue to produce a square or rectangular box.
3. Paste pictures/diagrams (chart) of the concepts under study on the six surfaces of the square box or on the upper surface of the rectangular box produced.
4. Fill the box with instructions/notes on the main concept in three envelops and label them as simple, medium and hard.
5. Place the box in a corner where it can be viewed and used to teach or learn.
6. Pick up one envelop e.g. simple and teach with it. You may pronounce the word on each card correctly and expect learners to do same or ask individual learners to suggest methods of using each envelop. They can also do this cooperatively both in the school hours and at home.
7. Release the box to learners to use even when you are not in the classroom with them.
8. Finally, ask learners to produce similar boxes on different topics at school or home and use them to learn at their free periods.

Sources of IMABs and contents

The National Policy on Education (NPE 2004) in its philosophy and goals of education in Nigeria outlines the five main national goals for Nigeria upon which education is founded and every lesson delivered in the classroom becomes a building block for such educational foundation. These goals are as follow:

(a) a free and democratic society;
(b) a just and egalitarian society;
(c) a united, strong and egalitarian society;
(d) A great and dynamic nation;
(e) A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens

The same document also has the objectives and subjects for every starter of the education system. With particular reference to the primary and secondary subjects outlined in it (National Policy on Education, NPE 2004), Intelligence and Memory Activating Boxes (IMABs) can be designed and utilized to bring about effective teaching and learning especially at the primary and secondary school levels. Other sources from where IMABs can be prepared from include the national curricula and syllabi, schemes of work and individual textbooks. In the designing and preparing the contents of IMABs, concepts or topics should be broken down to sub-concepts or sub-topics from simple to complex manners. On the other hand, the contents of IMABs can be made up of sub-concepts and sub-topics treated in the previous lessons. This box can then be made available for learners to reach and utilize at their convenience to activate their intelligences and memories based on the lessons they have learnt. A typical scheme of work from where several IMABs can be designed is captured from the science Teachers Association of Nigeria (STAN 2011) schedule of national workshops as follow:

SENIOR SECONDARY BIOLOGY
COURSE CODE: STAN BIO 301
MODULE 1:
COURS TITLE: BIOLOGY AND LIVING THINGS
COURSE UNIT: UNIT 3: ORGANIZATIONS OF LIFE
COURSE CONTENT/DESCRIPTION

1. Levels of organization of life.
2. Cell (Euglena, paramecium).
3. Tissue (hydra,).
4. Organ (onion bulb).
5. System (bird, man).

NOTE: What is expected to be done with the above scheme has been explained above, BUT STILL, see some examples below.

Producing the contents of IMABs

Formulate statements, questions and tentative answers on concept cards and introduce them into envelops to be placed in the boxes; for instance:

A. Levels of organization of life- explaining the main concept of the lesson first. Note: This lesson was prepared and presented at STAN Biology Panel workshop by Pollyn and Teetito 2011.

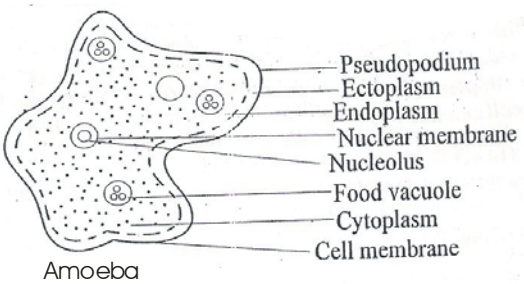
A. 1. Levels of organisation of life

Organization of life is the manner in which life exists from simple to complex forms within the environment generally called Earth. Life in living things is organised in form of cell, tissue, organs and systems. Living things exist in each of these levels or categories. Living things that exist at the cellular level are called single-celled-organisms, e.g. Virus, Bacteria, Amoeba, Paramecium, Euglena and Chlamydomonas. Those that exist in more than one or more cellular associations are referred to as simple multi-cellular organisms, e.g. Spirogyra, volvox, hydra, jelly fish; While those

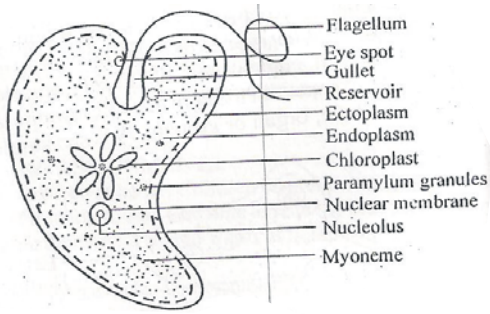
organisms that contain several cells, tissues, organs and systems are referred to as complex cellular organisms, e.g. plants and animals. Organisms in each of these levels are called living things because they possess life. Biologically speaking, life is described in seven series of events or broad activities which also indicate the presence of life in all living things. These activities also are known as characteristics of living things. They are carried out with corresponding characteristic features present in the living things according to their levels. For instance, organelles make up the characteristic features of single celled and simple multi-cellular organisms. Multi-cellular and complex cellular organisms have tissues, organs and systems as their characteristic features which include internal and external appendages. Level of organization is studies in the categories of cells, tissues, organ and systems (Pollyn 2005).

The cell: Cell is the basic, structural and functional unit of life. A cell is a unit of life in all living things because it performs basically all the characteristics of life performed by all living things such as nutrition, irritability, reproduction, growth, excretion, respiration and movement. There are free-living (independent) single-celled organisms such as bacteria, amoeba, paramecium, euglena and chlamydomonas found in stagnant water and watery and dirty environments. There are also non- free (non-independent cells) which are found in all living things, in this case, cells are building blocks of living things that exist as simple multi-cellular or complex cellular organisms. There are basically two types of cells; prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells. Plant and animal cells are examples of eukaryotic cells. They can be studies to find out or describe the differences between prokaryotic or eukaryotic cells or plants and animals. There are differences also between prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells.

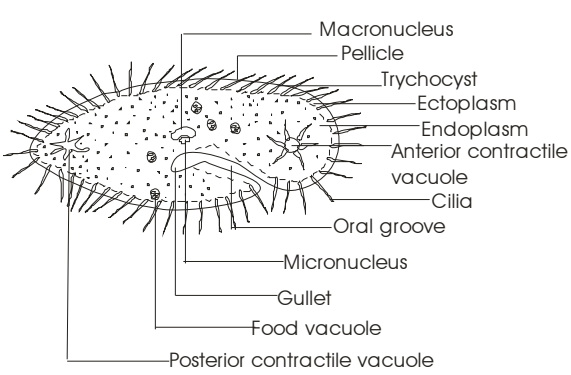
Information in bits, for instance, differences in the characteristic features of organisms can be described by way of asking and answering questions on concept cards and be introduced into envelops which can be placed in a constructed IMAB for learners to reach and use to study or play games with at their convenience. Labelled examples of free- living single-celled organisms are shown below. The organelles as well as their functions can be used to prepare concept cards.



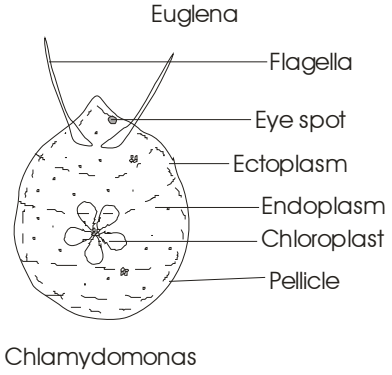
Amoeba



Euglena



Paramecium



Chlamydomonas

Source: Pollyn 2005.

A.2. Designing an IMAB with the above diagrams in three stages can be done as follow:

1. Steps for the Simple level

1. Create envelops with each of the diagrams pasted, e.g. amoeba on their upper surfaces.
2. Write out all the organelles of the particular organism on pieces of cardboard paper (concept cards) and introduce these accordingly into each envelop containing the diagram of the particular organism.
3. Also, write out the characteristics of the organism and introduce into same envelop.
4. Label each envelop as simple or easy level on the opposite surface of the envelop.
5. Introduce these envelops containing the cards into the box.
6. Use this level to present the rudimentary information about the organisms to be presented to the learners about the first level of organization of life; e.g. organelles in Amoeba are pseudopodia, cell membrane, nucleus, etc. See example below.

Pseudopodium	Cell membrane	Ectoplasm
Endoplasm	Nuclear membrane	Nucleolus
Food vacuole	Contractile vacuole	

2. Steps for the medium level

1. Write out each of the organelles and their functions on pieces of cardboard papers
2. Introduce these concept cards into another envelop bearing the particular diagrams of the organisms.
3. Introduce these also into the box, e.g. pseudopodia/cell membrane

Note: In this stage, the sub-concept being presented is briefly explained to allow learners to comprehend the lesson in bits. An example is given below.

Pseudopodia: Pseudopodia are movement appendages in amoeba which the organism uses for movement. These are false feed the organism extends to capture its preys and uses as food. In capturing its prey, amoeba extends two pseudopodia at the direction of the prey and tactically engulfs it with a little drop of water with which it digests it. After capturing the prey as food, amoeba can move away from the scene by extending pseudopodia in another direction. This is why the shape of amoeba is not constant.	**Ectoplasm:** This is the part of amoeba directly attached to the cell membrane. It is part of the cytoplasm but is very light in nature because none of the organelles is suspended in it.	Endoplasm: this is the part of the organism amoeba that is directly associated with the ectoplasm. This part is very dense because it contains the organelles that perform other functions in the organism. It is the endoplasm and the ectoplasm that form the cytoplasm of the organism.

3. Steps for hard level

1. Broaden the explanation of the concepts started at the medium level in relation to other concepts on another concept card, e.g. pseudopodium/cell membrane.
2. Introduce the cards into a different set of envelops labelled hard with diagram of the organism on one of the surfaces.
3. Put these envelops with the cards into a constructed IMAB.
4. Teach with each envelop or leave the box with the learners to operate during their learning process.

Note: In this stage, the concept being presented is broadly explained to include some physiology and mathematical implications where necessary to convey proper understanding of the meaning and structure of the concept under study. An example is given below.

Pseudopodium/cell membrane: a pseudopodium is an extension of the cell membrane which is made up of a single protein layer found in between double lipid layers which contain phospholipid, cholesterol and glycolipid molecules that form chains of fatty acid that determines whether a membrane is formed into a flat sheet or round vesicles. The fatty acid chains allow many small, fat-soluble molecules, such as oxygen, to permeate the membrane, but they repel large, water-soluble molecules, such as a sugar, and electrically charged ions, such as calcium (see cell membrane in Encyclopaedia Britannica 2011). The single protein layer in between the lipid layers allows the transport of ions and water-soluble molecules across the membrane. The presence of both lipid and protein layers contributes to the flexibility of the cell membrane. This can be the reason why amoeba can extend and withdraw its pseudopodia at random.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Intelligence and Memory Activating Box (IMAB) is an Academic Learning Material (ALM) necessary for all learners at the primary and secondary school levels. What the learners are expected to do in the utilization of IMABs and their contents is to pick concept cards from the box and read out or study to activate their intelligences and memories in order to perform well in their achievement tests which could be assignments, tests or examinations. Procurement of IMABs is the responsibility of parents and the government, while it's designing and utilization are the responsibilities of teachers and learners.

Delivery of adequate and effective lessons in the classrooms and laboratories is not in much talking but in the production of interactive materials that will provoke learners' intelligences, memories, and interests as well as their motivation to perform well in their academic endeavours, therefore the production of IMABs should be adequately sponsored by government and associations, and be utilized by teachers and learners.

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EMERGING MYTHS AND REALITIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

One of the key points in Late President Yar'adua's 7- point agenda is the accomplishment of qualitative and functional Education. This can be monitored through assessing academic achievement of students. Chemistry Education occupies a central position to all disciplines. This study examined the correlates between age and gender on academic achievement (CGPA) of Chemistry students. The study used thirty six (36) females and forty (40) males giving a total of sample seventy eight (76). Scatter – plot, mean and standard deviation were used for the descriptive statistics while univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression were used for inferential statistics. T-test was used to test the null hypothesis formulated ($P<0.05$). Result revealed a linear relationship between, age-CGPA and gender-CGPA.A low positive correlation coefficients was obtained for ages and gender ($r=0.006$ and 0.105) which were not significant. The predictor variables jointly accounted for 1.1% of the variance, age was the better predictor. The null hypothesis tested was accepted implying no significant difference in academic achievements of students. It was suggested that some more variables be included so as to determine significant correlation of students' academic achievement of Chemistry students.

Introduction

On assumption of office on May 29th 2007, late President Musa Yar'adua met a nation with vital infrastructure such as roads, power, water etc in comatose state, while key sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, education and transport were floundering (Ochiama, 2008). It was against this background that the president unveiled a 7-point agenda which he hoped would put back the economy on track. In his inaugural speech, late Yar'adua had said that his administration would focus "on accelerating economic and other reforms in a way that makes a concrete and visible difference to ordinary people". These, he said are the kernel of what has come to be known as the President's economic blueprint. He enumerated the seven point agenda as: power and energy; food security and agriculture; wealth creation and employment; mass transportation, land reforms; security; qualitative and functional education and pursuance of the rule of law. Qualitative and functional education at all levels of education has been the clamour for educational policy makers since time immemorial.

Chemistry occupies a pivotal position in Science and Technology and is needed by everybody and in every aspect of human endeavour (Agwagah and Harbor-Peters, 1994; Akinsola, Tella and Tella, 2007; Olayemi, 2009; Abubakar & Eze, 2010; and Abubakar and Uboh, 2010; Ejimaji and Abubakar, 2010). Since Chemistry education is

a compulsory subject in engineering and allied courses for tertiary education, then, there is need for a qualitative and functional Chemistry education to be in place as one of the fulfilment of the 7-point agenda of the Federal Government.

Quisumbing in (Acceladjo, 2004) mentioned that true test of quality education is the degree to which one can share what he has learnt with others to improve the quality of life. Qualitative and functional Chemistry education can be evident in the academic achievement of students emphasising their cognitive level. This now brings us to the issue of academic achievement in chemistry. Agwagah and Harbor-Peters (1994) reported that gender related differences existed in Chemistry learning and achievement. Busch (1995) reported that female students have significantly lower self-efficacy than males with respect to Chemistry related and other traditionally male dominated subjects including computer. Other researches on inter-relationship of gender and Chemistry have reported no significant gender influence on achievement in Chemistry. Agwagah and Harbor-Peters (1994) have reported that little differences are identified between males and females in Chemistry achievement at ages 9 through 13 years but at age 17, females perform poorer than the males. Tenzin (2002) reported that younger students out performed their peers in Chemistry, English, HCG, Science and overall scores while older students achieved at a higher level than the younger ones.

Hence, this current study is designed to assess the significant relationship of both gender and age on academic achievement of Chemistry students of the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Rivers State. Specifically, it will ascertain which variable gives a better percentage of variance to the academic achievement of the students.

Statement of the problem

The late President Yar'adua's 7-point agenda is to build on the greatest accomplishments of the past few years, concentrate on rebuilding our physical infrastructure and human capital in order to take our country forward. Development of human capital is a strong tool for a Nation's growth. A qualitative and functional education is an essential ingredient to rebuild human capital in a Nation. Chemistry education stands central to all courses, hence the all important need to focus on the quality of Education which is evident in the academic achievements of students. Several factors affect academic achievements, they include gender and age. So, the problems are how the effect of these two variables: age and gender contribute to the academic achievement of chemistry students?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant relationships and contributory effect of the gender and the age on the academic achievement of Chemistry student. Also, the effect of gender on academic achievement in Chemistry was ascertained.

Research Questions

1. Are there any relationship between gender age and achievement of Chemistry students?

2. What is the individual contribution of each of the two predictor variables: gender and age to student's performance?

3. What is the combined contribution of the two predictor variable to students' academic in Chemistry?

Research Hypothesis

H_{01}: There is no statistical significant difference in the academic performance of female and male Chemistry students of F.C.E. (Tech.), Omoku in 2007/08 session.

Methods

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised all the chemistry students in the School of Science at the Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Rivers State. From the population, the academic session of 2007/08 was used for this study. The sample consists of seventy-six (76) students made up of forty (40) males and thirty-six (36) females spanning NCE 1, 11, and 111 academic levels.

Materials / Data collection

The college approved cumulative grade point average CGPA result that reflects the overall academic performance for the session for each student was obtained from the records of the chemistry department. Each student's age and gender were obtained from the School of Science Education records and the admissions unit of the college.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The gender, age and CGPA of each student were entered into a database. The statistical package SPPP was used for the comparative analysis. Mean, standard deviation and scatter plot were utilised for the descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics was established using bivariate correlation, univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), t-test and multiple regression analysis. The scatter plot of the variables revealed a linear relationship, hence Pearson correlation was used to determine the significance of the relationship of age – CGPA and between gender-CGPA. T-test was used to test the hypothesis formulated for the study level of statistical significance was set at $\alpha = 0.05$

Results

Results are as presented below

Research Question 1

Are there any relationships between gender age and academic achievement in Chemistry?

Table 1: Correlation matrix of age, gender and CGPA

Variables	CGPA	Age	Gender
CGPA	1		
Age	0.006	1	
Gender	0.104	0.015	1

Result from Table 1 revealed that both Age and Gender correlated positively with CGPA, hence they both have predictive validity on CGPA. The correlation coefficients however, were not significant.

Research Question 2

What is the individual contribution of each of the two predictor variables: gender and age to student's performance and which variable most significantly affect their CGPA?

Table 2: Percentage contribution of Age, Gender on CGPA

	Age	Gender
R - (R)	0.006	0.105
R- square (R^2)	0.000	0.011
% Contributed	0.000	1.100

Table 2 revealed that Age contributed only 0 % to the variance observed in CGPA while Gender contributed 1.1%

Table 3: Relative contributions of each of the variables and their significance

Variables	Standard Error	beta values	t	Significance
Age	0.021	0.004	0.035	0.972
Gender	0.204	0.105	0.900	0.371

Research Question 3

What is the combined contribution of the two predictor variable to students' academic achievement in Chemistry?

Table 4: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis

ANOVA [b]

Multiple R=0.105 R square = 0.011 Adjusted R square = 0.016 Standard error of estimate = 0.80718					
model	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Significance
Regression	0.529	2	0.265	0.406	0.668 [a]
Residual	47.563	74	0.652		
Total	48.092	76			

a. Predictor (constants), Age, Gender

b. Dependent Variable: CGPA

Results in Table 4 shows that the predictor variables jointly account for 2.1% of the variance observed in students CGPA, the result is however not significant.

Research Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of female and male chemistry students of F.C.E (Tech.), Omoku in 2007/08 session.

Table 5: Mean rating, standard deviation and t-analysis of chemistry students

Sex	N	Mean	Std	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision on hypothesis
Female	36	2.30	4.27	76	0.09	2.0	Accept
Male	40	2.19	5.2				

The result in table 5 revealed that t calculated was 0.09 which is lesser than critical t-value of 2.0 indicating acceptance of H01. Hence, gender was insignificant in the academic performance of chemistry students in the 2007/2008 session.

Discussions

In 2007/2008 session the department of Chemistry/Computer Education, recorded thirty-six females and forty males. The highest and lowest ages for females and males were 35 & 15 years, and 30 & 15years respectively. The highest and lowest CGPA for females and males were 4.58 & 0.65 and 4.53 & 0.88 respectively. Findings from the study revealed that the two predictor variables age and gender had low positive correlation (r=0.006 & 0.105) respectively on CGPA of Chemistry students. However, the result was not significant at 0.05 confidence interval. This imply that both age and gender were positively related to the students. Russell, Barfield, Turnbull, leibach and Pretlow (2008) also record a low correlation coefficient (r=0.07) between age and GPA of registered health information administrator RHIA certificate examination scores. Also, Yousefi, et al (2010) recorded a low correlation coefficient (r=0.22) between age and academic achievement among 400 Iranian students in the age range of 15-19years. From Table 2, gender was a better contributor to the variance in CGPA of the students at only 1.1% while age did not contribute anything at 0%. Owolabi and Etuk-iren (2009) recorded a low positive correlation 1.3% variance between gender and academic achievement of Pre-NCE Mathematics students. However, Olayami (2009) reported an insignificant low negative correlation (r = -0.143) with 4.6% variance for gender-academic achievement of Physical Chemistry students of F.C.E (Tech.) Akoka. Using multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA), De Paula and Hlawaty (2004) reported a statistical relationship for their four two-way interaction of age-country, gender-country, achievement-country and achievement-age. Using the extended-fisher application, for the three levels of ages 13-15, and 17 year olds, they illustrated a significant difference on the 22 dependent learning styles.

The Beta values from Table 3 can be used to express mathematically the combined influence and contribution of the variables thus:

$$Y = 0.15 x – 0.018x_2$$

$Y = CGPA$ x_1=Age, x_2 = gender

Table 5 revealed a lesser t-value than the critical t-value. So, gender is not significant in the academic achievement between females and males in the department. Equally, Abubakar and Eze (2010), Abubakar and Ejimaji (2010); Abubakar and Ihiegbulem (2010), Abubakar and Uboh (2010) have all reported no statistical gender differences in Mathematics, Chemistry, Integrated Science and the overall School of Science students respectively of F.C.E (Tech.), Omoku, Rivers State in the 2007/2008 session. On the contrary, Yousefi et al (2010), reported a significant gender difference in academic achievement of Iranian students. Akinsola et al (2007) recorded no gender difference in procrastinatory behaviours and academic achievements between males and females students of University of Ibadan and University of Lagos.

Conclusion

This research contributed to the broad understanding of the connectedness of observable traits: age and gender on academic achievement of Chemistry students. It sought to establish the significance and relational effect of age and gender on Chemistry students' academic achievement (CGPA). The data have provided evidence of a positive correlation between age-academic achievement and gender-academic

achievement. Both age and gender were insignificant in academic achievement of the students but gender was the better contributor to academic achievement. This findings reiterate the success of the increasing clamour for gender equity at all levels of education which the Millennium development goals advocates for and in line with the Federal Government's 7 – point agenda of qualitative and functional education at all educational level towards improving the teaching of Chemistry.

Recommendation

Based on the findings from the study, it is recommended that for further studies, more predictive variables be added to age and gender so as to ascertain more significant predictors of academic achievements of Chemistry students. There is the need to keep learners firmly anchored on a set of human values; to teach young teachers how to process the vast variety of information so that they pick up chemistry knowledge that are qualitative and functional to themselves and the society at large. Interactive approaches and activities should be put in place to address our foremost concern of strengthening the moral fibre of our learners and opportunities inside the classroom and within classroom that will help them acquire life-long skill and imbibe esteemed principles and values, all these go a long way in improving the teaching of Chemistry for the attainment of the 7 point agenda of the federal government.

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AGE AND GENDER AS PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF COLLEGE MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE STUDENTS

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Abstract: This study examined the correlates between age and gender on academic achievement (CGPA) of Mathematics and Science students. The study used three hundred and thirty-two (332) students; two hundred and twenty-three(223) females and one hundred and nine (109) males . Scatter-plot, mean and Standard deviation were used for the descriptive statistics while univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression were used for the inferential statistics. Z-test was used to test the null hypothesis formulated ($P< 0.05$).Result revealed a linear relationship between, age-CGPA and gender–CGPA.A low positive correlation coefficients was obtained for ages and gender ($r=0.030$ and 0.111) which significant. The predictor variables jointly accounted for 1.3% of the variance, gender was the better predictor. The null hypothesis tested was accepted implying no significant gender difference in academic achievement of the students. It was suggested that some more variables be included so as to determine significant contributory effect of students academic achievement of Mathematics students .

Key words: Academic achievement, Age and Gender, Cumulative grade point average(CGPA), Academic Persistence.

Introduction

The quintessential achievement oriented domain education, particularly for college students', includes high performance on tests, passing courses and completing degrees (Habibollah, Margery, Shupe and Yager,2009).Over the years, researches have revealed that academic achievement has numerous determinant factors ranging from socio-economic status (Ajayi and Muraina,2011),students employment status (Wantabe,2005),learning disabilities (Shupe and Yager,2011),Students Interest (Udegbe,2009),attitude (acceladjo,2001),Guidance and counseling (Odubanjo and Adeniji,2010) ,teaching methods (Eniayeju,2010),School entry modalities (Cameson and Wilson ,2011; Olayemi,2009), Gender continuous assessment (Owolabi and Etuk-Iren,2009).Due to the quest for better academic performance of students at all levels of education. Researches have continued to be improved upon by studying joint effect of predictor variables which this study is one of such .Age has played a considerable part

as regards to education, like entry age of students to a school, hence age could be a predictor of success. Gender is the properties that distinguish organism on the basis of their reproductive roles as female or male(Abubakar and Uboh,2010).Sudies is fast disrupting many past erroneous belief that males perform better than female(abubakar,2010;Eniayeju,2010).The world is fast changing due to Science and technology hence the emphasis on Science Technology and Mathematics.

This study sought to find out the contributory effect of age and gender on students academic performance of Mathematics and Science students of Federal College of Education (Technical) ,omoku ,Rivers State ,Nigeria

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant relationship and contributory effect of gender and age on the academic achievement of Mathematics students. Also, the effect of gender on academic achievement in Mathematics was ascertained.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.Are there any relationship between gender ,age and academic achievement of Mathematics and Science students ?

2.What is the individual contribution of each of the two predictor variables: age and gender to students' performance?

3.What is the joint contribution of the two predictor variable to students' academic achievement in Mathematics and Science?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H_{01} :There is no significant difference in the academic performance of female and male mathematics and science students of F.C.E.(Tech.),Omoku in 2007/08 session.

Methods

Research Design

The study is a non-experimental type hence used expo-factor design.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised all the students of Federal College of Education (Technical),Omoku, Rivers state ,Nigeria. The college is a technical college that has five (5) Schools: Technical Education, Vocational Education, Science Education ,Buisness Education and School of Education. School of Science Education students was purposively sampled out due to the nature of the study. The academic session of 2007/2008 was selected for the study. School of Science has five (5) departments :Integrated Science ISC, Mathematics MAT, Chemistry CHM, Physics PHY and Computer COMP. Computer department serves as the technical department to all the remaining four department, so, each science student has prefixes: ISC/COMP,MATHS/COMP,CHM/COMP AND PHY/COMP. In 2007/2008 academic session, ISC recorded One hundred and forty-five students; Mathematics recorded seventy-eight (78) students ,Chemistry department had seventy-six (76) students while Physics recorded thirty-three (33) students. So, all the three hundred and thirty-two (332) Mathematics and Science students constituted the sample for the study.

Data collection

The study employed secondary data for the study. Data was obtained from School of science Education data records and the admissions unit of the College. The

college approved result that reflects each students session cumulative grade point average CGPA were obtained from School of Science record data base. For the records ,CGPA of students is the cumulative Grade point average divided by the cumulative credit unit of all the courses registered and taken by each student for first and second semester. Age and gender of the students were obtained from the admissions unit of the college.

Data Analysis

The age, gender and CGPA of each student were entered into a data base .The statistical package SPSS was used for the comparative analysis. Mean, standard deviation and scatter plot were utilized for the descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics was established using bivariate correlation, univariate analysis of Variance ANOVA,T-test, Z-test and multiple regression analysis. The scatter plot of the variables revealed a linear relationship ,hence Pearson's correlation was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the predictors age, and gender and the dependent variable CGPA.

Results are as presented below

Table 1: Percentage Gender composition of Mathematics and Science Students

Department	female	%	Male	%	Total
ISC/COMP (06)	115	79	30	21	145
MAT/COMP(07)	38	49	40	51	78
CHM/COMP(08)	55	72	21	28	76
PHY/COMP(09)	15	45	18	55	33
TOTAL	223	67	109	33	332

Research Question 1

Are there any relationship between gender ,age and academic achievement of Mathematics and Science students ?

Table 2: Correlation matrix of age, gender and CGPA

Variables	CGPA	Age	Gender
CGPA	1		
Age	0.030	1	
Gender	0.111*	-0.006	1

*Correlation significant ($P< 0.05$)

Research Question 2

What is the individual contribution of each of the two predictor variables: gender and age to students' performance?

Table 3: Percentage contribution of Age, Gender on CGPA

	Age	Gender
Multiple R	0.030	0.111
R square (R^2)	0.001	0.012
% Contribution	0.1	1.2

Table 3 revealed that Age contributed only 0.1% to the variance observed in CGPA while Gender contributed 1.2%.

Table 4:Relative contribution of each of the variables and their significance

Variables	Standard Error	Beta values	t	Significance
Age	0.014	0.031	0.559	0.577
Gender	0.104	0.111	2.036	0.043

Research Question 3

What is the combined contribution of the two predictor variable to students' academic achievement in Mathematics?

Table 5: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis

ANOVA [b]
Multiple R=0.115[a]
R square =0.013
Adjusted R square= 0.007
Standard Error= 0.89134

ANOVA [b]

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
Regression	3.529	2	1.764	2.221	0.110 [a]
Residual	261.384	329	0.794		
Total	264.913	331			

a. Predictor (constants), Age, Gender

b. Dependent Variable: CGPA

Results in Table 5 revealed that the combination of the two independent variables age and gender yielded a multiple regression (R) of 0.115 with the dependent variable CGPA.

Research Hypothesis

H_{01} :There is no significant difference in the academic performance of female and male Mathematics and Science students of F.C.E.(Tech.),Omoku in 2007/08 session.

Table 6:Mean, standard deviation and z-analysis of Mathematics and Science students

Gender	N	min	max	mean	std	Z_{cal}	Z_{crit}	Decision
Female	242	0.27	4.58	2.18	0.87	-1.76	1.96	Accepted
male	123	0.67	4.59	2.36	0.98			

Result from Abubakar and Uboh (2010)

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed the gender composition of Mathematics and Science students.ISC department recorded the highest enrolment with one hundred and fifteen female at 79% composition and 21% male followed by Chemistry department that recorded 72% female out of it's seventy-six (76) total enrolment. Mathematics

department recorded 51% males and 49% female while Physics recorded the lowest enrolment and gender composition of 15:18 female to male percentage ratio. Overall, school of Science had 67% female enrolment and 33% male enrolment.

Table 2 revealed that predictor variable of age had lower positive correlation than gender with their dependent variable CGPA. However, gender revealed a significant correlation with student CGPA. Gender had a negative correlation with age which was not significant .This implied that both age and gender were positively related to CGPA of the students. Abubakar (2010) earlier also recorded a positive but insignificant correlation between age gender and CGPA of Mathematics students of F.C.E (Technical) in the 2007/2008 academic session. Owolabi and Etuk-Iren (2009) however, found out that the best correlates of students performance in Pre-NCE Mathematics in F.C.E.(Tech.),Akoka, Lagos was the Continuous assessment score.

From Table 3,it was evidently revealed that age is insignificant as it relates to CGPA ,it was responsible for 0.1% of variance in performance of Mathematics and Science students while gender was responsible for 1.2 % of the variance. Owolabi and and Etuk-Iren (2009) recorded a similar result where gender was responsible foe 1.3% of the variance in the performance of two hundred and thirty-three (231) Pre-NCE Mathematics students of F.C. E (Technical), Akoka, Lagos state. Abubakar (2010) however recorded a 0% variance contribution in the CGPA of Mathematics students of F.C.E.(T),Omoku, Rivers state, Nigeria.

From Table 5,neither age nor gender contributed significantly to the varianceof CGPA of the students.The combined influence and contributions of the variables can be presented thus:

$Y = 0.031x_1 + 0.111\ x_2$

Where x_1 = age ,x_2 =gender and y = CGPA

Olayemi (2010) in his study recorded a statistically significant contribution of only average score in Mathematics AVM as a predictor of academic performance in Physical Chemistry using Year II and III chemistry NCE students of F.C.E.(Technical),Lagos, Nigeria during the 2006/2007 session among nine other predictor variables of chemistry score, attitude to Mathematics ,Course combination, gender, Senior secondary examination SSE Mathematics, NCE grade in Mathematics ,SSCE grade in Chemistry, National examination council NECO grade in Chemistry and mode of entry.

From Table 5, the predictor variables jointly accounted for 1.3% of the variance observed in students CGPA, result however was not significant. Olosunde and Olaleye (2009) found that combined effect of nine independent variables yielded a multiple regression explaining 63.4% of the variance in female students achievement in Mathematics. However, Owolabi and Etuk-Iren (2009) in their study using predictor variables of : Mathematics Performance Test, Mathematics continuous Assessment score and course of study jointly accounted for 24% of the Pre-NCE Mathematics performance Test. Wilson and Cameson (2011) found a statistically significant but relatively small achievement differences between oldest and youngest children when cognitive ability scores were controlled using three hundred and thirteen students. Ajayi and Muraina (2011) reported that social economics status predictor variable of

Parents education, occupation and real mothers age jointly produced 0.3% variance but was significant on academic performance of students in Ogun state in Nigeria. Similarly, Habibollah et al(2009) discovered that creativity ,age and gender jointly accounted for 0.143 of the variance in GPA of Iranian undergraduate students in Malaysian Universities.

Table 6 showed that male student had the highest CGPA of 4.59 while a female had the lowest CGPA of 0.27.Student with CGPA less than one repeats the level, hence, from ISC, eleven students repeated, Mathematics had five repeaters .Chemistry and Physics recorded one repeaters each .The age range for both male and female was between 15 -37 years. Hypothesis formulated was accepted ,hence, no significant difference in the academic performance of female and male Mathematics and Science students of F.C.E.(T.),Omoku. Abubakar(2010) recorded a similar gender result with only Mathematics students in the same session. Habibollah et al (2009) also recorded no significant gender difference in CGPA in their study.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Evidently from the study is the fact that during the 2007/2008 academic session of F.C.E (Technical),Omoku, Rivers state, Nigeria, age gender was a predictor of the academic performance (CGPA) of Mathematics and Science students. However, gender was a better predictor. Both age and gender jointly accounted for 1.3% of the variance in the students CGPA..The session also recorded no significant gender difference in CGPA of the students. In the general academic performance of the student, eighteen students out of the three hundred and thirty-two students used for the study had to repeat their level implying a 95% success rate in the academic performance of the students. This present study can be carried out in sister colleges to establish an affirmative or refutive result .Also, more variables can be included to detect what most significantly and effectively contribute to mathematics and science students academic performance.

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT AND MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN PORT HARCOURT

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Abstract:*This study explored the extent to which the self-concept of students in Port Harcourt relates to their Mathematics, and General Academic Achievement. The population consisted of 6,478 senior secondary 3 (SS3) students from 13 state financed senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt. Stratified random sampling was conducted to select 3 schools (one school each from 2 mixed schools, 5 boys' schools and 6 girls' schools). The sample for study was 300 SS3 students from the 3 randomly selected schools. The instrument used for data collection was the Self-Description Questionnaire 111 (SDQ 111) developed by Marsh (1992) which contains 13 self-concept facets out of which 2 facets (Mathematics, and General Academic) where adopted for this study. The subjects were tested in Mathematics and scores obtained. The general average scores of the students on their promotion examination from SS2 to SS3 were extracted from their school records. The Person's Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to answer the research questions, while the transformed t-test was used to test all the 3 hypotheses formulated for this study. The results of the tests indicated that Mathematics Self-concept is significantly related to Mathematics Achievement, General Academic Achievement and General Academic Self-concept. The main implication of the findings of this study is that self-concept and Mathematics, and General Academic achievement of students are so strongly related that a change in self-concept facilitates a change in achievement. It was therefore, recommended that educational programme designers and developers, teachers, parents and students should make self-concept development of students an educational aim as important as academic achievement.*

Keywords: *Self-concept, Mathematics Achievement, General Academic Achievement.*

Introduction

Students' performance in Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) administered by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), and the National Examination Council (NECO), continued to deteriorate from year to year, particularly in the areas of Science and Mathematics (Akubuiro and Joshua, 2004). For Nigeria, a developing country that needs Science and Technology for its development, the poor performance of students in Science and Mathematics and worse still, the very

insignificant proportion of students who choose Mathematics as a course of study after secondary education have turned the concern of the government and people of Nigeria into anxiety. This situation does not favour Nigerian's move towards developing a science and technology culture.

However, this problem is not peculiar to Nigeria. Even the developed nations have similar worry and concern. A Gallup Survey commissioned by Bayer Corporation (2003) found nine in every ten Americans concerned about the lack of Mathematics skills of today's students to cope with a changing world that is progressively more difficult to understand, analyze, or explain. Futurists predict continual change emerging from the effects of increasing world population, advancing technologies, environmental degradation, migration and immigration, and challenges to world security (Marsh and Yeung, 1996). In coping with these emerging challenges, students have a competitive advantage when they are able to draw upon meaningful scientific knowledge and functional mathematical skills. According to Cech (2003), a progressively complex world calls for increasingly skilled people who understand Science and Mathematics.

The unresolved riddles therefore are: Why the poor performance of students in Mathematics despite the lofty uses to which Mathematics has been put (Euclid in Principles of Geometry, Einstein in Quantum and Relativity Theories, Newton in Laws of Gravitation and Motion, etc) and is yet to be put? What can be done to check the deteriorating performance of students in Mathematics, and make way for the acquisition of the requisite Mathematical skills for the understanding of today's complex world and the demands of tomorrow?

Some investigations revealed that the questions above, and even many more others, owe their answers to the complexity of self-beliefs (e.g. self-concept) that act on the students (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987; Chapman & Turner, 1997; Yeung & Lee, 1999). The above researches have shown close relationship between self-concept and academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigeria nation and other nations of the world have shown tremendous concern about the poor performance of students in Science and Mathematics (Akubiro & Joshua, 2004; Bayer Corporation, 2003). This poor performance of students in Mathematics in Nigeria – a country that needs Mathematics for its development – deserves the total attention of educational planners, teachers and researchers in Nigeria for a possible turnaround of the poor performance of students in Science and Mathematics.

According to Marsh (1986), self-concept has been shown to be a very important educational achievement indicator as well as a desirable mediating variable leading to other positive outcomes, such that educational policy statements throughout the world list self-concept enhancement as a central goal of education. Whether or not educational policies in Nigeria list self-concept as a central goal of education is a topic for another study.

Suffice it to say that in Nigeria, few researches have been carried out which confirm the significant relationship between self-concept and Mathematics

Achievement (Bassey, 2002; Jamabo, 1996; Osang, 1990). A lot more studies need to be done to replicate the above findings in Rivers State and other parts of Nigeria to answer the question: "Why poor students' performance in Mathematics", and possibly suggest ways to check the negative trend.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not (and to what extent) significant relationships exist between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' Mathematics Achievement, Students' General Academic Achievements and Students' General Academic Self-concept. The following research questions directed the study:

1. To what extent does students' Mathematics self-concept relate to students' Mathematics Achievement?
2. What is the extent to which students' Mathematics Self-concept relate to students' General Academic Achievement?
3. To what extent does the Mathematics Self-concept of students relate to students' General Academic Self-concept?

Statement of Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following three null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' Mathematics Achievement.
2. There is no significant relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' General Academic Achievement.
3. There is no significant relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' General Academic Self-concept.

Significance of the Study

Based on the results of this study, the poor performance of Nigerian students in Science and Mathematics could be hinged, totally or in part, on low Mathematics Self-concept. Thus educators, curriculum developers, teachers and parents would see the need to list self-concept enhancement as a central goal of education in Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

The overriding theoretical orientation of this study is grounded in the perceptual psychology tradition. Perceptual psychologists postulate that all persons create their own reality through their perceptions of what they belief to be real. And that a person's behaviour is contingent on how an individual perceives and interprets his/her experiences (Combs and Gonzales, 1994). Thus from the perspective of the perceptual psychology, it is clear that to understand an individual's behaviour, we need to know how that individual perceives and interprets his/her experiences. In other words, to appreciate students' academic performance, we need to understand how students perceive and interpret school and school subjects.

The most influential and eloquent voice in self-concept theory was that of Carl Rogers who introduced an entire system built around the importance of the self (Hattie,

1992). In Rogers' view, the self is the central ingredient in human personality and personal adjustment. Rogers described the self as a social product, developing out of interpersonal relationships and striving for consistency. He maintained that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself. He also believed that in every person there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment.

Self generally means the conscious reflection of one's own being or identity, as an object separate from others or from the environment. There are a variety of ways to think about the self. Two of the most widely used terms are self-concept and self-esteem. Self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect of self (related to one's self-image) and generally means the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). Self-concept can also means the general idea we have of ourselves.

The idea of self-concept includes attitudes, feelings and knowledge about ability, skills, and social acceptance capability of the self. Self-concept covers all aspects of our cognitive, perceptional, and affective evaluation. Therefore, self-concept is simply a collection of personal attitudes towards oneself (Gross, 1992).

Psychologists have paid a lot of attention to factors related to the formation and development of self-concept. This issue is very important to the field of mental health, as an individual's conception of his or her person, which is linked to the personality, to a certain extent determines the attitude of that person to his or her environment, and to a larger extent the person's academic performance. It may then be suggested that if self-concept is positive and normal, the individual will possess normal mental health. Adversely, if self-concept is negative and abnormal, the individual may behave abnormally in his or her environment. The implication is that good mental health (resulting from positive self-concept) makes for positive academic achievement.

The consensus appears to be that self-concept is largely acquired. This point is very pertinent for students and for those who are involved in their upbringing, particularly their parents and teachers. Other factors affecting self-concept are the behaviour of others around the individuals, and social stimulation.

Marsh (1992) showed that the relationship of self-concept to school achievement was very specific. According to Marsh, general self-concept and non-academic aspects of self-concept are not related to academic work, but general academic achievement measures were found to relate positively to general academic self-concepts and are highly related to success in that content area.

Many students are not confident about their mathematical ability to solve problems. A poor attitude towards the discipline is thought to plague learners at every level of schooling. The fear of both answering mathematical questions in class and/or taking mathematical tests has been studied by Marsh, and Hocever (1985) and Stodolsky (1985), and both studies found consistence results that fears of Mathematics often escalates to a level termed mathematics anxiety with the effect of poor achievement in Mathematics. They concluded that individuals with poor attitudes towards mathematics are often reported to have a low self-concept and feelings of

incompetence. These attitudes are manifested as self depreciating remarks and a perpetual lack of success in Mathematics.

According to Wong (1992), mathematics achievement is closely related to self-concept and attitude towards mathematics. As in the case of the general self-esteem, more mathematically confident students have significantly higher scores on a standardized measure of mathematics computations. Osang (1990), in his study, tested the relationship between students' performance in mathematics and self-concept. He found that students' performance in mathematics depended on their mathematics self-concept. That is, their achievement in mathematics depended on what they thought of or believed about themselves, with reference to mathematics as a subject.

In a study conducted by Byrne (1984), he founded that relationship between students' self-concept in Mathematics and their Mathematics Achievement is logically and inevitably connected. Byrne reported that achievement in Mathematics is highly related to what an individual thinks of Mathematics. That is, ones Mathematics self-concept will influence ones achievement in Mathematics. Also students' self-perceptions of mathematics ability influence their mathematics achievement, and that their attitude towards mathematics during high school has positive effects on their choosing careers in science and mathematics.

Methodology

The study adopted the Correlational Research Design. The population of the study consisted of 6,478 SS3 students of the 13 state government financed post primary schools in Port Harcourt. Only the state schools were chosen (as against unity schools and private schools) to make for homogeneity: that is, to ensure the use of subjects that have similar characteristics.

The sample for this study consisted of three hundred (300) SS3 students that were chosen from 3 randomly selected schools from 13 senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt. The study employed the stratified random sampling technique, each school type (single boys, single girls and mixed schools) was considered a stratum and a senior secondary school selected at random.

All the research questions were answered using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Statistic, with Mathematics Self-concept as independent variable and Mathematics Achievement, General Academic Achievement and General Academic Self-concept as dependent variables. To test the null hypotheses formulated for this study, the computed Person's Product Moment Correlation Coefficients (r) were transformed to t-test using the formula,

$$t = r^2. [(n - 2)/(1 - r)]½.$$

Results

In the tables that follow, SMS = Students' Mathematics Self-concept, SMA = Students' Mathematics Achievement, GAS = General Academic Self-concept, and GAA = General Academic Achievement.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between students' Mathematics Self-concept and students' Mathematics Achievement.

Table 1: Transformed t-test on the Relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' Mathematics Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	p	Cal (r)	Crit. (r)	Cal. t-test trans.	Crit. t-test trans
SMS (x)	300	31.21	10.65	298	0.05	0.767	0.139	20.55	1.960
SMA (y)		27.13	13.81						

The result in the above table indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between Mathematics Self-concept of students and students' Mathematics Achievement [calculated t = 20.55 > critical t = 1.960 at $p < 0.05$; df = 298]. This significant positive relationship implies that students with high Mathematics Self-concept will generally achieve higher in Mathematics than those with low Mathematics Self-concept.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between students' Mathematics Self-concept and students' General Academic Achievement.

Table 2: Transformed t-test on the Relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' General Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	p	Cal (r)	Crit. (r)	Cal. t-test trans.	Crit. t-test trans.
SMS (x)	300	31.21	10.65	298	0.05	0.131	0.139	2.281	1.960
GAA (z)		49.63	14.46						

The data in Table 2 show that the calculated t, though low, is significant at the 5% confidence level [calculated t = 2.281 > critical t = 1.960 at $p < 0.05$; df = 298]. This implies that students with high Mathematics Self-concept can achieve highly in general school work.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between students, Mathematics Self-concept and students' General Academic Self-concept.

Table 3: Transformed t-test on the Relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' General Academic Self-concept

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	p	Cal (r)	Crit. (r)	Cal. t-test trans.	Crit. t-test trans.
SMS (x)	300	31.21	10.65	298	0.05	0.147	0.139	2.565	1.960
GAS (m)		37.89	7.23						

This result shows a significant positive relationship between Students' Mathematics Self-concept and Students' General Academic Self-concept at the 5% confidence level [calculated t = 2.565 > critical t = 1.960 at $p < 0.05$; df = 298]. The

interpretation is that students with high Mathematics Self-concept have the tendency of viewing school and academics positively.

Conclusion

This study investigated the extent to which students' mathematics self-concept relates to students' mathematics achievement, general academic achievement and general academic self-concept. Significant positive relationships were found in all the three cases at the 0.05 level of significance. These results are supported by Marsh (1990) and Morriss and Smith (1978). This study further found that the strength of relationship between Mathematics Self-concept and Mathematics Achievement decreased as Mathematics Self-concept was compared with General Academic Achievement and General Academic Self-concept. It is clear that self-concept becomes more empirically sensitive to, and more predictive of, achievement outcomes the more specific that it is conceived and assessed.

According to Bandura (1997), self-concept beliefs influence the choices people make and the courses of action they pursue. Individuals tend to engage in tasks about which they feel competent and confident and avoid those which they do not. Self-concept also helps determine how much effort people will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronting obstacles, and how resilient they will be in the face of adverse situations. The higher the self-concept, the greater the effort, persistence, and resilience an individual puts on tasks. As a consequence, self-concept exercises a powerful influence on the level of accomplishment that individuals ultimately realize. Conversely, people who doubt their capabilities may believe that things are tougher than they really are: a belief that fosters stress, depression, and a narrow vision of how best to solve a problem. In other words, many students have difficulty in school not because they are incapable of performing successfully but because they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic work. This study has shown that the more positive the self-concept of students, the higher their motivation, commitment and success in academics and other endeavours.

Thus, given the significance of self-concept in academic achievement of students, the enhancement of self-concept outcomes should be of major concern to educators, program developers, teachers, parents and counselors.

Recommendations

The self-concept beliefs of teachers are themselves related to their instructional practices and to the achievement and psychological well-being of their students. Efficacious teachers create classroom climates in which academic rigor and intellectual challenge are accompanied by the emotional support and encouragement necessary to meet the attendant challenge and achieve academic excellence (Tschannem-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 1998). All teachers should, therefore, do well to take seriously the responsibility of nurturing the self-concept of their students, for it is clear that these self-beliefs can have beneficial or destructive influences.

Teachers should pay as much attention to students' perception of competence as to actual competence, for it is the perception that may more accurately predict student's

motivation and future academic choices. Assessing students' self-concepts can provide schools with important insights about their students' academic motivation, behaviours, and future choices. For example, unrealistically low self-concept leads to poor academic behaviours, avoidance of challenging courses and careers, and diminishing school interest and achievement.

The ultimate aim of education should be to produce competent, caring, loving, and lovable people. One needs only cast glance at the American landscape to see that attending to the personal, social, and psychological concerns of students is both a noble and necessary enterprise. Teachers can aid their students by helping them to develop the habit of excellence in scholarship, while at the same time nurturing their self-beliefs necessary to maintain that excellence throughout their adult lives.

Parents should develop positive self-concept in their children, at the early stages of their lives. This could be best done at home which is the most important social force in shaping and maintaining the child's self-concept. The home environment is the strongest agent in shaping the child's self-concept, so the earlier he is exposed to positive self-concept formation the better. Positive attitudes of the parents towards their children will boost their ego, strengthen their feeling of self-worth and act as another form of motivation to work harder. Empathy should be applied in this kind of relationship and no sign of conflict of interest should be experienced in their child's choice of subjects and career.

Counseling services should be provided in schools so that students having problems in academic subjects can be attended to through the combined efforts of the school and the home. Students, because of their sexes, should not be discouraged directly or indirectly from learning certain subjects when they are young. In other words, students should be discouraged from forming stereotyped attitudes towards certain subjects, because of their sexes. This will boost positive competition between males and females, and enhance academic achievement and excellence.

The influence of students' self-beliefs on their achievement does not end with their schooling. Consequently, the aim of education must transcend the development of academic competence. Schools have the added responsibility of preparing self-assured and fully-functioning individuals capable of pursuing their hopes and their ambitions.

Self-concept theory is a relatively new area in the Nigerian educational scene. Thus, more researches on this field should be conducted to delve more into the self-concept patterns and how they affect vocational choices, physical appearance, problem-solving abilities and the up bringing of children by parents. These studies should be done to test the various facets of self-concept in different populations. Perhaps, it will then be hoped that educational policy statements in Nigeria would list and emphasize positive self-concept development as a central goal of education.

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ASSESSMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN OYO METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *This study examines the availability and usability of Information and communication technology among secondary school teachers in Oyo Metropolis. The Research Design employed is the descriptive survey design. Three research questions were formulated for the study. The population for the study consisted of 120 secondary school teachers. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for gathering data for the study. Data collected were analyzed using frequency tables and simple percentage. Results of the study showed that ICT facilities are not available in most of the schools covered. It was also observed most teachers used as the sample for the study, are not competent in the use of ICT. Recommendations were then made to the government.*

Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) may be viewed in different ways. Rodriguez and Wilson (2000) defined ICT as a set of activities which facilitate by electronic means the processing, transmission and display of information. ESCAP (2000) in its own definition defined ICT as techniques people use to share, distribute, gather information and to communicate through computers and computer networks. Marcelle (2000) described ICT as a complex varied set of goods, applications and services used for producing, distributing, processing, transforming information (including) telecoms, TV and radio broadcasting, hardware and software, computer services and electronic media. Ogunsola and Aboyade (2005) viewed ICT as a cluster of associated technologies defined by their functional usage in information access and communication of which one embodiment is the internet. Information and Communication Technology are computer based tools used by people to work with information and communication processing needs of an organization. It purview covers computer hardware, software, the network and other digital devices like video, audio, camera and so on which convert information (text, sound, motion etc) into digital form (Moursund and Bielefeldt, 1999). Information and Communication Technology as tools within the school environment include use for school administration and management, teaching and learning of ICT related skills for enhancing the presentation of classroom work, teaching/learning repetive tasks, teaching/learning intellectual, thinking and problem solving skills, stimulating creativity and imagination, for

research by teachers and students and as communication tool by teachers and students (Collis and Moonen, 2001, Derbyshire, 2003; Moursund and Bielefeldt, 1999).

The field of education has been affected by ICTs, which have undoubtedly affected teaching and research (Yusuf, 2005). A great deal of research has proven the benefits of ICT in improving quality of education (AL-Ansari, 2006). As a result of this, developed nations have integrated ICT into their educational system. Adomi and Kpangban (2010) observed that there are developments in the Nigerian education sector which indicate some level of ICT application in secondary schools in Nigeria. They traced the introduction of computer education in secondary schools to 1988, when Nigeria government enacted a policy on computer education. The Federal Government of Nigeria in the National Policy on education 2004 recognizes the prominent role of ICTs in the modern world and has integrated ICTs into education in Nigeria (Adomi and Kpangban, 2010). To actualize this goal, the document states that government will provide basic infrastructure and training at the primary school. At the junior secondary school, computer education is made a pre-vocational elective and is a vocational elective at the senior secondary school.

The Federal Ministry of Education launched an ICT-driven project known as SchoolNet, which was intended to equip all schools in Nigeria with computers and communication techniques. Under the SchoolNet programme, MTN provided fully operational computer laboratories with 21 personal computers, VSAT interconnectivity, hand-on training in 24 secondary schools in Kaduna, Lagos, Enugu, Kwara, Rivers and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. In all, over 49,524 pupils and 2,412 teachers were trained on how to use ICT facilities (Abdul-Salaam, 2007).

To adequate provide ICT facilities to secondary schools, the Nigerian Federal Government commissioned a Mobile Internet Unit (MIU) which is operated by the Nigerian National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). The MIU is a locally-made bus that has been converted into a mobile training and cyber centre. Its interior has ten workstations, all networked and connected to the internet. The MIU is also equipped with printers, photocopiers and a number of multimedia facilities. Internet connectivity is provided via VSAT with a 1.2m dish mounted on the roof of the bus. It is also equipped with a small electric generator to ensure regular power supply. The MIU takes the internet to places, areas and various and secondary schools (Adomi and Kpangban, 2010). They added that the number of these buses is so small and as a result most rural schools are yet to benefit from this project.

Successful integration of ICT in the school system depends largely on the availability and competence and the attitude of teachers towards the role of modern technologies in teaching and learning. Research works have shown that most secondary schools have either insufficient or no ICT tools to cater for the ever increasing population of students in the schools and where they are available, they are by implication a matter of out-of-bounds to the students (Chattel, 2002; Cheng, 2003; Chiemeke, 2004). Fakeye (2010) also found out in a study carried in Ibadan that in most of schools covered in the study do not have computers, hence are not connected to the internet. He added those who have computers do not use them for teaching but solely for administrative purposes. In another study by Okwudishu (2005), he found out that the unavailability of some ICT components in schools hampers teachers' use of ICTs. Lack of adequate search skills and of access points in the schools were

reported as forces inhibiting the use of internet by secondary school teachers (Adomi and Kpangban, 2010).

A survey carried out by Cirfat and Longshak (2003) revealed that only one school, out of ten has computer sets. It is worth noting that none of the ten schools has internet facility. Ozoji (2003) reported in a study that most our secondary schools do not have software for the computer to function. One of the unity schools has five computers against a population of 900 and no internet software was installed. The facilities are grossly inadequate for any meaningful teaching or learning to take place. On teachers' competence, teachers in Nigerian secondary schools are not competent in basic computer operation and in the use of generic software (Yusuf, 2005), although they have positive attitude towards the use of computer in Nigerian secondary schools. This finding revealed the low level of ICT penetration in the Nigerian school system. This reveals the state of ICT in most of the Nigerian secondary schools. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the availability of ICT facilities, level of knowledge possessed by teachers in some selected secondary schools in Oyo Metropolis.

Research Design

The descriptive survey method was considered as the appropriate design because the study is directed towards people, their opinions, attitude and behaviors. The area covered by the study is Oyo Metropolis, covering the four local governments that make up Oyo Metropolis. They are Oyo East, Oyo West, Atiba and Afijio Local Government Area.

Research Question

The following research questions were formulated for the study:

- How readily available are ICTs facilities in schools for the purpose of teaching and learning?
- Do teachers use ICT in Teaching?
- Do teachers in secondary schools have the needed experience and competence in the use of computers either for educational or industrial purpose?

Population of the Study

The population of this study was made up of 120 teachers from twelve secondary schools that were randomly selected from the secondary schools in the four local governments using the random sampling technique. Ten teachers were randomly selected from each of the twelve schools making a total of one hundred and twenty (120) teachers for the study.

Research Instrument

The instrument for the study was developed by the researcher based on established procedures in literature. The instrument contained of three sections. Section A focused on the demographic information of the teachers. Section B focused on the availability of ICT facilities in the schools while section C contained questions on the usability of these facilities by secondary school teachers.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The face validity and content validity of the instrument were verified by experts in the Computer Science Department and School of Education, Federal College of Education (Sp) Oyo. The various suggestions made were used to modify the

instrument. In order to ascertain the consistency of the instrument, test-retest method was used to ascertain the reliability. The questionnaire was administered twice on the sample. The interval between the first and second administration was three months. A correlation of 0.84 was achieved which was considered high enough to justify the reliability of the questionnaire.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher visited the selected schools to administer questionnaire developed for the study. The 120 copies of the questionnaire were administered on the respondents and collected back on the spot.

Methods of Data Analysis

Data Collected from the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and Simple Percentage.

Results

The demographic information of the participants is given in table 1.

Figures from Table 1 below shows that 8.33% of the respondents are between the ages of 21 and 30, while 50% falls between 31 and 40, 33.33% are between 41 and 50 while 8.33% are 50 years and above. It also showed that 58.33 of the respondents are female while 41.67% are male. 25% of the respondents are NCE holders, while 66.67% hold a first degree and 8.33% of the respondents are masters degree holder. 8.33% of the respondents have spent 1 to 10 and 31 years above respectively in the teaching service. 58.33% of them have spent 11 to 20 years while 25% of them have spent 21 to 30 years in secondary schools as teachers.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

ITEM	FACTOR	PERCENTAGE
AGE	Age (Year)	Percentage
	21 – 30	8.33
	31- 40	50
	41 -50	33.33
	51 and above	8.33
Sex Distribution	Sex	Percentage
	Female	58.33
	Male	41.67
Educational Qualification	NCE	25
	B.A/B.Sc/B.Ed/B.Sc Ed/B.A Ed./HND	66.67
	M.Sc/M.A/M.Ed	8.33
Years of Experience	1 – 10	8.33
	11- 20	58.33
	21 – 30	25
	31 and above	8.33

Research Question 1: How readily available are ICTs facilities in schools for the purpose of teaching and learning?

The analysis as it applies to the above research question is as shown on Table 2 below

Table 2: Availability of ICT Facilities in Schools

SN	STATEMENTS	YES	%	NO	%
1.	There are enough computers in my school	30	25	90	75
2.	My school has Educational Software for teaching	10	8.33	110	91.67
3.	Our computers are connected to the internet	5	4.17	115	95.83
4.	We have interactive Boards in our schools	0	0	120	100
5.	There are Television set that we use for teaching	10	8.33	110	91.67
6.	We have enough printers	10	8.33	110	91.67
7.	There are Photocopiers in my schools.	15	12.5	105	87.5
8.	Multimedia Facilities are available for teaching	0	0	120	100
9.	We have Projectors in our schools	2	1.67	118	98.33
10.	Presence of a virtual library	0	0	120	100

The results in table 2 are on the availability of ICT facilities in secondary schools. Results showed that ICT facilities are not readily available, with items 1 to 10. 75% of the teachers stated that they do not have enough computers. The study showed that none of the school covered in this study have interactive boards, multimedia facilities and virtual library. 8.33% of respondents said that they have educational software, television set and printers, while 4.17% of the respondents said their computer systems are connected to the internet. 12.5% of the respondents said they have photocopiers in their schools.

Research Questions 2 & 3: Do teachers use ICT in Teaching? and Do teachers in secondary schools have the needed experience and competence in the use of computers either for educational or industrial purpose?

The Table 3 below shows results for the analysis of the research questions stated above.

Table 3: Teachers use of ICT Facilities

SN	STATEMENTS	YES	%	NO	%
1.	I can boot the computer	40	33.33	80	66.67
2.	I use the computer to teach my students	12	10	108	90
3.	I use the computer to keep records	02	1.67	118	98.33
4.	I use Microsoft Word to type Questions and other documents	18	15	102	85
5.	I use Microsoft Excel to teach basic mathematics	02	1.67	118	98.33
6.	I use Power Point In Presenting my Lesson	00	00	120	100
7.	I browse the Internet to get materials for teaching	09	7.5	111	92.5
8.	I have an e-mail address	35	29	85	71
9.	I can use a search engine such as google	12	10	108	90
10.	I use education software such as CAI for teaching	08	6.67	112	93.33
11.	I can set up a database using MS Access	00	00	120	100
12.	I can use a scanner to copy images	02	1.67	118	98.33
13.	I can operate a printer that is connected to the computer	40	33.33	80	66.67
14.	I can set up a multimedia projector	02	1.67	118	98.33

The Table 3 above provides answers to the research question 2 and 3. 66.67% of the respondents cannot boot the computer. 10% of them use the computer to teach their students. 1.67% use the computer to keep records and use Microsoft Excel to teach basic mathematics, while 15% use Microsoft word to type their questions and other document. 7.5% of the respondents get their teaching material from the internet, 29% have e-mail address, so it means 29% of the respondent use the computer to send and receive mail. 10% of the respondents can use a search engine, while 6.67% of them use educational software such as CAI for teaching. 1.67% of the sample can use a scanner and can also set a multimedia. 33.33% of the respondents can print using a printer. The study showed that none of the respondent use power point and Microsoft Access.

Discussion

The result of this study shows that ICT facilities are not readily available in the schools covered by this study. It also shows that most of the schools are not connected to the internet. Schools with computers do not have the relevant educational software required by their students. In addition, the computer available in these schools cannot meet the need of the large population of students in these schools. Some schools with internet connectivity have been cut off because they have not been able to pay their access fee. The findings of this study are in line with that of Fakeye (2010) and Oyejola (2007) that most schools in Nigeria are ill equipped for the application of ICT.

The study also showed that most teachers in secondary do not use ICT teaching students, for administrative purpose and for their personal purpose. It observed that most of these teachers lack the knowledge, competence to use ICT to facilitate teaching-learning process. This Fakeye (2010) attributed to non availability of ICT facilities. He believed that the non availability of these facilities greatly hinders access and inadequate training of teachers on the use and application of the computer.

Conclusion

From the study it was concluded that ICT facilities are not readily available in our secondary school and that there is low level of ICT utilization in our secondary schools. The study revealed that most teachers lack the basic skill to use the computer and other ICT devices. Based on the findings, it is however, recommended that:

1. Government should ensure that ICT facilities be provided in schools. Education Tax Fund should be involved in procuring computer for secondary schools.
2. Government should revisit the curriculum at secondary schools level with a view to incorporating the use of computer and ICT assisted instruction in the teaching and learning process.
3. Teachers at secondary school levels should be trained on the use of ICT facilities through regular seminars and computer literacy workshops to keep them abreast of computer and ICT based instruction.

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TIME FRAME AND SYLLABUS COMPLETION OF SENIOR SECONDARY MATHEMATICS IN OMOKU DISTRICT, NIGERIA

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Abstract:*The study considered time allocated against syllabus completion before external examinations. The focal points were mathematics as a subject and an analysis of the 2009/2010 Academic Session. The analysis revealed that out of 364days in a session, only 146 days, represented 40% of the entire session did schools engaged in various school activities. The remaining 218 days, representing 60% of the session was observed as different holidays, making time frame to be inadequate and insufficient for mathematics syllabus completion. Three theories: Total Quality Management (TQM), Quality Assurance (QA) and Theory Z were posited as frameworks. Recommendations such as more periods should be allocated for completion of mathematics syllabus before exposing students to external examinations and others were postulated*.

Keywords: *Time Frame, Syllabus completion, Mathematics, Time table and Examination.*

Introduction

Time is a universal phenomenon without a single, generally accepted universal definition. It is so important that everybody, both whites and blacks, literates and illiterates, rich and poor, are all affected by it. It is fair to all, as it has no fear nor favour for any individual or corporate bodies. If considered as an umpire, it is unbiased and impartial.

Ebong in Agabi (2010:99) defined "time as a continuum in which events succeed one another from the past through the present to the future". By this definition, time is defined based on series of similar, indispensable events taking place one after another both in the past, the present and even in the future.

However, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) English Dictionary defined time as what we measure in hours, days and years. It further defined it as the period that something happens. Here, the definition of time is based on duration or period, which are in hours, days and years.

From the foregoing, time can be defined as the duration or period similar or different events do occur, either in succession or not. It could be in hours, days, years, decades, centuries, etc.

In education, time is an indispensable asset. It is an educational resource. According to Agabi (2010:99), *"time is an educational resource that is highly limited in supply and critical but often taken for granted by the providers of education. It is so important and useful that each school activity is regulated by it"*.

Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006:64) posited that different tasks need to be allotted time and emphasized the need for proper time management. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008:216) gave six basic ways to structure time as withdrawal, rituals, past times, activities, games and authenticity.

In Hoy and Miskel (2008:9), Taylor and his followers discovered through time and motion studies that by systematically undergoing a given task over a period of time, that the most efficient way in lesser time can be developed. To Agabi in Agabi, Okorosaye – Orubite, Ezekiel-Hart and Egbezor (2005:105), school activities are carried out within a specific time which gives credence to the existence of such registers as academic calendar, time table, lesson period, mid-term break, time book, etc. The above simply point to the fact that time is an indispensable tool to an individual or a corporate body. Time should be allocated to different activities of the day, week, month, year and so on. Proper time allocation to different activities gives rise to time management. The length of time allotted for or used for something is simply referred to as time frame (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2001). School activities like morning devotion, lesson periods, breaks, preps, dinning, labour, others, are regimented by time frame (Maduagwu and Nwogu, 2006). According to Agabi (2010:99), *"all school system activities are carried out within a time frame which may be limited to minutes, hours, days, months or even years"*.

It is important to emphasize that time-frame for each activity of any day, week, year, etc should be structured in the form of time-table. According to Nnabuo in Nnabuo, Okorie, Agabi and Igwe (2005:260), time-table is a document that illustrates time, place (room), subject and periods of each school subject in a week and term. It provides orderly direction and avoid clashes as teachers attend lesson at the allocated time and place. In a nutshell, a time-table is a schedule of period and place of various school activities. Emphasize need to be made here that time-frame should match the type of activity for it, otherwise, it will result to wastage of time or incompletion of required activity.

Insufficient time-frame for subject syllabus result to inability of the subject teacher to complete the syllabus and prepare students for external examination. It is relevant we get a working definitions of subject syllabus and scheme of work.

Nnabuo in Nnabuo, et al (2005) opined that any document which shows how each subject should be taught and the details through which it should be treated is a

subject syllabus. Aiyepeku (2006:142) outlined the basic content of a teaching syllabus as:

(a) Topics to be taught at various levels in the school,

(b) Specific behavioural objectives which should indicate knowledge to be acquired after the teaching of any given topic,

(c) The content of all the topics selected for inclusion in the syllabus and

(d) Materials and suggested activities for teaching listed topics.

He advised that where a national examination syllabus is available, the school teaching syllabus should be based on it. He defined scheme of work as a breakdown of the syllabus for work planned to be covered weekly. Nnabuo in Nnabuo, et al (2005:261) describes scheme of work as breaking down into topics of a subject to be covered on a weekly basis of each school term.

Students should be encouraged to get good subject textbooks, which among other things, should adequately cover the syllabus.

Research Methodology

This study employed a combination of the analytical study of the 2009/2010 Academic Session as a resource document and other materials used were textbooks, articles and reports. These materials were selected in a fashion that looks like randomized sampling procedure and were assessed in terms of validity and value. Scott's four overlapping validity criteria which are authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning served as a frame work (Agabi, 2010:96).

Theoretical Framework

Time allocated for teaching and learning of mathematics in Secondary Schools in Omoku Town, Rivers State is inadequate and insufficient. This is traceable to the short time available to school activities. Regular public holidays, strikes which leads to closure of schools and other forms of holidays reduces the period of time for complete school activities. In effect, there is reduction in available time for teaching and learning and other school functions.

Teachers are not able to complete their subject syllabus and adequately prepare students for external examinations. Subsequently, the result of such incomplete syllabus is mass failure in schools external examination, loss of self-confidence by students leading to all forms of examination malpractices, occult practices, militancy, joining of gangs, armed robbery, prostitution and other forms of social vices. In the light of the above, efforts need to be made by all stakeholders in the education discipline: teachers, students, administrators (principals), parents, host communities, government and examination bodies to alleviate this ugly trend in our schools. The frameworks for this research study is based on three theories, which are Total Quality Management (TQM), Quality Assurance (QA) and Theory Z.

Total Quality Management (TQM) by W. Edwards Deming in 1982 stipulates *inter alia* that:

(i) Excellent performance of students in external examinations should be the primary focus of the school,

(ii) The school must be dedicated to continual improvement, personally and collectively.

(iii) School management must create the enabling environment for excellent performance of students.

Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008:52); Okorie and Uche in Nnabuo, Okorie, Agabi and Igwe (2005:45-56) and Emenalo in Babalola and Ayeni (2009:751-753) all agree to the above.

It is obvious that allocation of more periods for the teaching and learning of mathematics or recruitment of more mathematics teachers for the short available periods will help in adequately preparing students for external examinations. Aiyepeku (2006:146) advocated a generous allocation of teaching periods per week for mathematics.

Quality Assurance (QA) by the chief proponent of fault free product, Crosby, ensures that proactive and precautionary measures are taken before and during production to ensure that no wastage and no defect is recorded. (Okorie and Uche in Nnabuo, et al, 2005:57 and Awe in Babalola and Ayeni, 2009:72).

Applying this to our discussion, it is the administrator's duty to make sure that the quality and quantity of teachers are adequate for the time frame for the teaching and learning of mathematics. The teachers on their part should make the best use of the allocated time. Aiyepeku (2006:147) emphasized that proper preparation before each lesson, effective use of teaching aids, giving of regular exercises during lesson, assisting each student during lessons to correct errors encountered while solving problems are measures teachers should adopt in teaching and learning of mathematics.

Theory Z by William G. Ouchi around 1981 emphasizes concern for people and participative and consultative decision-making. Hoy and Miskel (2008:179-181), Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008:77-79) and Peretomode (2008:33-38) all agree that the basic premise of theory Z is "that involved workers are the key to increased performance in an organization".

From the above theories, we can deduce that student's poor performance in external examinations are attributable to a lot of variables which inadequate preparation and incomplete syllabus before embarking on such examinations is one of them. A collective effort of all stakeholders is needed to alleviate the situation.

Analytical Study of the 2010 Academic Session

Span of 2009/2010 Academic Session:

Began 13th Sept., 2009	Total of 52 weeks	= (52x7) days
Ended 11th Sept., 2010		= 364 days
		(Note: 1 week = 7 days)
Saturdays and Sundays		= 52 x 2 days = 104 days
Remaining days	364 days – 104 days	= 260 days.

Issues of 1st Term, 2009/2010 Academic Session

Span: 13th Sept., 2009 to 9th Jan., 2010

- Mid-term break (30th Oct., 2009 to 2nd Nov., 2009) - 2 days
- Public holidays:
  - ❖ El-die Fitri holiday (21st & 22nd Sept., 2009) - 2 days
  - ❖ Independence Day (1st Oct., 2009) - 1 day
  - ❖ Salah Days (26th & 27th Nov., 2009) - 2 days
- 1st term, holidays (19th Dec., 2009 to 9th Jan, 2010) (3 weeks) - 21 days

Total for 1st Term - 28 days

Issues of 2nd Term, 2009/2010 Academic Session

Span: 10th – Jan, 2010 to 24th April, 2010

- Mid-term break (19th Feb., 2010 to 22nd Feb., 2010) - 2days
- Public holiday:
- Moslem Idi-Malud (26th Feb., 2010) - 1day

-2nd term holidays (3rd April, 2010 to 24th April, 2010) (3 weeks) - 21days

Total 2nd term - 24 days

Issues of 3rd Term, 2009/2010 Academic Session

Span: 25th April, 2010 to 11th Sept., 2010.

- Mid-term break (6th June, 2010 to 9th June, 2010) - 2days
- Public holidays:
  - ❖ Workers' Day (3rd May, 2010) -2 days
  - ❖ Death/Burial of President Yar'Adua (6th May, 2010) - 1day
  - ❖ Children's Day (27th May, 2010) - 1day
  - ❖ Democracy Day (29th May, 2010) - 1day

-3rd term holiday (24th July, 2010 to 11th Sept., 2010) (8 weeks) - 56 days

Total for 3rd term - 62days.

Grand total of holidays = total for 1st term + total for 2nd term + total for 3rd term = 28 days + 24 days + 62 days = 114 days.

Days secondary schools were opened for classes in the 2009/2010 academic session = (260 - 114) days = 146days

Days secondary schools were on holidays for 2009/2010 academic session = (364 – 146) days = 218 days

% of days secondary schools opened for 2009/2010 academic session

$$= \frac{146\text{days} \times 100\%}{364\text{days}} = 40\%$$

% of days secondary schools were on holidays in 2009/2010

academic session $= \frac{218\text{days} \times 100\%}{364\text{days}} = 60\%$

From the above analysis, secondary schools spent 60% for holidays while only 40% of the entire 2009/2010 academic session was used for school activities.

Note: Some schools have less than 40% in 2009/2010 session for school activities due to other internal holidays not captured in this analysis. Also, other academic session(s) may have less than 40% for school activities. A typical example is the current 2010/2011 academic session.

WAEC Syllabus for Mathematics in the 2009/2010 Academic Session

The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) has seven main topics broken down to thirty-seven sub-topics for prospective candidates of the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) General Mathematics/Mathematics (Core) Syllabus for the 2009/2010 Academic Session (WAEC, 2009:343-355).

Secondary Schools in Omoku Town and Time Frame for Teaching and Learning of Mathematics in the 2009/2010 Academic Session.

There are about eight recognized secondary schools in Omoku Town, Rivers State. Five of them are private while only three are public secondary schools. An analysis of the time allocated for teaching and learning from their respective time-tables range from two (2) periods of forty minutes each weekly to just one period of forty minutes weekly.

Also, the number of mathematics teachers were two at most and only one in some schools.

Comparison of Time Frame and Syllabus Completion of these Secondary Schools in lieu of Teaching and Learning of Mathematics.

As earlier posited, the number of mathematics teachers in both private and public secondary schools in Omoku town, Rivers State is grossly inadequate. The implication of this is over utilization of manpower which will result to low production. On the other hand, the time frame for the teaching and learning of mathematics is insufficient. Aiyepeku (2006:146) advocated nothing less than five periods of forty minutes weekly for SS One and Two and a little less than that for SS Three if the students are to be thoroughly prepared for external examinations.

Rosenshine and Furst in Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008:454-455) identified student opportunity to learn, that is, the teacher's coverage of the material or content in class on which students are later tested as one of five teacher processes that show the strongest correlation to positive outcomes. To Alutu and Ochuba in Okafor, Ekpo, Igwe, Eya and Okoye (2008:54), *"inadequate teaching and preparation of students before examination is one of the reasons students involve in examination malpractices"*.

This is true as no student wants to fail. Ukoh and Ajanaku in Oyatoye, Olafimihan, Adeoye, Sabi, Alao, Fashiku and Abdusalam (2010) also support this view.

To lend support to the issue at stake, Aiyepeku (2006:148) opined that adequate coverage of the examination syllabus is one of the recognized requirement for students writing public examinations in mathematics subject. Nnabuo in Nnabuo, et al (2005:261) emphasized that effort should be made by school executives to ensure

compliance by teachers and a revisional feedback built in to allow adequate preparation of students for examination.

Emenalo in Babalola and Ayeni (2009:757) posited that attention has to be focused, among other things, on what goes on in the classroom between the staff and students in terms of the content of course coverage, quality of teaching and actual contact hours utilized. This is true as poor inputs will definitely yield faulty output.

Agabi in Agabi, et al (2005:105) identified poor academic results arising from inability to complete school syllabus as a wastage which occurs when the importance of time is ignored in the execution of school activities.

Implications of Insufficient Time Frame and Inconclusive Subject Syllabus

Since insufficient time frame cannot enable teachers to complete mathematics syllabus and prepare students for external examination eternal examinations, the following implications are possible:

(1) **Mass Failure in Public or External Examinations**

2009/2010 WAEC result has it that only 24.94% of the total candidates obtained credits in English Language, Mathematics and at least, three (3) other subjects; 2009/2010 NECO result reveals that only 22.99% of candidates in Rivers State obtained five credit passes including Mathematics and English Language.

(2) **Incessant Examination Malpractices in Public or External Examinations.** It is no more a news to hear of examination malpractices in external examinations, rather, what may be news is that a public or external examination was carried out without any examination malpractices.

(3) **Dislike for the Subject and Development of Phobia;**

People generally consider mathematics to be difficult. Insufficient preparation of students for external examination will result to dislike for the subject and justify the strong, unreasonable fear and hatred some already have for it.

(4) **Loss of Aims of Teaching the Subject**:

Aiyepeku (2006:141) identified the following aims/objectives of teaching mathematics, *inter alia*:

(a) To develop computational skill,
(b) To develop precise, logical and abstract thinking,
(c) To stimulate and encourage creativity,
(d) To acquire the ability to teach mathematics.

These aims and objectives may be completely lost as a result of this.

(5) **Creation of Lacuna**

One of the disadvantage or implication of this is that it will create a gap between what the student knows and what he/she is supposed to know.

(6) **Deepening of the falling standard in education**:

If the issue at stake is not addressed, it will deepen further the issue of the falling standard in Nigerian educational system.

Conclusion

It was revealed from the study that the time frame for syllabus completion of senior secondary mathematics is insufficient. This makes it impossible to complete

subject syllabus and hence, students' preparation for external examinations are inadequately. The result of this is failure in school external examinations.

Recommendations

In other to curb persistent student failure in external examinations like WAEC and NECO, the following recommendations are necessary:

(1) Government should recruit qualitative and quantitative mathematics teachers and deploy them to schools where mathematics teachers are in short supply. In addition, there is need to reduce incessant and unnecessary public holidays.

(2) Principals should allocate more periods for mathematics classes and supervise accordingly.

(3) Teachers should prepare well before lesson, use teaching aids, avoid story telling and distractions while aiming at achieving set goals. They should also attend seminars, conferences, from time to time for improvement.

(4) Students should pay attention in class, ask questions and do further/additional studies at home.

(5) Parents should provide relevant textbooks, materials and conducive atmosphere for during and after school studies for their children.

(6) Examining bodies like WAEC and NECO should use these teachers for marking of answer scripts, expose them on topics for more concentration are needed and possibly set questions on topics covered.

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INTEGRATING SELF-PACED e-LEARNING WITH CONVENTIONAL CLASSROOM LEARNING IN NIGERIA EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Abstract:*The advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its rapid growth are changing the way people use, develop, process and disseminate information and instruction {technology}. There is no doubt that ICT use in the classroom increase student's motivation to learn, engage in learning and give independence in learning. Evidence shows that there is a correlation between using ICT in schools and students academic achievement across a range of courses. Student are comfortable and fulfilled in an ICT environment and using this as a bench mark, [integrating it with a self-paced student centered learning] in conjunction with the conventional classroom learning will go a long way to improve learning thereby increasing academic performance of the students at large. This paper explores the potential of self-paced e-learning alongside with conventional classroom learning and the positive impact the integration of the two can have on student's academic performance when incorporated into the Nigeria Educational system.*

Keywords: *Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Self-paced e-learning, Conventional Classroom Learning, Integration, Nigeria Educational System*

1.0 Introduction

ICT has been used in educational settings since its inception, but recent empirical research has affirmed that it plays a vital role in high-quality learning and teaching. Such research insights have shown that advances in technology have opened up new possibilities for the way in which teachers educate their classes, giving potential for innovative ways to encourage students to become more engaged in their schooling. To enable the best possible outcomes for their students it is vital that schools are able to keep up with this progress. (Condie and Munro, 2007).

In an extensive review of the ICT and performance levels in the UK Cox, Abbott, Webb, Blakeley, Beauchamp & Rhodes (2003) found evidence of positive effects on achievement levels in students across a wide range of subjects, which particularly indicates that in European schools ICT has positively enhanced

performance in the primary years, particularly in the primary language of the country. Schools that have greater ICT infrastructure perform more highly than schools with less developed ICT infrastructure. Higher motivation is reported, particularly for primary students, with the use of ICT such as interactive whiteboards.

The majority of teachers report that students are more highly motivated, which in turn affects behaviour and communication when using computers and the internet in class. In order to reach European targets set for the year 2010, the numbers of computers in schools have increased dramatically in recent years (Balanskat and Blamire, 2007). Two thirds of teachers report being very confident in their usage of word processors, and a third feel that they have the necessary skills to develop electronic presentations. Almost all teachers in the UK and Denmark report using ICT regularly as a teaching aid, whereas in other countries such as Greece or Latvia, only a third of teachers report doing so.

Greater gains of achievement in students are seen when the teacher uses ICT in a planned, structured way that is integrated effectively into their lessons (Higgins, 2003).

2.0 Conventional Classroom Learning

According to Martin and Eugenio (1992), conventional classroom teaching is conceived as the transmission of "knowledge" or "information" from the teacher to the student. The teacher in this instance prepares for the lesson to be taken, therefore takes the most active role in the classroom [provide and guide] and students are required to listen, take notes, memorize, and be able to demonstrate their knowledge by filling in the proper blanks or choosing the appropriate alternative on the test.

Knowledge, in this view, is a set of beliefs that accurately mirrors the world. The emphasis in the classroom is on transmitting these beliefs clearly and precisely. Rarely, then, is interaction between teacher and student genuinely initiated by the latter. The teacher not only has all of the answers but also all of the relevant questions. Students are not, at the first instant are presumed to know nothing and may not necessarily contribute or ask questions to which the teacher can give clear and definite answers.

The conventional classroom has a certain theory of knowledge, in this view, is acquired passively rather than actively, is more the product of observation than of exploration. Principally, education has two aims: first, the transmission of the knowledge that has been acquired firsthand by those who have preceded us (which Bertrand called "knowledge by description'), and, second, to make sure that the student's mind remains accurately aimed and highly receptive-- so that it is itself capable of acquiring "knowledge by [direct] acquaintance"(Bertrand 1946).

The most vital relationship in a conventional classroom is between the teacher and student, and this is so, because the teacher transmits what he has learnt in the past and in tune with the present to the student. The tutor-students ratio is kept low to be able to produce the best result [the ideal learning situation is one to one]. Schools teach students in groups only because it is financially impossible to have a one-to-one teacher-student ratio. Keeping the ratio very low will improve teachers productivity and also beneficial to students with slow learning prowess.

Underlying the conventional wisdom, as Richard Rorty (1979) has emphasized, is a certain metaphor, or picture, that has dominated epistemology since Descartes. This is the picture of the mind as a great mirror containing various representations--some accurate, some not--of nature. It is the task of epistemology to identify the foundation and to provide a method that, when properly employed, will "polish" the mirror and ensure that all that is represented on it accurately reflects, or is true of, the world.

There is an important difference between students learning in a group and learning as a group. Students in conventional classrooms learn in groups largely because financial considerations make it impossible for each student to have his or her own tutor. The emphasis is on the transmission of "knowledge" from active teacher to passive student, and the (financially prohibitive) ideal is a one-to-one teacher-student ratio. In contrast, the sort of classroom envisages-- what is characterize as a "community of inquiry"--regards group learning as essential to education. Members of a class who work *as* a group learn to see themselves as active participants in the discovery, analysis, and justification of claims to knowledge. As such, they constitute a model of the nature and structure of knowledge as it exists outside of the classroom. The emphasis is on dialogue, interaction, and a joint cooperative undertaking guided by a skilled and sensitive teacher who is him- or herself an interested inquirer.

Conventional learning typically takes place in an identifiable classroom space, usually in a school or in an institution dedicated to learning. A traditional classroom usually has a number of specific features, including:

- an instructor/trainer who delivers information to students
- a number of students/learner who are all physically present in the classroom and regularly meet at a specific time
- student participation in lectures and discussions
- a set of chairs and desk arrange in rows and columns

2.2 Advantages of Conventional Classroom Learning

The following are some of the advantages of Conventional Classroom Learning

- Provides interactive classroom setting that promotes the open exchange of ideas: Having numerous students learning in the same classroom has the added benefit of allowing students to exchange ideas and questions with one another providing another valuable learning medium that online environments cannot replicate. First-hand interaction with the educating professor also allows for ideas to be exchanged freely and without any communication barriers.
- A classroom creates an environment of learning. While a student is attending a class s/he learns how to behave in an appropriate manner, how to make friends and interact with people. Such learning is not possible in online courses as the individual would interact with computer.
- In a classroom the teacher decides the important areas of study and imparts the same knowledge to all the students, though the way each student absorbs information is different. The teacher can also identify learning issues with particular students and

provide support. Such an environment is absent in online learning programs as the students are left on their own to study and have to develop the necessary skills alone.

- Exchange ideas with peers, not only about the training course but about other current issues.
- Benefit from a face-to-face learning approach that allows learners to address any difficulties or areas of confusion immediately. A classroom environment offers students the opportunity to have face-to-face interactions with their peers and instructors. This is an added social benefit as well as an educational aid. Because students see the same peers in class every session, they get a chance to form friendships. In the case of higher learning, pupils can find potential lifelong professional connections. On the educational side, students get a chance to participate in a lecture or class discussion physically. If something is not understood, interrupting to ask for clarification is always an option. The best classes not only include, but also insist that students get hands-on experience with the subjects being taught. This is particularly useful for those preparing for certification exams because analysis and problem-solving skills are learned best through trial and error, with access to a helpful mentor as needed.
- Access to a savvy, experienced instructor permits students to apply what they learn to real-world needs by asking questions and looking for connections to the job. Because learning works best when materials are relevant, good instructors add real value.(Ed, 2003)
- In some cases, the classroom environment is the only style of education the students know, and the change of pace online classes offer may prove difficult to adjust to. Students get the opportunity for hands-on, structured learning instead of being presented with the course books, written lectures and self-directed activities distance learning provides. Suddenly straying from the standard learning experience may add unexpected strain academically, making the class material more difficult in the process. At this point, they enjoy the interaction between them and their teachers.

2.3 Limitations of Conventional Classroom Learning

Like other instructional methodologies, conventional classroom learning has its limitations.

- Neglect problem solving, critical thinking, and higher order learning skills: The classroom setting can also hinder ones ability to learn by allowing other, more vocal, students to dominate the bulk of the discussion environments. Quieter personalities are limited in their communication options for exchanging ideas and information
- Encourage passive learning: Depending on the level of interaction in the classroom setting, shy students may be allowed to attend classes without providing alternative ways to communicate ideas. Forcing students to learn by vocal exchange with a professor may limit their ability to learn.
- Ignore individual learning differences between students: Classrooms environments tend to group students together in large number often making it difficult

for instructors to isolate learning deficiencies and provide the necessary close attention that individuals may need to learn.

- A campus-based learning experience means the class schedule is predetermined and not subject to change. Students must shape their personal schedules around school instead of the other way around. If plans unexpectedly change or an emergency comes up, the student cannot adjust the class schedule to turn in the work at a different time. If a scheduling conflict arises between work and school, students are forced to choose between their education and their income.
- Knowledge conveyed in the classroom tends to be situated in the context of the classroom and the school rather than the context in which the knowledge was created (Henning, 1998). This contextual dichotomy has been shown to negatively impact the learning process, adversely effecting learner motivation in particular.
- The teacher is the center of attention, not the students. That was the way education was, and still is in many regards. Learning follows whatever pace is dictated by its training materials, by the time allotted for the class and the instructor's approach.
- With classroom learning, students must physically attend the courses to get credit for attendance. Those who must travel long distances to get to school must allot enough time to arrive punctually, particularly in instances where inclement weather is involved. A long commute may also mean a hefty transportation cost over a long period of time which, when combined with the cost of education, may present an issue to financially challenged students.

3.0 Self-Paced e-Learning

As cited by Gurmak, John and Harvey(2005), e-Learning is construed in a variety of contexts, such as distance learning, online learning and networked learning (Wilson 2001). In the context of this paper self-paced e-learning is the one that utilizes information and communications technology (ICT) to promote educational interaction among students and their teachers [content provided] . Volery (2000) argues that the fast expansion of the Internet and related technological advancements, in conjunction with limited budgets and social demands for improved access to higher education, has produced a substantial incentive for universities to introduce eLearning courses.

Self-paced or individualized learning is defined as learning directed by the individual in order to meet personal learning objectives. Although self-paced learning and individualized learning have essentially the same meaning, there are some subtle differences. In self-paced learning, the learner controls the pace of the learning process. For example, in a self-paced computer-based course, two students might begin the course on the same day but one may finish days ahead of the other. By contrast, in individualized learning, there may be some time parameters. For example, a structured on-the-job training (OJT) course may require the individual to reach specific points in the course at specific times. The learning is still targeted to the individual, but the pace of learning may be partially controlled by the trainer or facilitator. Here, the term self-paced learning is used to describe both approaches.

Self-paced courses provide a convenient alternative to the traditional classroom. In fact, recent meta analysis (Means, 2009) research is showing that online distance education students outperform campus based students.

Spring (2004) proposed five teaching and learning modes in which e-learning can provide gains in effectiveness, quality and cost benefits:

- Classroom interactive learning: between students and teachers and among students
- Independent learning: where students or teachers are learning and studying alone in a variety of environments and modes including aspects of self directed lifelong learning;
- Networked learning: through contact with groups, individuals and sources where quite different influences and experiences are creating a qualitative difference to both standard and blended teaching and learning;
- Organizational learning: including learning communities, learning precincts and learning cities; and
- Managed learning: where education technology is creating, through computer managed communication and learning management systems, capability to enable teachers to negotiate and provide individualized curricula and learning experiences for each student.

3.1 Examples of Self-Paced Learning

In self-paced learning, the content, learning sequence, pace of learning and possibly even the media are determined by the individual. Examples of self-paced learning include:

- Reading a book to acquire new information about a topic.
- Reading a book, listening to accompanying audiotapes and completing exercises in a workbook.
- Reading a reference manual and watching a video.
- Completing a computer-assisted learning (CAL) course that uses interactive computer modules for knowledge transfer and one-on-one work with the clinical trainer for skills transfer, first with models and then with clients.
- Completing a CAL distance learning course on the Internet (knowledge transfer only).
- Participating in a structured OJT clinical skills course that involves reading assignments in a reference manual, completing exercises in a workbook and working one-on-one with the clinical trainer for skills transfer, first with models and then with clients.

3.2 Advantages of Self-Paced e-learning

According to Anderson (2005), Self-paced e-learning maximizes individual freedom. Rather than making the obviously incorrect assumption that all students learn at the same speed, have access and control over their lives to march along with a cohort group of learners or are able, despite divergent life circumstances, to begin and end

their study on the same day, self-paced study correctly puts the learner squarely in control.

In most group-based (conventional classroom) courses, the trainer attempts to present the information to the typical or average learner. The more capable learners may become bored or frustrated, while the less capable learners may feel lost or overwhelmed. By contrast, a self-paced approach allows the learner to make many of the decisions about when, where, what and how quickly to learn. The trainer functions as a guide and facilitator of learning.

The other advantages to this approach of learning are:

- Learners can learn information and skills when they need them.
- Learners are not as dependent on the structure and pace established by the trainer.
- Assuming control of the learning process is highly motivating for many learners.
- Each learner has the same level of participation in the learning process. Participants are active rather than passive, and assume greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Because most self-paced learning courses allow participants to begin and end a segment of the training course at any time, it is an efficient use of training time and resources.
- Learning activities can be organized sequentially, because each component in a self-paced course has objectives that must be met before proceeding to the next component.
- Self-paced learning provides trainers with the time to focus more attention on participants who need assistance. Although participants who are not having difficulties certainly should not be neglected, this approach allows the trainer to spend time with participants who do require assistance.
- Essential equipment, materials and supplies used can be kept at a minimum because only one or two participants may be involved in training at any one time.

3.3 Limitations of Self- Paced e-Learning

As with any approach to learning, there are also limitations to consider:

- Most learners have not learned this way before, so they may feel uncomfortable with learning on their own.
- Students may lack the necessary motivation to work independently.
- Learners may have poor reading skills, because most self-paced learning approaches require reading, this can be a major limitation.
- Learners may possess poor time management skills. Procrastination may make the self-paced learning process less effective than it can be.
- Trainers may feel that they do not have time to manage a self-paced learning system.
- It may be challenging and time-consuming to design and develop the appropriate learning materials, in either print or electronic format.

- Without good planning, it may be difficult for the trainer to arrange for times to meet with the participant.
- Trainers may find that documenting, evaluating and updating Students progress is very time-consuming.

4.0 Advantages of the Integration of Self-paced e-learning and Conventional Classroom Learning

The following are some the benefits that would be derived from integrating self-paced e-learning and conventional classroom learning:

- The Self-paced e-Learning is not an exclusionary alternative to the traditional classroom, but really are an extension of that classroom into cyber-space and global networking. Traditional classroom teaching and learning are addressed with the leverage provided by technology-based instruction and testing.
- The power of the integration is in sequencing the activities, engaging the learner in different ways, and then optimizing the combined learning effect. The content of the course will be made interactive, graphical, voice enabled and with real life simulations.
- The student can make use of the advantages of self-paced e-learning by going through beforehand the course modules to be handled in the next class, making use of the interactive sections available in form of quiz. When such students appear in class, treating the same course module will be simplified and the student can learn better from the lecturer by asking questions on those aspects that were not clear on the self-paced e-module
- The learning process in some people takes quite a bit of time, so a self-paced e-learning setting is ideal for the patience and environment required. Such people can now make use of the advantage of going through the module online moving at their own pace to comprehend what was initially taught in class.

5.0 Conclusion

This research proposes a combination of online, intranet and internet (self-paced e-learning) and conventional classroom learning style for courses. This will allow the benefits of both types of learning to be realized. The truth of the matter is that there are advantages and disadvantages to every type of learning environment. It is best to use the advantages that each method offers to their fullest extent. It is obvious from this research review, that a combination of self paced e-learning and classroom learning to convey subject matter to students will be the best teaching method. This will on the long run translate on their overall performance of students in school.

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USING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN A COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOOM TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract:*This paper discusses the fundamentals of cooperating teaching - the role of general subjects teacher as well as the role of the special education teachers in a collaborative classroom. Enhances was laid on two roles of the special education teacher which are - permanent and temporary co-teaching roles. Also discussed were necessary steps needed for effective planning for collaborative teaching. The paper later gave examples of some technology devices that could be used for educational application and steps to follow to improve students' achievement through the use of ICT. Finally, conclusion was drawn.*

Keywords: *Cooperating teaching, inclusive classroom, special education, collaboration, ICT.*

Introduction

Historically, teachers have worked in isolation - one teacher to a classroom. As children with disabilities entered the public schools in the 1970s, they were taught in separate classrooms with their own teachers. Over the past 25 years, these students have slowly moved into the flow of the regular classroom, thus the use of the term "mainstreaming." (Suzan Ripley, 1997). He further stated that students, although they were mainstreamed for selected subjects or parts of the day; they were not considered part of the typical class. Now the philosophy is to include all students in the same class, which has brought about teams of general education and special education teachers working
collaboratively or cooperatively to combine their professional knowledge perspectives, and skills. The biggest change for educators is in deciding to share the role that has traditionally been individual: to share the goals, decisions, classroom instruction, responsibility for students, assessment of student learning, problem solving, and classroom management. The teachers must begin to think of it as "our" class. This Digest explores the facets of this new collaboration between general and special education teachers.

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classroom management. The teachers must begin to think of it as "our" class. This write-up explores the facets of this new collaboration between general and special education teachers.

What is Cooperating Teaching?

Cooperative teaching was described in the late 1980s as "an educational approach in which general and special educators work in co-active and coordinated fashion to jointly teach heterogeneous groups of students in educationally integrated settings (Suzanne Ripley, 1997). In cooperative teaching both general and special educators are simultaneously present in the general classroom, maintaining joint responsibilities for specified education instruction that is to occur within that setting" (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989).

This type of co-teaching actually has a number of names. The way this model works is that a content area teacher is in the classroom all the time. The special education teacher comes in and co-teaches one to three times a week. All students are able to benefit by having more face time with their teachers. Co-teaching gives each child that opportunity. For special needs children, this may mean help with reading a paragraph, learning a new language, or solving mathematical problems. Co-teaching brings special education's best practices, which are really best for all children, into normal classrooms where they can benefit all students.

The distinctive feature of cooperative teaching, which differs from earlier approaches, is that it is direct collaboration with the general education and special education teachers working together in the same classroom most of the day.

An effective team of teachers will work together as equal partners in interactive relationships, with both involved in all aspects of planning, teaching, and assessment. Areas for this collaboration will include curricula and instruction, assessment and evaluation, and classroom management and behavior. The key to making co- teaching work is joint planning. They must both know the entire curriculum so that they can switch back and forth and support each others efforts.

In developing and implementing cooperative teaching, school professionals experience great changes in the way they go about their daily work. To overcome the inevitable fears and stresses associated with change, the educators involved must feel that they are responsible for the change and that its success or failure lies directly with them (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995).

The Role Played by Each Teachers in a Collaborative Classroom

In a collaborative model the general education and special education teachers each bring their skills, training, and perspectives to the team. Resources are combined to strengthen teaching and learning opportunities, methods, and effectiveness. The one point that clearly developed from this relationship was that both of them had expertise in many areas, and combining these skills made both teachers more effective in meeting the needs of all students (Dieker & Barnett, 1996).

Typically the primary responsibility of general education teachers is to use their skills to instruct students in curricula dictated by the school system. Also, the primary responsibility of special education teachers is to provide instruction by adapting and developing materials to match the learning styles, strengths, and special needs of each

of their students. In special education situations, individual learners' needs often dictate the curricula.

General educators bring content specialization, special education teachers bring assessment and adaptation specializations. Both bring training and experience in teaching techniques and learning processes. Their collaborative goal is that all students in their class are provided with appropriate classroom and homework assignments so that each is learning, is challenged, and is participating in the classroom process.

A Special Education Teacher's Role in an Inclusive Classroom

An inclusive classroom is one of the placement options for a student with a learning disability. This is the least restrictive form of education for special needs students and it allows the student to be included in a typical classroom environment with his or her peers.

There are two roles a special education teacher may play in an inclusive classroom — permanent or temporary co-teaching.

Permanent Co-Teaching

Permanent co-teaching offers students many advantages. In a permanent co-teaching arrangement, there is a content teacher, someone who specializes in a specific subject like history, and a special education teacher. The teachers share in the planning, implementing, and grading of lessons. This is great for all the students, not just those that fall under the special education umbrella. The one-on-one teacher to student time is increased because there is literally an extra teacher in the classroom. With an average classroom size of 20 to 30, each teacher could focus her attention on only 10 to 15 students. For a special needs student, this additional individualized contact is invaluable.

Planning for Effective Collaboration

Collaboration involves commitment by the teachers who will be working together, by their school administrators, by the school system, and by the community. It involves time, support, resources, monitoring, and, above all, persistence. However, the biggest issue is time - time for planning, time for development, and time for evaluating. Planning should take place at the district and the building levels, as well as at the classroom level.

District planning helps ensure that all resources will be available, including time, money, and professional assistance. District-level planning will take into consideration the effect change in one place will have on other settings. Building-level planning will assist the teams in being sure adequate support is in place to sustain new initiatives. Principals play an extremely important leadership role in facilitating collaborative efforts by instructional personnel.

Both district and building-level planning should provide staff development opportunities to encourage teachers and administrators to participate in classes, workshops, seminars, and/or professional conferences on cooperative teaching. Motivation is an important ingredient for success, but additional skills will be needed to realize the goals teachers set for themselves and their classes.

Planning also is a factor in selecting the students who will be part of the collaborative process. It is important to keep natural proportions of typical students,

students identified as being at risk, and students who have been found to have disabilities. Achieving a balanced classroom is easier at the elementary and middle school levels than at the secondary level, where a certain amount of grouping takes place with course selection.

A major consideration is in arranging planning times for co-teachers. Co-planning must take place at least once a week, according to studies. Planning sessions were viewed as priorities by both teachers; they refused to let other competing responsibilities interfere with their planning sessions (Walther-Thomas, Bryant, & Land, 1996). The planning must be ongoing to allow teachers to review progress on a regular basis, make adjustments, evaluate students, and develop strategies to address problems either in discipline or learning.

Walther-Thomas and her colleagues (1996) found that five planning themes were identified by co-teachers who considered themselves to be effective co- planners:

1. Confidence in partner's skills;
2. Design of learning environments for both the educators and students that require active involvement;
3. Creation of learning and teaching environments in which each person's contributions are valued;
4. Development of effective routines to facilitate in-depth planning; and
5. Increased productivity, creativity, and collaboration over time. Participants in collaborative programs agreed that the time required for planning does not decrease during the year, but the quality of instruction continues to improve.

Different Types of Technology and their Educational Applications

Many different types of technology can be used to support and enhance learning. Everything from video content and digital moviemaking to laptop computing and handheld technologies (Marshall, 2002) have been used in classrooms, and new uses of technology such as podcasting are constantly emerging.

Various technologies deliver different kinds of content and serve different purposes in the classroom. For example, word processing and e-mail promote communication skills; database and spreadsheet programs promote organizational skills; and modeling software promotes the understanding of science and math concepts. It is important to consider how these electronic technologies differ and what characteristics make them important as vehicles for education (Becker, 1994).

Technologies available in classrooms today range from simple tool-based applications (such as word processors) to online repositories of scientific data and primary historical documents, to handheld computers, closed-circuit television channels, and two-way distance learning classrooms. Even the cell phones that many students now carry with them can be used to learn (Prensky, 2005).

Each technology is likely to play a different role in students' learning. Rather than trying to describe the impact of all technologies as if they were the same, researchers need to think about what kind of technologies are being used in the classroom and for what purposes. Two general distinctions can be made. Students can learn "from" computers—where technology used essentially as tutors and serves to increase students basic skills and knowledge; and can learn "with" computers—where

technology is used a tool that can be applied to a variety of goals in the learning process and can serve as a resource to help develop higher order thinking, creativity and research skills (Reeves, 1998; Ringstaff & Kelley, 2002).

The primary form of student learning "from" computers is what Murphy, Penuel, Means, Korbak and Whaley (2001) describe as discrete educational software (DES) programs, such as integrated learning systems (ILS), computer-assisted instruction (CAI), and computer-based instruction (CBI). These software applications are also among the most widely available applications of educational technology in schools today, along with word-processing software, and have existed in classrooms for more than 20 years (Becker, Ravitz, & Wong, 1999).

According to Murphy et al, teachers use DES not only to supplement instruction, as in the past, but also to introduce topics, provide means for self-study, and offer opportunities to learn concepts otherwise inaccessible to students. The software also manifests two key assumptions about how computers can assist learning. First, the user's ability to interact with the software is narrowly defined in ways designed specifically to promote learning with the tools. Second, computers are viewed as a medium for learning, rather than as tools that could support further learning (Murphy et al, 2001).

While DES remains the most commonly used approach to computer use in student learning, in more recent years, use of computers in schools has grown more diversified as educators recognize the potential of learning "with" technology as a means for enhancing students' reasoning and problem-solving abilities. In part, this shift has been driven by the plethora of new information and communication devices now increasingly available to students in school and at home, each of which offers new affordances to teachers and students alike for improving student achievement and for meeting the demand for 21st century skills describe earlier. No longer limited to school labs, school hours and specific devices, technology access is increasingly centered on the learner experience.

Bruce and Levin (1997), for example, look at ways in which the tools, techniques, and applications of technology can support integrated, inquiry-based learning to "engage children in exploring, thinking, reading, writing, researching, inventing, problem-solving, and experiencing the world." They developed the idea of technology as media with four different focuses: *media for inquiry* (such as data modeling, spreadsheets, access to online databases, access to online observatories and microscopes, and hypertext), *media for communication* (such as word processing, e-mail, synchronous conferencing, graphics software, simulations, and tutorials), *media for construction* (such as robotics, computer-aided design, and control systems), and *media for expression* (such as interactive video, animation software, and music composition).

In a review of existing evidence of technology's impact on learning, Marshall (2002) found strong evidence that educational technology "complements what a great teacher does naturally," extending their reach and broadening their students' experience beyond the classroom. "With ever-expanding content and technology choices, from video to multimedia to the Internet," Marshall suggests "there's an unprecedented need

to understand the recipe for success, which involves the learner, the teacher, the content, and the environment in which technology is used."

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) takes advantage of the opportunity brought by rapidly evolving communication technologies to create flexible teaching methods and curriculum materials that can reach diverse learners and improve student access to the general education curriculum (Rose & Meyer, 2002). UDL assumes that students bring different needs and skills to the task of learning, and the learning environment should be designed to both accommodate, and make use of, these differences (Bowe 2000; Rose & Meyer, 2002). To promote improved access to the general curriculum for all learners, including learners with disabilities, Rose & Meyer (2002) have identified three key principles or guidelines for UDL:

1. Presenting information in multiple formats and multiple media.
2. Offering students with multiple ways to express and demonstrate what they have learned.
3. Providing multiple entry points to engage student interest and motivate learning.

For example, printed reading materials pose substantial challenges to the learning of students with disabilities (J. Zorfass: personal communication, October 2005). Technology can assist with such difficulties by enabling a shift from printed text to electronic text, which Anderson-Inman and Reinking (1998) assert can be modified, enhanced, programmed, linked, searched, collapsed, and collaborative. Text styles and font sizes can be modified as needed by readers with visual disabilities; read aloud by a computer-based text-to-speech translators; and integrated with illustrations, videos, and audio. Electronic text affords alternative formats for reading materials that can be customized to match learner needs, can be structured in ways that scaffold the learning process and expand both physical and cognitive access, and can foster new modes of expression through revision and multimedia (J. Zorfass: personal communication, October 2005). It represents one way that technology can support the achievement of students with disabilities.

Steps to Improving Students Achievement Through ICT

Teachers can take the following steps to improve student achievement through technology.

- Determine the purpose of using technology in the classroom, as determined by the specified educational goals. Is it used to support inquiry, enhance communication, extend access to resources, guide students to analyze and visualize data, enable product development, or encourage expression of ideas? After the purpose is determined, select the appropriate technology and develop the curricula. Create a plan for evaluating students' work and assessing the impact of the technology.
- Coordinate technology implementation efforts with core learning goals, such as improving students' writing skills, reading comprehension, mathematical reasoning, and problem-solving skills.
- Collaborate with colleagues to design curricula that involve students in meaningful learning activities in which technology is used for research, data analysis, synthesis, and communication.

- Promote the use of learning circles, which offer opportunities for students to exchange ideas with other students, teachers, and professionals across the world.
- Encourage students to broaden their horizons with technology by means of global connections, electronic visualization, electronic field trips, and online research and publishing.
- Ensure that students have equitable access to various technologies (such as presentation software, video production, Web page production, word processing, modeling software, and desktop publishing software) to produce projects that demonstrate what they have learned in particular areas of the curriculum.
- Encourage students to collaborate on projects and to use peer assessment to critique each other's work.
- In addition to standardized tests, use alternative assessment strategies that are based on students' performance of authentic tasks. One strategy is to help students develop electronic portfolios of their work to be used for assessment purposes.
- Ensure that technology-rich student products can be evaluated directly in relation to the goals for student outcomes, rather than according to students' level of skill with the technology.
- Create opportunities for students to share their work publicly--through performances, public service, open houses, science fairs, and videos. Use these occasions to inform parents and community members of the kinds of learning outcomes the school is providing for students.
- Learn how various technologies are used today in the world of work, and help students see the value of technology applications.
- Participate in professional development activities to gain experience with various types of educational technology and learn how to integrate this technology into the curriculum.
- Use technology (such as an e-mail list) to connect with other teachers outside the school or district and compare successful strategies for teaching with technology info@ncrel.org (2005).

Conclusion

The concepts of individualized instruction, multiple learning styles, team teaching, weekly evaluation, and detailed planning are all of direct benefit to students. The purpose of the collaboration is to combine expertise and meet the needs of all learners**.**

It is important that teachers receive preparation and classroom support. It is also important that planning time continues to be available throughout the school year. "Most important, all students win by being challenged by collaborating teachers who believe that they are responsible for all children in the classroom" (Angle, 1996).

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FAMILY PEDAGOGY – RESEARCH DIRECTION AND SOCIAL AND PEDAGOGIC ACTION

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Abstract: *Considering the continuous amplification of the unit between psychocentrism and sociocentrism generated by the psychological and sociological curriculum substantiation, the current social pedagogy paradigm defines and analyzes education from the perspective of social requirements, having as its general function the optimization of the relationships between school and community, with consistent applications at the family level (family pedagogy). Family pedagogy as a research direction and social pedagogic action answers parents' need to be helped in educating their children as better as possible. The quality of a "good parent" requires effort and specialty training, continuous improvement and self-improvement, and is based on science, on competence and skill, supposing even a certain vocation. This study valorizes the perceptions, representations, motivations and attitudes of experts with a rich experience and serious concerns in supporting the educative function of family, interested in making parents responsible and involving them in their own shaping to change family practices and optimize parental behaviors in favor of the harmonious development of children's personality.*

Keywords: family pedagogy, parent education, socio-educational intervention

1. Argument

The globalization process, which is more and more visible at the contemporaneous life level, causes essential changes in the structure and functionality of social institutions, including at the school and family level.

Today, family is requested pertinent answers to the challenges of contemporaneous world in terms of adaptability, cohesion, creativity, efficiency, competence as to the organization of family life and especially as regards children's education.

Family is the first school of the child, the first educational environment. Italian pedagogue Fausto Telleri considers family as "a persistent and structural reality which creates and stabilizes human personality from a psycho-social point of view" (Telleri F., 2003, p. 23). The socialization process starts in the family through the values promoted therein, through the manifested attitudes and the expressed opinions, through the parents' behavioral modes. All these constitute for the child accessible concrete models, which are "good to assimilate". A reputed Romanian pedagogue considers that parental behavioral models are a "synthetic and generative construction, defining the articulated set of purposes, actions, practices, results and values, which are constant, specific, of the conduct of a family with children, oriented either to determine or to

condition or influence the nascent and/or resulting conduct from the perspective of their personality and the personality of their children."(Neacşu I., 2010, pg.117)

The daily moral exercise of the child in the family is a preamble for its own family life but also for the social life. The parental care, the psychological atmosphere, the family's values system constitute the main coordinates influencing the child's development and creating for it the premises favorable to its social integration. The educational parental model, the family climate, the internal cohesion transfer to the children social values such as: self esteem, respect to the other, altruism, moral conscience, prosocial conduct, will. Such values shall help the young to integrate socially and shall contribute to its subsequent development both personally and professionally.

This study underlines the role and the importance of family pedagogy as a research direction and socio-educational action of family, a multidimensional ensemble of socio-educational interventions in favor of family mainly aiming at finalities of the type of changes at the level of parents' conduct based on restructuring parental attitudes and competences through learning.

2. Methodology

This study is of exploratory qualitative type and is based on the focused interview (the interview guide -annex). Please find below the main stages in the performance of the focus group:

- *Establishment of the discussion theme*: the main discussion axes were presented, which allowed the identification and delimitation of the social and educational intervention area of pedagogues (form teachers) from the intervention area of psychologists in their work with parents (psychological counseling offered to family);

- *Establishment of the group structure* was made according to the following criteria: establishment of a medium homogenous group, considering that all those involved have the optimization of the activities with parents as their common point;

- The attraction in debates of certain representatives for all the professional categories interested in working with parents (teachers, school counselors, psychologists, social assistant, family doctor)

- The high recognition of the professional competences held by those involved in the debates

- *The drafting of the guide for the organization of the focused interview*:

- The establishment of questions (funnel questions, from general questions to specific questions; the preparation of open questions allowing the issuance of as many value judgments for this study as possible)

- The establishment of the team registering the debate results (1 observer and 1 assistant moderator)

- *The establishment of the meeting place and of the duration of the interview:* methodical cabinet within the Piteşti University, 2 hours.

- *The performance of specific procedures:*

▪ Before starting the focus-group, the moderator introduced itself and mentioned its role in this group activity;

▪ The moderator presented the purpose of the focus-group and explained the rules of its performance (the fact that there are no correct or wrong answers, that the participants should speak loudly and in turns, all of them intervening with opinions, ideas; the fact that it is not consensus that is pursued but the exchange of relevant ideas and experiences).

▪ The moderator explained the necessity to record the discussion and ensured the participants of the confidentiality of discussions.

- *focus –group composition:*

▪ one moderator, university teacher, education sciences Phd;

▪ 6 form teachers with a rich practical experience in the field of educative activities from 6 school units of Piteşti

▪ 2 school counselors from 2 Piteşti high schools;

▪ 2 psychologists from the County Argeş Center of Resources and Educational Assistance

▪ 1 social assistant from the Argeş General Department for Social Assistance and Child Protection

▪ 1 doctor from the Arges Public Health Department

- *Objectives pursued in performing the focus group:*

▪ Identification of perceptions, representations, motivations, attitudes of experts with a rich experience in parental education and in social and medical services offered to family;

▪ Identification of the specific framework for the research and analysis of family from a double perspective: social-educational and psychological.

3. Results, findings

The teachers, the form teachers participating in the focus group highlighted the main aspects of pupils' educational counseling in problems related to: self-knowledge, self image, adaptation and social integration, school success, development crises, crisis situations, solving and surpassing a conflict, appropriation of efficient learning techniques, career orientation, pupils' knowledge, understanding pupils' problems, support in their development, ensuring the balance between school requirements and pupils' possibilities, in identifying the causes of school non-adaptation, optimization of the school-pupil relation. Also, certain form teachers underlined that, in the opinion of most parents, school is the institution in which they continue to be most trustful for the education of their children. For this reason, as to the support that school grants to family, it was asserted that the services offered by it are rather few and do not fully answer the needs specific to families. Generally, the interaction with parents is limited to parent meetings and consultations, in which mostly information activities dominate, and less support and training activities. As to the collaboration of family with school, the lower and lower interest of parents in communicating with teachers, in participating in parents' meetings etc was underlined. The father's presence as a partner in family-school relationships is very low. Some parents mentioned that they can no longer provide support and control in doing children's homework (mostly, school tasks being

very complicated for them). Other parents claimed that they sanction their child depending on school results.

The recommendations of the participants in the focus group also regard the specific activities related to parents' educational counseling which could form the object of workshops with families for a better knowledge of their children, for a better understanding of their needs and behaviors, for identifying the risk factors in family, school, social integration, for the communication between parents and children on themes related to their daily life (the child's future, friendship, love, sexuality) etc.

Generally, the education of future parents materializes at the school level through homeroom classes and the orientation and counseling activities, where several themes related to family not sufficiently covering the parental education problem are approached (family types, the change of family roles, family care and support etc.). The classes are frequently held by teachers without a special training in this field.

School counselors and psychologists described the specific psychological counseling activities for parents and children and also underlined the complementarity of these interventions with the parental education and educational counseling actions. Some parents benefit from psychological counseling for:

- Surpassing difficult situations (divorce, loss of job, intra-family conflicts, chronic diseases, death of one of the spouses, etc.) endangering child's safety or generating risks related to the child's separation from its family environment;
- Optimization of the communication with the child, making the best decisions, negotiating solutions and creatively solving conflicts between generations;
- Development of parental skills and practices for children's education and care.
- Supporting the children with special educative necessities.

The social assistant stated the situations and the family cases in which interventions are usually made and in which specialized social support is offered, and the doctor insisted on the specific prevention and treatment actions for families. It was underlined that interventions and preventive models eliminate risks and the promotion of interventions develops positive functionality and is focused on the acquirement of competences and capacities.

Therefore, the optics of the interviewed experts led to the adoption of a holistic perspective, of social and systemic approach of proactive practices in the services offered to family and of the socio-educational interventions supporting and strengthening family functioning.

4. Conclusions

As a direction of research and social pedagogic action, family pedagogy dimensions and orients its research area at 2 levels:

L_1: *education of future parents* – as an educative action of preparing the young for the family life, for exercising their role as future parents. *Family education* supposes the special direction of the educational process to preparing the young for exercising their role as future parents. The education process for family life starts with the education *in and through* family. *Family education* regards the actions and the influences within family with an educative nature, which come from parents and are

oriented to shaping the child's personality. *Education through family* depends on the general culture of family and its life manner, both of them providing permanent feedback for the consolidation of family roles.

Four preparatory stages for family life are mainly delineated: the stage of forming the affective image about family life (of the habit to integrate in the parental family life), the stage of value orientations (of adhesion to value and cultural patterns of family and their internalization), the stage of consolidating personal independence and asserting full personality (pre-marital stage), the stage of option for family life, of formation of the new family (the marital stage).

L_2: *parents' education* – as action of modeling parents' personality for optimizing their relations with children. Considering the complexity of the society we live in, family pedagogy may offer consistent solutions of psycho-pedagogical nature for the satisfaction of parents' need of being helped in educating their children as better as possible. *Parents' education* has the purpose of encouraging the conscious and responsible assumption of the parent mandate. Such an intervention has as finality the optimization of the parent-child relationship, which is in a continuous transformation and continuous re-adaptations.

Family pedagogy cultivates the parents' spirit of responsibility for the education of their children. Its intervention is necessary in solving such problems as: the early education of children in the first years of life, the early formation of civilized behavioral habits, the child's preparation for school, the maintenance of a harmonious relationship of family with school, the manner of gaining parental authority, the manner or organizing the child's leisure time, the manner of counteracting the influence of a negative entourage in the child's group of friends, the settlement of intergenerational conflicts, etc. But the priority function of family pedagogy is however the transmission of social and cultural values and norms from one generation to another in view of a successful social integration.

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Annex

Interview Guide

1. How long have you been a form teacher /school counselor /psychologist/doctor/social assistant?
2. How often do you have meetings with parents?
3. In what circumstances do you perform/did you perform educational/psychological/intervention counseling activities *for and in favor of pupils and their parents*? Briefly describe the work with parents!
4. What types of needs did parents express when you had relations with them in different contexts?
5. Do you consider that parental education can contribute to the increase of the quality of the children's education process and their wellbeing? Argue your answer briefly!
6. In your opinion, what types of activities could form the object of a special program of parental education circumscribed to family pedagogy?

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CORELLATION OF MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The aim of each modern teaching is integrated learning while various knowledge is associated horizontally and vertically. At the Teachers' Training Faculty in Belgrade,*

we have practiced camping of our students at the most remote parts of Serbia where students learn how to survive in nature. They find themselves in various and most incredible situations in which they have to practice mounteneering, swimming, finding food in the surroundings in nature, etc. It has shown that many situations, besides physical fitness and good health, require a solid mathematical knowledge. We are trying to present elementally mathematical knowledge indispensable for survival outdoors, in nature, in this work. These knowledge enable us to orientate without a compass, determine the height of an object , the width of a river, the distance of heavenly bodies, etc. Having in mind the fact that future teachers are on camping, we also point to the aesthetic side of upbringing and education.

We admire mathematical organization of nature in various situations. We point to mathematics present at a leaf of a tree, honeycomb of bees, animals' growth , etc.

Key words: *mathematics, physical education, camping, resourcefulness /surviving outdoors.*

Introduction

The aim and tasks of physical education teaching are not realized exclusively during instruction (by regular time-table for physical education and anticipated physical activities that last 45 minutes in essence), but also through extracurricular activities which are especially important for the students.

If we start from an assumption that one of the basic tasks of physical education is to teach an individual to practice permanently and in free time, on the basis of personal determination and conviction, then it is clear that this task is easier done through the forms of work in physical education for which the students were determined voluntarily . The subject matters which cannot be realized through a class lasting 45 minutes are important for physical education instruction as well.

" The essence of extra curricular activities is the same as at teaching physical education. Doing the tasks and reaching the aim of physical education by practicing bodily movements – exercises" . (Martinovic, 2005:466)

Going outdoors becomes a practice to many people after one going out for a breath of air only, in green forests and fields or along a river.The very staying out in

nature can be realized in many ways, and one of them is camping , organized by the Teacher Training Faculty in Belgrade for its students, within elective subject ' Outdoor activities'. The aim of outdoor activities is to introduce better the students – future teachers and tutors into the possibilities and contents which could be offered by organised staying outdoors, in nature, with basic aim to pass on gained practice and experience to youth they will work with in near future during their professional work.

Camping , as a specific form of holiday and recreation in our conditions, has occurred recently. It has especially become popular when so called selective tourism occurred , when one is in the position to choose the mode and place of one's staying , when the need to explain the forms of staying in nature in more detailed way occurred , and especially camping.

In order to do the tasks we are facing successfully, while at camping, elemental mathematical knowledge is indispensable as well . A simple mathematical device will enable us to admire the natural order , as David a psalmist did in the 19th psalm, saying : ' The Heavens speak glory of God and heavenly sphere is his hands' work.' Knowing what kind of mathematics is hidden in a leaf 's or a plant's growth… students will like and understand the nature, where a pedagogical aspect of camping is certain. A simple mathematical device, adopted by students at mathematics lessons , is necessary for orientation and surmounting obstacles in nature. Only with elemental mathematical knowledge, along with physical and health preparation , it is possible to surpass all the obstacles we are facing at the camping successfully.

The task of our work has been to point to necessary functionality of acquired knowledge before and during the studies and their inevitable correlation. The stress is laid on knowledge of mathematics and physical culture.

Mathematical order in nature

While being in nature, we observe it as artists and scientists. We find regular geometrical figures in it, what will increase our attention and more profound experience in everything that surrounds us. If we observe leaves, trees and fruits, we come across the most various polygons (triangles, quadrangles, pentagons, etc.) Thus, for example, we find regular triangle in the cross-section of a Colchicum fruit. A circle could be found in the cross- sections of tree trunks, leaves , at throwing pebbles in the water ,etc. Speaking about polygons and noticing them in nature, we can remind of historical tasks on construction, for example, pentagon, quadrature of the circle, etc. We give our camping a wider, cultural dimension in this way. We find algebraic and transcendental curves in the nature. We should mention spirals that we meet on snails' shells , sunflower, etc. If we observed a snowflake by microscope , we could notice wonderful six-pointed stars with the most various forms of points, and at the same time, almost no identical forms . Their beauty and regularity cannot be imagined even by the wildest imagination. A pentagon is found in arrangement of seeds in apples and pears, when we cut them in halves. The situation is similar with their flowers. All these facts were mentioned best by Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) , as he used to say:" Nature is a vast book in which the science is written up. It is always open in front of our eyes, but a man cannot understand it unless he previously learns the language

and letters it is written by. It is written by the language of mathematics, and its letters are triangles, circles and other mathematical figures''.

Every object in nature has its form, position toward other objects, and it takes up a part of the space. If we abstract these three features, we come to an ideal geometrical body. We shall notice its surfaces which could be flat and crooked, lines (straight, curved, closed, open), segments of a line, points,… Camping is the right place to return back to Old Egypt and imagine the origins of creating geometry from the nature. After the flood by the Nile , the Egyptians had to measure the ground that was in the shapes of various geometrical figures. In this way they came to the notion of a geometrical figure and its surface. The knowledge acquired in such a way was called geometry. The word geometry means measuring of the ground (from Greek word γεωμετρια).

While objects in nature are regular and irregular, symmetry accompanies almost all living creatures. If we observe arrangement of leaves on a stalk, we will find many facts interesting for mathematics. The leaves at some plants are arranged in circles at the stalk's joints, and the leaves along the stalk are arranged in spirals and symmetrically at some other plants. The Pythagoras's triangle (length of the sides 3,4,5) is found on a dry leaf of globeflower and Japanese cypress (Doci,2005:17). Not to mention the spirals and golden cross-sections of shells, fish and crabs . We find here golden rectangles and squares. Fish also contain golden cross - section and the Pythagoras's numbers in the most varied ways. (Doci, 2005:68-69). A serious mathematical discussion about arrangement of leaves on a stem leads us to a golden cross-section, numerical progressions , chain fractions, and much more of it because we need to know advanced mathematics. However, we are on camping, and we should always develop love and admiration toward natural phenomena , thus it is sufficient to deal with these phenomena just superficially as well. Golden cross-section (Divine proportion) is the greatest harmony which is seen everywhere in natural conformity. All that is divided by golden cross-section is beautiful as it is adopted to the features of our eyes. If we divide a whole into two parts in such a way that a greater part refers to a smaller one as the whole to a greater one, ten we get golden cross-section. Many flowers have the shape of a five-pointed star (a regular pentagon) in nature. For example, it is a case with azalea , bellflowers and dog rose flowers. Ratio between the distance of two opposite and two adjacent tops on a flower equals a golden proportion. More elaborate mathematical device, which is omitted here, can show that arrangement of leaves on a stem contains within itself Fibonacci's (Fibonacci, 1180-1250?) progression (1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21,24,..., each member equals the sum of the previous two), golden cross-section and many more mathematical laws (Sevdić, 1965:27-36; Čanak, 2009:118-119). Golden cross-section is also found in a field chamomile flower pattern. Sunflower seeds are arranged along logarithmic identical angle spirals that move in opposite directions. We find Fibonacci's progression and golden cross-section in the number of seeds per spirals and ratio of number of seeds in one and the other direction of spirals. Number of spirals at most of average size sunflowers is 34 and 55. These are Fibonacci's numbers (f9, f10). At large flowers, that number is 55 and 89, also Fibonacci's numbers (f10, f11).

We also come across hives and bees in nature. It is the opportunity to say something about hexagonal cells of honeycomb where a bee moves. From the initial position, a bee comes across to the next ,adjacent cell, moving always to the right (up-straight-left). Number of paths, from the initial point to certain point n equals n+2nd term of Fibonacci's progression. A bee builds its honeycomb in such a way that it can store maximal quantity of honey in minimal space with the least consumption of wax for the construction.

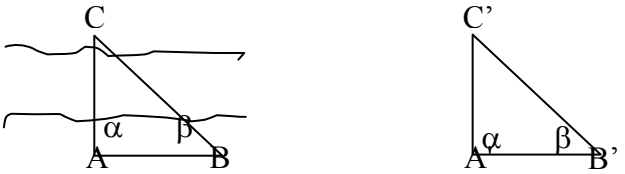
Mathematical device helps in overcoming obstacles in nature

While at camping, we oranize going to mounteneering , we explore the surroundings and overcome unknown obstacles. It is especially important to know how to measure the height of the rock that interposes and blocks the road, the width of the river that we should swim across, the length of the road,etc. Elemental mathematics helps us here, knowledge of lengths of some parts of our body , a rod, shadow, etc. We will remember an anecdote how Tales (624-547 B.C.) measure the pyramid of Kheops. He was asked by the Egyptian priest to measure the height of the great pyramid, Tales took the advantage of a clear day, laid in the sand and left the impression /trail of his body, stepped on one end of the impression and waited till the length of the shadow coincided to the length of the trail, i.e. impression of his body in the sand. At that moment the height of the pyramid was equal to its shadow. But, Tales did not have to wait for the length of the shadow to coincide with its original. He was able to count the ratio between instantaneous length of the shadow and the length of the original. The Tales theorem application is even more sophisticated through proportion (Sevdic,1965:41). Of course, there are entirely elemental mathematical devices to measure a height of, lets say , a tree if the foothill is not accessible.

We come to a river and we want to swim across it. By simple technique, almost without mathematics, we measure the width of the river. We put out hand above the eyes, as when we protect from the Sun, in such a way that we see the spot to which we measure the width of the river by our eyes below the hand. Now we have a rectangular triangle, one leg is the distance from the ground to our eyes, the other is the required distance. Without moving the position of our hand, we turn left, right or towards the land, to the position more convenient for measuring. We notice the farthest spot that we see below the edge line of the hand. We measure the distance till that spot and that will be the width of the river. Although it seems there is no mathematics in it, it is present, however. It is an opportunity for the students to remind of the knowledge about congruence of triangles. There are some other, simple ways of measuring the width of the river, while the proportions and Tales's theorem , and sometimes elemental knowledge of trigonometry. By these simple devices it could be determined:

1. The distance between point A and C which are divided by the river, and point C is visible.

We shall determine an arbitrary point B and measure the length AB, as well as the angles α and β. We construct the triangle A'B'C' on the river bank. Now the distance A'C' will present the width of the river AC.



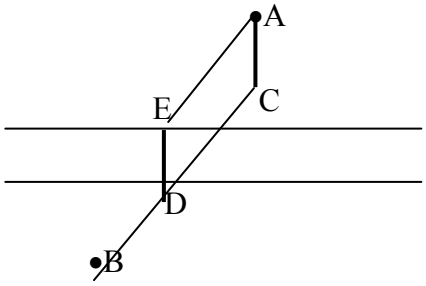
2. The distance of the point A from the point B, if the length AB cannot be measured directly.
3. The distance of the point A from the point B, if some obstacle lies or is located between them, a swamp , for example.

There are many more situations in nature which can be overcome by mathematical device, but we do not quote them in this work.

When we are at camping, we install tents. It is an opportunity to occupy with and amuse ourselves with their mathematical features. Except simple problems, such as calculation the surface and volume, there are interesting problems about tents in the field of minimum and maximum. If the students carry one tent flank each, several of them join and make the tent and stay in it. With the help of mathematics, we will get the answer to the question: Is there, perhaps, the greatest value for the tent's ground size and some greatest value for the value of volume dimension? Maximal values can be searched at arbitrary combination of wings, shape and size of the tent.

We also cross the bridge on the river, and it is an opportunity to think about it. There are two places A and B on different banks of the river. The question is : where exactly to build a bridge so it will end vertically (at a right angle) to the river banks, and places A and B would be connected in the shortest way?

The solution can be seen in the picture. From the point A we draw a segment of the line AC, vertically to the course of the river. The line AC is as wide as the river. The bridge should be constructed at the point D, i.e. where a segment of the line BD cuts the river bank. It is easily shown that every other way from A to B is longer that this one.



Wider knowledge includes geography as well. Knowing how to read a geographical map is of great importance for orientation. For reading maps and determining position, direction and course of movement, it is indispensable to know mathematics, as well as usage of mathematical equipment for reading. Students also

should be instructed how to orientate through reference gadgets such as a watch, rings on a tree, position of the stars, moss on the trees, position of temples and monuments on cemeteries ,etc.

As a meter is not always at hand, we should know measures of our body. Firstly, everyone should know the length of one's step. If one does not know that, one could use the rule that the length of a grown up man's step is equalled by half the distance between his eyes and feet. Another rule , which can easily be proved mathematically, says: A man walks as many kilometers per hour as he makes steps in three seconds . It is useful to know the following rules as well: a meter is approximately equal to the distance between the end of one aside fully spread arm and the opposite shoulder. One meter also equals approximately the distance of 6 spans (nine inches) between the tips of the thumb and index finger spread as much as possible. For other referent measures , ask for Dejić , 1995:156.

While taking a rest

After a busy day, in the evening, by a bonfire, we can turn back to mathematics again, without being conscious of that. In starred nights, it is always interesting to wander off to the classical period when there were no modern observatories , airplanes and satellites, but the wise scientists measured the distances between the Sun, the Moon and other celestial bodies from the Earth by simple mathematical devices. Perhaps the story about Eratosthenes (275-19B.C.) who measured the length, of the Earth's equator, without going around the Earth, as a matter of fact, without going anywhere from Alexandria where he lived (Dejić M., Dejić B.,1995:156).

Number is a quantity of something, and we should always give the answer to the question "How much /how many?" when we are camping. At leisure time, students play chess. It is a good opportunity to find the right answer to the question how many kernels of wheat could be placed on a chessboard, if we put one kernel on the first square on the chessboard, 2 kernels on the second, 4 on the third and so on, on each new square we should put double quantity of wheat that on the previous one. The numbers of wheat kernels on chessboard squares make geometric progression , and their sum is of 20 ciphers.

Someone picked up a dandelion and blew into it. If that dandelion had 100 seeds , and a new plant would grow out of each one, in the second year there would already be 100 new dandelions, in the third: $100 \cdot 100 = 10000\ldots$ in the tenth year there would be 10^{18} . Further , we can count how many dandelions there would be on each square meter on the globe, and where other plants would be placed. The number of insects, animals, mammals, etc. can be counted in the similar way. As a matter of fact, great numbers are all around us. Just have a look at the stars in the sky, numbers on tree leaves, distances to celestial bodies ,etc.

Even while we open a can of cylindrical shape, we can discuss about the problem, how to make a can of circumference given in advance with the least consumption of sheet metal.

Conclusion

Modern men live in cramped quarters surrounded by technique, therefore look ever more for free space in nature and outdoors with as favourable micro climate as possible, what is enabled , in addition to everything else, by taking into consideration and application of physical culture. Physical culture brings a man closer to nature, what is very important. Getting closer to nature should be also understood as approaching of one to oneself and to generic essence contained in its own motion. It must not be forgotten that a man is not a master of the nature, but its product and integral part. Modern living conditions , rational life and running after money, for greater production and rational life determine to a great extent the possibilities of being occupied with physical culture (temporal above all). Practicing physical culture is also , in addition to everything else, a matter of free time, determined for doing cultural activities.

" A man has a special place in the world of nature. He has made 'helping devices', used them as his lengthened extremities , in the sense of prolonged brain activity. A man succeeded in adapting nature to his own needs to a great extent , by his work and activities , and he also does that presently in a modern way. Moving his own body is a primary device which a man uses in order to express relation of his own being and the world he lives in (Martinović, 2005:30).

Presently, integrated learning and application of knowledge are factors that cannot be avoided in any single segment on any level of education. We have integrated two seemingly disparate fields, mathematics and physical education. We demonstrated multilateral advantage of mathematical device and its concrete application at the students' camping. The students have practically seen and learned how to orientate without a compass, how to determine the height of an object, the width of a river, the distance of celestial bodies, etc. Admiration to mathematical order in nature and application of mathematics at leisure time have not been omitted either.

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THE SELF-IMAGE, ELEMENT OF BEHAVIOURAL AND EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION

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Abstract: *During school life, self-image suffers a series of changes due to the increase in age and also experience accumulation, reflecting an individual seal which will not change throughout life. During this period, the individual identifies himself not only with grades that objectify school performance, but also according to the "academic opinion" composed of himself and which he is aware of, in whole or in part. But, as general objective, in this study aims at identifying particularities of self-image and its development in 4th grade students. At the same time, in order to improve students' self image, their self-control capacity, the reduction of the fear of failure, it is essential to implement strategies regarding a stimulative learning environment, involving all students, feedback on the performance level, recognition of the students' merits.*

Key words: *self-image, self-knowledge, self-esteem*

I. Concept delimitations

The self-image refers to the place or value an individual attributes to himself in relation to the other members of the community to which he belongs, under the circumstances of an accurate self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is self-knowledge of the person, meaning perception and knowledge from her own activity, from her own behavioural actions, from her relations with others, from successes and failures, from her aspirations compared to those of others, in relation to which the person obtains the awareness of its own value.

In the Dictionary of Psychology (Doron, R., Parot, F., 2007:387) it is shown that "self-image refers to the representation and evaluation the individual makes of himself in various stages of his development and in different situations he finds himself into. As a result, there is not only one self-image, but several. Psychologists and psychoanalysts who have studied the child showed how these representations are constructed through a game of identification with characters from the subject's entourage or with real or imaginary figures of heroes. Self-images also depend on how the subject is viewed and appreciated by others".

Trif, L., taking into account Miclea, M. and Lemeni, G., indicates that self-knowledge / self-esteem refers to the process of exploration and structuring of their own characteristics (e.g. skills, emotions, motivations, attitudes, beliefs, mechanisms of defence and adaptation, etc.) which results in the self-image of the person. Self-image

is the essential marker of behavioural and emotional self-regulation. (Trif, L., 2008:117)

The self-image is linked to the genesis of self awareness. In the psychology of development, the study of the genesis of conscience is part of the study of descriptive, self-descriptive or reflective use of language, together with the study of individuation and self-knowledge processes, addressed by social interactions or by the child's reactions to his own image perceived in the mirror, studied by R. Zazzo.

Closely related to the self-image is self-esteem, which is a fundamental dimension to any human being, whether child, adult or elderly, regardless of culture, personality, interests, social status, abilities. Self-esteem refers to how we evaluate ourselves, how good we consider ourselves compared to our expectations or to others. Self-esteem is the evaluative and affective dimension of self-image.

The great dictionary of psychology (2006:1126) states that "we have three sentences: 1. of all the people an individual knows, the most information he has is about himself, 2. the self is the pivot of any social relationship, 3. the concept of self is determined by the concept of person in the culture the person belongs to".

The concept a person has of self has many sides. There is the objective side, which we call self-image: the evaluative side, called self-esteem; the side that describes how you want to be, which we call the ideal self; the side related to skills and abilities, called awareness of your own efficiency; the side related to the way you identify with social groups, called social identification and the way in which the sense of self was shaped by the cultural context in which you grew up. (Hayes, N., Orrell, S., 2003:213).

II. Self-image formation

Self-image formation is primarily a subjective construction and involves three aspects: the importance of others' opinion in its construction; the elements on which the perception of others is achieved; the extent to which conduct and motivation influence self-image creation.

The formation of self-image goes through the following steps:

- *the construction of self*, of the subjective self image, what we believe is characteristic for us. At this stage the own assessment of self-image takes place (we like / do not like what we believe about ourselves, what we are). It depends on the individual's personality;

- *awareness of others' judgments* which may or may not coincide with the image built by ourselves. These judgments may also influence self-image;

- *reporting own image to the others' judgment*. This appreciation can lead to positive or negative feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. We are influenced by groups in which we live: primary groups (family, classmates, friends) or secondary (pupils from the same school). The two types of groups affect self-image formation differently. They contribute to the socialization of the individual (G.Kelemen, 2011). An important role in the formation of self-image is played by social comparison. (The theory of social comparison: we compare ourselves with people who resemble us.)

In each of us reside more characters (M. Roco, 2007:26), among which we mention the following: the fundamental character (what we mainly are, the personality essence) the admitted character (what we imagine to be), the dreamed character (what we want to be), the purpose or the model character (what we would like to be, as a model), the exemplary character (what the others or society would like us to be), the reflected character (the way others see us), the apparent character (the way we would like others to perceive us), the secret character (what we hide from the others), the actor character (what we would like to seem in a given situation), the defence character (the character that we take refuge in case of threats)

III. The main issues related to self-image development in young students

During school life, self-image suffers a series of changes due to the increase in age and also experience accumulation, reflecting an individual seal which will not change throughout life. During this period, the individual identifies himself not only with grades that objectify school performance, but also according to the "academic opinion" composed of himself and which he is aware of, in whole or in part. An important feature of this age period is the massive overvaluation of their own possibilities of action, leading first to a certain distancing from the objectified performances (they are not accepted as a true measure of their possibilities), and on the other hand, to the location in the future of "real" confirmations. Promises made to oneself are fulfilled or not during life.

The system of beliefs begins in childhood, with "reproaches" from parents. These reproaches are the first indicators of personal value. As the child grows and develops, he is brought before other mirrors by family members, colleagues and teachers. These reflections of his image form the basis of self image as he matures.

Normally, school and social performance of each student can not all be located at a higher level, especially when school tasks are at a high level of difficulty. Therefore, teachers should create situations where students get to know not only their limits, but also their resources.

IV. Ascertaining study

As **general objective**, this study aims at identifying particularities of self-image and its development in 4th grade students:

In this sense, the **operational objectives** pursued are: identifying self-esteem; self-esteem capacity building; increasing personal assertiveness; developing realistic beliefs about themselves;

Students samples:

We note that there were a number of tools used to select the three subjects, such as: psycho-pedagogical characterization sheet, case study, history, family situation, relationships with others, with parents, siblings, with classmates, the individual socio-gram of choices and rejections, relationships with teachers, relationships with friends and relationships with strangers.

A critical role was played by the class teacher who has important information needed in selecting cases. In the following, we shall present the samples of subjects only as identification data in the form of initials, along with their age and gender.

1) Name: D. P. L.	2) Name: N. A. E.	2) Name: S. S. L.
Age: 10	Age: 10	Age: 10
Grade: 4th	Grade: 4th	Grade: 4th
Gender: male	Gender: female	Gender: male

Research instruments used:

a) The LAW S.E.Q. Questionnaire. It is an educational questionnaire that measures the self-esteem of the student. It is not represented as a diagnostic tool, but rather integrated into the screening tests. It is a short questionnaire which includes 16 questions out of which 4 are neutral. The LAW S.E.Q. questionnaire is present in two forms: one for primary and one for secondary school level and it is composed of questions with three possible answers (yes, no, do not know).

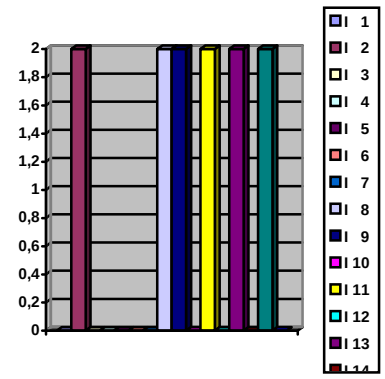
b) The questionnaire for the self-assessment of self-image (Carl Rogers)

The questionnaire provides a list of 32 adjectives, representing both positive personal characteristics (e.g. *humorous, enthusiastic, trustworthy, polite, sincere, strong*, etc.) and negative (e.g. *emotional, fragile, internalized, cynical, jealous, impulsive*, etc.). The subjects have to read the list carefully and put in the column *How I am now*, an "X" next to each adjective, which they consider as being characteristic for them. Then, without looking at the signs put in the first column, they have to reread the list of adjectives and write a "0" in the column *How I would like to be* next to each adjective they would like to be characterised by. **The** terms passed through the grid of adjectives designate values that we submit to the subjects' appreciation. They express the affection-evaluative resonance the words or terms included in the test items have on them. On this basis we can identify individual and group values accepted and shared.

c) The social desirability scale *(Douglas P. Crowne and David Marlowe, adapted and experimented in our country by I. Dafinoiu). This scale measures the degree of sincerity and realism of the subjects regarding the assessment of oneself (self-assessment). The scale comprises 33 statements representing attitudes and personality traits. Subjects must respond to each one of them by "true" or "false" as they correspond or not to their own way of being. The answers are related to the standard.*

Analysis and interpretation of results:

1) *D. P. L.* ***- LAW SEQ questionnaire*** *- 12 points → low self-esteem;*



Following the responses listed with 0 points I1, I3, I4, I5, I6, I7, I10, I12, I14, I16, we find discrepancies between desires / aspirations and reality, but reasonable inconsistencies within normal ranges. The student's agreement with himself can improve if he agrees to assume certain responsibilities, facing the difficulties which might arise in their achievement. The absence of the mother in the child's life leads to uncertainty.

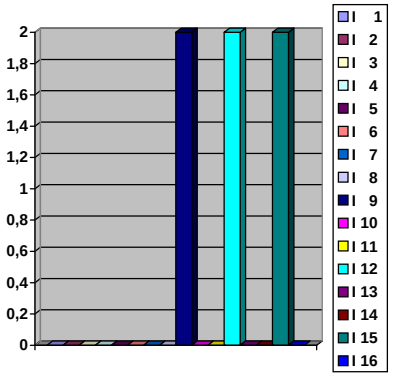
Fig. 1. Graphic description of the results to the LAW SEQ questionnaire

- Self-assessment questionnaire ⟶ 22 points. It confirms the discrepancies between the current and the ideal Self. "At present" – he attributes himself negative characteristics: emotional, reserved, jealous, stubborn, impulsive, apathetic. As ideal person he mentions positive characteristics: independent, interesting, relaxed, energetic, but also negative: lazy.

- Social desirability scale – he obtained a score of 20 points. It is considered high scoring between 20 and 33 points. People in this category are concerned with being perceived as socially desirable. They feel the need to have the approval of others for what they do. A high level of need for social approval is often characteristic of people living a sense of social insecurity, of anxiety, which may affect negatively their interaction with others. Such people are ruled by the desire to do what others expect from them, to behave according to certain social norms, which often causes these people to appear differently from what they are.

The desire to achieve the social desirability ideal generates in people in this situation, energy consumption and sometimes dissatisfaction due to unfulfilment of this goal. This energy could be channelled towards regaining self-confidence or performing a correct reassessment.

2) N. A. E. **- LAW SEQ questionnaire** - 6 points ⟶ very low self-esteem;



Analyzing responses to I2, I14, it is inferred that the need for action for the student to overcome the uncomfortable feeling related to the dissolution of friendship, especially since through I10 she affirms her desire for change. It requires the activity to be channelled towards regaining self-confidence, towards a fair review of self.

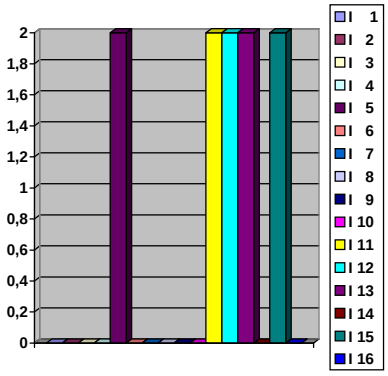
Fig. 2. Graphic description of the results to the LAW SEQ questionnaire

- Self-assessment questionnaire ⟶ 24 points - suggests a reasonable level of psychological comfort and an insignificant discrepancy between the current

Self and the ideal Self. As ideal person she appreciates the adjective *intelligent* which she does not mark in the "self portrait".

- Social desirability scale – she obtained a score of 15 points. People in the category 9-19 points are characterized by behaviour that shows a relative balance between social desirability and social undesirability. They want to present themselves as being as close as possible to everyday normality.

3) S. S. L. **- LAW SEQ** questionnaire - 10 points ⟶ very low self-esteem;



The answer to I16, by which he accepts that other people believe he is telling lies, reveals that he is concerned by the assessments of others. Negative relations with others are expressed by the appreciation that others often break friendship with him and he must find new friends, for the old ones play with someone else (I3, I14). It is necessary to help the student recognize representative personal qualities and negative traits he wants to change in himself.

Fig. 3. Graphic description of the results to the LAW SEQ questionnaire

- Self-assessment questionnaire ⟶ 32 points - suggests a reasonable level of psychological comfort and an insignificant discrepancy between the "self portrait" and ideal Self. The same adjectives he attributes himself at present are also marked in the box *if he could be an ideal person,* including negative features: emotional, lazy.

- Social desirability scale – with a score of 22 points, he is characterised by a high degree of social desirability (social conformity). He is expected to change attitudes and behaviours easier, as required by specific circumstances of life, to get social approval of his acts.

V. Conclusions

The formation of a balanced self-image, of dignity and self-esteem and respect towards the others is done by becoming aware of resources and limitations, different from student to student. Thus we come to the acceptance of natural differences between people, to an increase in tolerance and to the avoidance of global labelling which can have negative effects on their personality.

At the same time, in order to improve students' self image, their self-control capacity, the reduction of the fear of failure, it is essential to implement strategies regarding a stimulative learning environment, involving all students, feedback on the performance level, recognition of the students' merits. Therefore, the attention that the teacher must pay to developing a positive self-image represents an important contribution to school success at this stage and the preparation for subsequent cycles.

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USING THE FOUR RESOURCE MODEL TO MAP OUT PLANS FOR A LITERACY LESSON

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Abstract:*The purpose of this paper is to map out plans for a literacy lesson using the framework articulated by Freebody and Luke (1999a) in the four resources model. The reason why I have chosen to write about the practicalities of the four resources model lies in the fact that literacy is an important contemporary topic, especially in the context of middle school students. Rush (2004) noticed that research mainly focuses on reading intervention in the early years of schooling, while middle school students are a neglected target group. This paper aims to curb this situation. At the same time, the present paper aims to put into practice Freebody and Luke's four resources model, thus creating a much needed precedent in middle school literacy education.*

The paper is structured into three parts. The first part deals with a literature review of the four resources model with the focus on the four main roles (i.e., code breaker, meaning maker, text user, and text analysis). The second part of the paper presents the literacy lesson under analysis and the educational standards that have to be met according to the school curriculum. The third part maps out plans for the chosen lesson, giving examples of activities for each of the four main roles in Freebody and Luke's four resources model. The paper ends with a conclusion, followed by a relevant list of references.

Key words: *curriculum, Freebody and Luke, four resource model, literacy, lesson, standards*

Literature review

The definition of literacy in the twenty-first century as stated in *Literate Futures: Report of the literacy review for Queensland state schools* is a broad one: "Literacy is the flexible and sustainable mastery of a repertoire of practices with texts of traditional and new communication technologies via spoken language, print and multi media" (Luke, Freebody and Land, 2000, p.9). At the same time, Freebody and Luke (1999b) argue that literacy education does not mean developing certain skills but, as suggested in the definition above, it refers to developing social, cultural, and economic practices.

According to the four resources model framework, the repertoire of literacy practices has been separated by Freebody and Luke (1999a) into four main roles. Luke and Freebody decided to conceptualise literacy in this way because they realised that everyone – regardless of their view of literacy – was (practically) right. The four

resources model focuses on the range of practices which, if emphasized in a reading program, will be able to cover and integrate a repertoire of textual practices needed in today's new economies and cultures (Freebody and Luke, 1999a). *Literate Futures* also acknowledges the fact that effective progress in schoolwork was highly influenced by the acquisition of reading (Luke, Freebody and Land, 2000).

The four resources model does not discard the current and well-developed techniques used by teachers worldwide to train their students in becoming literate, but rather attempts to recognize and incorporate them. As such, the model became a map of possible practices dependent on the teacher's reading of his or her students' existing linguistic, cultural, and textual practices (Freebody and Luke, 1999a). The four resources model is a framework that "avoids a model of literacy as the artifact of pedagogical styles or preferences; rather it draws attention to the kinds of practices students need to learn" (Comber, 1997, p. 32).

The creators of the four resources model did not have the intention of transforming their model into a solution to all literacy problems, but rather, Freebody and Luke offered an alternative way to teaching the skill of reading and a way of conceptualising what (effective) readers do. This is also evident from their decision to change the terminology used since the model's initial development, preferring to use the notion "practices" instead of "roles." The word "practices" even suggests that the models are applied in everyday classroom or community contexts. On the contrary, the term "role" suggested a pre-established framework that students need to fit into (Freebody and Luke, 1999a).

According to Freebody and Luke (1999a), literacy has **three dimensions**: breadth, depth, and extent. The breadth of an individual's or community's repertoire of literate practices refers to the range of social activities offered by the curriculum. These literacy activities are also referred to by different researchers as "genres" or "text types." The concept of extent refers to the range of novelty, transformation, and redesign at work.

Both the breadth and depth of literacy practices can be assessed because they are developed though educational experiences (Freebody and Luke, 1999b). The depth of skills exercised by a student draws on a repertoire of literacy practices that allows the learner to successfully engage in reading and writing activities. Of course, literacy can also include listening and speaking, as well as multimedia texts. The four practices advocated by Freebody and Luke's model are: (1) breaking the code of texts, (2) participating in the meanings of text, (3) using texts functionally, and (4) critically analysing and transforming texts (Freebody and Luke, 1999a).

The reader as a **code breaker** refers to the ability of a person to successfully recognize and engage the technology of written texts (Freebody, 1992), with an emphasis on decoding and encoding the symbols of written, spoken, and visual texts. This includes the alphabet, sounds in words, whole words, letter/sound relationship; spelling; grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, intonation, rhythm; clauses, sentences, and text structure; and visual, nonverbal, and auditory codes (Ludwig, 2003).

The reader as a **meaning maker** or **text participant** entails engaging the technology of the text itself (Freebody, 1992) by comprehending and making meaning

from written and spoken texts. This includes using background knowledge to construct meaning; comparing personal experiences with the ones presented in texts; relating previous experiences with similar texts; seeing own interests and lifestyles reflected in texts; interpreting words, clauses, sentences, and texts; interpreting visual, nonverbal, and auditory texts; and looking at the way texts are constructed to make a specific meaning (Ludwig, 2003).

The reader as a **text user** means being able to take part in social activities in which the written text plays a major part (Freebody, 1992), with an emphasis on knowing how to use texts – appropriate audience and purpose, the right type of text for the right context and purpose. This includes understanding cultural and social contexts which dictate the way texts are structured; using appropriate text types for specific purposes; recognising the particular structures and features of texts; and understanding the options for using certain texts to convey particular meanings (Ludwig, 2003).

The reader as a **text critic** or **text analyst** refers to the understanding that written, spoken, and visual texts are not neutral, no matter how factual or neutral the texts seem to appear (Freebody, 1992). Most texts rather advocate particular points of view while silencing others. This includes recognising the purpose in creating the text; recognising that texts influence people; recognising opinions, bias, points of view, and missing points of view in the text; understanding that texts are written according to the views and interests of the author; identifying the ways in which the readers, viewers, or listeners are influenced; and presenting alternative points of view (Ludwig, 2003).

Freebody and Luke (1999b) argue that the practices presented in the four resources model are necessary, but none of the four areas are sufficient to become effective literate citizens. It is also believed that the four resources model produces different learning effects for different groups of students, depending on the pedagogies and curricula used.

The text under analysis

The four resources model has been used effectively by teachers worldwide in mapping the strengths of students, with a focus on strategies aimed at developing the students' weaknesses (*Further notes on the four resources model: Transcript of one conversation with the authors*, 1999). Teachers also believe that Freebody and Luke's model provides a framework for well rounded instructions in classrooms (Rush, 2004).

The target text that will be incorporated in the four resources framework is entitled "How He Did It: Health Advice, Kid-to-Kid" by Amy Bertrand, part of *Unit 1. Why read?* in *Glencoe Literature. Reading with purpose* by Jeffrey D. Wilhelm et al. (2007). According to the *English-language arts content standards for California public schools, kindergarten through grade twelve*, the standards that apply to this lesson are:

- Under "READING: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development," the students should be able to "1.3. Clarify word meanings through the use of definition, example, restatement, or contrast" (California Department of Education, 1998, p.42);

- Under "READING: Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)," the students should be able to "2.4. Identify and trace the development of

an author's argument, point of view, or perspective in text" (California Department of Education, 1998, p.43) and "2.6. Assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of the author's evidence to support claims and assertions, noting instances of bias and stereotyping" (p.43);

- Under "WRITING: Writing Strategies," the students should be able to "1.1. Create an organizational structure that balances all aspects of the composition and uses effective transitions between sentences to unify important ideas" (California Department of Education, 1998, p.44);

Mapping out plans

According to Freebody (1992), a successful reader needs to develop and be able to sustain the resources needed to play the four roles of the model: code-breaker ("How do I crack this?"), text-participant ("What does this mean?"), text-user ("What do I do with this, here and now?"), and text-analyst ("What does this do to me?").

In this section, the four resources model will be used as an instructional framework to map out plans for teaching a reading lesson using *How He Did It: Health Advice, Kid-to-Kid* by Amy Bertrand. Following are examples of how the text under analysis can be used within each of the four areas of the framework will be given. All the activities suggested below have been designed for a class of 12, Grade 7 students, but are easily applicable to other middle school levels. The students are assigned *How He Did It: Health Advice, Kid-to-Kid* (Bertrand, 2007) and divided into four groups of three. One student in each group is chosen to represent the group and to record the group's findings and, later on, share them with the other groups.

The question that each group will have to explore in order to **develop code breaking strategies** is: "Which words do you think are interesting?" (*Learning Role Cards*, 2002). In their groups, the students brainstorm ideas and the group representative writes down the words that appeal to them. Once they have completed this task, the teacher asks the students to give an explanation of what the words mean in their contexts. The representatives take notes once again. While the students are on task, the teacher monitors and gives advice and assistance where needed. After the students have completed the activity, the representatives of each group share their ideas with the other groups. Once back in their original groups, the entire class helps to put up a list of interesting words found in the text under analysis. This list can be used later on by the teacher as the weekly spelling list. This activity meets standard 1.3 under "Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development" (California Department of Education, 1998).

The question that each group will have to explore in order to **develop meaning making strategies** is: "What are the main ideas presented?" (*Learning Role Cards*, 2002). Each group is given the possibility of choosing one idea that they would like to analyse in terms of the author's argument, point of view, or perspective in text. After the students have completed the task, the representatives of each group present their findings in front of the class. With visual support from the book, the presentations can generate lively discussions in which the teacher can take the role of facilitator and mediator. This activity meets standard 2.4 under "Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)" (California Department of Education, 1998).

The question that each group will have to explore in order to **develop text using strategies** is: "If you were to make your own version of a website about the topic under discussion, how would it be different to the print version?" (*Learning Role Cards*, 2002). The students create an organizational structure for their website, balancing all aspects of the composition. In order to unify important ideas, the students are asked to uses effective transitions between sentences and prepare the virtual links of each section of their web site. The teacher can collaborate with the Information Technology teacher so that the students brainstorm for ideas in the class, and create their web sites in the computer room. This activity meets standard 1.1 under "WRITING: Writing Strategies" (California Department of Education, 1998).

The four questions that each group will have to explore in order to **develop text analysing strategies** are: "Are there stereotypes in the text? Who does the text favour or represent? Who does the text reject or silence? How does this text claim authority?" (*Learning Role Cards*, 2002). On completion, each group reports back to the class, supporting their answers with examples for the text. This activity meets standard 2.6 under "Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials)" (California Department of Education, 1998).

Conclusion

This paper has presented the main characteristics of the four resources model, giving detailed explanations of what Freebody and Luke (1999a) understand by code breaker, meaning maker, test user, and text analyst. In order to connect theory to classroom practice, a text had been chosen and activities that match the four resources framework had been presented. The author of this essay believes, just as other researchers have concluded (see Rush, 2004), that the four resources model advocated by Freebody and Luke (1999a) can be used to develop a range of skills and knowledge needed by all literacy learners.

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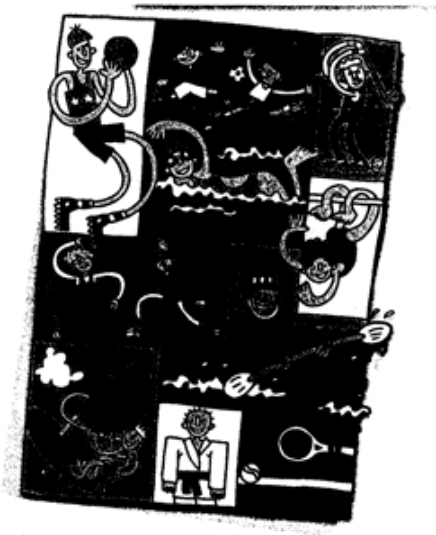
READING WORKSHOP 1

INFORMATIONAL TEXT
WEB SITE

How He Did It:

Health Advice, Kid-to-Kid



by Amy Bertrand

Sixth-grader's Web site helps other children stay fit. 1

Ever since Robert Kohn can remember, his parents have stressed the importance of healthy eating and exercise.

"I think I've heard about it forever," he says.

That education led to a remarkable project by Robert, a sixth-grader. For a school project, he wrote a research paper on childhood **obesity,** then created an advisory council on it, which in turn led to a Web site, created especially for use by children.

Robert's not known for being big into team sports at school, says his mom, Dee Dee, but he still values the importance of working out. He plays golf and tennis and works out about two days a week in a gym, lifting weights and "focusing on cardio[1] right now," he says.

He's never had a weight problem, but knows kids who have. "It's a huge problem," he says.

That's why he wanted to tackle it for his school project. 2

1. ***Cardio*** is short for *cardiovascular,* meaning of the heart and blood vessels. Exercise that increases heart rate is often referred to as *cardio.*

Vocabulary

obesity (oh BEE sih tee) *n.* condition of being extremely overweight

Practice the Skills

1 Key Text Element

Text Features Read the subtitle and the deck, which is right below the writer's name. Do they give you information that might help you set a purpose for reading?

2 English Language Coach

Word References What does it mean to **tackle** a problem? Use a dictionary to find the meaning of *tackle* that is used here.

20 UNIT 1 Why Read?

Bertrand, A. (2007). How He Did It: Health Advice, Kid-to-Kid. In Wilhelm, J.D., et al., *Glencoe Literature. Reading with Purpose*. Columbus: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.

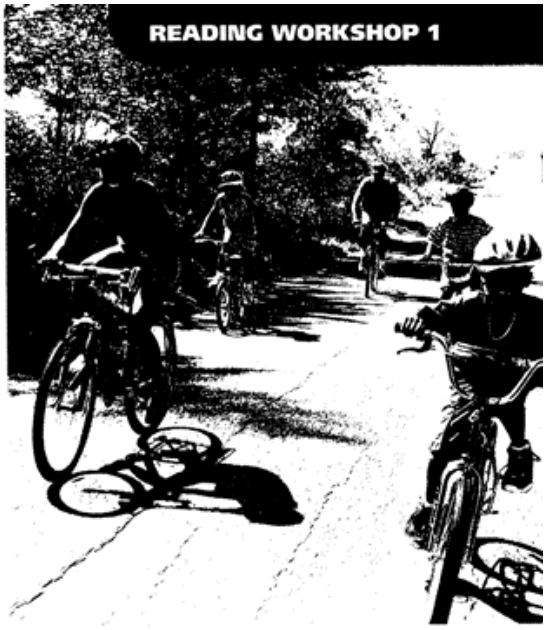
READING WORKSHOP 1

The project:

In his language arts class, students were required to come up with a topic that would be used in a three-pronged,[2] yearlong project. The first part of the project was to write a research paper; the second part was to come up with an action plan; and the third portion was to get someone to take action.

Robert began by reading books and searching the Web. He found quite a bit of information on the topic, but not much of it was directed at children.

So, he put together an **advisory** council on the subject, which included teachers, a dietitian,[3] a hospital **administrator** and a chef. They met a couple of times and helped Robert cultivate information[4] for his next big project: creating a Web site just for kids. 3



Analyzing the Photo Do you think that this would be a good picture to appear on Robert's Web site? Why or why not?

The Web site:

What resulted was **www.healthychoicesforkids.com.**

Robert gathered all of the information he wanted to include, then sketched out what he wanted each page of the Web site to look like, along with the words to go on it. A professional designed the Web site for him, and the result is a kid-friendly site with kid-friendly graphics. It's easy to navigate and written in a language kids can easily understand.

2. ***Three-pronged*** means that the project has three parts.
3. A ***dietitian*** is an expert in planning meals or diets.
4. When someone ***cultivates information,*** he or she prepares and organizes it in a way that is clear and easy to follow.

Vocabulary

advisory (ad VY zuh ree) *adj.* having the power to give advice

administrator (ad MIN uh stray tur) *n.* person who manages or directs

Practice the Skills

3 **Key Reading Skill**

Setting a Purpose for Reading Has your purpose for reading changed now that you've started to read the article? Think about your original purpose, and then think of a second purpose for reading.

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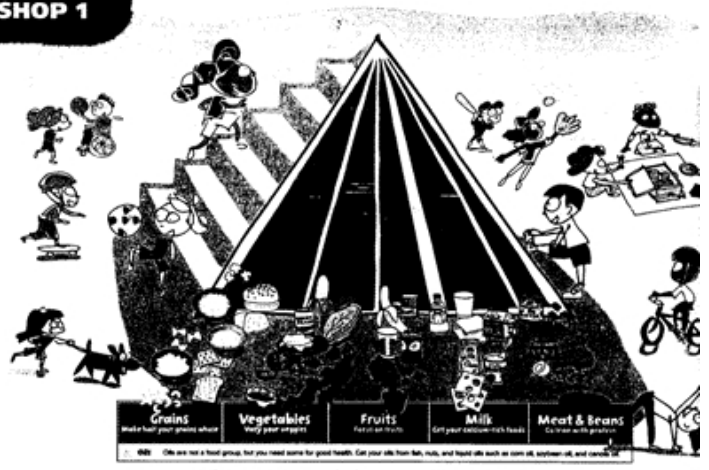
READING WORKSHOP 1

Topics on the site include:

- How do I know if I'm overweight?
- What are the risks of being overweight?
- Portion sizes.
- Making healthy choices while dining out.
- How many **calories** do I burn during common activities?

"I'm hoping other kids get educated about obesity: What it is, the risks of being obese, how to get in better shape," Robert says. 4



Analyzing the Graphic According to this food pyramid, what is one food *you* should eat more of for better health?

The action plan:

Robert's strong views on the subject took him to his next step: writing lawmakers.

"In my research I found HB 81,[5] a bill about having exercise and healthy foods at public schools," Robert says.

So he wrote the supporters of that bill, and though he's still waiting for confirmation, he's been asked to speak about his findings.

"I think I'll tell them why I think childhood obesity is such a huge problem, how horrible obesity is and how many people are suffering," he says. "It can cause diseases like cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure."

His **ultimate** goal is to have the lawmakers take over his Web site. "I want to see what they can do." 5

5. ***HB 81*** means "House Bill 81," a proposed law on which Congress has been asked to vote.

Vocabulary

calories (KAL uh reez) *n.* units used to measure the energy supplied by food

ultimate (UL tuh mut) *adj.* greatest; most important

Practice the Skills

4 **BIG Question**
What information could you read on Robert's Web site that might help you or someone you know?

5 **BIG Question**
Write three things that you learned from reading this article. Write your answer on the "How He Did It" page of Foldable 1. Your response will help you complete the Unit Challenge later.

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DIMENSIONS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS

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Abstract: *The article discusses the possibilities to increase the role of co-operative learning in educational contexts. The theoretical model introduced in the first section is reflecting the social interdependences perspective, and proposes an integration of humanistic and constructivist models. The new reference framework developed is considered a useful starting point for the by introducing some explanatory models regarding knowledge development through interactions within the learning group, through cooperation. Moreover their effects on learning motivation are underlined in the context of specific educational activities.*

Keywords: ***intra and interpersonal competences, learning group, cooperative learning***

1. Characteristics of postmodern education

Present-day school is mainly the product of industrial, modern, impersonal society. When relating education to postmodern society several questions arise: Should education reproduce and preserve culture or enrich it, develop the human being's diversity and potential? The answers to these questions can be identified in the analysis of postmodernism` characteristics as found in education:

- Revaluing the subjective dimension of the educational process as a relation where teachers and students are " constructors of meanings and significances",
- Complexity and ambivalence by turning from a "paradigm of certitude" to a "paradigm of incertitude", to a subjectivation of learning,
- Openness, diversity and transdisciplinarity,
- Hermeneutic approach as means and reflexive and self-reflexive capacity of the human being, as possibility of constructing one's own vision of the world and decision taking in accordance with phenomenological perspectives,
- Intra and interpersonal communication as means of global intercultural development,
- Facilitating creativity by understanding latent socio-cognitive mechanisms and manifests of developing personalities as axiologization of critical cultural elements,
- Continuous development and lifelong learning,
- Forming competences on the four dimensions of learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live among the others and learning to be.

Education can be analysed in a broad manner in an evolutive and comparative way, from the perspective of learning: traditional, modern, postmodern.

Figure 1. Evolutive characteristics of education

Traditional	Modern	Postmodern
Thorough learning	Efficient learning, Active learning.	Significant learning, Thorough learning, Transformational learning, Interactive learning
Passivity	Action and competiveness	Cooperation and subjective engagement
Acquisitions	Abilities, capacities	Competences

2. Humanistic paradigm

Some characteristic aspects of postmodern education originate in psychological humanistic theories of learning. These theories have important contributions for the development of intrapersonal competences. In the middle of the 20th century, C. Rogers promotes a new goal of education, which is still up-to-date: learning how to learn, to involve ourselves in the process of change, our society is undergoing. Learning is considered significant if it involves all five elements:

- It has the quality of personal involvement (rationally-cognitively, motivationally, emotionally, attitude-based),
- It is self – initiated (involves the sense of discovery, intention, expansion and understanding),
- It has resistance power (significant for behaviour, attitudes, learner's personality),
- It is assessed by the learner,
- The core of learning is understanding, spread over the experience as a whole.

„Humanistic paradigm is in favour of an open educational system and for a school that favourizes active participation of the educator in creating the message, meaning, value." (Emil Păun, Dan Potolea, 2002, p.32). This is a non-directive type pedagogy oriented toward facilitating mediated learning based on the following principles:

Human beings have the capacity to learn, having within themselves the curiosity and wish o understand the world, being capable of overcoming the problems arisen by adaptation and especially by learning.

Institutionalized learning is coherent and consistent only when perceived in relating to personal projects. The educator has to help the pupil, to identify and solve problems that arise as significant to him.

Learning perceived as a major need for change in the organization of the self, is seen by pupils as threatening and therefore they tend to fight against it. This perception is the result of the need to change his/her own values.

Knowledge with a threatening character for the pupil is better acquired when threats are reduced to the minimum. Therefore the educational environment has to be comprehensive, familiar and encouraging.

A valid learning is carried out through action, confrontation with problem solving process, through confrontation with social, psychological and philosophical problems as well as personal difficulties.

Learning is facilitated only if the subject is involved and shares responsibility in the learning method, in choosing orientation, self-discovery, decision in how to carry out learning and if s/he is responsible for his/her decisions.

Learning that fully engages the subject has the strongest effects upon his/her personality and it leads to learning by and about him/herself.

Independence, creativity, trust are efficient and act only when self-criticism and self-assessment function as elementary psychical processes involved in learning. Assessment carried out by someone else, even teacher, can have a secondary position because someone who depends only on external evaluation becomes reluctant, unconfident, or remains naïve and immature.

We consider that humanistic education is one of the main ways to cultivate the subject's capacities of communication, of relating to reality in a subjective manner by understanding of the self, of the world and their judgement.

3. Cooperative learning – dimensions and exigency

Social Interdependence paradigm has as representatives K. Kofka, K. Lewin, M. Deutsch, Jhonson&Jhonson, Cohen Sh. Sharan, E, Aronson and others and develops the idea that the type of structural interdependence from a situation determines the way individuals interact among themselves. Social interdependence exists when individuals share mutual goals and the results of each individual are dependent on the others` actions. M. Deutsch identifies three types of interdependence and the ways of interaction that generate them:

- Positive interdependence reflects cooperation actions when individual actions promote the success of the others,
- Negative interdependence which indicates the reverse situation when one's actions block the success of the others,
- No made interdependence by whose means one's activity does not produce effects on the others neither regarding stress nor regarding failure.

The theory of social interdependence generated methodological experiences that tried to promote positive interdependence within the learning group

All these theories generated in the educational practice of the 20th century a ample research and scientific development of cooperative learning. These led to its application is an important way of structuring the formal and nonformal learning situations on different age levels.

Cooperative learning takes place when pupils work together, either in pairs or in small groups to solve one and the same task, to explore a new subject or to create new ideas, new combinations and even authentic innovations.

„Cooperative learning means using as training method of small groups of pupils/students, so as they will be able to work together and eventually each member of the group improves his own performance and contributes to increasing the performances of the other group members." (Jhonson, R., Jhonson D., Holubec E., 1994, p. 3)

Several steps have been made from learning in groups to cooperative learning and organising the learning experience other than individually.

There are some differences between learning through collaboration and cooperative learning, the most important being that in learning through collaboration the stress is laid on the learning process and in cooperative learning the process and the result are equally important. The orientation towards the product as result of the learning process brings about the development of goal oriented thinking and of the feeling of individual and collective responsibility. „Cooperative learning refers to a set of training strategies that involve cooperative pupil - pupil interaction towards the subject, as integrated part of learning process."(Kagan, Spencer, 1994, p. 41)

Cooperative learning develops the respect for diversity, the capacity of empathy, social abilities. The social – cognitive conflict arises given the fact that among the group members there are also cognitive differences. This conflict generates the acceleration of learning.

Numerous studies prove the superiority of cooperative didactic strategies in the prejudice of competitive and individual learning. Cooperative didactic strategies develop superior cognitive processes, communication abilities, improve motivation, self esteem, develop the personality.

In the field related literature, cooperative learning is characterised by the following elements: *positive interdependence, direct interaction, individual responsibility, interpersonal and small group abilities, group processing, pupils` roles and abilities necessary for group work*

Positive interdependence

We may say that positive interdependence is done when the members of a team aspire to a certain mutual acknowledgement, being positively dependent on each other. Everything that is a gain for one member of the team is a gain for the whole team. Pupils realise that they need each other to fulfil the group task. The teachers can structure the positive interdependence establishing *aims, mutual objectives* ("learn and see that all members of the group learn"), *mutual rewards* (team acknowledgement on the basis of members` contribution), *mutual resources, cooperative tasks* (identifying those tasks that would motivate and direct the group), *distributed roles* (the one that resumes, the one that encourages the others, the one that formulates the answer).

Learning tasks

În the field related literature we can read about learning tasks that focus on the learning activity determining different types of group interaction:

- *Task of disjunctive type* The group has to make a selection of each member's answers and contributions. The best solution is identified.
- *Task of conjunctive type.* Implies that the productivity of the group is linked to each member's efficiency, even to the weakest one.

- *Task of additional type.* The result of group's activity is the sum of each member's contribution.
- *Tasks of discretional type.* The members of the group can mix individual options in any way they want. The final solution is the result of all participants` contribution.

Direct Interaction

Pupils help each other in the learning process, encouraging themselves and sharing their ideas.

They explain the others what they know, discuss, teach one another. The teacher arranges the groups so as the pupils to sit one next to the other and discuss each aspect of the task they have to solve.

Individual responsibility

Each student's performance is frequently assessed and the result is presented to him and the group. The teacher can highlight individual responsibility choosing pupils at random for a test, or choosing one member of the group the give the answer.

Interpersonal and small group skills

Groups can not exist or function efficiently if students don't enhance certain absolutely necessary social skills. Students must develop these skills the way they are taught different things. They include conducting, decision making, confidence building, communication, conflict management. Pupils are taught, helped, monitored in using collaborative social capacities that increase the efficiency of group work.

Group processing

Groups need certain moments to discuss how well they have achieved their goals and to maintain efficient work relations among group members. Teachers provide necessary conditions for processing through tasks like: (a) enumerate at least 3 actions of group members that led to group success or (b) enumerate at least one action that could increase the group's success the next day. The teacher permanently monitors the learning and gives feedback them and the whole class about the way they work

Students` role

Within each group the roles pupils play can be oriented towards the task, the group maintenance or both. Because students have to get accustomed to both categories, the teacher sometimes distributes specific roles like the ones below. Pupils` attention is drawn on isolated roles to make them aware of each role's necessity. They have to change roles for each activity because the purpose of the activity is to make them able to perform them all simultaneously. At group's level the following roles can be assigned: *the Assessor*: verifies whether everyone understands what is being worked at, *the Spy* searches for necessary information at other groups or, occasionally, at the teacher, *the Time keeper* pays attention that the group focuses on the task and respect the given amount of time, *the Active listener* repeats and reformulates what other have said, *the Interrogator* extracts information from group members and the *Résumé* draws the conclusions so that they make sense, *the Encourager* congratulates, helps, encourages each member of the group; *the Responsible for Materials* distributes and collects the necessary material, *the Reader* reads the written materials, the Speaker presents the group's conclusions in from of the class

Conclusions

Creating a learning situation involves a value orientation and the option for the ways of structuring pupils` interdependence. The chosen type of structure determines the way pupils will interact with the others and the results they will obtain.

The application of these models implies accepting the change of the actors` role, generating positive effects on cognitive, affective-motivational, metacognitive and social level. This contributes significantly to one's full development and to the development of intra and interpersonal competences. (acc to. M. Roco,2004, p. 141):

- The conscience of self and own emotions (self-conscience as introspection, recognition of feelings according to the way and moment they appear).
- Emotion control (self-control as possibility of realizing what determines the feelings according to the moment and cause of their occurrence and as possibility to diminish negative feelings: anger, fear, anxiety, etc),
- Interior motivation (motivation as exercise of emotion and feeling guidance towards reaching certain goals when there is no reward at stake),
- Empathy (the capacity o understand the others from a affective and sentimental point of view),
- Establishing and guiding interhuman relations (social abilities that occur as manipulative competences that can control other people's emotions).
- Development of metacognitive feelings (through feelings of familiarization, of task difficulty, of trust and satisfaction)

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SKILLED SERVICE HOURS IN THE PROFESSIONAL CHILD CARE –FLEXIBILITY ANDSOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

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Abstract: ***Actual life-oriented approach*** *(You can not learn to swim without going into the water)*
Resources-oriented approach*(Strengths- to recognize and develop them)*
Solution-oriented approach*(Find solutions - „here“ and „now“)*
(EJO-2009 Betreutes Wohnen n. Fachleistungsstunden 3.6. in www.jugendhilfe-obernjesa.de/info/download/leistungsbeschreibungen/EJO_3_6_FlexH_Fachleistungsstunde.pdf)

On the way to reform and to improve the child caresystem Romania developed in the last years a long range of specialised institutions and bodies. The main idea was to improve the system in a way that will make it able to take into consideration the main European trends and European methodologies, but simultaneously also the specificity of the local and regional structures, mentalities and historical developments and that will make it able to face some of the specific economic, financial and social challenges of the Romanianpresent day society.

Despite some difficulties (most of them as a result of a chronically lack of specialists and practitioners – care workers, care takers, pedagogues, educators), the classical institutionalised childcare knew a strong decrease and many of still existing formal care institutions changed not only the name (from "home for children" to the insipid an uninspired "placement centres") but also their "traditional"organisation (based on rigid structures and rigorously organised day cycles) and their way of working with the institutionalised children and young people.

One of the main witnessed trends was the interest to introduce into the daily practice more flexibility and to find care measures and care work-patterns that are more appropriate to the actual needs of the child and to its quotidian life. Through the additional specialist hours there should be increased the support for young people with additional needs in terms of individually contracted hours of child and youth services.

The paper presents some possibilities of increasing the efficiency of the care work through a flexible professional care setting, respectively through the so-called "skilled service hours"and also some models and patterns of action. Based on the long experience accumulated in the German child-care system, the paper details some of the premises, of the functioning conditions, of the strengths and weaknesses of this way of structuring and implementing care interventions and of making them increasingly efficient.

Keywords: *flexible setting of professional care, part-time interventions, skilled service hours, professional care-services*

1. Hilfe durch Fachleistungsstunden (FLS). Prämisse.

Die Flexibilisierung der Jugendhilfe allgemein und die Implementierung der Fachleistungsstunden als Gestaltungsmethode der „flexiblen Hilfe“ bedeuten für Rumänien, das einerseits mit einer erhöhten Heterogenität der Bevölkerungsgruppen, die Hilfe für Erziehung benötigen, und andererseits mit einer mangelnder konzeptionellen Kohärenz auf der Ebene der NGO-s und staatlichen oder teil-privatisierten Kinder- und Jugendhilfeeinrichtungen konfrontiert ist, effiziente Alternativen, Alternativen die auch finanziell unterstützbar sind und fachlich schnell und mit unmittelbaren positiven Wirkungen umgesetzt werden können.

Der Begriff der Fachleistungsstunden ist in der Fachliteraturimmer noch nicht endgültig definiert.

„Die sozialpädagogische Fachleistungsstunde gilt als innovatives Finanzierungsinstrument der neunziger Jahre. Insbesondere in den so genannten Jugendhilfestationen in den neuen Bundesländern wurde das Instrument der Fachleistungsstunde zur Finanzierung von „flexiblen Hilfen aus einer Hand“ und somit als Ergänzung zu den traditionellen Finanzierungsformen eingeführt. Die Fachleistungsstunde findet zurzeit überwiegend Anwendung im Bereich der ambulanten, hilfeplangesteuerten Leistungen der Erziehungshilfe, sowohl einzelfallbezogen als auch gruppenbezogen.

Im Bereich der stationären Erziehungshilfe wird die Fachleistungsstunde in der Regel als Instrument zur Finanzierung von Zusatzleistungen genutzt und im Einzelfall bewilligt“.[1]

„Die Fachleistungsstunde nimmt als Finanzierungsmodell für erzieherische Hilfen eine radikale Position ein: Sie koppelt die Finanzierung transparent an die Leistung für den Einzelfall. Mit der Fachleistungsstunde sollte eine "einheitliche Währung" der erzieherischen Hilfen etabliert werden. Die Idee der Fachleistungsstunde ist nicht am "grünen Tisch", sondern aus der sozialpädagogischen Praxis heraus entwickelt worden“.[2]

Unter Fachleistungsstunde wird in der Regel die Zeiteinheit verstanden, die direkt am Klienten verbracht wird („face- to-face“). Dabei gibt es Vereinbarungen, die darüber hinaus eine gesonderte Berechnung von Fahrtzeiten und Fahrtkosten ermöglichen oder die eine

zusätzliche Abrechnung von Supervisionsleistungen ermöglichen.[3]

Das Konzept der Fachleistungsstunden beeinflusst nicht nur die finanziellen Aspekte der ambulanten Erziehungshilfen, sondern auch die fachlichen Standards. Es existiert hierzu kein Konsens, sondern einfach eine irritierende Vielfallt von Begriffen und Gestaltungsmodi. Die Fachstandards sind verschieden und in fast jedem Land herrschen andere Regeln und andere Abrechnungsregeln. Das

[1]Plaßmeyer, F., Kohlmeyer, M., - *„Finanzierungsmodelle im Kontext von wirkungsorientierter Steuerung der Hilfen zur Erziehung“* in Wirkungsorientierte Jugendhilfe, ISA, Münster, 2009, Band 07, *S. 16)*

[2] „Finanzierungsmodell: Fachleistungsstunde“ – VSP – Verbund für Soziale Projekte - http://www.vsp-mv.de/wirueberuns/finanzierungsmodell.aspx

[3] MenTeo – *„Selbstständig in der Sozialen Arbeit. Berechnung von Fachleistungsstunden.“* http://menteo.de/page2/page7/page7.html

Fachleistungsstundenkonzept und die Fachstandards sind immer häufiger in Diskussion geraten[4].

In der Regel sind einige Voraussetzungen zu berücksichtigen:

- Als Grundlage für die Ausgestaltung der Hilfe dient der individuelle Hilfeplan[5][6], der Feststellungen über den Bedarf, die zu gewährende Art der Hilfe sowie die notwendigen Leistungen enthält.

- Aus ihm müssen sowohl die qualitativen als auch die quantitativen Merkmale der Leistungen hervorgehen. Grundlage für die Bemessung der Anzahl von Fachleistungsstunden ist eine fallbezogene, zeitnahe Bewilligung.

- Die Fachleistungsstunde (FSL) ist ein Instrument zur Ermittlung, Darstellung und Abrechnung von Entgelten für Leistungen der Jugendhilfe. Sie ergänzt die traditionellen Finanzierungsformen(Tageskostensatz und pauschale Kostenerstattung z. B.).

In der Fachliteratur werden zahlreiche Vor- und Nachteileverschiedener Modelle der sozialpädagogischen Fachleistungsstundenin der Praxis benannt (Tabelle 1)

Tabelle 1- Vorteile und Nachteile von auf Pauschalen basierenden

[4] *„Quo Vadis Fachleistungsstunde? Fachstandards & Fachleistungsstunde im Diskurs“* - Der AFET - Bundesverband für Erziehungshilfe e.V., Fachtag, 19.06.2012 http://www.afet-ev.de/aktuell/AFET_intern/PDF-intern/

[5] In Deutschland nach § 36 SGB VIII (siehe Endnote i.)

1) Der Personensorgeberechtigte und das Kind oder der Jugendliche sind vor der Entscheidung über die Inanspruchnahme einer Hilfe und vor einer notwendigen Änderung von Art und Umfang der Hilfe zu beraten und auf die möglichen Folgen für die Entwicklung des Kindes oder des Jugendlichen hinzuweisen. Vor und während einer langfristig zu leistenden Hilfe außerhalb der eigenen Familie ist zu prüfen, ob die Annahme als Kind in Betracht kommt. Ist Hilfe außerhalb der eigenen Familie erforderlich, so sind die in Satz 1 genannten Personen bei der Auswahl der Einrichtung oder der Pflegestelle zu beteiligen. Der Wahl und den Wünschen ist zu entsprechen, sofern sie nicht mit unverhältnismäßigen Mehrkosten verbunden sind. Wünschen die in Satz 1 genannten Personen die Erbringung einer in § 78a genannten Leistung in einer Einrichtung, mit deren Träger keine Vereinbarungen nach § 78b bestehen, so soll der Wahl nur entsprochen werden, wenn die Erbringung der Leistung in dieser Einrichtung nach Maßgabe des Hilfeplans nach Absatz 2 geboten ist.

(2) Die Entscheidung über die im Einzelfall angezeigte Hilfeart soll, wenn Hilfe voraussichtlich für längere Zeit zu leisten ist, im Zusammenwirken mehrerer Fachkräfte getroffen werden. Als Grundlage für die Ausgestaltung der Hilfe sollen sie zusammen mit dem Personensorgeberechtigten und dem Kind oder dem Jugendlichen einen Hilfeplan aufstellen, der Feststellungen über den Bedarf, die zu gewährende Art der Hilfe sowie die notwendigen Leistungen enthält; sie sollen regelmäßig prüfen, ob die gewählte Hilfeart weiterhin geeignet und notwendig ist. Werden bei der Durchführung der Hilfe andere Personen, Dienste oder Einrichtungen tätig, so sind sie oder deren Mitarbeiter an der Aufstellung des Hilfeplans und seiner Überprüfung zu beteiligen. Erscheinen Maßnahmen der beruflichen Eingliederung erforderlich, so sollen auch die für die Eingliederung zuständigen Stellen beteiligt werden.

(3) Erscheinen Hilfen nach § 35a erforderlich, so soll bei der Aufstellung und Änderung des Hilfeplans sowie bei der Durchführung der Hilfe die Person, die eine Stellungnahme nach § 35a Abs. 1a abgegeben hat, beteiligt werden.

(4) Vor einer Entscheidung über die Gewährung einer Hilfe, die ganz oder teilweise im Ausland erbracht wird, soll zur Feststellung einer seelischen Störung mit Krankheitswert die Stellungnahme einer in § 35a Abs. 1a Satz 1 genannten Person eingeholt werden.

Leistungsentgelten, tagesgleichen Leistungsentgeltsätzen und sozialpädagogischen Fachleistungsstunden[7]

	Leistungsentgelte basierend auf Pauschalen	**Tagesgleiche Leistungsentgeltsätze**	**Sozialpädagogische Fachleistungsstunden (FLS)**
Vorteile	Geringerer Verwaltungs- und Verhandlungsaufwand gegenüber dem Einzelentgeltsatz Erhöhte Anreize zu wirtschaftlicher und sparsamer Haushaltsführung Gegenseitige Deckungsfähigkeit von Aufwandspositionen untereinander Keine notwendige Offenlegung der Kostenstruktur des Leistungserbringers gegenüber dem Öffentlichen Träger der Jugendhilfe Wirtschaftliche Existenzabsicherung der Einrichtung durch vorgegebenen Sockelbetrag, der aufDurchschnittswerten basiert.	Das „Standardsystem“ ist leicht verständlich und im Erziehungshilfebereich etabliert Vergleichbarkeit bei gleichwertigen Angeboten Niedrigschwellige und präventive Ansätze können durch eine entsprechende Hinzurechnung zu den o. a. Jahreskosten berücksichtigt werden. In diesem Fall würden die prospektiven Jahreskosten und die prospektiven „Präventivkosten“ addiert und auf einen Tag umgerechnet.	Orientierung am individuellen Hilfebedarf Hohe Flexibilität und Vernetzungsmöglichkeit Steuerungsmöglichkeiten durch öffentlichen Trägerder Jugendhilfe
Nachteile	Einrichtungsspezifische Kostenstrukturen werden nicht berücksichtigt. Hiermit ist gemeint, dass während die Einrichtung ihre Einnahmen nur in gewissen Punkten nach „behördlich“ vorgegebenen Bewertungsmaßstäben vergütet bekommt, sie	Der Tagesentgeltsatz ist statisch (starr) und wird i. d. R. über einen längeren Zeitraum gezahlt. Gefahr der Fallausweitung (Mengenexpansion), die Entlassung des jungen Menschen stellt ein betriebswirtschaftliches Risiko dar. Kaum Anreize zur Verweildauerreduzierung,	Ein in der Regel hoher administrativer Aufwand (Dokumentation, Fakturierung) Durch Vermischung von realen Kosten und Durchschnittswerten (z. B. Anwendung von KGST-Richtwerten im Bereich der variablen und fixen Sachkosten) entsteht ein

[7]Plaßmeyer, F., Kohlmeyer, M., - „Finanzierungsmodelle im Kontext von wirkungsorientierter Steuerung der Hilfen zur Erziehung“ in Wirkungsorientierte Jugendhilfe, ISA, Münster, 2009, Band 07, *S. 14 - 16*

	umgekehrt ihre eigenen Ausgaben mit echtem Geld bezahlen muss (Risiko). In den meisten Fällen werden enge Mengen- und Leistungsvorgaben gemacht, die auf einem gewissen Misstrauen basieren und dementsprechend Kosten- und Qualitätsniveaus vorgeben.	da für den Einrichtungsträger eine längere Verweildauer kostengünstiger ist und eine Verweildauerverkürzung bei gleich bleibender Auslastung zu höheren Kosten je Betreuungstag führt (Anlaufkosten). Mangelnder Kosten- und Leistungsbezug (Kostenungerechtigkeit) Tagesgleiche Entgeltsätze entsprechen nicht demKostenanfall im zeitlichen Ablauf	Kostendeckungsrisiko für die Seite des Einrichtungsträgers. Mangel an Transparenz und Leistungsgerechtigkeit Erhebliche Planungsunsicherheit bezüglich Fallaufkommen und Einnahmesituation beim freien Träger der Jugendhilfe Unterschiedliche Abrechnungsverfahren bei Einzelfall- und Gruppenhilfen Schwierigkeit der Finanzierung von Maßnahmen, die teilweise einer anderen Finanzierungssystematik unterliegen (z. B. Vernetzung von stationären oder offenen mit ambulanten Maßnahmen)[8] Tendenz zur Fallausweitung

2. Nettojahresarbeitszeit einer Fachkraft[9]

Die Nettojahresarbeitszeit ist die um die allgemeinen Minderzeiten und um die berufsspezifischen Minderzeiten bereinigte Jahresarbeitszeit einer Fachkraft.

Sie ist die Zeit, die unmittelbar für fallspezifische, fallübergreifende und fallunspezifische Tätigkeiten aufgewendet werden kann.

Die Nettojahresarbeitszeit ist auf dieser Basis identisch mit den durchschnittlich verfügbaren Jahresbetreuungsstunden einer Fachkraft. Sie ist die Zeit, die tatsächlich für einzelfallbezogene Tätigkeiten aufgewendet werden kann. Diese umfassen im Einzelnen:

(a) unmittelbare einzelfallbezogene Leistungen

[8]16 Vgl. Plasmeyer, Frank, Die Finanzierung von „Flexiblen Erziehungshilfen“ in Nordrhein-Westfalen. In: Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe – Landesjugendamt (Hg.), Flexibilisierung erzieherischer Hilfen, 2000, S. 24 ff.

[9] Reichl, A. –*„Die Fachleistungsstunde in der Jugendhilfe. Leistungsbeschreibung und Entgeltvereinbarung nach § 78 SGB VIIIam Beispiel Niedersachsen in Bundesfachgruppe Selbständige“* im DBSH (Deutscher Berufsverband für Sozialarbeit a. V.), Hannover, 2006, S. 2

Dies sind solche Leistungen, die unmittelbar im Kontakt mit dem jungen Menschen

erbracht werden oder sich auf andere Weise eindeutig diesen zuordnen lassen. Dazu gehören bspw.:

- Arbeit mit dem jungen Menschen
- fallbezogene Gespräche/Kontakte mit Lehrer/innen, Ausbildern u.a.
- fallbezogene Gespräche/Kontakte mit Behörden
- Hilfeplangespräche
- Konfliktlösung und Interventionen in Krisensituationen

(b) mittelbare einzelfallbezogene Leistungen:

Dies sind solche Leistungen, die im Rahmen der Ablauforganisation und Kommunikation innerhalb der Einrichtung der Vor- und Nachbereitung unmittelbarer Leistungen dienen. Im Einzelnen:

- Planung und Vorbereitung des Hilfesettings
- Vor- und Nachbereitung von pädagogischen Maßnahmen
- Vor- und Nachbereitung von Hilfeplangesprächen
- Fallbesprechungen/kollegiale Beratung und mit ASD
- Leistungsdokumentation; Berichtswesen/Statistik
- Fahrt- und Wegezeiten

Die Kalkulation der Fachleistungsstunde sieht dann z.B. folgendermaßen aus:

- Tarifliche Lohnkosten einer sozialpädagogischen Fachkraft
+ 10 % Tarifliche Lohnkosten für Leitungsfunktionen
+ 20 % Tarifliche Lohnkosten für Verwaltungskraft = Personalkosten
+ Sachkosten = 10 % der Personalkosten
- Personalkosten + Sachkosten = Gesamtkosten. Gesamtkosten /persönliche Jahresbetreuungszeit (Std.) = Entgelt für Fachleistungsstunde

Kalkulation der Fachleistungsstunden (Beispiel)[10]

251Bruttoarbeitstage ***abzüglich Ausfälle, Erkrankungen, Kur- u. Heilverfahren*****, Erholungsurlaub, Bildungsurlaub, Mutterschutz, Wehrübungen etc.**	**bereinigte, jährliche Arbeitszeit** einer Normalarbeitskraft (bei 38,5 Wochenstunden)	*abzüglich* **berufsspezifische Minderzeiten** - 10 %	*abzüglich* **fallspezifische Minderzeiten**	**Nettojahres-arbeitsstunden pro Fachkraft** (bei 0% fallspezifischer Minderzeit)
abzüglich 46,55 Tage pro Jahr	1.574 Std.	157,4 Std.	0 % bis - 10 %	1.416,6 Std.

[10]Anlage lV des Rahmenvertrages Jugendhilfe NRW, Teil l und Teil ll zu § 9 Ziffer 5 Punkt 3 des Rahmenvertrages Jugendhilfe NRW, Teil l und Teil ll,
http://www.lvr.de/media/wwwlvrde/jugend/hilfezurerziehung/dokumente_65

Aus dem aufgestellten Hilfeplan müssen für die Bemessung der Stundenzahl sowohl die qualitativen als auch die quantitativen Merkmale der Leistungen durch eine Beschreibung der:

(a) fallspezifischen (face-to-face),

(b) fallübergreifenden (z. B. Gespräche mit dem Jugendamt, Eltern, Lehrern, Ausbildern, erforderlichen Wegezeiten) und

(c) fallunspezifischen (z. B. Herstellung sozialräumlicher Vernetzung)

Leistungsanteile hervorgehen.

2.1 Allgemeine Minderzeiten / bereinigte Jahresarbeitszeit

Ausgangsgröße für die Ermittlung der Nettojahresarbeitszeit ist die Bruttojahresarbeitszeit. Die Richtzahl beträgt für die bereinigte Arbeitszeit einer Normalarbeitskraft jährlich ca. 1575 Stunden.

2.2 Berufsspezifische Minderzeiten

Unter berufsspezifischen Minderzeiten sind fallübergreifende und allgemeine Aufgaben einer Fachkraft zu fassen, wie z. B.

- Teamsitzungen
- Supervision
- pädagogische Gesamtkonferenzen (Sitzungen)
- Facharbeitskreise[11]

Eine Größenordnung von ca. 157 Jahresarbeitsstunden (10 % der bereinigten Jahresarbeitszeit) wird in der Fachliteratur als angemessen angenommen[12].

2.3 Fallspezifische Minderzeiten

Die Berechnung der Nettojahresarbeitszeit basiert auf der Annahme, dass die verfügbaren Jahresbetreuungsstunden auch geleistet und abgerechnet werden können. Dies ist jedoch nur theoretisch möglich. Praktisch wird es nicht leistbar sein, die Fachleistungsstunden einer Fachkraft so aufeinander abzustimmen, dass keine Warte- bzw. Überbrückungszeiten auftreten[13].

- Je größer die Betreuungsintensität (vereinbarte Stundenzahl pro Woche und Fall), umso besser sind Anschlusszeiten zu vereinbaren und umso geringer ist der Auf-

[11]Rahmenvertrag II NRW – Anlage IV – S. 63,
http://www.jugendsozialarbeit.info/jsa/lagkjsnrw/lagkjsnrw_web.nsf

[12]Reichl, A. - Die Fachleistungsstunde in der Jugendhilfe. Leistungsbeschreibung und Entgeltvereinbarung nach § 78 SGB VIII am Beispiel Niedersachsen in Bundesfachgruppe Selbständige im DBSH (Deutscher Berufsverband für Sozialarbeit a. V.), Hannover, 2006, S. 3, http://menteo.de/page15/page17/page17.html
- Kröger, Rainer (b): Leistung, Entgelt und Qualitätsentwicklung in der Jugendhilfe. In: Becker- Textor Ingeborg, Textor Martin R.: SGB VIII Online Handbuch. http://www.sgbviii.de/S45 .html
- Münder,Johannes; Tammen, Britta: Die Vereinbarungen nach §§ 78a ff. SGB VIII. Eine Untersuchung von Leistungs-, Entgelt- und Qualitätsentwicklungsvereinbarungen. http://www.bmfsfj .de/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Abteilung5/Pdf-Anlagen/leistungsvereinbarung-C2_A778,property=pdf,bereich=,rwb=true.pdf

[13] Rahmenvertrag II NRW – Anlage IV – Fachleistungsstunde nach § 9 des Rahmenvertrages http://www.jugendsozialarbeit.info/jsa/lagkjsnrw/lagkjsnrw_web.nsf, S.62 - 65

wand für die Organisation und Koordination der Betreuungsleistungen für die sozialpädagogische Fachkraft.

Eine Gewichtung der fallspezifischen Minderzeiten ist jeweils fallbezogen mit dem jeweiligen Kostenträger abzustimmen.

- Berufsspezifische und fallspezifische Minderzeiten sollten nicht mehr als 20% der bereinigten Arbeitszeit betragen. Überschreitungen können im Rahmen der Entgeltverhandlungen im Einvernehmen mit dem Öffentlichen Träger der Jugendhilfe vereinbart werden.

3. Vorstellung und Diskussion konkreter Hilfsmittel. Fachleistungsstundenkontingente

3.1. Fachliche Ausrichtung der Einrichtung

- Lebensweltorientiert („Man kann nicht schwimmen lernen ohne ins Wasser zu gehen".)
- Ressourcenorientiert („Stärken wahrnehmen und ausbauen")
- Lösungsorientiert („Lösungen im Hier und Jetzt finden")[14]

3.2. Methodische Grundlagen

- Einzelfallhilfe (Hauptschwerpunkt)
- Gruppenarbeit und Freizeitaktivitäten
- Beratung (systemischer Ansatz)
- Hilfen werden individuell angepasst, in jedem Fall aber
- von entsprechend berufs- und lebenserfahrenen Pädagogen/innen durchgeführt
- der besondere Betreuungsbedarf des Kindes/Jugendlichen wird berücksichtigt.
- Wenn notwendig, können ergänzend psychotherapeutische Hilfen durch externe Therapeuten erfolgen.[15]

3.3. Als ***fachspezifische Aktivitäten*** gelten:

- Praxisberatung und -anleitung
- Supervision
- Teamsitzungen
- Pädagogische (Gesamt)Konferenzen (Mitarbeiterdienstbesprechungen)
- Planungs- und Grundsatzarbeiten für die Einrichtung oder das Unternehmen - Arbeitsgemeinschaften und Facharbeitskreise

3.4. Als ***fallspezifische Aktivitäten*** gelten:

- Einzelfallarbeit („face-to-face")
- Hilfeplangesprächen
- Kontakte zu Behörden und Institutionen
- Dokumentation und Berichtswesen

[14]EJO-2009 Betreutes Wohnen n. Fachleistungsstunden 3.6. in www.jugendhilfe-obernjesa.de/info/download/leistungsbeschreibungen/EJO_3_6_FlexH_Fachleistungsstunde.pdf, S. 1
[15]EJO-2009 Betreutes Wohnen n. Fachleistungsstunden 3.6. in www.jugendhilfe-obernjesa.de/info/download/leistungsbeschreibungen/EJO_3_6_FlexH_Fachleistungsstunde.pdf, S. 1

- Fehlgeschlagene Kontakte, Wartezeiten, Überbrückungszeiten
- Fahrt – und Wegzeiten

3.5. Die Analyse der Leistungen und Methoden der Unterstützung und der individuelle Betreuungsbedarf der Kunden für ambulante Erziehungshilfen(Tabelle 2) ermöglicht die Gruppierung des notwendigen Fachleistungsstundenkontingentes in fünf "Bedarfsgruppen", wie folgt (Tabelle 3)

Tabelle 2(Beispiel)
Fachleistungsstundenkontingent (FLSK)

Name, Vorname …… Geb. Datum:……..

Lebensbereich(Kooperations-/Interaktionspartner		**Maßnahmen/ Methodisches Vorgehen**	**Komponente der alltäglichen Lebensführung**	**FLSK / Woche**	**FLSK / Monat**
Lebenspraxis/ Alltags -gestaltung	Mitbewohner Personensorgeberechtigte Vermieter Nachbarn Partner Mitbewohner	Anleitung (nicht Übernahme), Kontrolle, Rückmeldung, Motivation zu körperlicher Bewegung	**1. Einkaufen** - "Kompleten" Bedarf an Lebensmittel und Gegenständen des täglichen Bedarf auswählen und einkaufen - persönliche Dinge wie Zeitschriften, Zigaretten, Kosmetikartikel einkaufen **Zubereitung von Mahlzeiten, Ernährung** - Zwischenmahlzeitenwie Frühstück und Abendessen inkl. Getränke zubereiten - Zubereitung warmer Hauptmahlzeiten		

			- Auswahl von Art und Menge der Nahrung -essen und trinken **2. Zeitliche und Räumliche Orientierung** - Tages- und Nachtrhythmus einhalten - Zeitbedarf einschätzen -sich in fremder 1 Umgebung zurechtfinden (z.B. nach dem Weg fragen, Hinweisschilder beachten, Fahrpläne lesen, öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel benutzen)		
Haushalts-führung / Wohnen	Wohnung Wäschepflege Hygiene Körperpflege/Ernährung	Anleitung (nicht Übernahme), Kontrolle, Rückmeldung, Motivation	**3. Wäschepflege** -Schmutzwäsche sammeln - Wäsche waschen und trocknen - Wäsche zusammenlegen, bügeln - Wäsche einräumen und Kleidung Instandhaltung **4.Ordnung im eigenen Bereich und**		

			Instandhaltung/ Instandsetzung von Haushaltsgegenständen - aufräumen, reinigen, putzen - kleinere Reparaturen durchführen **5. Körperpflege** - eigenständig baden oder duschen (körperliche Fähigkeit und Motivation) - Kleidung (nach Witterung oder Anlass) auswählen **6. Wohnung suchen und einrichten**		
Finanzen und (sozial-) rechtlichen Angele-genheiten.	Lebensunterhalt Jugendamt Ausländerbehörde Sozialamt Schule/Arbeitsagentur Banken	Sicherung des Lebensunterhalts, Begleitung bei der Durchsetzung von Leistungsansprüchen, Einteilung, Assistenz, Ausgabenplanung, Haushaltskonto	**7. Geld verwalten** - mit kleineren Beträgen (z.8. Taschengeld) umgehen -mit größeren Beträgen umgehen, das eigene Geld einteilen, mit Geld wirtschaffen, Geld sparen, etc. **8. Regeln von finanziellen und (sozial-) rechtlichen**		

			Angelegenheiten - Asylangelegenheiten - Behördengänge -Telefongespräche / Korrespondenz mit Ämtern, Bank, etc. - Konto führen, Überweisungen tätigen		
Gestaltung sozialer Beziehungen	Partner Mitbewohner Nachbarn Freunde Eltern Verwandte	Entwicklungsdiagnostik, Eltern-/Angehörigenarbeit, Initiieren von Kontakten, Hilfestellung, Beratung, Moderieren in Konfliktsituationen, Unterstützung bei der Bedürfnisartikulation/ Selbstmitteilung, Erschließung von Hilfen im Umfeld	**9. Gestaltung sozialer Beziehungen** - mit Spannungen und Konflikten umgehen - Beziehungen zu Mitbewohnern, Nachbarn, Mitarbeiter/Innen pflegen - Beziehungen zu Angehörigen pflegen - Beziehungen zu Freund/en und Partner/-in pflegen - Anderen helfen (z .B. kranken oder schwächeren , Haushaltmitgliedern beim Lernen, Selbstversorgung etc. helfen)		

			- Aufgabe übernehmen		
Ausbildung und Beschäftigung	Schulen /Ausbildungsstätte Arbeitsagentur Arbeitgeber	Information, Beratung, Vermittlung in Fachberatung, Erschließung von Hilfen im Umfeld	**10. Entwickeln von Zukunftsperspektiven, Lebensplanung** - Leistungen in der Schule - sich auseinandersetzen mit Fragen wie „Wie will ich mein Leben gestalten?“ - Verfolgen von Lebensplänen - Nachhilfe suchen und organisieren - Praktikum und Ausbildungsplätze suchen - Bewerbungsunterlagen vorbereiten		
Freizeit	Mitbewohner Freunde Partner	Hinweis auf Angebote, Foren zum Erfahrungsaustausch, Anleitung zur Reflexion des eigenen Freizeitverhaltens	**11. Gestaltung freier Zeit / Eigenbeschäftigung** - Freie Zeit selbst gestalten (Vorlieben, Hobbies pflegen, sich selbstbeschäftigen, etc.,) - sich über		

			Freizeitangebote / kulturelle Veranstaltungen informieren und Angebote auswählen - an Freizeitangeboten / kulturellen Veranstaltungen teilnehmen		
Besonderer Hilfebedarf,Medikamente	Ärzte Therapeuten Psychotherapeuten Krankenversicherung	Begleitung zum Behandler, Erinnerung und Kontrolle bei der Durchführung der Behandlung Erinnerung, Kontrolle, Motivation	**12. Gesundheitsförderung und -erhaltung** - Auswahl eines Arztes - Terminvereinbarung - Arztbesuche - sich Hilfe-und Unterstützung im Falle von Krankheiten oder Unwohlsein suchen / organisieren - Vermeiden gesundheitsschädigender Verhaltensweisen - gesundheitsfördernde Verhaltensweisen wie z.B. körperliches Training, Bewegung, gesunde Ernährung etc. zeigen		

			- Dosierung und Einnahme von Medikamenten - (Körper-) Übungen		
Psychische Gesundheit	Bewältigung der psychischen Erkrankung (psychischen Trauma)	Gespräch, Motivation zur Auseinander-setzung (Vermeidung von Vermeidung) Erfahrungsaustausch, Beobachtung, Rückmeldung, Entwicklung und Begleitung therapeutischer Aufgaben, intensives Üben, Psychoedukation, Krisenprävention, Krisenbegleitung			
FSL Gesamt					

Tabelle 3 - **Fachleistungsstundenkontingente (Beispiel)**

Einstufung	**Zeitraum ***	**Stundenkontingent pro Woche**			**Stundenkontingent pro Monat**		
		Gesamt	Betreuung	Fallbezogene Tätigkeiten	**Gesamt**	Betreuung	Fallbezogene Tätigkeiten
FLS Stufe 1	3 – 6 Monate (Betreuung in den ersten 3 bis 4 Monaten nach der stationärenUnterbringung)	**8**	7	1	**32**	28	4

FLS Stufe 2	Wohnen in einer WG (FLS in der Wohngruppe)	**6**	5	1	**24**	20	4
FLS Stufe 3	Eigene Wohnung (FLS in den ersten 6 bis 8 Monaten)	**4**	3	1	**16**	12	4
FLS Stufe 4	Eigene Wohnung (FLS in den danach kommenden 6 bis 8 Monaten)	**3**	2,5	0,5	**12**	10	2
FLS Stufe 5	Eigene Wohnung (nach 12 – 14 Monaten)	**2,5**	2	0,5	**10**	8	2

** Die o. g. Zeiträume weichen von Fall zu Fall ab.*
In der Einschätzung des benötigten individuellen FL-Stundenkontingents soll die spezifische Situation der Kunden berücksichtigt werden, wie z. B.
- die Fluktuation (s. g. "Zeitdruck")
- vorherige spezifische Lebenserfahrungen der Kunden
- die Ergebnisse der vorgeleisteten Betreuungsarbeit (Erreichungsgrad der im Hilfeplangespräch formulierten Ziele, Selbständigkeit, Selbstbewusstsein, usw.)

Tabelle 4- **Anzahl von Fachleistungsstunden (Beispiel)**

Leistungen /Stufe	FLS / Woche					FLS / Monat				
Unmittelbare einzelfallbezogene Leistungen (Arbeit mit dem jungen Menschen)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Lebenspraxis/ Alltagsgestaltung. Haushalts-führung / Wohnen	1,5	1	0,5	0,5	0	6	4	2	2	0
Finanzen und (sozial-) rechtliche Angelegenheiten, (fallbezogene Gespräche/Kontakte mit Behörden u. a.)	1,5	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	6	4	2	2	2
Hilfeplangespräche, Gestaltung sozialer Beziehungen	0,5	1	0,5	0	0	4	4	2	0	0
Schule, Ausbildung und Beschäftigung (fallbezogene Gespräche/Kontakte mit Lehrer/innen, Ausbildern u.a.)	1,5	1	0,5	1	1	6	4	2	4	4
Freizeit	0,5	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Besonderer Hilfebedarf, Konfliktlösung und Interventionen in Krisensituationen,Medikamente. Psychische Gesundheit.	1	0,5	0,5	0	0	4	2	2	2	2
Fallbezogene Tätigkeiten • Planung und Vorbereitung des Hilfesettings • Vor- und Nachbereitung von pädagogischen Maßnahmen • Vor- und Nachbereitung von Hilfeplangesprächen • Fallbesprechungen/ Beratung und mit ASD • Leistungsdokumentation; Berichtswesen/Statistik	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	4	4	4	2	2
Fahrt- und Wegezeiten	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	2	2	2	2	2
Gesamt	8	6	4	3	**2,5**	32	24	16	12	10

Tabelle 5 – Auswertung über geleistete Fachleistungsstunden (Zeitraumbezogene Überblick über die erbrachten FLS)

Übersicht der geleisteten Fachleistungsstunden vom 01.04.2012 bis zum 30.04.2012
Bereich: UMF – Ambulant Betreutes Wohnen
Erzieher:

Name, Vorname	Kostenträger	Bewiligungs-zeitraum	Bewilligte Std. (Netto)	Rest-kontingent (bis Ende)	Geleistete Stunden	Überlauf	Gruppen-stunden	Durchschnitt pro Woche		
								Geleistet	Bewilligt	Restzeit
P. M.	(Judet)	01.01.2012-01.07.2012	60	30	10	0,00	0,00	2,5	2,5	0,00

[1]**Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB) Achtes Buch (VIII) Kinder- und Jugendhilfe**
(Stand: Neugefasst durch Bek. v. 14.12.2006 I 3134; zuletzt geändert durch Art. 2 G v. 22.12.2011 I 2975)
§ 36 SGB VIII Mitwirkung, Hilfeplan
(1) Der Personensorgeberechtigte und das Kind oder der Jugendliche sind vor der Entscheidung über die Inanspruchnahme einer Hilfe und vor einer notwendigen Änderung von Art und Umfang der Hilfe zu beraten und auf die möglichen Folgen für die Entwicklung des Kindes oder des Jugendlichen hinzuweisen. Vor und während einer langfristig zu leistenden Hilfe außerhalb der eigenen Familie ist zu prüfen, ob die Annahme als Kind in Betracht kommt. Ist Hilfe außerhalb der eigenen Familie erforderlich, so sind die in Satz 1 genannten Personen bei der Auswahl der Einrichtung oder der Pflegestelle zu beteiligen. Der Wahl und den Wünschen ist zu entsprechen, sofern sie nicht mit unverhältnismäßigen Mehrkosten verbunden sind. Wünschen die in Satz 1 genannten Personen die Erbringung einer in § 78a genannten Leistung in einer Einrichtung, mit deren Träger keine Vereinbarungen nach § 78b bestehen, so soll der Wahl nur entsprochen werden, wenn die Erbringung der Leistung in dieser Einrichtung nach Maßgabe des Hilfeplans nach Absatz 2 geboten ist.
(2) Die Entscheidung über die im Einzelfall angezeigte Hilfeart soll, wenn Hilfe voraussichtlich für längere Zeit zu leisten ist, im Zusammenwirken mehrerer Fachkräfte getroffen werden. Als Grundlage für die Ausgestaltung der Hilfe sollen sie zusammen mit dem Personensorgeberechtigten und dem Kind oder dem Jugendlichen einen Hilfeplan aufstellen, der Feststellungen über den Bedarf, die zu gewährende Art der Hilfe sowie die notwendigen Leistungen enthält; sie sollen regelmäßig prüfen, ob die gewählte Hilfeart weiterhin geeignet und notwendig ist. Werden bei der Durchführung der Hilfe andere Personen, Dienste oder Einrichtungen tätig, so sind sie oder deren Mitarbeiter an der Aufstellung des Hilfeplans und seiner Überprüfung zu beteiligen. Erscheinen Maßnahmen der beruflichen Eingliederung erforderlich, so sollen auch die für die Eingliederung zuständigen Stellen beteiligt werden.
(3) Erscheinen Hilfen nach § 35a erforderlich, so soll bei der Aufstellung und Änderung des Hilfeplans sowie bei der Durchführung der Hilfe die Person, die eine Stellungnahme nach § 35a Abs. 1a abgegeben hat, beteiligt werden.
(4) Vor einer Entscheidung über die Gewährung einer Hilfe, die ganz oder teilweise im Ausland erbracht wird, soll zur Feststellung einer seelischen Störung mit Krankheitswert die Stellungnahme einer in § 35a Abs. 1a Satz 1 genannten Person eingeholt werden.
[1] Plaßmeyer, F., Kohlmeyer, M., - „Finanzierungsmodelle im Kontext von wirkungsorientierter Steuerung der Hilfen zur Erziehung“ in Wirkungsorientierte Jugendhilfe, ISA, Münster, 2009, Band 07, *S. 14 - 16*
[1]16 Vgl. Plasmeyer, Frank, Die Finanzierung von „Flexiblen Erziehungshilfen“ in Nordrhein-Westfalen. In: Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe – Landesjugendamt (Hg.), Flexibilisierung erzieherischer Hilfen, 2000, S. 24 ff.

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REVIEW
THE METHODOLOGY OF EDUCATING SPEECH IN PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION – AN EARLY EDUCATION BASED APPROACH*

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"1 Decembrie 1918" University, Alba-Iulia

Approaching pre-school education from based on early education, officially assumed through the *Curriculum for pre-school education* (2008) and through the document entitled *Fundamental Guide marks in learning and early development at children from birth to the age of seven* (approved by the order of the Ministry of Education no 3851/2010), brought about the necessity to reconsider initial and lifelong training at pre-school teachers. Even if the experience of those years when the new curriculum has been implemented, revealed progress towards the integration of pre-school education as a decisive part of early education, still there are numerous challenges and opportunities that have to be revalued. We are referring to aspects like organizing learning activities on experiential fields and correlating the later to the fields of child`s personality development. We also refer to combining discipline related activities with integrated ones, to organizing the syllabus on units, to integrating games in different activities (routines, transitions, learning activities).

In this context, Gabriela Kelemen`s book, is a successful approach to the methodology of educating speech in pre-school education based on the concept of early education. In connection with new curricular approaches, the book is illustrative as a model of correlation between the field of child`s personality development (*The development of speech and communication*) and an experiential field in the structure of the curriculum (*Language and communication*), in the same time, offering guide marks for a more general model of the concept of child`s global development. (central concept in the new vision upon early education).

From this perspective, the book begins with a chapter dedicated to the outline of a conceptual framework regarding communication and speech, where the author synthetically presents groups of information chosen according to their relevance for the didactic activity. She has presented well known theories and models regarding speech and communication (Chomsky, Skinner, Bandura, Brown), she has synthetized the main indicators of child`s speech evolution from birth to the age of 6, she described the speech functions, presented the structure and the process of communication at pre-school level. The components of the communication ability are presented at the end of the chapter.

* Kelemen Gabriela (2012), *Metodica educării limbajului la nivel de învăţământ preşcolar*, Editura Universităţii „Aurel Vlaicu", Arad.

The 2nd chapter is dedicated to the goal and the objectives of the methodology of speech education and the presentation of the experiential filed *Language and communication,* from the perspective of early education. The reader can find here information regarding the aims and objectives of this field, models of didactic planning for different types of activity. From the 3rd chapter, dedicated to activities of speech education in kindergarten, we want to draw attention on the paragraph referring to evaluation, where the author presents evaluation sheets adapted to this type of activities.

As expected in a methodology book, the most important chapter is dedicated to *specific forms of carrying out activities in the field of speech education.* Under this title, the author describes and exemplifies the didactic game, teacher`s stories, children`s stories (with their various forms) memorizing, conversation and image based reading. The presentation of these forms highlights the experience that the author has in pre-school education, in general, and in speech education, in particular. We notice the systematization, clarity and the highly applicative value of the work.

A selection of recommended contents would involve:

- Applications of activity planning based on didactic games (pp. 138-150) presented for each group (primary, middle, secondary, preparation), which allows us to notice the progress of this learning method throughout pre-school period;
- Applications of activity planning based on teacher`s stories and children`s retellings (pp. 158-167) for each group.
- Considerations and exemplifications based on memorizing and conversation as forms of learning activity;

The book contains several methodology issues for which Gabriela Kelemen finds proper solutions. Among these, we would like to recommend the readers:

- Educating speech from an integrated perspective, by presenting some models of curricular integration and relevant applications for the way in which only one integrated activity can fulfil objectives of several experiential fields;
- Presentation and exemplification of certain methods of prevention and removal of speech difficulties at children;

On the whole, the book stands out as a clear and systematic approach that reconstructs the logic of construction and concept derivation, allowing the reader a progressive familiarization with concepts, methods and applications from the field of speech education at pre-school children. Each chapter is organized as a logical succession of ideas and concepts, favouring a fluent reading, with heuristic elements that urge to reflection. Shortly, the book is an useful tool both for students that train to become teachers, and for teachers who are interested in broadening their knowledge in the field of educating speech in pre-school education.

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